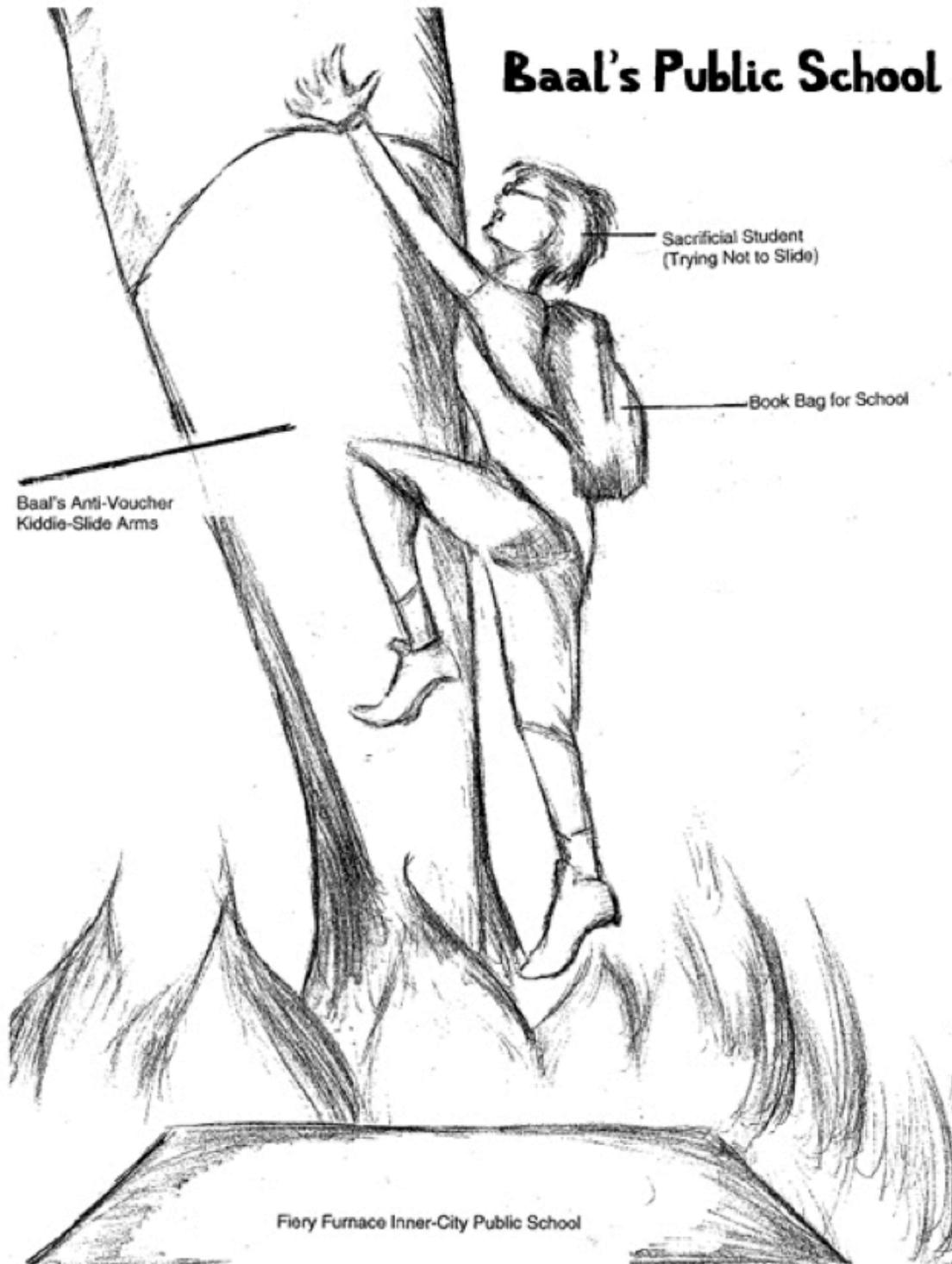


Baal's Public School



WASHINGTON'S CARTHAGINIAN NOBILITY

In the past several decades, archeologists have unearthed certain aspects of the Carthaginian culture which provide a truly matchless metaphor for certain problematic activities and associated hypocrisy among some of Washington DC's finest denizens. This essay will discuss (a) what about the Carthaginians was so uniquely disquieting as to disgust even the Romans, and (b) what the **House and Senate Democrats**, as well as **President Obama** himself, are doing today that's metaphorically identical or worse.

The Carthaginians

Carthage arose on the North African coast (around where Tunisia is today) over two thousand years ago from a trading outpost of the ancient Phoenicians, and grew in wealth and power to rival mighty Rome for predominance in the Mediterranean world around 300 BC or thereabouts. They were a trading and voyaging empire much like the Phoenicians from which they derived, and worshipped the same deity, Baal.

The Carthaginians were master carpenters and shipbuilders, and constructed war and trading ships that were second to none. They constructed a huge and elaborate circular harbor as well, a veritable Grand Central Station for their navy and trading vessels which could, amazingly, safely house all their fleet from storms but permit its rapid and organized redeployment as well.

The First Punic War

When Rome first clashed with Carthage beginning around 265 BC, the primitive Roman naval forces were outclassed by the Carthaginians' superior shipbuilding technology and naval skill. The 1st Punic War generally went Carthage's way until the Romans found a complete Carthaginian five-tiered trireme washed ashore during a storm. They took it apart piece-by-piece, and mastered the intricate carpentry joints which the Carthaginian shipwrights had perfected over the years to enhance the structural integrity of their sailing vessels; their skill in this regard actually produced greater strength and flexibility than even uncut timbers. The Carthaginians' secrets of complex multi-piece dovetail joints, mortise and tenon pegged draw-tongue joints with opposing grain direction and other technically sophisticated details of ancient ship building know-how were copied by the Romans, who began to then compete on a more even basis.

Indeed, the Romans gradually got the upper hand when they figured out how to transfer their military specialty -- which was infantry land warfare -- onto naval engagements. The Romans developed a large gang-plank with a great spike at the far end. They'd position their warship alongside the Carthaginian warship, have this spiked gang-plank -- called a "corvus" -- crash onto the Carthaginians' deck, and then swarm over the resultant bridge which would be locked in position by the spike now embedded in the Carthaginian's deck. Some historians believe it was this

technical innovation that enabled the Romans to effectively defeat the Carthaginians in the 1st Punic War and force them into an unfavorable peace treaty.

Hannibal

The 2nd Punic War began around 220 BC when Hannibal, scion of the Carthaginians' Noble Barca family, crossed the Alps and attacked Rome from the rear.

Hannibal is well known for his military genius, and he handed the Romans one of their worst defeats ever at the battle of Cannae, where he successfully encircled and then massacred over 60,000 Roman Legionnaires.

But Hannibal was far better at tactics than strategy, for although he won all the battles in Italy he failed to bring Rome to its knees and was eventually defeated at Zama, in Carthage's back yard in North Africa on or around October 19, 202 BC by Scipio Africanus, who successfully copied and improved upon Hannibal's tactics. (Scipio's keys to success at Zama were [a] a flexible deployment of his troops so they could simply move out of the way of Hannibal's charging war-elephants, and [b] his convincing the matchless Numidian cavalry, some of Hannibal's most important mercenary allies, to switch sides at a critical juncture of the battle). So ended the second Punic War, to the great humiliation and weakening of Carthage.

Carthage's Destruction

The 3rd (and final) Punic War was basically the conclusion of this process around 150 BC, when even though Carthage was no longer a threat or economic rival, Rome determined it was nonetheless appropriate to massacre all its citizens, raze Carthage to the ground and sow the land with salt so it would be barren forever.

Carthage had not revolted or otherwise done much to provoke this final murderous outburst by the Romans. Indeed, in direct contrast to their treatment of most of their other conquered foes, Rome made little effort to bring the Carthaginians into the Roman fold as a colony or protectorate.

What was it about the Carthaginians that impelled the Romans to react in this fashion?

Carthaginian Religious Practices

As noted earlier the Carthaginians worshipped Baal, who was not known as a kind and gentle God.

Specifically, the Carthaginians believed that the appropriate worship of Baal required that children be burned in sacrifice as part of the needful ceremonies. In fact, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica, the Carthaginian temples featured a great bronze statue of Baal, with his metallic arms held out to receive a sacrificial child, who would slide off the arms into the furnace below. The ages of the children

sacrificed in this manner range from a few months, to five years, according to archeological findings to date.

Particularly during a crisis, the Carthaginians, even including the nobility, would evidently sacrifice up to 200 or more of their own children for serious emergencies. But for normal everyday religious services the Carthaginians grew reluctant to sacrifice their own. According to Roy Decker in "Religion of Carthage" the Carthaginians "...began to buy children for the purpose of sacrifice, or even raise servant children instead of offering up their own."

Although some archeologists believe there was no such human sacrifice practiced by the Carthaginians, and some others believe the children were mercifully killed before being placed on Baal's kiddie-slide-arms into the flames, other archeologists and historians have cited evidence of the victims' being fully alive during this incendiary activity. A few minutes of Google research even reveals that there's some linguistic archeological evidence that the Carthaginians may have oddly called this "laughing through the flames to Baal" due to the gaping mouths and contorted fingers of the children's' charred bodies.

(One might also speculate that the emotive and religious power of the entire sacrificial entreaty to Baal was viewed by the Carthaginians as being proportionate to the suffering of the victim, since this is clearly the case with many of the other examples of religious human sacrifice throughout the ages. Just as the Carthaginian Nobility ramped up their sincerity and sacrificed their own during emergencies, they may logically have perceived a related need to maximize the authenticity of the sacrificial act by likewise maximizing the suffering involved on the part of the victim, as well as the subsidiary suffering of his or her parents. It's more of a *sacrifice* that way, in other words).

In any event, and regardless of whether the Romans were truly revolted by this Carthaginian incendiary activity or not (it's a bit hard to imagine their being genuinely revolted at anything, considering their entertainment preferences), it certainly provided them with a great excuse to utterly extirpate this once formidable foe. As noted previously, the Romans' treatment of the Carthaginians does stand in stark contrast to their treatment of other major conquered foes such as the Samnites, Gauls, Thracians, etc.

Washington's Carthaginian Spiritual Descendents

Now, there's an obvious major difference between burning children and forcing them to attend public school. Even for me, who went to a white-bread middle school in the suburbs and who was systematically picked on, sometimes spat on and otherwise daily humiliated by my so-called peers, burning alive would have been somewhat worse. But if I'd had to attend an inner-city school my skinny body, braces, glasses and pimples would doubtless have attracted far worse and damaging attention. Videos of real-life beat-downs, where a group of cowardly thugs pound and kick their poor object of attention sometimes to the point of crippling or brain damage, suggest to me that I would likely not have survived.

Indeed, from the perspective of the victim, even on a literal level such cowardly beat-downs may not be all that much better than burning in Baal's Bakery.

Jaheem Herrera, an 11 year old boy in one of Baal's Public Schools in the Atlanta area who decided on April 16, 2009 that hanging was preferable to the attentions of his peers, could confirm this overall concept were his sad suicide not successful, particularly inasmuch as his beat-downs were verbal, not physical. (Less than a year later, the lovely Phoebe Prince so sadly confirmed that Baal's worshipful minions are now infesting various suburban public schools, too).

But on a broader metaphorical level, the majority of inner-city youth condemned to the abysmal public schools which are the only choice in that environment are being sacrificed just like the Carthaginian children, but on a more widespread scale for we're talking millions, not mere hundreds or thousands. And while I was given a vital life-line by my parents, who although not wealthy were thank God able to send me and my siblings to private school, my fate were I born in the inner-city would have been much different. I truly shutter in contemplation of this.

Although the intent of this essay is not to document how horrible the inner-city public schools are, suffice it to say that most students condemned to this variety of "education" emerge fully ill-equipped to participate viably in society outside the inner-city, and most of them are sadly insufficiently literate to read this essay, or even a comic book in many cases. But nevertheless the recent alacrity with which the House and Senate Democrats are trying to eliminate what meager life-line is tenuously in place for today's inner-city compatriots of Baal's Charred Children, is matched only by the alacrity with which they send their own children elsewhere.

I suspect there are few, if any, anti-voucher Democrats who actually practice what they preach and send *their* own children to Washington inner-city public school.

Carthaginian Versus Washington "Nobility"

Upon analysis, and within the confines of this overall metaphor, the ancient child-burning Carthaginians are actually morally superior to their anti-voucher successors in Washington today, in two subtle but crucial respects.

First, the Carthaginians did after all burn their own children on occasion, when a crisis required them to ramp up their sincerity, notwithstanding the fact that otherwise they generally preferred to utilize Expendable children for this sacrificial purpose. So, in contrast to Washington's anti-voucher nobility who send their own children every day to private school, the Carthaginian Nobility were not hypocrites all the time. The moral equivalent today, to extend this metaphor a bit further, would be if the Obama girls (and the offspring of the other anti-voucher Democrats) attended public inner-city school in daily proportion equal to the ratio of actual Noble Carthaginian children burned over total children burned. This would produce mathematically exact metaphorical moral equivalence.

Second, when the Carthaginians burned Expendable children instead of their own, their primary motivation was to save their own children. It was not to enhance their

power or reward political allies. In dire and disgusting contrast, the ability of the House and Senate Democrats, and Lord High Priest Obama himself, to send their own offspring to private school is wholly independent of whether others get this same life-line too. That is, the Expendable children the Carthaginians burned effectively saved the lives of the Carthaginian Nobles' children who would have burned instead. But the Expendable inner-city children being effectively sacrificed today by **Washington's Carthaginian Democrat Nobility** are serving only to solidify that Nobility's power. Thus, their sacrifice saves nobody, rather, it sadly simply paves the way for more of the same.

Summary

Count Kerry, Hillary the Horrible, Princess Nancy, Baron of Bank Barney and yea, even High Lord Obama himself will doubtless ridicule and decry this unusual but trenchant metaphorical comparison. Their efforts in this regard will probably be aided by the **main-stream press**, which has reductively morphed into an odd combination of **Town Crier** and **Court Jester**. Indeed the children of Washington's Carthaginian Nobility may well get a private school assignment to research and attack this unjust metaphor.

But sadly, the Obama girls' former Sidwell inner-city voucher classmates will likely have no chance to debate their findings, for if the anti-voucher Democrats get their way, "they're toast" along with countless others.

Damocles
March 2009