

51 Τὸ δὲ Καρχηδονίων πολίτευμα τὸ μὲν ἀνέκαθεν  
 μοι δοκεῖ καλῶς κατὰ γε τὰς ὄλοσχερεῖς διαφορὰς  
 2 συνεστάσθαι. καὶ γὰρ βασιλεῖς ἦσαν παρ' αὐτοῖς,  
 καὶ τὸ γερόντιον εἶχε τὴν ἀριστοκρατικὴν ἐξουσίαν,  
 καὶ τὸ πλῆθος ἦν κύριον τῶν καθηκόντων αὐτῶ·  
 καθόλου δὲ τὴν τῶν ὄλων ἀρμογὴν εἶχε παραπλη-  
 3 σίαν τῇ Ῥωμαίων καὶ Λακεδαιμονίων. κατὰ γε  
 μὴν τοὺς καιροὺς τούτους, καθ' οὓς εἰς τὸν Ἄννι-  
 βιακὸν ἐνέβαινε πόλεμον, χεῖρον ἦν τὸ Καρχηδονίων,  
 4 ἄμεινον δὲ τὸ Ῥωμαίων. ἐπειδὴ γὰρ παντὸς καὶ  
 σώματος καὶ πολιτείας καὶ πράξεώς ἐστὶ τις αὔξη-  
 σις κατὰ φύσιν, μετὰ δὲ ταύτην ἀκμὴ, κ᾿πειτα  
 φθίσις, κράτιστα δ' αὐτῶν ἐστὶ πάντα τὰ κατὰ τὴν  
 ἀκμὴν, παρὰ τοῦτο καὶ τότε διέφερον ἀλλήλων τὰ  
 5 πολιτεύματα. καθ' ὅσον γὰρ ἢ Καρχηδονίων  
 πρότερον ἴσχυε καὶ πρότερον εὐτύχει τῆς Ῥωμαίων,  
 κατὰ τοσοῦτον ἢ μὲν Καρχηδῶν ἤδη τότε παρήκ-  
 μαζεν, ἢ δὲ Ῥώμη μάλιστα τότε εἶχε τὴν ἀκμὴν  
 6 κατὰ γε τὴν τῆς πολιτείας σύστασιν. διὸ καὶ  
 τὴν πλείστην δύναμιν ἐν τοῖς διαβουλίαις παρὰ  
 μὲν Καρχηδονίοις ὁ δῆμος ἤδη μετειλήφει, παρὰ  
 7 δὲ Ῥωμαίοις ἀκμὴν εἶχεν ἢ σύγκλητος. ὅθεν  
 παρ' οἷς μὲν τῶν πολλῶν βουλευομένων, παρ'  
 οἷς δὲ τῶν ἀρίστων, κατίσχυε τὰ Ῥωμαίων  
 8 διαβούλια περὶ τὰς κοινὰς πράξεις. ἢ καὶ πταί-  
 σαντες τοῖς ὄλοις τῶ βουλευέσθαι καλῶς τέλος  
 ἐπεκράτησαν τῶ πολέμῳ τῶν Καρχηδονίων.

52 Τὰ γε μὴν κατὰ μέρος, οἷον εὐθέως τὰ πρὸς  
 τὰς πολεμικὰς χρείας, τὸ μὲν πρὸς τὰς κατὰ θάλατ-  
 ταν, ὅπερ εἰκός, ἄμεινον ἀσκοῦσι καὶ παρασκευά-  
 ζονται Καρχηδόνιοι διὰ τὸ καὶ πάτριον αὐτοῖς  
 ὑπάρχειν ἐκ παλαιοῦ τὴν ἐμπειρίαν ταύτην καὶ

51. The constitution of Carthage seems to me to have been originally well contrived as regards its most distinctive points. For there were kings, and the house of Elders was an aristocratical force, and the people were supreme in matters proper to them, the entire frame of the state much resembling that of Rome and Sparta. But at the time when they entered on the Hannibalic War, the Carthaginian constitution had degenerated, and that of Rome was better. For as every body or state or action has its natural periods first of growth, then of prime, and finally of decay, and as everything in them is at its best when they are in their prime, it was for this reason that the difference between the two states manifested itself at this time. For by as much as the power and prosperity of Carthage had been earlier than that of Rome, by so much had Carthage already begun to decline; while Rome was exactly at her prime, as far at least as her system of government was concerned. Consequently the multitude at Carthage had already acquired the chief voice in deliberations; while at Rome the senate still retained this; and hence, as in one case the masses deliberated and in the other the most eminent men, the Roman decisions on public affairs were superior, so that although they met with complete disaster, they were finally by the wisdom of their counsels victorious over the Carthaginians in the war.

52. But to pass to differences of detail, such as, to begin with, the conduct of war, the Carthaginians naturally are superior at sea both in efficiency and equipment, because seamanship has long been their national craft, and they busy themselves with the sea

## THE HISTORIES OF POLYBIUS

2 θαλαττουργεῖν μάλιστα πάντων ἀνθρώπων, τὸ δὲ  
 περὶ τὰς πεζικὰς χρείας πολὺ δὴ τι Ῥωμαῖοι πρὸς  
 3 τὸ βέλτιον ἀσκοῦσι Καρχηδονίων. οἱ μὲν γὰρ  
 τὴν ὅλην περὶ τοῦτο ποιοῦνται σπουδὴν, Καρχη-  
 δόνιοι δὲ τῶν μὲν πεζικῶν εἰς τέλος ὀλιγοροῦσι,  
 τῶν δ' ἵππικῶν βραχεῖάν τινα ποιοῦνται πρόνοιαν.  
 4 αἴτιον δὲ τούτων ἐστὶν ὅτι ξενικαῖς καὶ μισθοφόροις  
 χρῶνται δυνάμεσι, Ῥωμαῖοι δ' ἐγχωρίοις καὶ  
 5 πολιτικαῖς. ἢ καὶ περὶ τοῦτο τὸ μέρος ταύτην  
 τὴν πολιτείαν ἀποδεκτέον ἐκείνης μᾶλλον· ἢ μὲν  
 γὰρ ἐν ταῖς τῶν μισθοφόρων εὐψυχίαις ἔχει τὰς  
 ἐλπίδας αἰεὶ τῆς ἐλευθερίας, ἢ δὲ Ῥωμαίων ἐν  
 ταῖς σφετέραις ἀρεταῖς καὶ ταῖς τῶν συμμάχων  
 6 ἐπαρκείαις. διὸ κἂν ποτε πταίσωσι κατὰ τὰς  
 ἀρχάς, Ῥωμαῖοι μὲν ἀναμάχονται τοῖς ὅλοις,  
 7 Καρχηδόνιοι δὲ τὸναντίον. <ἐκεῖνοι γὰρ> ὑπὲρ  
 πατρίδος ἀγωνιζόμενοι καὶ τέκνων οὐδέποτε δύ-  
 νανται λῆξαι τῆς ὀργῆς, ἀλλὰ μένουσι ψυχομα-  
 8 χοῦντες, ἕως ἂν περιγένωνται τῶν ἐχθρῶν. διὸ  
 καὶ περὶ τὰς ναυτικὰς δυνάμεις πολὺ τι λειπόμενοι  
 Ῥωμαῖοι κατὰ τὴν ἐμπειρίαν, ὡς προεῖπον ἐπάνω,  
 τοῖς ὅλοις ἐπικρατοῦσι διὰ τὰς τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἀρετάς·  
 9 καίπερ γὰρ οὐ μικρὰ συμβαλλομένης εἰς τοὺς  
 κατὰ θάλατταν κινδύνους τῆς ναυτικῆς χρείας,  
 ὅμως ἢ τῶν ἐπιβατῶν εὐψυχία πλείστην παρ-  
 10 ἔχεται ῥοπὴν εἰς τὸ νικᾶν. διαφέρουσι μὲν οὖν  
 καὶ φύσει πάντες Ἰταλιῶται Φοινίκων καὶ Λιβύων  
 τῇ τε σωματικῇ ῥώμῃ καὶ ταῖς ψυχικαῖς τόλμαις·  
 μεγάλην δὲ καὶ διὰ τῶν ἔθισμῶν πρὸς τοῦτο τὸ  
 11 μέρος ποιοῦνται τῶν νέων παρόρμησιν. ἐν δὲ  
 ῥῆθὲν ἱκανὸν ἔσται σημεῖον τῆς τοῦ πολιτεύματος  
 σπουδῆς, ἣν ποιεῖται > περὶ τὸ τοιούτους ἀπο-  
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more than any other people ; but as regards military service on land the Romans are much more efficient. They indeed devote their whole energies to this matter, whereas the Carthaginians entirely neglect their infantry, though they do pay some slight attention to their cavalry. The reason of this is that the troops they employ are foreign and mercenary, whereas those of the Romans are natives of the soil and citizens. So that in this respect also we must pronounce the political system of Rome to be superior to that of Carthage, the Carthaginians continuing to depend for the maintenance of their freedom on the courage of a mercenary force but the Romans on their own valour and on the aid of their allies. Consequently even if they happen to be worsted at the outset, the Romans redeem defeat by final success, while it is the contrary with the Carthaginians. For the Romans, fighting as they are for their country and their children, never can abate their fury but continue to throw their whole hearts into the struggle until they get the better of their enemies. It follows that though the Romans are, as I said, much less skilled in naval matters, they are on the whole successful at sea owing to the gallantry of their men ; for although skill in seamanship is of no small importance in naval battles, it is chiefly the courage of the marines that turns the scale in favour of victory. Now not only do Italians in general naturally excel Phoenicians and Africans in bodily strength and personal courage, but by their institutions also they do much to foster a spirit of bravery in the young men. A single instance will suffice to indicate the pains taken by the state to turn out men who will be ready to endure