

## Reassessing Polybius on Naval Power in the First Punic War

<p>Plb. 1.20.15-21.1 ταύτη παραδείγματι χρώμενοι τότε πρὸς ταύτην <b>ἐποιοῦντο τὴν τοῦ παντὸς στόλου ναυπηγίαν</b>, ὡς εἰ μὴ τοῦτο συνέβη γενέσθαι, δῆλον ὡς διὰ τὴν ἀπειρίαν εἰς τέλος ἂν ἐκωλύθησαν τῆς ἐπιβολῆς. οὐ μὲν ἄλλ' οἷς μὲν ἐπιμελὲς ἦν τῆς ναυπηγίας, ἐγίνοντο περὶ τὴν τῶν πλοίων <b>κατασκευήν</b>, οἱ δὲ τὰ πληρώματα συναθροίσαντες ἐδίδασκον ἐν τῇ γῆ κωπηλατεῖν τὸν τρόπον τοῦτον</p>	<p>Using this ship as a model, <b>they built their whole fleet</b>; so that if this had not occurred, it is clear that on account of inexperience they would have been prevented from reaching this goal. Now, however, those to whom the care of the shipbuilding had been given were busy <b>getting them ready</b>, those who had assembled the crews were teaching them on land to row in the following manner...</p>
<p>Plb. 1.36.8 προσπεσόντος δ' αὐτοῖς ἐξαρτύειν τὸν στόλον τοὺς Ῥωμαίους καὶ μέλλειν αὐθις ἐπὶ τὴν Λιβύην ποιῆσθαι τὸν πλοῦν, τὰ μὲν <b>ἐπεσκευάζον σκάφη</b>, τὰ δ' <b>ἐκ καταβολῆς ἐναυπηγοῦντο</b></p>	<p>Upon learning that the Romans were readying the fleet and were about to make an expedition to Libya, they [the Carthaginians] set about <b>refitting ships and building new ones from scratch</b>.</p>
<p>Plb. 1.38.5-6 οὐ βουλόμενοι δὲ καθάπαξ εἶκειν, αὐθις ἔγνωσαν ἐκ δρυόχων εἴκοσι καὶ διακόσια ναυπηγεῖσθαι σκάφη. τούτων δὲ τὴν συντέλειαν ἐν τριμῆνῳ λαβόντων, ὅπερ οὐδὲ πιστεῦσαι ῥάδιον,</p>	<p>Not wishing to give in at all, they decided to build 220 ships from the keel. These were finished in three months, a thing not at all easy to believe.</p>
<p>Plb. 1.36.10-37.2 οἱ δὲ Ῥωμαῖοι τῆς θερείας ἀρχομένης <b>καθελκύσαντες τριακόσια καὶ πενήκοντα σκάφη</b> καὶ στρατηγούς ἐπιστήσαντες Μάρκον Αἰμίλιον καὶ Σερούιον Φόλουιον ἐξαπέστειλλον. οἱ δ' ἀναχθέντες ἔπλεον παρὰ τὴν Σικελίαν ὡς ἐπὶ τῆς Λιβύης. συμμίζαντες δὲ περὶ τὴν Ἑρμαίαν τῷ τῶν Καρχηδονίων στόλῳ, τούτους μὲν ἐξ ἐφόδου καὶ ῥαδίως τρεψάμενοι <b>ναῦς ἔλαβον αὐτάνδρους ἑκατὸν δεκατέτταρας</b>: τοὺς δ' ἐν Λιβύῃ διαμείναντας νεανίσκους ἀναλαμβάνοντες ἐκ τῆς Ἀσπίδος ἔπλεον αὐθις ἐπὶ τῆς Σικελίας. διάραντες δὲ τὸν πόρον ἀσφαλῶς καὶ προσμίζαντες τῇ τῶν Καμαριναίων χώρα τηλικούτῳ περιέπεσον χειμῶνι καὶ τηλικαύταις συμφοραῖς ὥστε μὴδ' ἂν εἰπεῖν ἀξίως δύνασθαι διὰ τὴν ὑπερβολὴν τοῦ συμβάντος. <b>τῶν γὰρ ἐξήκοντα καὶ τεττάρων πρὸς ταῖς τριακοσίαις ναυσὶν ὀγδοήκοντα μόνον</b> συνέβη περιλειφθῆναι σκάφη...</p>	<p>The Romans, in early summer, having <b>launched 350 ships</b>, placing Marcus Aemilius and Servius Fulvius in command, they proceeded to sail along Sicily towards Libya. Encountering the fleet of the Carthaginians they fell upon them and easily put them to flight, <b>capturing 114 ships with their crews</b>. Embarking those soldiers remaining in Libya at Aspis, they sailed back to Sicily. Crossing the strait safely they had reached the territory of Camarina when they were overtaken by such a storm and such a calamity that it is not able to be adequately described on account of its surpassing scale. <b>For of the 364 ships</b>, only eighty ships survived...</p>

Ps. Dem. 50.7 <i>Against Polycles</i> ἔτι δὲ σκεύεσιν ἰδίους τὴν ναῦν ἅπασιν κατεσκεύασα, καὶ τῶν δημοσίων ἔλαβον οὐδέν, καὶ κόσμῳ ὡς οἶόν τ' ἦν κάλλιστα καὶ διαπρεπέστατα τῶν τριηράρχων.	Moreover, <b>I fitted the ship with equipment all on my own</b> , taking nothing from the public stores, and ornaments, such that they were the most beautiful and distinguished of all the trierarchs.
Ps. Dem. 50.35 <i>Against Polycles</i> παραλαβὼν τὴν τριήρη αὐτὸς σαυτῷ κατασκεύασαι καὶ ναύτας καὶ ἐπιβάτας καὶ ὑπηρεσίαν...	Take over the trireme and furnish it yourself, with sailors and marines and rowers...

### A Timeline for Shipbuilding in Polybius

**261:** First phase of Roman shipbuilding (Plb. 1.20.9-1.21.2)

**260:** Battle of Mylae (Plb. 1.23)

**257:** Second Roman, first Carthaginian phases of shipbuilding (Plb. 1.25.5-7)

**256:** Battle of Ecnomus (Plb. 1.26-28)

Second Carthaginian phase of shipbuilding (and refit) (Plb. 1.36.8-9)

**255:** Battle of Cape Hermaeum, Storm off of Camarina (Plb. 1.36-37)

Carthaginian refit or shipbuilding? (Plb. 1.37.3)

Third phase of Roman shipbuilding (Plb. 1.38.5-7)

**253:** Storm off of Panormus, Roman fleet mothballed (Plb. 1.39.6-8)

**251:** Fourth phase of Roman shipbuilding (Plb. 1.39.15)

**249:** Battle of Depana (1.50-51)

Fifth phase of Roman shipbuilding (Plb. 1.52.4-8)

Second storm near Camarina (Plb. 1.54), Romans 'relinquish the sea' (Plb. 1.55.1-2)

**243:** Final phase of Roman shipbuilding (Plb. 1.59.1-8)

Battle of the Aegates Islands (Plb. 1.60-61)

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