

## UNIT - 2

### Greek Warfare

#### 1. Greek Military system :-

##### Synopsis:-

Roman legion

Roman cavalry

Roman Armor

Roman Navy

siege craft

key battles

##### Roman legion :

\* The Roman legion, the ultimate military machine of the ancient world, was the catalyst that spread Roman conquest and civilization throughout the known world.

\* The core of the Roman legion consisted of heavily armored infantry.

\* The Roman legion was the largest military unit of the Roman army. A legion was roughly of brigade size, composed of 4,200 infantry and 300 cavalry.

##### Roman Armor:

\* In the early days of the Roman Republic, legionaries had to arm themselves on their own.

\* This meant that quality and quantity depended a great deal on the individual's wealth and there was a great deal of disparity between the soldiers.

\* Roman's armor borrowed extensively



from the type worn by previous civilizations and Rome's neighbours most notably from the Etruscans and the Greeks.

\* As time went on, the Roman military machine became better armed and was adapted in accordance with who the enemy was and the tactics that they employed.

\* They also learnt from the people they encountered as the empire expanded.

### Roman cavalry:

\* The role of cavalry in the Roman thought process when it came to battles with her enemies was typically not high up on the list.

\* The cavalry was generally used as light skirmishing troops and mounted archers whose job was to patrol, act as scouts and messengers and to provide a mobile defensive screen while the legion was massing in battle array.

### Roman Navy:

\* The Roman navy expanded outwards from the city of Rome, which is located roughly in the middle of the Italian peninsula.

\* Being centrally located like this means that there was a lot of land to conquer north and south, which means that there



was little need for boats or any kind of navy.

\* As Roman influence expanded, it soon became clear to them that they were way behind other civilizations such as Greeks and Carthaginians who had large fleets and large of experience in conducting maritime military operations

\* As war with Carthage edged closer for control over the Mediterranean Sea, the Romans realized the military strength of the legions needed to be complemented with a powerful navy too.

\* During First Punic War, a large fleet was built using stranded Phoenician vessel as a prototype

\* Over the next few decades, the ingenious Romans modified and adapted ship designs and honed their naval fighting skills, as well as ramping up production of vessels.

\* Ultimately, the Roman navy became such a powerful force in such a short time that during 2nd Punic War, Hannibal abandoned the once formidable Carthaginian fleet to focus on land operations.



## 2. Battle of Cannae

\* The Battle of Cannae [216 BC] remains one of the greatest military reversals of all time.

\* It was fought near the ancient village of Cannae, in southern Apulia, Southeastern Italy between the forces of Rome and Carthage during Second Punic War.

\* The Romans were crushed by the African, Gallic, and Celtiberian troops of Hannibal, with recorded Roman losses ranging from 55,000 - 70,000.

\* Hannibal was the first to arrive at the battlefield with a force of about 40,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry.

\* His army took command of the Aufidus River, the

\* The battle begins with standard skirmishing by light troops on either side as the infantry advanced.

\* On the Roman right Paulus and his Roman cavalry crashed into their Spanish and Gallic opponents.

\* Carthaginian cavalry eventually overcame their Roman foes and chased them from the field.

\* At the day's end, the Roman infantry had been killed to the last man.

\* The Battle of Cannae proved two flaws in the Roman war machine, one major and one potential



\* The Roman legions lacked sufficient cavalry to reliably defeat a Carthaginian army in the field.

\* Cannae also highlighted the potential of conflicting command in Roman armies. The daily transfer of absolute power from one consul to another led to disaster.

## Battle of Zama (202 BC)

\* Battle of Zama, victory of the Romans led by Scipio Africanus the Elder over the Carthaginians commanded by Hannibal.

\* The last and decisive battle of the Second Punic War, it effectively ended both Hannibal's command of Carthaginian forces and also Carthage's chances to significantly oppose Rome.

\* The battle took place at a site identified by Hannibal.

\* Before the battle Hannibal and Scipio met personally, possibly because Hannibal perceived that battle conditions did not favour him.

\* Scipio's cavalry then charged the opposing Carthaginian cavalry on the wings; the latter fled and were pursued by Masinissa's forces.

\* Roman infantry legions then



advanced and attacked Hannibal's infantry, which consisted of 3 lines of defence.

\* The Roman crushed the soldiers of the first line and then those of the second.

\* However by that time, the legionaries had become nearly exhausted, and they had yet to close with the third line, which consisted of Hannibal's veterans from his Italian campaign.

\* At that crucial juncture, Masinissa Numidian cavalry returned from their rout of the enemy cavalry and attacked the rear of the Carthaginian infantry who were soon crushed between the combined Roman infantry and cavalry assault.

\* Hannibal has done all that he could do as a general in battle, especially considering the advantage by his opponent.

\* With the defeat of Carthage and Hannibal, it is likely that Zama awakened in Rome a vision of a larger future for itself in the Mediterranean.