

ABSTRACT

MOS MAIORUM AND THE SECOND PUNIC WAR

Ancient Rome bequeathed as a legacy to the world a Greco-Roman culture, law, administration, architecture, and Christianity. Roman tradition and custom, that which was customarily accepted as precedent, *mos maiorum*, would come to be challenged at a time when Rome needed to adapt to the changes brought forth by the Second Punic War.

This second war with Carthage witnessed many changes to long-standing tradition, but this in and of itself was not wholly unconventional. What set this war apart from other conflicts was the active participation of a legendary Roman statesman, Quintus Fabius Maximus. His participation offers readers a glimpse at the workings of *mos maiorum* during a time of incredible pressure on the people of Italy. This window into the past is illustrative in that one can see the amendments to custom materialize due in part to the new and liberal thinking of the traditionally conservative Fabius.

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