



GREAT CITIES OF AFRICA

THE CITY OF CARTHAGE



The Kingdom of Carthage was a north African Berber nation first established in 814 BC. The Berbers have inhabited North Africa from 10,000 BC and are indigenous to the north African region sometimes called The Maghreb which includes modern-day eastern Mauritania, Western Sahara, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and parts of northern Mali and Niger. The Berber population of Carthage however remained largely Libyan. The city was originally a state under Phoenician (a sea-faring people originally from modern-day Lebanon) control before it gained independence and fell under African control. The central city of Carthage was located in the one of the most northern parts of Africa in the area which is modern-day Tunisia near Libya. The name the Greeks used for Carthage was 'Karchedon'. The location of the city of Carthage was on the coast of north Africa which borders the Mediterranean Sea and made the city only 350 miles from the island of Sicily in Europe. Behind the city of Carthage was located the Lake of Tunis which was another source of water for the city and of fresh fish.

The central city was designed as a fortress and had very high walls which were a total of 23

miles in length, they protected the temples and great buildings that had been constructed. The city had a huge burial ground, market places, temples decorated in gold and marble, restaurants, libraries, a theatre, and four residential areas. The city of Carthage was known for its enormous wealth and prosperity. By 300 BC the population of the city of Carthage had grown to over 700,000 people. The trade in African goods across the Saharan trade routes increased the wealth of the city of Carthage and this was managed by the Berber population of the kingdom. At this time the African city of Carthage was the wealthiest city in the Mediterranean. The merchants of Carthage were known for the development of large vineyards for the production of wine. The city minted gold coins and was a hub for the trade of metals, textiles and food across the Mediterranean and northern Africa. The merchant ships of Carthage would also sail to the west of Africa (modern-day Nigeria and Senegal) for trade in textiles, metals and other more exotic west African goods.