

Weather and *τύχη* in Polybius' *Histories*
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<p>1. καθάπερ ἡ τύχη σχεδὸν ἅπαντα τὰ τῆς οἰκουμένης πράγματα πρὸς ἓν ἔκλινε μέρος καὶ πάντα νεύειν ἠνάγκασε πρὸς ἓνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν σκοπὸν, οὕτως καὶ (δεῖ) διὰ τῆς ἱστορίας ὑπὸ μίαν σύννοψιν ἀγαγεῖν τοῖς ἐντυγχάνουσι τὸν χειρισμὸν τῆς τύχης, ᾧ κέχρηται πρὸς τὴν τῶν ὄλων πραγμάτων συντέλειαν. καὶ γὰρ τὸ προκαλεσάμενον ἡμᾶς καὶ παρορμησαν πρὸς τὴν ἐπιβολὴν τῆς ἱστορίας μάλιστα τοῦτο γέγονεν... (1.4.1-2).¹</p>	<p>Just as fortune has sloped nearly all affairs of the inhabited world into one direction and has forced them all to slope towards one and the same target, thus it is necessary to bring under one general view through my history for those who happen upon it the handiwork of Fortune, which she has made use of for the fulfillment of all affairs. For, this was what has especially called me forth and urged me on towards the undertaking of history.</p>
<p>2. (...) ὧν μὲν νῆ Δι' ἀδύνατον ἢ δυσχερὲς τὰς αἰτίας καταλαβεῖν ἄνθρωπον ὄντα, περὶ τούτων ἴσως ἂν τις ἀπορῶν ἐπὶ τὸν θεὸν τὴν ἀναφορὰν ποιοῖτο καὶ τὴν τύχην, οἷον ὄμβρων καὶ νιφετῶν ἕξαισιῶν ἐπιφορὰ συνεχῆς, ἢ τάναντία πάλιν ἀρχμῶν καὶ πάγων καὶ διὰ ταῦτα φθορὰ καρπῶν... (36.17.2).²</p>	<p>Concerning these things, the causes of which are, by Zeus, <u>impossible or difficult for a human to comprehend</u>, someone perhaps being at a loss might make a reference to a god and fortune, such as a continuous burst of thunderstorms and heavy snowstorms or on the other hand of droughts and frosts and because of these destructions of crops...</p>
<p>3. διάραντες δὲ τὸν πόρον ἀσφαλῶς καὶ προσμίζαντες τῇ τῶν Καμαριναίων χώρα τηλικούτω περιέπεσον χειμῶνι καὶ τηλικαύταις συμφοραῖς ὥστε μηδ' ἂν εἰπεῖν ἀξίως δύνασθαι διὰ τὴν ὑπερβολὴν τοῦ συμβάντος... ταύτης δὲ μείζω περιπέτειαν ἐν ἐνὶ καιρῷ κατὰ θάλατταν οὐδ' ἴστορησθαι συμβέβηκεν. ἥς τὴν αἰτίαν οὐχ οὕτως εἰς τὴν τύχην ὡς εἰς τοὺς ἡγεμόνας ἐπανοιστέον* πολλὰ γὰρ τῶν κυβερνητῶν διαμαρτυραμένων μὴ πλεῖν παρὰ τὴν ἕξω πλευρὰν τῆς Σικελίας τὴν πρὸς τὸ Λιβυκὸν πέλαγος ἐστραμμένην διὰ τὸ τραχεῖαν εἶναι καὶ δυσπροσόρμιστον, ἅμα δὲ καὶ τὴν μὲν οὐδέπω καταλήγειν ἐπισημασίαν, τὴν δ' ἐπιφέρεισθαι· μεταξὺ γὰρ ἐποιοῦντο τὸν πλοῦν τῆς Ὠρίωνος καὶ κυνὸς ἐπιτολῆς· οὐθενὶ προσσχόντες τῶν λεγομένων ἔπλευον</p>	<p>Having crossed the strait safely and having approached the country of the Camarinans they happened upon a storm of such great magnitude and such great disasters <u>that it is not possible to speak in a way that is worthy because of the incredibility of the event</u>...no greater turn of events has happened to be inquired about than this at one time. The cause of which should not so much be ascribed to fortune as much as to the leaders; for although the helmsmen had warned many times to not sail along the outer coast of Sicily facing the Libyan Sea, because of it being rugged and difficult to land on, at the same time they warned that one constellation had not yet stopped while another was approaching. For they were making the voyage between the rising of</p>

¹ Greek text for all passages from Book 1 is from Phillips (2016). All translations are my own.

² Greek text from Paton (2012). All translations are my own.

<p>ἔξω πελάγιοι... πλὴν οὗτοι μὲν μικρῶν ἐλπίδων ἔνεκα μεγάλοις περιτυχόντες ἀτυχήμασι <u>τότε τὴν αὐτῶν ἀβουλίαν ἔγνωσαν</u>... ὁ καὶ τότε καὶ πλεονάκις αὐτοῖς ἤδη συνέβη καὶ συμβήσεται πάσχειν, ἕως ἂν ποτε διορθώσωνται τὴν τοιαύτην τόλμαν καὶ βίαν, καθ' ἣν οἴονται δεῖν αὐτοῖς πάντα καιρὸν εἶναι πλωτὸν καὶ πορευτὸν (1.37.1 ,3-5, 6, 10)</p>	<p>Orion and the Dog-Star. Paying attention to none of the things that were said, the sailors sailed on the outside... but for the sake of small hopes they, having met with great disasters <u>then recognized their own thoughtlessness</u>... and it happened to them that they experienced this more frequently, and it will happen to them in the future until they at some point set right their courage and force, by which they consider it to be necessary for them to be on sea and traveling during every season.</p>
<p>4. ἐν ἣ προσπεσόντες εἰς τινα βράχεια διὰ τὴν ἀπειρίαν, γενομένης ἀμπότεως καὶ καθισάντων τῶν πλοίων εἰς πᾶσαν ἤλθον ἀπορίαν. Οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ πάλιν ἀνεπίστως μετὰ τινα χρόνον ἐπενεχθείσης τῆς θαλάττης, ἐκρίψαντες ἐκ τῶν πλοίων πάντα τὰ βάρη μόλις ἐκούφισαν τὰς ναῦς... ἐντεῦθεν δὲ ποιούμενοι παραβόλως καὶ διὰ πόρου τὸν πλοῦν εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην πάλιν περιέπεσον χειμῶνι τηλικούτῳ τὸ μέγεθος ὥστε πλείω τῶν ἑκατὸν καὶ πενήκοντα πλοίων ἀποβαλεῖν. (1.39.3-4,6).</p>	<p>Where, having fallen upon some shallows due to their inexperience, and when the tide rose and the vessels landed, they came into every difficulty. However, when, after some time the sea rose again unexpectedly, having cast from their ships all the heavy things, they barely lightened their ships.... from there, making their way through the open sea rashly into Rome, again they fell upon a storm so great in magnitude that they lost more than one hundred and fifty ships.</p>
<p>5. τὸ μὲν γὰρ πρῶτον ἐξεχώρησαν τῆς θαλάττης εἷξαντες τοῖς ἐκ τῆς τύχης συμπτώμασιν...(1.59.4).</p>	<p>The first time, they departed from the sea having yielded to the casualties from fortune</p>
<p>6. ἐπιγενομένου δὲ χειμῶνος καὶ περιστάσεως προφαινομένης ἐκ τοῦ πελάγους ὀλοσχερεστέρας, οἱ μὲν τῶν Καρχηδονίων κυβερνῆται διὰ τε τὴν τῶν τόπων καὶ τὴν τοῦ πράγματος ἐμπειρίαν προορώμενοι τὸ μέλλον καὶ προλέγοντες τὸ συμβησόμενον ἔπεισαν τὸν Καρθάλωνα φυγεῖν τὸν χειμῶνα καὶ κάμψαι τὴν ἄκραν τοῦ Παχύνου. Πεισθέντος δὲ νουνεχῶς, οὗτοι μὲν πολλὰ μοχθήσαντες καὶ μόλις ὑπεράραντες τὴν ἄκραν ἐν ἀσφαλεῖ καθωμίσθησαν, οἱ δὲ τῶν Ῥωμαίων στόλοι, τοῦ χειμῶνος ἐπιγενομένου καὶ τῶν τόπων εἰς τέλος ὑπαρχόντων ἀλιμένων, οὕτως διεφθάρησαν ὥστε μηδὲ τῶν ναυαγίων μηδὲν γενέσθαι χρήσιμον, ἀλλ' ἀμφοτέρους αὐτοὺς ἄρδην καὶ παραλόγως ἀχραιοθῆναι (1.54.6-8).</p>	<p>After a storm arose and when a greater danger revealed itself from the sea, the helmsmen of the Carthaginians due to their experience of the area and the matter and foreseeing that which was about to happen and telling that which was about to happen persuaded Carthalo to flee the storm and to curve around the cape of Pachynus. Having been sensibly persuaded, they, laboring much and barely rounding the cape they were brought into safety. But the fleets of the Romans, when the storm arose and since the places were at length without harbors, were destroyed to the extent that nothing of their wreckage was useful, but both of them were completely and <u>unexpectedly</u> rendered useless.</p>
<p>7. Τῶν δὲ πολιορκουμένων ταῖς μὲν ἀντοικοδομίας ἐνεργῶς χρωμένων, τοῦ δὲ λυμαίνεσθαι καὶ διαφθεῖρειν τὰς τῶν</p>	<p>While those who were being besieged were eagerly making use of counterwork, although they had given up the design of maltreating</p>

<p>ὑπεναντίων παρασκευὰς ἀπεγνώκτων, γίνεται τις ἀνέμου στάσις ἔχουσα τηλικαύτην βίαν καὶ φορὰν εἰς αὐτὰς τὰς τῶν μηχανημάτων προσαγωγὰς ὥστε καὶ τὰς στοὰς διασαλεύειν καὶ τοὺς προκειμένους τούτων πύργους τῆ βία βαστάζειν. ἐν ᾧ καιρῷ <u>συννοήσαντές</u> τινες τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν μισθοφόρων τὴν ἐπιτηδειότητα τῆς περιστάσεως πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἔργων διαφθορὰν προσφέρουσι τῷ στρατηγῷ τὴν ἐπίνοιαν...συνεργούσης τοῖς βάλλουσι τῆς τοῦ πνεύματος βίας (1.48.1-3, 8).</p>	<p>and destroying the preparations of the enemies, a certain steady wind arose having such force and strength against the apparatus itself of the mechanisms that it both shook the sheds, and it lifted the towers placed front of them with its force. In which opportunity some of the Greek mercenaries <u>having considered</u> the suitability of the circumstance for destroying the works brought the idea to the general...the force of the wind cooperating with those who are throwing.</p>
<p>8. εἰς ἃ βλέπων Ἠμίλκας καὶ παντὸς πράγματος καὶ καιροῦ πείραν λαμβάνων διὰ τὸ δυσχρηστεῖν περὶ τὴν ἔξοδον διενοήθη τι τοιοῦτον. τοῦ προειρημένου ποταμοῦ κατὰ τὴν εἰς θάλατταν ἐκβολὴν <u>συνθεωρήσας</u> κατὰ τινὰς ἀνέμων στάσεις ἀποθινοῦμενον τὸ στόμα καὶ τεναγῶδη γινομένην τὴν παρ' αὐτὸ τὸ στόμα πάροδον, ποιήσας εὐτρεπῆ τῷ στρατοπέδῳ τὰ πρὸς τὴν ἔξοδον καὶ κρύπτων ἐν αὐτῷ τὴν ἐπιβολὴν ἐτήρει τὸ προειρημένον σύμπτωμα (1.75.7-8).</p>	<p>Looking into which things, Hamilcar, taking the attempt of every matter because of the difficulty concerning this passage, intended the following. <u>Having noticed</u> that the mouth of the aforementioned river got silted up by the exit into the sea and during certain steady winds and that the river pooled and became more like a marsh by the mouth and having made the preparations for the camp for the journey and keeping the plan for himself he kept watch for the aforementioned chance.</p>

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