

Darryl L. Byrd. PIRACY IN THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN. (Under the direction of Dr. Anthony Papalas) Department Of History, March 1998.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the topic of piracy in the ancient Mediterranean Sea (from c. 2500 B.C. through 65 B.C.) using materials from traditional and maritime archaeology, as well as historical documents and inscriptions. The foremost book on this subject was written over seventy-five years ago by Henry Ormerod, whose work did not include archaeological data and which has not been updated, in English, in the intervening years. Data from archaeology provides information on how people lived and worked during the time in question, this information can be used to examine the role of pirates in the ancient world.

This thesis uses a wide variety of primary sources, including works by ancient authors such as the historical works of Herodotus, Thucydides, Polybius, and Diodorus Siculus; as well as the fictional works of Homer. Greek and Roman inscriptions are also primary sources used in this thesis as they often provided direct accounts of pirate activities. Secondary sources include archaeological data from terrestrial and maritime sites that have been examined throughout the Mediterranean.

Analysis of archaeological data provides information which can illuminate aspects of piracy over time. Shipwreck

analysis indicates trade routes used by merchants and pirates, providing a guide to where pirates were located and the areas in which they operated at various times in the ancient world. Cargo analysis supplies data on the economic impetus for piracy by indicating the types and amounts of goods being transported over the sea. A combination of archaeological data and a review of existing, ancient and modern, works on piracy provides a better understanding of piracy in the Mediterranean Sea from the Minoan Period to the Roman Republic.

PIRACY IN THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN

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Introduction

The study of piracy throughout the Mediterranean has not been examined at length in the English language since H. A. Ormerod published his seminal work in 1924. Since then, articles and monographs, especially in the fields of traditional and maritime archaeology, have contributed considerable insight into the economic and social structures of the Mediterranean region from the Minoan Age (2500-1600/1500 B.C.) through the late Roman Republic (133-31 B.C.). This work, in turn, throws more light on the subject of piracy, how it was defined, and how and why it was practiced. This thesis will use these new insights to examine Mediterranean piracy in the centuries before Christ.

The definition of the term, "piracy," has changed from ancient to modern times; and piracy and privateering have been considered distinct terms. Modern scholarship defines "piracy" as an illegal attack on shipping at sea, and categorizes "privateering" as hostile actions at sea in times of war by private vessels that have been granted the authority by their governments to harass enemy shipping.¹ Piracy, privateering, and trade were not clearly

¹. Henry A. Ormerod, *Piracy in the Ancient World: An Essay on Mediterranean History* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1924), 60-1.

differentiated by the Greeks and Romans.² Naval raids, which may have had little military value, were condoned as an acceptable method for reducing the enemy, and enriching the raiders. The definition of piracy is further complicated by the fact that ancient authors (from the 8th century B.C.) also made little or no distinction between trading and pirate raids, and considered a wide range of land-based raiding as piratical.³ The modern definition, cited above, does not mention land-based actions, though there are examples of pirate and privateering land raids in recent eras, such as Drake's raid on Cadiz in the 16th century.⁴ The term "brigandage" was used by ancient authors to refer to "highway robbers", the robbery of a victim on land by persons who did not come from a ship. If either the victim or the aggressor operated close to or from the sea, then the act was generally

2. Brian MacDonald, "Leisteia and Leizomai in Thucydides and in IG 1/3 41, 67, and 75," *American Journal of Philology* 105 (1984): 77. Privateers are distinguished by a letter of marque, granted by the government, which allows the privateer to raid enemy shipping.

3. Authors such as Homer, Thucydides and Herodotus. W. Kendrick Pritchett, *The Greek State at War*, vol. 1 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 58.

4. Garrett Mattingly, *The Armada* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1959), 88-93. Queen Elizabeth secretly agreed to Drake's proposal to raid the Spanish coast, she supplied him with ships, even though England and Spain were not technically at war. Elizabeth changed her mind later, but the new orders never reached Drake, who raided Cadiz April 29-May 1, 1587.

considered a form of piracy, even though it took place on land. Piracy was defined in the ancient Mediterranean as any raid carried out by men from the sea against another vessel or against a coastal target, and included hostile actions directed at ships by men from the land. The definition is thus broader than the modern definition cited above, as it encompasses a wider range of actions that ancient authors considered piratical.

In examining piracy in the period covered, this thesis will consider five different categories of pirates: professional pirates, privateers, opportunistic pirates, pirate alliances, and wreckers. Professional pirates were those who actively pursued raiding, either on land or at sea, as their primary means of making a living. Privateering was not clearly defined in the ancient period, but generally, privateers were men who were either enrolled in navies or who worked as mercenaries for a particular city-state, including those who took advantage of war to raid all shipping, not just enemy shipping. Opportunistic pirates were men who generally made their living in a profession other than piracy, but who became pirates when an irresistible opportunity for profit arose. Those with access to ships, such as fishermen or traders, probably made up a large percentage of this group. Pirate alliances were made up of

men of many nationalities and backgrounds who banded together into large fleets; they existed primarily in the later periods, especially the Hellenistic (323-167 B.C.) and Roman Periods (4th through 1st century B.C.). The final category, the wreckers, were men who lured ships to dangerous shores in the hopes that the ships would be dashed upon the rocks. Ancient customs stipulated that cargo and people cast ashore from a wreck were the rightful property of whosoever should find them.⁵ Wreckers also include men who preyed upon ships beached for the night; even ships safely moored but not in a port were considered "wrecked," and were fair game for the wreckers.⁶

Within each period, this thesis will also consider the types of people who became pirates and the geographical, social, political, and economic background which influenced piracy, particularly the development of maritime trade, which provided a prime target for piracy. The methods of piracy and types of ships used will be discussed, as well as the methods which states and governments adopted to combat piracy. The actual methods used by pirates on both land and

5. Jean Rougé, *Ships and Fleets of the Ancient Mediterranean*, translated by Susan Frazer (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1981), 149-50. (165).

6. Rougé, *Ships and Fleets*, 165.

sea varied greatly, depending on the resources available in the area in which the pirates operated. We can know only of the methods described in surviving written materials; there may have been other methods used besides. Many people, individuals and categories of people are listed by ancient authors as pirates; factors such as geography, politics, economics, and trade had a bearing on the choice of piracy as a profession. The image of the pirate in the Greek world and his place in society changed over time. Scholars examining the ancient sources disagree whether piracy was an accepted career in society.⁷ States and individuals adopted a wide range of methods to combat piracy. In all eras, individuals made various responses to deal with piracy, but actions by states were few and ineffectual until the Roman Period (4th through 1st century B.C.). The early Greek world consisted of small, independent city-states, and no one state possessed the resources necessary to maintain a standing navy until the

7. There is much debate on this subject. Rubin believes that piracy was not an acceptable vocation in ancient Greece. Alfred Rubin, *The Law of Piracy* (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1988), 3. Aeschines, writing c. 350 B.C., wrote of piracy as an evil. Aeschines, "Against Timarchus," in *The Speeches of Aeschines*, trans. Charles Darwin Adams (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1948), 1.191. Recent research by Gallant found that ancient piracy was an acceptable method for men to make their living. Thomas Gallant, *Risk and Survival in Ancient Greece: Reconstructing the Rural Domestic Economy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 136. Gallant listed Aristotle as one of the ancient authors who wrote of piracy as a valid way to acquire wealth. Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. Benjamin Jowett (New York: The Modern Library, 1943), 1267a-1-5.

last quarter of the 5th century B.C.⁸ The Aegean and most of the Mediterranean states lacked the strong naval force necessary to consistently police the seas. So no one state could sufficiently deter pirates for any length of time. The situation was further exacerbated by the almost continual state of warfare in the entire region beginning in the 5th century B.C.

8. Chester G. Starr, *The Economic and Social Growth of Early Greece, 800-500 B.C.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 176-7.

Chapter I

Piracy in the Pre-Classical Period

It is difficult to examine the development of piracy prior to the Classical Period (5th & 4th centuries B.C.), because contemporary records for this period are lacking. Archaeology provides some data on conditions in the Mediterranean before 5th century B.C., however, much of the information about piracy in the pre-Classical period⁹ is provided by the works of Homer (born c. late 9th century B.C.)¹⁰, Herodotus (born c. late 6th century B.C.), and Thucydides (born between 460 and 455 B.C.), though piracy was not the main focus of any of those works.

Homer is believed to have written in the 8th century B.C.¹¹ His epics were meant to glorify the men and deeds of

9. For this thesis, the Pre-Classical Period consists of the time prior to the 5th century B.C., which contains many different periods, such as the: Minoan Period = 2500-1600/1500 B.C.; Mycenaean Period = 1500-1200 B.C.; Dark Ages = 1200-800 B.C.; Homeric Period = 800-600; Archaic Period = (overlaps Homeric Period) 8th-6th centuries B.C. Dates are approximate.

10. Dates for authors listed in this thesis were obtained from: N. G. L. Hammond and H. H. Scullard, eds. *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).

11. Joachim Latacz, *Homer, His Art and His World*, trans. James P. Holoka (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 15.

an earlier era, the late Mycenaean Period (1500-1200 B.C.).¹² Epics such as *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* were not historical essays, but rather were thought to be based on centuries of oral tradition.¹³ Though there is doubt about the factual accuracy of his information,¹⁴ the epics may reflect conditions, if not events, in the author's time.¹⁵

In the 5th century B.C., Herodotus and Thucydides wrote histories of Greece and both works mention piracy. For the early periods they relied on oral traditions passed down through the generations. Thucydides used Homer as a source,¹⁶ and both historians documented events for their own times.

12. Kirk suggests that the epics refer to a time as early as the 13th century B.C. G. S. Kirk, *Homer and the Oral Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 10. Latacz, *Homer*, 65.

13. Sir Maurice Bowra, "Style" in *A Companion to Homer*, eds. Alan Wace and Frank Stubbings (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1963), 27. Latacz states that epic oral poetry probably dates to at least the late Mycenaean period, Latacz, *Homer*, 49.

14. J. A. K. Thompson, "Homer and His Influence" in *A Companion to Homer*, eds. Alan Wace and Frank Stubbings (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1963), 3-4.

15. Kirk, *Homer and Oral Tradition*, 4, 8. The language of the epics, as they exist, indicates that they were developed into written form over an extended period and there are few, if any, direct traces of the oral component remaining in the epics.

16. Thucydides, I.3. Cartwright notes that Thucydides used Homer only when Homer's work matched Thucydides ideas. Thucydides does not accept any divine influence, as Homer did. David Cartwright, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides: A Companion to Rex Warner's Penguin Translation* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1997), 16-17.

Thucydides wrote that most early Greeks and non-Greeks, who lived in coastal areas, were originally pirates,¹⁷ and he also stated that almost all the islanders were pirates.¹⁸

Herodotus suggested that the "Greek" men the Persians accused of abducting Europa were Cretans.¹⁹ This is one of the events that Herodotus mentioned as a commonly held cause of the Trojan War (ca 1280 B.C.).²⁰

According to Thucydides, King Minos of Crete was the first to establish a navy and clear the seas of pirates, during the Minoan Period (2500-1500 B.C.).²¹ Minos was a mythical character, and the Cretan thalassocracy is a widely debated subject.²² Minos may have been a mythical figure, but

17. Thucydides, I.5.

18. Thucydides, I.8.

19. Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. A. D. Godley (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1940), I.2.

20. Herodotus, I.2.

21. Thucydides, I.4.

22. Most scholars today do not support the idea of a thalassocracy, but admit that the Minoans controlled or influenced wide areas throughout the Aegean. Chester G. Starr, "Myth of the Minoan Thalassocracy," *Historia* 3 (1954/5): 282-91. Cadogan and Hiller argue for Minoan control, if not necessarily a thalassocracy (Cadogan refuses to use the term thalassocracy, citing the word as too "emotive" and our knowledge of Minoan naval affairs is not sufficient, 14-15). Gerald Cadogan, "Minoan Thalassocracy?" in *The Minoan Thalassocracy: Myth and Reality*, eds. Robin Hägg and Nanno Marinatos (Stockholm: Paul Aströms Förlag, 1984), 14-5. Stefan Hiller, "Pax Minoica Versus Minoan

Crete did exchange goods with the eastern Mediterranean.²³ The presence of gold, bronze, and ivory in Crete and Mycenaean Greece (1500-1200 B.C.) indicates that exchange of some kind was taking place, since those materials are not indigenous to those regions.²⁴ If Thucydides was right, then Crete was the first power to reduce piracy in order to protect trade.²⁵ Crete was only power to do so, no other attempt to combat piracy is noted in written accounts until the Classical Period (5th-4th centuries B.C.).

Thucydides noted that the early inhabitants of Greece took several measures to protect themselves from pirates. They carried weapons.²⁶ They lived in inland towns to avoid

Thalassocracy," in *The Minoan Thalassocracy: Myth and Reality*, eds. Robin Hägg and Nanno Marinatos (Stockholm: Paul Aströms Förlag, 1984), 27.

23. Hermann Bengtson, *History of Greece: From the Beginnings to the Byzantine Era*, trans. Edmund Bloedow (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1988), 10.

24. M. I. Finley, *Economy and Society in Ancient Greece* (New York: Viking Press, 1981), 278, n 30. Jules Toutain, *The Economic Life of the Ancient World* (New York: Arno Press, 1979), 17.

25. Gomme doubts Thucydides knew much about the Minoan world except through myth. Gomme criticizes Thucydides for accepting traditions about the Cretan era as true without critical examination. A. W. Gomme, *Introduction and Commentary on Book I*, vol.1, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), 92.

26. Thucydides, I.6.1.

sea raids,²⁷ and generally, towns were built on hills since elevated places offered advance warning of impending pirate attack, and were difficult to attack.²⁸ Archaeological evidence points to towers or keeps that housed the local population during times of attack.²⁹ Towns eventually built walls as protection from raids.³⁰

Many scholars believe that the early Mycenaean (1500-1200 B.C.) economy was fueled by gift-exchange between wealthy rulers, while other scholars contend that local and long-distance trade developed and expanded at this time.³¹ In any case, goods of all kinds were transferred over the seas,

27. Thucydides, I.7.

28. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 38-9.

29. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 41-49. Brulé and Rostovtzeff argue that towers were built as anti-pirate devices beginning in the Hellenistic period (4th century B.C.). Pierre Brulé, *La Piraterie Crétoise Hellénistique* (Paris: Centre De Recherches D'Histoire Ancienne, 1978), 30-32. Michael Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), 203.

30. Thucydides, I.8.3

31. Knorrinda sees early trade as a matter of barter. But he also notes that gift exchange was a large part of the distribution of goods. Heiman Knorrinda, *Emporos: Data on Trade and Trader in Greek Literature from Homer to Aristotle* (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1961), 2-4. Finley examined the deciphered linear B inscriptions and noted that no instance of words indicating "paying," "buying," or "to sell" can be found in more than 300 inscriptions. He does not conclude that this indicates trade did not exist, just that the records were silent about trade. Finley, *Economy*, 206.

as evidenced by maritime archaeology.³² In 1984, marine archaeologist George Bass began excavations of a shipwreck off the coast of Turkey, near Ulu Burun. Bass tentatively dated the Ulu Burun wreck to approximately the 14th century B.C. The ship carried an impressive array of goods, including artifacts of silver, gold, and amber jewelry; ivory; and copper and tin ingots for the production of bronze. The ship also carried bronze weapons, such as blades and double axes, as well as pottery and glass ingots. A gold chalice and a gold roundel were found along with bronze tools.³³ The artifacts originated in many different areas, including Syria, Palestine, Cyprus, Egypt and Greece.³⁴ The origin of the ship is not known.³⁵ It is clear that prosperous trading was taking place in the Mediterranean in the late Bronze Age (1500-1200 B.C.). Bass believes that the Ulu Burun ship sank because a rogue wind dashed the ship upon

32. George Bass, "A Bronze Age Shipwreck at Ulu Burun (Kas): 1984 Campaign," *American Journal of Archaeology* 90 (1986): 269. This 14th century B.C. wreck carried cargo of glass, copper and tin ingots, ivory, myrrh, frankincense, olive oil, wine, pottery, bronze weapons, to name some items found on the wreck.

33. Bass "Bronze Age Shipwreck," 274.

34. Bass, "Bronze Age Shipwreck," 293-4.

35. Bass, "Bronze Age Shipwreck," 296.

the rocks.³⁶ Archaeology has yet to provide any concrete evidence of piracy as the cause for ancient shipwrecks. The owners of the Ulu Burun ship would not have risked such a valuable cargo if they feared pirates. We must assume some measures to control and limit piracy existed at this time. With the end of the Bronze age (1200 B.C.) piracy emerged in full force.

The works of Homer, especially *The Odyssey*, provide important clues as to the development of piracy in the ancient Mediterranean. Though Homer claims to have been writing about the Mycenaean Period (1500-1200 B.C.), the conditions he described were probably from his own day (8th century B.C.). A line from *The Odyssey* gives an idea of the ambiguous place of piracy in Homer's time, ". . . even cruel foemen that set foot on the land of others, and Zeus gives them booty, and they fill their ships and depart for home - even on the hearts of such falls a great fear of heavenly wrath."³⁷ The line is problematic. Were the "cruel foemen" soldiers or pirates? Soldiers plundered the enemy whenever they were victorious, so Zeus would not be likely to impose punishment after granting booty. Did the same hold true if

36. Bass, "Bronze Age Shipwreck," 272.

37. Homer, *The Odyssey*, trans. A. T. Murray (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1946), XIV.86.

the "cruel foemen" were pirates? The line might refer to pirates taking booty and then suffering for their actions later.

Piracy was an acceptable profession for men in the Archaic Period and they were drawn to piracy despite the threats of godly intervention or the penalties imposed by mere mortals. Greece's population was fairly mobile.³⁸ Homer portrayed men who were unsuited to stay at home and tend herds of cattle or the farm. His work is literature, but it provides an indication of the social and economic conditions that were prominent factors in the development of piracy. Men preferred to go out into the world and seek adventure and wealth. Leading men, such as Odysseus and King Menelaus of Sparta, were raiders in Homer's epics,³⁹ thus Homer portrayed piracy as an acceptable vocation for men.⁴⁰ According to Homer, Odysseus was a man of war and daring, not a herdsman or a farmer. He lied to his slave, Eumaeus, when he said that he had left the comfort of his home nine times to raid foreign lands in his swift ships, and he gained substantial

38. Thucydides, I.2.1.

39. Homer, *The Odyssey*, iv.80-90..

40. Knorrinda, *Emporos*, 10. See note 7 in the Introduction for the debate on piracy as an acceptable vocation.

plunder on those adventures.⁴¹ Odysseus had been away for ten years, yet he planned to go out raiding again when he expelled the suitors, saying that he needed to replace the wealth that the suitors squandered in his absence.⁴² There are few other written resources that confirm or contradict the image of the pirate as an acceptable career until the Hellenistic Age (323-167 B.C.).⁴³

A man hearing Odysseus' story would not be surprised at the deeds carried out by an Achaeon or a boasting Cretan, as both groups were often considered pirates.⁴⁴ Men of all social ranks were pirates. The leading men who went to sea were, for the most part, adventurers seeking glory and fortune as pirates.⁴⁵ Homer wrote that Menelaus, king of

41. Homer, *The Odyssey*, XIV.222-234.

42. Homer, *The Odyssey*, XXIII.357.

43. Pindar (born 518 B.C.) lamented that Homer deliberately enhanced the image of Odysseus as a soldier, but no mention was made of Odysseus as a pirate. Pindar, "Nemean Ode VII," in *The Odes of Pindar*, trans. Sir John Sandys (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), ln. 20-30. According to Thucydides, in the past, men were not ashamed to admit that they were pirates and that people did not shun such men. Thucydides, I.5.

44. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 16,83.

45. Hasebroek cites piracy as the primary purpose of Menelaus' journeys, stating that it was "...the most honorable occupation a noble could have." Johannes Hasebroek, *Trade and Politics in Ancient Greece* (Chicago: Ares Publishers Inc., 1978), 18. Jason's mythical voyage, dated between 1200-1000 B.C., is an example of a leader out raiding

Sparta and an Achaean, traveled far and gained great wealth by raiding the eastern Mediterranean.⁴⁶ Menelaus was thus both king and a pirate. This seems a strange combination of authority and lawlessness, if viewed in modern terms, but one that held no apparent contradictions in ancient Greece.

A question arises about whether kings and leaders in the Archaic Age needed to raid for material reasons, or whether they were just out for adventure. While they were expected to lead raids to provide the opportunity for their followers to acquire wealth and goods,⁴⁷ Odysseus, for one, appeared to have been comfortable in Ithaca, and there was no apparent need for him to seek additional income through piracy. Yet Homer has him boast of his piracy. After twenty years away from home, he intended to go raiding again once he settled his affairs in Ithaca.⁴⁸ His plans to continue raiding seems to reflect the acceptance of piracy by society in Homer's time, if not in earlier times as well.

since he sought to find, and eventually stole, the Golden Fleece. Pindar, *Pythian Ode iv*, 67-250.

46. Homer, *The Odyssey*, IV.80-90.

47. Spaulding and Nickerson mention that the leaders at Troy were diverted from their assault on Troy by their raids on merchant ships to supply the army with food and booty. Oliver L. Spaulding and Hoffman Nickerson, *Ancient and Medieval Warfare* (London: Constable and Company, Ltd., 1994), 39.

48. Homer, *The Odyssey*, XXIII.362.

Due to the lack of records, it is difficult to learn the extent of piracy's impact on trade. The lands of the Mediterranean were rugged and afforded little internal communication and travel, thus the sea became an important avenue of trade and the movement of goods and people. Traditional archaeological evidence can outline some developments that facilitated maritime trade. Archaeological evidence indicates the existence of a Greek trading post at Al Mina in Syria which existed from the last quarter of the 9th century B.C.⁴⁹ The city of Naucratis in Egypt was established as a place where Greeks could conduct their trade, and it dates to the late 7th, early 6th century B.C.⁵⁰ The first known examples of harbor modifications began around 600 B.C. at Delos, which became an important commercial port.⁵¹ Harbor modifications of a later date (6th century

49. Matthew Dillon & Lynda Garland, *Ancient Greece: Social and Historical Documents from Archaic Times to the Death of Socrates (c. 800-399 B.C.)* (London: Routledge, 1994), 18. Starr cites the 8th century as the foundation of Al Mina by the Greeks. Starr, *Economic and Social*, 27.

50. Herodotus, II.178-179; Starr, *Economic and Social*, 61. How & Wells note that Herodotus' choice of words indicate that he may not have meant that Naucratis dated from the reign of Amasis, but perhaps the freedom of the Greeks to trade in Egypt was restricted during Amasis' reign. W.W. How and J. Wells, *A Commentary on Herodotus*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 254.

51. Starr, *Economic and Social*, 35.

B.C.) were also found at Samos.⁵² The building of the diolkos, a trackway between Corinth's two ports, dates to the 7th or 6th century B.C.⁵³ Overseas trade or exchange developed into the most important means by which goods traveled from one area to another. The establishment of trading posts, and perhaps colonies, and the improvement of harbor installations, all helped the development of sea trading.

The growth in maritime trade increased the opportunities for pirates to raid ships bearing goods from all parts of the Mediterranean. The growth in trade was slowly facilitated by the development of coinage in the 7th century B.C. in Asia Minor, and trade presented even more attractive booty for pirates. Before coinage came into use, trade was conducted by barter or by using oxen as monetary units.⁵⁴ Pirates found coins much easier to carry off than cattle or bulk goods. The first coins in Greece proper were developed in Aegina, and were lumps of silver with a turtle designed stamped onto

52. Herodotus, III.60.

53. The exact date is unknown. Warner says that it was old even in Thucydides' time and suggests that it dates to the reign of the Corinthian tyrant Periander (625 B.C. - 585 B.C.) W. Warner, "The largest ship trackway in ancient times: the diolkos of the Isthmus of Corinth, Greece, and early attempts to build a canal," *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 26.2 (1997): 98-9.

54. Knorringa, *Emporos*, 4.

one surface.⁵⁵ The introduction of coins in Aegina may have been the result of the island's involvement in maritime commerce,⁵⁶ which developed there earlier than in many areas of Greece.

The spread of trade probably reflected the increase in the Greek population during the Archaic Age (8th-6th c. B.C.), as greater numbers of people meant greater needs for goods. The land may not have been able to provide for all the needs of the population,⁵⁷ and in some areas of Greece, the carrying capacity of the land may have been outgrown in the 8th and 7th centuries B.C.⁵⁸ The establishment of colonies was one way that Greece attempted to deal with its burgeoning population and increase trade.⁵⁹ Colonies were mainly founded in the western Mediterranean, in Africa, southern Italy, southern France, and Sicily. The eastern

55. G. K. Jenkins, *Ancient Greek Coins*, (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1972), 42.

56. Thomas Figueira, *Aegina: Society and Politics* (New York: The Arno Press, 1981), 232.

57. Rougé, *Ships and Fleets*, 14.

58. A. French, "The Economic Background to Solon's Reforms," *Classical Quarterly* 6 (1956): 12. The author notes that only 25% of modern Greece's entire land area is suitable for cultivation.

59. John Boardman, *The Greeks Overseas* (Baltimore: Penguin Books Inc., 1964), 176-7.

Mediterranean was already well developed, so Greek expansion in that region was limited. The Black Sea region became a major site for Greek trading posts.⁶⁰ The new colonies provided trade partners for mainland Greece.⁶¹ Colonies were often established in areas that provided timber and grain.⁶² Corinth founded Corcyra in the Adriatic and Potidaea (600 B.C.) in the Northern Aegean.⁶³ Sicily was one of the first areas colonized, and it became an important source of grain for centuries to come.⁶⁴ Miletus founded many colonies in the Black Sea region.⁶⁵ That area was grain-rich country and provided a much needed staple to many city-states throughout

60. The colony at Berezan, on the north shore of the Black Sea, was founded c. 625 B.C. A. Kocybala, "Greek Colonies of the North Shore of the Black Sea" (Ph.D. diss, University of Pennsylvania, 1978), 203-13.

61. Bengston, *History of Greece*, 41; Starr, *Economic and Social*, 62. Scholars, such as Hasebroek, believe that colonies were established for grain production that would have been shipped back to the founding city. Colonies were not deliberately established as trade centers with mercantilism as the primary goal. Hasebroek, *Trade and Politics*, 105-110. Boardman argues that colonies in the west were not situated in areas good for farming, but rather at sites good for trade with interior regions. Boardman, *Greeks Overseas*, 177.

62. Ellen Churchill Semple, *The Geography of the Mediterranean Region: It's Relation to Ancient History* (New York: Holt, 1931), 350.

63. Boardman, *Greeks Overseas*, 232, 236.

64. Boardman, *Greeks Overseas*, 183. Naxos founded in 734; Syracuse in 733.

65. Bengston, *History of Greece*, 55.

the Mediterranean. The area also provided access to the northern regions, which provided metal ores, fish, wool, amber, and slaves.⁶⁶ Finished goods from the Greek world were traded in the coastal towns of the Black Sea. These towns and their trade increased the number of potential targets for pirates. But over-population is just one possible reason for Greek expansion in the mid-8th through the mid-6th century B.C.⁶⁷ The Greeks had become accustomed to, and perhaps dependent on, the imported goods brought by Phoenician traders.⁶⁸ As Phoenician dominance of trade declined, the Greeks became more involved in trading.⁶⁹ Ships became larger and began to require port facilities, which replaced the old

66. Starr, *Economic and Social*, 57; Bengston, *History of Greece*, 55.

67. Bengston, *History of Greece*, 50.

68. Phoenician activity in the western Mediterranean in the 7th century B.C. is confirmed by the discovery of a Phoenician ship at Playa de la Isla, Spain, which was discovered in 1988 and has been the site of excavations through the early 90s. The ship may tell us more about Phoenician practices, including piracy, as the excavation continues. I. Negueruela, et al., "7th century B.C. Phoenician vessel discovered at Playa de la Isla Mazarran, Spain," *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 24.3 (1995): 189-97.

69. B. H. Warmington, *Carthage* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1969), 39.

custom of beaching a ship to unload goods or men.⁷⁰ Archaeological finds, from Italy to Russia, indicate that the exchange of goods intensified from the 7th century B.C. onward.⁷¹ As trade grew, piracy grew as well. Herodotus has Demaratos proclaim, "Hellas and poverty have always been reared together."⁷² Piracy provided a means for gaining wealth or needed materials, and it flourished when no power opposed the pirates. No central power existed at this time, except perhaps for the Corinthians, which could keep the pirates from raiding shores and ships.⁷³ The growth and evolution of trade during the ensuing Classical Age (5th-4th century B.C.) affected the pirates' ability to raid with impunity.

The Phoenicians were well established throughout the Mediterranean as merchants when the Greeks began to expand

70. Lionel Casson, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 362. Rougé, *Ships and Fleets*, 145. Bengston, *History of Greece*, 58.

71. David Gill, "Pots and Trade: Spacefillers or Objects D'Art?" *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 111 (1991): 36. Greek pottery has been found in Italy. And in Russia, Bengston, *History of Greece*, 58.

72. Herodotus, VII.101.

73. J. B. Salmon, *Wealthy Corinth*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 223-4.

their interest in trade.⁷⁴ They were also considered pirates and combined piracy with their legitimate trading missions.⁷⁵ Ancient authors (none of whom were Phoenician) wrote almost nothing about the Phoenicians that could be considered complimentary.⁷⁶ The Phoenicians, Cicero (born 106 B.C.) complained, brought luxury goods as trade items to the Greeks, causing the Greeks to fall prey to greed and sloth.⁷⁷ Their piracy earned them an awful reputation, due mostly to their methods of kidnapping people. According to Homer, Odysseus' shepherd, Eumaeus, had been abducted by Phoenicians who had come to his boyhood homeland of Syria to trade. Eumaeus was sold as a slave to Odysseus' father.⁷⁸

74. Rougé, *Ships*, 145. The early Greeks found trading contemptible. Odysseus was insulted when he is called a merchant captain, Homer, *The Odyssey*, XIV.288. Bass points out that it is very difficult to identify the origin of ships from archaeological remains, so there are no clearly identified Greek trading vessels in the Mycenaean Age. Bass, "Bronze Age Shipwreck," 296-7.

75. Thucydides, I.8. Knorrhinga, *Emporos*, 9. Rougé, *Ships and Fleets*, 141.

76. Warmington, *Carthage*, 38-9.

77. Cicero, *De Re Publica*, trans. Clinton Walker Keyes (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), fr. 3.3.

78. Homer, *Odyssey*, XV.403-484. Warmington points out that Homer's aristocratic audience would see kidnapping and piracy as legitimate only if carried out boldly, in the Greek manner. They disapproved of the Phoenician method of using the cover of "trader" to carry out kidnapping and stealing. Also, the Greeks considered trading a base profession. Warmington, *Carthage*, 39. Moscati reasoned that the Phoenicians would not have jeopardized their trade by resorting to

Three centuries later, Herodotus wrote about the era when Phoenicians acted as both traders and pirates. He wrote that the Phoenicians brought goods from Egypt and Assyria to Greece, but abducted Greeks, especially women and boys, to sell as slaves in other lands.⁷⁹ The Phoenicians took slaves wherever they went, as they did in Egypt taking two priestesses.⁸⁰ The Phoenicians, though maligned, profited from trading and raiding. Their successors, the Carthaginians, became expert businessmen, and there is little to connect them to pirate activities. Other groups of people replaced the Phoenicians as pirates and traders as their culture declined.

According to Thucydides, the Corinthians were among the first to develop a navy.⁸¹ Thucydides neglected to explain why the Corinthians needed a navy, but it is likely that pirates were part of the problem the Corinthians sought to eliminate. Corinth was in a unique position since her

reckless kidnapping. Sabatino Moscati, *The World of the Phoenicians*, trans. Alastair Hamilton (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1965), 47.

79. Herodotus, I.1.

80. Herodotus, II.54.

81. Thucydides, I.13. Salmon believes that the navy was developed to combat piracy and to increase Corinthian power throughout the region. Salmon, *Wealthy Corinth*, 224.

harbors served the Aegean Sea to the east and the Ionian, Adriatic, and Tyrrhenian Seas to the west.⁸² The pirates troubling her shipping may have been Etruscans or Tyrrhenians from Italy; Illyrians from the Adriatic in the western Mediterranean, and the Aeginetans in the Aegean.

The Aeginetans suffered from mixed blessings. Because the island of Aegina is small, it was unable to produce large amounts of grain and lacked other needed natural resources.⁸³ But the location of the island was well-suited for maritime endeavors.⁸⁴ The island lies in the Saronic Gulf, between Attica and the Peloponnesus, a location which allowed the Aeginetans the opportunity to develop their own maritime trade and to carry out raids on rival ships.⁸⁵ Aegina was involved in a longstanding economic feud with Athens.⁸⁶

82. Salmon, *Wealthy Corinth*, 31-2; 134.

83. Figueira, *Aegina*, 202.

84. According to Hesiod (born early 8th century B.C.), The people of Aegina were among the first Greeks to build ships. Hesiod, *Theogony, Works and Days, the Shield*, trans. Apostolos N. Athanassakis (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), fr. 205. Figueira argues that since Aegina was not at a natural crossroads for trade, such as Corinth was, the Aeginetans went out in their ships and captured trade bound for places such as Corinth. Figueira, *Aegina*, 207.

85. Figueira. *Aegina*, 202.

86. Herodotus, v.83.1. Ironically, the feud between the two began after Aeginetan pirates stole several statues from Epidaurus which were made from Athenian olive wood.

Piratical raids on shipping were one of the causes for the animosity between the two areas.⁸⁷ It may be that the Aeginetans raided Corinthian trade in the era before the development of Athenian trade.⁸⁸ Pirate raids provided a livelihood to a segment of the Aeginetan population and helped the island's economy by reducing maritime rivals.

The Corinthians may have been fighting the Liparians. The Lipari Islands were located in the Tyrrhenian Sea off the coast of Sicily, and the islands were settled by men from Cnidos and Rhodes. These men originally settled in Sicily, but they were driven out by the Phoenicians.⁸⁹ The islands were inhospitable, and the land was unable to support large populations, thus the settlers turned to piracy as a profession in order to survive.⁹⁰

The people from Samos were considered pirates in the 6th century B.C. Thucydides wrote of the Samian tyrant Polycrates, who raided both ships and towns.⁹¹ According to Herodotus, the Samians were accused of piracy by the Spartans

87. Herodotus, V.89.

88. Figueira, *Aegina*, 207.

89. Warmington, *Carthage*, 41.

90. Warmington, *Carthage*, 41.

91. Thucydides, I.13.

when they attacked a Spartan vessel and carried off a huge bronze bowl, which was being sent as a gift to Croesus of Lydia.⁹² The Samian fleet charged a toll for safe passage to all those unfortunate enough to enter their region of the Aegean.⁹³ The Samian fleet consisted of at least 100 *pentekonters*,⁹⁴ and they also used triremes in their navy.⁹⁵ No one was safe from the pirates of Samos: Polycrates' forces raided friend and enemy alike.⁹⁶

Polycrates and the Samians can be considered the first known example of piracy organized and orchestrated by a state. Samos was one of the few city-states that was strong enough to oppose piracy (and yet the Samians practiced piracy). Polycrates provided the ships and the direction for the fleet. One modern scholar has suggested that Polycrates

92. Herodotus, I.70. The bowl is said to have held 2700 gallons. The value of the metal would have made it worth a fortune.

93. Semple, *Geography*, 644.

94. Graham Shipley, *A History of Samos, 800-188 B.C.* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 14. Thucydides wrote about Ameinocles of Corinth building "warships" for the Samians c. 700 B.C. These ships are thought to have been triremes. Thucydides, I.13.3. Modern scholars argue about the development of the trireme. For the most recent synopsis of the debate, see Anthony Papalas, "The Development of the Trireme," *Mariner's Mirror* 83 (August 1997): 259-60.

95. Thucydides, I.13.3.

96. Herodotus, III.39.

pursued pirate raids on shipping in order to replenish funds depleted by an ambitious building campaign.⁹⁷ Polycrates protected himself and his people from those seeking revenge for the attacks on their shipping. While the island of Samos was safe from attack by land, the Samians ensured their security against attack from the sea by channeling their resources into maritime development.

The Samian pirates were the first to use fleets of pirate ships instead of single ships operating independently. Organized fleets of ships meant a greater hazard to shipping since they could patrol wider areas more effectively than individual pirate ships. State-organized piracy could afford to build, man, and maintain fleets of pentekonteres and triremes. The Samians captured neighboring islands and several coastal towns of Asia Minor,⁹⁸ and Polycrates is thought to have effectively controlled the stretch of sea between Samos and the coast of Asia Minor, as well as other areas of the sea and coasts.

Exiled Samians also practiced piracy. According to Herodotus, Polycrates exiled a group of men who had unsuccessfully tried to overthrow him. The exiles made their

97. Shipley, *Samos*, 96.

98. Herodotus, III.39.

living by plundering and ransoming captives.⁹⁹ These pirates went to Siphnos to ask for a loan, which the Siphnians refused to grant. The pirates then responded by sacking the island's temple.¹⁰⁰ The Samians seem to have been well-suited to sail the seas as pirates.

Knowledge concerning vessels of the pre-Classical period comes mostly from artistic representation. There are few representations thought to specifically portray pirate vessels. One exception is a 6th century B.C. black-figure bowl from Greece. Some scholars have interpreted the scene on the bowl as a pirate vessel using both sail and oar to capture a merchant ship.¹⁰¹ For the most part, fast ships of any type would be useful to a pirate. Etruscan tomb

99. Herodotus. III.57-59. Men who were exiled from their homes would have found it very difficult to find acceptance in another city or state. They would have been unable to participate in many facets of their new state's affairs, including owning property, participating in the government, and perhaps participating in business. Piracy may have provided an option for securing a living for such men. Herodotus related the story of Histiaeus the exiled ruler of Miletus who turned to piracy and raided the shipping of the Black Sea (VI.5).

100. Herodotus, III.57.

101. There is debate over the interpretation of the vessels on the bowl. Casson and Bascom identify the vessels on this bowl as a merchant ship pursued by pirates in a *hemiolia*. Casson, *Ships and Seamanship*, 129; Willard Bascom, *Deep Water, Ancient Ships* (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1976), 54. Morrison identifies the vessels only as a merchant ship and a "two-level warship," he does not consider it a *hemiolia* or that the men are pirates, J. S. Morrison and R. T. Williams, *Greek Oared Ships, 900-322 B.C.* (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1968), 109.

paintings show ships that are long and sleek, a kind thought to be more suited for piracy than for trade.¹⁰²

The *pentekonter*, a fifty oared vessel, about 125 feet long¹⁰³ was well-suited for both trade and piracy. The ship had one level of rowers, twenty-five per side, and had room enough for the crew, supplies and loot.¹⁰⁴ *Pentekonters* were fast, an essential feature of a pirate vessel.¹⁰⁵ The Phocaeans were merchants who also practiced some piracy. They used the *pentekonter* for trade, in the 7th and 6th century B.C.,¹⁰⁶ and when they fled from their home in Ionia during the expansion of the Persian empire, c. 540 B.C. Polycrates' use of *pentekonters* has already been noted. Plutarch (born before A.D. 50) mentioned the *samaina*, another ship that the Samians used. The *samaina*, which appears to have been a larger version of the *pentekonter*, was "big-bellied" to carry more cargo and was designed to be a fast

102. Rougé, *Ships*, 152.

103. Casson, *Ships and Seamanship*, 54-55.

104. Figueira, *Aegina*, 207.

105. Christopher Haas, "Athenian Naval Power Before Themistocles," *Historia* 34, (1995): 35.

106. Herodotus, I.163.2.

galley.¹⁰⁷

The increase in trade in the pre-Classical period, especially in luxury goods and slaves from the eastern sector, presented enticing targets to pirates. Most regions of the Mediterranean lacked strong, central governments, and small city-states were unable to protect their people or trade once a ship left the harbor. Merchant ships and the trade they represented were only part of the whole picture of piratical activities in the ancient world.

Raids against coastal sites were prevalent long before sea trade developed. Coastal raids were an important part of piracy throughout the centuries discussed in this paper, especially in the early period. Coastal raids by pirates were the most feared, because they could strike anywhere with little or no warning.¹⁰⁸ Small villages, in most periods, were unlikely to have the resources necessary to defend themselves against pirates, and according to Thucydides, most towns built protective walls only after they grew wealthy

107. Plutarch, "Pericles," in *Plutarch's Lives*, trans. Bernadotte Perrin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1948), XXVI.3-4. The date on these vessels is uncertain, but it is thought that they were constructed simultaneously with or after the introduction of the *pentekonter*.

108. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 31.

enough from trade to build them.¹⁰⁹ An attack on a village or town could net the pirates livestock, grain, wine, and any valuables such as metals. Coastal raids were also a source for slaves. The growth of slavery, and the role piracy played in the slave trade, will be discussed in the next chapter.

A different problem involving pirates and coastal areas concerned men who made their living by wrecking, men who set beacon fires to lure ships to unsafe shallows where the ships foundered on the rocks. Wreckers captured both the cargo and crew. The Greek author, Apollodorus (born c. 180 B.C.), wrote of Nauplius, who made his living as wrecker.¹¹⁰ Though a fictional character, he was likely to have been modeled after men who actually practiced the profession.¹¹¹ He was considered a pirate, though he worked from the land, not the sea.¹¹² It is unlikely that wreckers were men who

109. Thucydides, I.8.3.

110. Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca*, trans. Sir James George Frazier (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954), II.1.5.

111. Ormerod notes that wrecking was probably a typical profession throughout the Mediterranean from antiquity through the 18th century AD, Ormerod, *Piracy*, 69-70.

112. Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca*, trans. Sir James George (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954), 2.1.5. Apollodorus' story is fictional, but it may reflect general conditions of the time.

incidentally saw an opportunity to sink a ship. A wrecker had to learn the ship routes to decide where to set the false beacon. This activity diminished over time, but while it was common, wreckers were as much a menace to those unfortunate enough to encounter them as were sea-based pirates.

The creation of protective organizations was one way in which people tried to protect themselves from pirates. The emergence of amphictyonies (associations centered around a temple) was an interesting development in methods of protection against pirates was evident during the Archaic Age (8th-6th c. B.C.). Amphictyonies were created to protect religious shrines,¹¹³ which included protecting the shrine from pirates.¹¹⁴ Amphictyonies often joined with political leagues, which then seem to have agreed not to harm other members of the amphictyony or league.¹¹⁵ The Calaurian Amphictyony, one of the earliest amphictyonies, developed to

113. Victor Ehrenberg, *The Greek State* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1964), 109.

114. Elizabeth York, *Leagues of Nations: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern* (London: The Swathmore Press Ltd., 1919), 2. Amphictyony "means the union of the people who dwell around a temple." Ehrenberg, *Greek State*, 109.

115. Ehrenberg, *Greek State*, 110.

protect the shrine and the people against raids.¹¹⁶ When it failed in this goal it ransomed the kidnapped victims.¹¹⁷ The Ionian Federation (League) developed around 700 B.C. It is unclear whether the League was designed to protect the people from pirates, or to protect itself while engaged in piracy.¹¹⁸ As time passed, the pirates developed new ways to plunder, and people adopted new strategies to deter the pirates.

116. Strabo, *The Geography of Strabo*, trans. Horace L. Jones (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1950), 8.6.14. Strabo (born 64/3 B.C.) Based on archaeological evidence, Kelly estimates the founding date for the amphictyony to the mid-seventh century B.C., rather than 1400 B.C., as some scholars believe. He outlines the debate concerning the founding date. Thomas Kelly, "The Calaurian Amphictyony," *American Journal of Archaeology* 70 (1966): 113-116.

117. Figueira, *Aegina*, 205.

118. David Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor: To the End of the Third Century After Christ* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), 65-6.

Chapter II

Piracy in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C.

Piracy in the Classical Period (5th-4th centuries B.C.) was documented by more diverse written sources than in preceding periods. At this time, historical documents, inscriptions, and literature, add to the understanding of piracy in the ancient Mediterranean. The historical works of Herodotus (born c. 490-430 B.C.) and Thucydides (born c. 460-400 B.C.) contain many references to pirates and their activities. The works of Xenophon (born c. 428-354 B.C.), Aristotle (born 384 B.C.- died 322 B.C.), and others touch upon the subject.

In the 5th century B.C., there was an increase in sea-borne trade that provided the pirates with more opportunities for raiding ships.¹¹⁹ Athens was at the center of a Mediterranean-wide trading network and at the peak of her power during this period.¹²⁰ Athens imported grain from Southern Russia, Sicily, and Egypt, salt fish from Spain and the Black Sea, timber from Macedon, Asia Minor, and the

119. This can be borne out by the gradual enlargements of ancient ports beginning in the Classical Period, which increased the number of docks and anchorage space. D. J. Blackman, "Ancient Harbors in the Mediterranean, Part 2," *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology and Underwater Exploration* 11:3 (1982): 185.

120. Toutain, *Economic Life*, 62.

Levant, incense from Arabia, and also food, textiles, and luxury goods from all over the Mediterranean.¹²¹ Athenian naval power reduced much of the piracy that had plagued early eras, but the increase in maritime trade, however, was too great a temptation, and piracy continued. Ancient authors lamented the damage caused by pirates. Isocrates (born 436-338 B.C.) wrote that pirates filled the seas.¹²² According to Demosthenes (born 384 B.C.), pirates were kidnapping and killing men who went to sea to trade.¹²³

Trade goods were valuable to the pirate who was willing to take them. A wide range of goods moved from one locality to another. Several important and valuable commodities were transported by sea,¹²⁴ metals being one of the most valuable trade items. Greece had some natural deposits of metals, including silver and lead, but copper and

121. Lionel Casson, "Traders and Trading: Classical Athens," *Expedition* 21 (1979): 25.

122. Isocrates, *Panegyricus*, trans. Geogre Norlin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954), 115.

123. Demosthenes, *Private Orations*, trans. A. T. Murray (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939), LII.5; LIII.6.

124. M. M. Austin and P. Vidal-Naquet, *Economic and Social History of Ancient Greece: An Introduction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 115; Starr, *Economic and Social*, 26.

tin for bronze needed to be imported in raw or worked form.¹²⁵ Some modern authors believe that metal ore comprised the majority of all goods transported by sea.¹²⁶ Bronze, or its raw materials, was an expensive commodity. A shipment of raw or finished metal was guaranteed to find buyers,¹²⁷ and it was also a tempting target for pirates. The demand for metal and other goods, such as grain, textiles, timber, and slaves, increased over time.

The banking industry was in its infancy at this time, so paper money was non-existent.¹²⁸ Athenian banks, however, developed a system of credit, which reduced the need to carry large amounts of coins on every trip,¹²⁹ though coins

125. Starr, *Economic and Social*, 82-3.

126. A. M. Snodgrass, "Heavy Freight in Archaic Greece," in *Trade in the Ancient Economy*, ed. Peter Garnsey, et al (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 25.

127. A.J. Parker, "Classical Antiquity: The Maritime Dimension," *Antiquity* 64 (1990): 337. All wrecks from the 6th, 5th, and 4th centuries B.C. contain metals of some sort, i.e. copper, lead, silver-lead.

128. Lionel Casson, *Ancient Trade and Society* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1984), 32.

129. Edward E. Cohen, *Athenian Economy and Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 14-5. Credit was a complicated system that required traders to deposit money with a "bank" prior to trading. "Banks" in Athens and other cities then exchange letters of credit which confirmed that the money was on deposit and would be paid out to the correct person when deals were complete (119-120). A ship's captain might change course to a port where the merchant or his bank did not have credit, so the merchant still had to rely on coins.

continued to develop and be used in trade. Movable wealth, such as coins, presented additional tempting prizes to pirates looking for profit.

Athens went to great lengths to protect her homeland and her trade from enemies and pirates alike. Herodotus detailed the development of Athens' navy at the turn of the 5th century B.C., a time when Athens and all of Greece were threatened by invading Persian military forces.¹³⁰ The navy that developed during the Persian Wars protected the commercial interests of Athens after the war, when the city-state rose in power, and had a sizeable navy, which interfered in the operations of Athens' economic rivals.

In 478 B.C., after defeating the Persian forces in Greece, the Greeks decided to fight the Persians in Ionia (Asia Minor). The Spartans provided leadership for the naval forces, but they soon withdrew from the fighting, leaving Athens in control of the united Greek forces.¹³¹ The loose confederation of Greek states formed the Delian League in 477 B.C. with the purpose to harass the Persians. Over time, Athens developed and maintained a large navy, funded by

130. Herodotus, VII.144.

131. J. A. O. Larsen, "The Constitution and Original Purpose of the Delian League," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 51 (1940): 181-2.

Delian League members.¹³²

The League attempted to stop piracy in such places as Skyros.¹³³ Plutarch wrote of Cimon, an Athenian *strategos* (general), who led a naval raid against the island of Skyros (476 B.C.), whose inhabitants were considered pirates.¹³⁴ Cimon sought to protect vital Athenian trade through the Bosphorus, which the pirates of Skyros were raiding. The captured islanders were all sold as slaves. The island was then settled by Athenians who were faced with the same barren soil problems, and they eventually resorted to piracy to survive.¹³⁵ They limited their raids to ships that belonged to Athens' enemies,¹³⁶ while the original inhabitants probably

132. N.G.L. Hammond, "The Origins and the Nature of the Athenian Alliance of 478/7 B.C.," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 87 (1967): 54-5.

133. Thucydides, I.98; Pritchett, *The Greek State at War*, 67.

134. Plutarch, *Cimon*, 8.3.

135. Strabo. XIV.635. Strabo does not note the date that the new inhabitants of Scyros turned to piracy, but it may have been after Athens' power declined c. 404 B.C. There is a recurring theme in ancient accounts of piracy. One state would remove a population because of their piratical ways, and send their own people in as settlers. Faced with the same poor economic conditions, the settlers would then turn to piracy. Diodorus Siculus (writing c. 60-30 B.C.) cited the case of the Rhodians from Cnidus in Liparia who became pirates, after settling there to thwart the Etruscan pirates. Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, trans. C. H. Oldfather (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1947-57), V.9.

136. Plutarch, *Cimon*, 8.3.

raided all shipping. The Athenian settlers on Skyros who practiced piracy might have been ignored by the Athenian government due to their status as Athenian citizens, and because they benefitted Athens in several ways. First, Athens might not have to subsidize the island if the islanders were profiting by piracy. Second, Athens' economic rivals were hurt by the raiding. For the most part, Athens acted against the piracy of others. In the 5th century B.C., the Athenian navy was strong enough to control piracy, especially in the area around the Athenian port, the Piraeus. Athenian naval power declined, however, after the turn of the 5th century B.C., and Athens suffered from pirate attacks.

The people of the island Aegina in the Saronic Gulf were involved in piracy. Their proximity to the Piraeus provided them with many profitable targets for pirate raids. Scyros and Aegina both faced problems with infertile soil.¹³⁷ The men of Scyros were unable to develop sufficient trade to survive and resorted to piracy. The Aeginetans developed trade but also allowed piracy to flourish, especially against its enemies.¹³⁸ There was a long history of mutual dislike

137. Figueira, *Aegina*, 230.

138. Figueira, *Aegina*, 230.

between Athens and Aegina.¹³⁹ Both states practiced piracy upon the others' shores and ships.¹⁴⁰ According to Xenophon, Aeginetan pirates, working for Sparta, were a major source of disruption to Athenian shipping in the 4th century B.C.¹⁴¹ The Spartans even captured the island in 389 B.C. as a base to raid Athenian shipping.¹⁴² By the end of the Classical Period (5th-4th century B.C.), Athens could no longer defend her ships, or even her port. No major power interested in suppressing piracy replaced Athens after the turn of the 4th century. Piracy flourished throughout the century until the rise of Macedon.

Literature, iconography, and archaeological material provides information concerning the ships used by pirates in the Classical Period. Thucydides mentioned that the Megarian pirates, acting as privateers during the Peloponnesian War, had vessels small enough to pick up and put in a wagon.¹⁴³

139. Herodotus, V.83.

140. Although Athens and Aegina were at war with each other for most of the 6th century B.C., Figueira still characterizes their actions against one another as piratical. Figueira, *Aegina*, 203.

141. Xenophon, *Hellenica*, trans. Rex Warner (London: Penguin Books, 1979), V.1.1; VI.2.1.

142. Xenophon, *Hellenica*, V.1.2.

143. Thucydides, IV.67.

Use of such a small vessel may suggest that the Megarians were only occasional pirates operating off their coast. Small ships were easy to build and hide but were ill-suited for long voyages on the open sea or for carrying large numbers of men and large amounts of plunder.¹⁴⁴

Professional pirates used larger craft, the pirates of the fourth century were more ambitious than their Megarian predecessors, and operated on a larger scale. According to Demosthenes, pirates employed a trireme in their operations.¹⁴⁵ The trireme was developed during the Archaic Period (8th-6th centuries B.C.), but it became the standard naval vessel only in the Classical Period (5th-4th centuries B.C.).¹⁴⁶ A trireme was an expensive ship to build, and it required a crew of at least one hundred and seventy men, comprising three levels of rowers. While triremes were primarily designed to ram an enemy vessel, their speed

144. Little is known about small craft in the ancient world. Morrison notes that Thucydides mentioned *keles* or *keletion* as small boats used by pirates but he fails to describe them, Morrison, *Greek Oared Ships*, 245.

145. Demosthenes, LIII.4-29.

146. Thucydides, I.13.2; Casson, *Ships*, 81. See Papalas, "Development of the Trireme," *Mariner's Mirror* 83 (1997): 259-271, for a discussion of the development of the trireme.

enabled pirates to overtake merchant ships.¹⁴⁷ The appearance of pirate-manned triremes suggests that city-states (perhaps from Samos or Crete) were involved in piracy since the use of the trireme indicates a high level of organization among the pirates and a large number of people involved in piracy.

Warships and merchant ships were built shell-first.¹⁴⁸ This meant that the hull was built up plank by plank and then the interior frames, which provide the ship's strength, were cut to fit the ship's shape. This was a labor-intensive and expensive way to build ships, requiring much labor to complete a single vessel.¹⁴⁹ Commercial ships ranged from seventy to four hundred and fifty tons burden at this time, although seventy to one hundred tons seems to have been the average ship size, since there were no harbors designed to handle large ships.¹⁵⁰ The merchant ships had a rounded hull that provided stability, but the round shape made them slow.

147. Casson, *Ships*, 92. The Corinthians and the Syracusans are known to have rammed enemy vessels in the prow, and then boarded. Pirates overtook and boarded a ship.

148. Ships were constructed in this manner until well after the 5th century A.D. Keith Hopkins, "Models, Ships and Staples," in *Trade and Famine in Classical Antiquity*, ed. Peter Garnsey, et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 1983), 96-97.

149. Hopkins, "Models" 97.

150. Hopkins, "Models," 98, 100; Starr, *Economic and Social*, 70.

Primitive sail design meant that the ships were under-rigged.¹⁵¹ The estimated average speed of commercial sailing vessels is about four to six knots with the wind, and only two to two and a half knots against the wind.¹⁵² Merchant ships travelling in a convoy were slower, since most convoys travel only as fast as the slowest ship.¹⁵³ A trireme full of pirates had a crew large enough to handle the oars and sail. A merchant ship had a crew of only four to six men and was no match for a trireme or most other pirate vessels.¹⁵⁴ Pirates overtook and boarded the merchant vessel, then killed or kidnaped the crew and confiscated the cargo. The pirates forced the crew to sail the captured ship to a safe place, or the pirates may have sailed it themselves, after disposing of the original crew.

The direct route across open water was fraught with too many dangers to make it appealing to many ancient Greek sailors. Most Greek sailors preferred travelling along the coast or from island to island, whenever possible, rather

151. Casson, *Ancient Trade*, 25.

152. Lionel Casson, "The Grain Trade in the Hellenistic World," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 85 (1954B): 142-43.

153. Casson, "Grain," 148.

154. Parker, "Classical Antiquity," 341.

than putting out to open sea.¹⁵⁵ The islands of the Aegean served as stepping stones to cross the sea to Asia Minor and the eastern Mediterranean.¹⁵⁶ Captains had their choice of routes, but the geography of the Mediterranean dictated which routes were best at particular times of the year.¹⁵⁷ Captains relied on the winds and chose their route accordingly. The pirates were well aware of which routes were open and when, and they staked out particular areas which they knew were bound to have commercial traffic.¹⁵⁸

A captain would learn of the routes by word of mouth, but written sailing directions were available as early as the 4th century B.C.¹⁵⁹ Such directions, or *Periplus*, pointed out routes, ports and harbors, distances between ports, and places to stop for water.¹⁶⁰ Coastal routes allowed captains

155. Semple, *Geography*, 584.

156. Gary Reger, *Regionalism and Change in the Economy of Independent Delos, 314-137 B.C.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 20.

157. Semple, *Geography*, 639.

158. Semple, *Geography*, 639.

159. Rougé, *Ships*, 18. Scylax the Younger wrote the *Periplus*, or sailing directions for the Mediterranean as early as the 4th century B.C. It is the first known written copy, but there may have been others, and all the information was passed by word of mouth from one generation to the next.

160. Bascom, *Deep Water, Ancient Ships*, 69.

to find shelter for the night or from a storm, but pirates lurked along these routes, as well as on the open seas. The Greeks were capable of sailing at night, but this was a dangerous way of eluding pirates and most preferred to put into harbor or beach for the night.¹⁶¹ A merchant ship that anchored for night might be attacked as the crew slept. The pirates would then carry away the crew as slaves and the cargo as booty. Pirates who chanced upon the ship at daybreak could overtake the merchant ship as she hoisted her sails and waited for the wind to fill them. The merchants who sailed the open seas or traveled along the coasts were always in danger of being attacked.

Pirates' coastal raids were directed not only at merchant ships but even towards land activities close to the coast. Written accounts described how pirates raided during festivals to kidnap women and children to be ransomed or sold

161. Casson, *Ships*, 89. The beaching of merchant ships is a point of controversy. Casson (*Ships*, 208) stated that a false keel on many ships was to reduce the wear and tear of beaching on the keel; and Bascom (*Deep*, 56) wrote that merchant ships were equipped with a ladder so the men could disembark when beached. Both believed that merchant ships were beached at night. Rougé (*Ships*, 14) argued that a loaded, round-hulled merchant ship could not be pulled onto the shore, it would not stand upright and would put too much stress on the ship. Triremes were beached, and I believe that light commercial craft may have been beached, but most were probably moored in a cove or inlet, since we know that merchant vessels carried anchors (Parker, "Classical Antiquity," 336).

as slaves.¹⁶² A festival netted women of all ages and provided more desirable slaves than grizzled sailors from merchant ships. There were countless festivals, fairs and religious ceremonies among the ancient Greeks.¹⁶³ Festivals served as a marketplace for foods and luxury goods. They were breaks from the routine of everyday life and were likely to ensure a crowd of participants and purchasers. Many festivals were attended by women only. Such festivals included the Thesmophoria, the Festival of Artemis in Athens, and the Bona Dea in Rome.¹⁶⁴ According to Herodotus, the Lemnians raided the Festival of Artemis at Brauron and kidnapped many Athenian women taking them home for concubines.¹⁶⁵ But pirates were generally more concerned with profit than pleasure and sold most of the women they captured.

During the 5th century B.C., slavery increased, and pirates furnished slaves to slave markets throughout

¹⁶². Herodotus, VI.138.

¹⁶³. Jon D. Mikalson, *The Sacred and Civil Calendar of the Athenian Year* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 199 & 201; I. DeLigt and P. W. deNeeve, "Ancient Periodic Markets: Festivals and Fairs," *Athenaeum* 3-4 (1988): 392, 394, 411.

¹⁶⁴. H. S. Versnel, "The Festival for Bona Dea and the Thesmophoria," *Greece & Rome* 34 (1992): 32.

¹⁶⁵. Herodotus, VI.138.1.

antiquity. Slavery had existed in early times, as evidenced by the story of Eumaeus, but more is known about it from the Classical Age down through the Roman Empire. Evidence suggests that a slave market existed on Aegina as early as the 6th century B.C.¹⁶⁶ Slaves were an expensive item, yet in the 4th century B.C. Attica, even the poorest of farmers generally had one slave.¹⁶⁷ An average man often owned two slaves, a male to attend him and a female for domestic chores, and more if he could afford it.¹⁶⁸ The richest Athenian might have one hundred slaves while twelve slaves were considered a reasonable number for a wealthy man in Athens.¹⁶⁹ Prices for slaves varied and were dependant upon the sex, age, and skills of the slave. The price for slaves at this time cost an average of two minae.¹⁷⁰ There are cases where a slave with extraordinary skills was purchased for the

166. Figueira, *Aegina*, 211.

167. Demosthenes, XXIV.197.

168. M. I. Finley, *Slavery in Classical Antiquity: Views and Controversies* (Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons, 1960), 58.

169. A. H. M. Jones, "Slavery in the Ancient World," in *Slavery in Classical Antiquity*, ed. M.I. Finley (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons LTD, 1960), 4. The very wealthy, such as Nicias, reportedly owned 1000 slaves. This is an extreme case.

170. Demosthenes, XLI.8; LIII.1; Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, II.5.2. A minae equals 100 drachmae.

exorbitant price of one talent.¹⁷¹ Such prices were sure to attract men who were willing to deal in human merchandise.

Pirates were a source of slaves for the slave markets throughout antiquity.¹⁷² There are several stories about people who were unfortunate enough to encounter pirates and become slaves. Demosthenes recorded the 4th century B.C. legal battle of Apollodorus, who mortgaged his home to pay the ransom demanded for his friend Nicostratus, who had been captured by pirates and sold as a slave.¹⁷³ Nicostratus's owner demanded about four talents for his release, this was an enormous sum worth about four triremes and seems to have been an unusually high ransom.¹⁷⁴ Apollodorus paid one thousand *drachmae* to the owner as a gesture of good faith, he then mortgaged his farm to pay the remainder of the four talents. Nicostratus was released, but he did not repay Apollodorus the money used to purchase his freedom, and Apollodorus filed a lawsuit. No record of the original price

171. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, II.5.2. A talent equals 6,000 *drachmae*, which is the cost of building a trireme.

172. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 96.

173. Demosthenes, LIII.4-29.

174. A skilled worker earned approximately 360 *drachmae* a year. A talent equaled 6,000 *drachmae*, and was the equivalent of approximately 57 pounds of silver.

for Nicostratus was cited. It is certain, though, that the only one to lose money in the deal was Apollodorus.

The custom of ransoming captives was probably practiced by all types of pirates, professional and opportunists. Pirates captured someone, either from a land raid or from a ship, and asked for a ransom from that person's family or friends.¹⁷⁵ If a ransom was not forthcoming, then the pirate sold the captive at the closest slave market, such as the one on Aegina.¹⁷⁶ Pirates who regularly participated in the slave trade were probably those men who had made piracy their way of life, not those men who just dabbled in piracy when chance provided them with a good opportunity for quick profit. Professional pirates knew the slave markets and had the contacts necessary to get the best price for each type of slave they captured. Either way, the pirate made money, and helpless individuals were consigned to a life of slavery.

One development in the methods pirates used was the formation of alliances. In the 5th century B.C., two pirate towns on Crete formed an alliance to reduce a common rival. Cnossus and Tylissus made a formal agreement, inscribed on stone, which detailed the rights and responsibilities of each

175. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 32.

176. Figueira, *Aegina*, 203.

member. The inscription noted how large a share each member received from both land and sea operations.¹⁷⁷ This alliance reflected a small operation, but it was the harbinger of things to come. In time, pirates joined forces to overwhelm all who opposed them. People on land and ships at sea were still not safe from pirate attack.

Citizens of the polis tried various methods to protect themselves against pirate attack, whether on land or at sea. People on the land often chose drastic measures to deal with suspected pirates. Strangers to a town or farm were immediately suspected of being pirates or brigands,¹⁷⁸ and at an unknown but early date, the custom of killing strangers developed.¹⁷⁹ Perhaps the best known example comes from the turn of the 5th century B.C., when the Greek fleet was defeated by the Persians at the battle of Lade. According to Herodotus, some Chians fled, having lost their ships they traveled on foot. The Ephesians saw armed men and feared that the Chians were pirates seeking to abduct Ephesian women

177. Fik Meijer and Onno van Nijf, *Trade, Transport and Society in the Ancient World* (London: Routledge, 1992), 42B lines 2-17.

178. Apollodorus, III, 2.2.

179. Semple, *Geography*, 639.

celebrating the Thesmophoria and killed all of them.¹⁸⁰

Another custom concerning strangers was to enslave any shipwrecked person.¹⁸¹ If he were a pirate, his enslavement would keep him from contacting any of his friends, who might decide to come to his rescue. If the shipwrecked man was not a pirate, he lost his freedom due to the fear that pirates inspired in the general population.

Ship captains devised their own ways to deal with pirates. Merchant ships often tried to sail in fleets for protection,¹⁸² and some paid for a naval escort.¹⁸³ Convoys may have deterred solitary pirate ships, but the lack of communication between ports and over land made the system of convoys ineffective. Additionally, each captain was in charge of his own vessel and had the final say about routes and the schedule for sailing. A single ship might carry

180. Herodotus, VI.16. Herodotus speculated that the Ephesians may have known who the Chians were, but killed them anyway to curry favor with the victorious Persians. The practice apparently continued for some time since Apollodorus (III.2.2) and Diodorus Siculus (V.59), wrote of the death of a man suspected of being a pirate though he was merely searching for his son.

181. Rougé, *Ships*, 150.

182. Demosthenes, i.17

183. Demosthenes, xviii.73.

cargo belonging to as many as thirty different merchants.¹⁸⁴ If the captain changed course to avoid unsafe water, the merchant had no voice in the matter.

Most merchants had to borrow funds from wealthier citizens in order to purchase cargo for trade.¹⁸⁵ The merchant had to put up at least half of what he wished to borrow in order to get a loan.¹⁸⁶ The interest on maritime loans was high, from thirty to one hundred percent, in extreme cases.¹⁸⁷ The merchant needed to get the cargo to the best market where it fetched the highest price so he could maintain a profit margin.

A merchant was willing to pay off pirates, or avoid them altogether, to keep his cargo and his chance for profit. Often, merchants paid off threatening pirates.¹⁸⁸ This practice was common enough that maritime loan agreements from the 4th century B.C. stipulate that the principal amount borrowed, or the interest on a maritime loan, was adjusted to reflect the amount spent by the merchants to pay off the

184. Demosthenes, XXXIV.

185. Cohen, *Athenian Economy*, 152.

186. Demosthenes, XXXIV; XXXV.

187. Casson, *Ancient Trade*, 27.

188. Casson, *Ancient Trade*, 29.

pirates.¹⁸⁹ If the entire cargo were lost for any reason and the merchant managed to return home, then the entire debt was forgiven. The merchant did not have to repay the loan, but he lost all the money he had personally invested in the cargo.¹⁹⁰

Besides paying off pirates, merchants could avoid pirates on the high seas by sailing in the winter months, when pirates were in port or at a favorite hide out refitting their ships for the next season of raiding.¹⁹¹ The extreme range of the sailing season ran from March 10th to November 10th.¹⁹² Hesiod (8th century B.C.) claimed that the best sailing season ran from mid-July to mid-September,¹⁹³ while Vegetius (writing between A.D. 383 to 450) claimed that the best sailing season ran from May 27th until September 14th.¹⁹⁴ The story of Saint Paul, who wrecked while sailing for Rome at the end of the sailing season, provides a good indication

189. Demosthenes, "Against Lakritos," in *Private Speeches*, 10-13.

190. Cohen, *Athenian Economy*, 56. Cohen based his finding on Athenian legal orations, especially Demosthenes XXXV.

191. Bascom, *Deep*, 33; Ormerod, *Piracy*, 18.

192. Semple, *Geography*, 579.

193. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 655-684.

194. Vegetius, *Epitome Rei Militaris*, IV.39.

of what happened when a ship sailed in winter.¹⁹⁵ It is doubtful that much traffic ventured out during winter, but some did manage to sail in the unpredictable winter weather.¹⁹⁶ The merchants of Delos were known to have sailed in the winter throughout the Cycladic Islands.¹⁹⁷ Times must have been desperate for men to brave the sea in winter. The various city-states were unable to consistently or effectively combat pirate raids.

Athenian sea power and dominance began in the early 5th century B.C. Athens did disrupt pirate activities for a period, but even at her height Athens still had trouble with pirates.¹⁹⁸ The Peloponnesian War drained away Athens' attention and strength, allowing piracy to return. The Athenians briefly recovered their power, only to lose it again to a more powerful force, the Macedonians. The era after the rise of Macedon was filled with constant war and

195. Apostles, 27.

196. Rougé, *Ships*, 16.

197. Reger, *Regionalism*, 54. Evidence from later sources show that winter sailing in the Mediterranean was still dangerous until the sixteenth century. John H. Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War: Studies in the Maritime History of the Mediterranean, 649-1571* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 2-4, 87-89.

198. Russell Meiggs, *Trees and Timber in the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 147.

turmoil. No one power could, or would, devote itself to reducing piracy. Generals and admirals looked to pirates to provide them, often overtly, with additional ships and crews to help them to rise in power. Thus, piracy grew and changed in the succeeding eras.

Chapter III

Piracy After the Rise of Macedon, 359-167 B.C.

After the Peloponnesian War, there were many powers fighting for control in Greece.¹⁹⁹ All who tried failed, until the rise of Philip II of Macedon and his son, Alexander the Great.²⁰⁰ In 359 B.C., Philip II came to power in Macedon, and he later ruled Greece,²⁰¹ Alexander ascended the Macedonian throne in 336 B.C., and he died in 323 B.C., at which time the generals in his army fought among themselves for control of the empire. Antigonus, after much fighting, acquired Macedon and Greece. Seleucus took Syria and the area that had been the old Persian Empire. Ptolemy took Egypt to rule. These men and their many successors continued to fight among themselves for bigger portions of the now fragmented empire. They fought from 323 B.C. until the death of the last of any of the successors' heirs, Cleopatra VII, in 30 B.C., long after Rome had entered the Mediterranean and

199. Bengston, *History of Greece*, 157-9; 166-177.

200. The Hellenistic Age began in 323 B.C. after Alexander the Great's death.

201. Alfred S. Bradford, *Philip II of Macedon: A Life from the Ancient Sources* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1992), 9-10; 143-45.

taken control of the remains of Alexander's empire.²⁰²

Despite the turmoil of the age, trade actually increased.²⁰³ Archaeological evidence from shipwrecks indicates that a wide range of goods were traded throughout the Mediterranean region.²⁰⁴ The boundaries of the Hellenistic world expanded due to Alexander's conquests. In time, the area between the Straits of Gibraltar and the Indus River, the terminus point of Alexander's march, became an integrated economic region.²⁰⁵ This brought new, or increased, resources into the economic network of the Mediterranean. Alexander accumulated a massive amount of loot. He distributed the newly acquired wealth to the army and throughout the various regions now under his control.²⁰⁶ Alexander instituted a new coin standard, which facilitated

202. This summary of Alexander's successors is based on N. G. L. Hammond, "The Macedonian Imprint on the Hellenistic World," in *Hellenistic History and Culture*, edited by Peter Green (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 12-23.

203. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic*, 129.

204. A. J. Parker, "Classical Antiquity: The Maritime Dimension," *Antiquity* 64 (1990): 337.

205. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic*, 130-32.

206. Bengston, 212; Toutain, *Economic Life*, 90. The author estimates that Alexander recovered 180,000 talents, close to 40 million pounds (British monetary unit, as of 1979), at Ecbatana alone. How & Wells note various sources which cite 40,000 talents (Strabo, 731) as a more likely figure. How, *Commentary on Herodotus*, 287.

trade throughout the eastern Mediterranean.²⁰⁷ The new currency circulated throughout the Empire by the mercenaries in his and the successors' armies.²⁰⁸ New cities and economic centers were founded, providing more markets.²⁰⁹

The frequent wars of this age differed from wars in preceding eras in that the soldier was no longer the working man, called away from his farm or his shop. The soldiers of the Hellenistic Age were professional soldiers and mercenaries. The farmer and the artisan could work without being interrupted by the call to arms, so business could be conducted on a regular and reliable basis.²¹⁰ The increase in mercenaries throughout the Hellenistic Age caused an increase in the amount of money in circulation, since the mercenaries were paid in cash.²¹¹

The instances of piracy and the number of pirates in the

207. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic*, 134-35.

208. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic*, 129-130.

209. Rostovtzeff, 132-33. The Successors also founded new cities, pg. 137.

210. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic*, 130.

211. Soldiers in earlier periods fought without compensation, except for money paid each combatant for his food. G. T. Griffith, *The Mercenaries of the Hellenistic World* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1935), 264-5.

Hellenistic Age grew,²¹² because there were no forces working to stop the pirates. The pirates benefitted from the increase in trade and cash flow during the Hellenistic Age. The reduction of the Athenian fleet after the Peloponnesian War meant that pirates were again free to roam the seas,²¹³ and new people were noted as pirates. Historians such as Polybius (born c. 200 B.C.) and Diodorus Siculus (writing c. 60-30 B.C.), as well as archaeological information, provide details of piracy in this Age.

The Tyrrhenian pirates were known for their deeds,²¹⁴ and are perhaps best known due to the Homeric myth that tells of their kidnaping the god of wine, Dionysus.²¹⁵ They were perhaps more successful in their raids against men, as they were known to have penetrated into the Aegean Sea as far

212. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic*, 202. The author bases this statement on the fact that a large proportion of existing inscriptions from this period mention pirates.

213. Isocrates, *Panegyricus*, 115.

214. Strabo, X.477. According to Ormerod, "Tyrrhenian" pirates may have included Etruscan pirates and any pirate from Italy. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 129-30.

215. Allardyce Nicoll, ed., "Bacchus and the Pyrats," in *Chapman's Homer: The Iliad, The Odyssey, and the Lesser Homeric*, vol. 2 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), lns. 14-17. The god turned the pirates into dolphins.

south as Delos.²¹⁶ They caused the Greeks many problems in the Adriatic, where the Greeks established several colonies there to safeguard trade from them.²¹⁷ As shall be seen, the Adriatic continued to be a pirate haunt until the 1st century B.C.

The ancient sources, particularly Polybius, were generally critical of the Aetolians because of their piratical activities.²¹⁸ The Aetolian League, formed in the early 3rd century B.C.,²¹⁹ was centered west of Thebes, south of Epirus, and north of the Gulf of Corinth. The League became a strong force in Greece,²²⁰ and was active in the affairs of Greece.²²¹ But their reputation declined as they turned to piracy. Polybius implied that Aetolian interest in Hellenic politics was merely a way to cause havoc in Greece

216. IG XI.2.148.

217. Harry J. Dell, "The Origin and Nature of Illyrian Piracy," *Historia* 16 (1967): 354. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 129 & 153.

218. Polybius, *The Histories*, trans. W. R. Paton (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954), 2.45. Polybius described the Aetolians as a people "who possess an innate lack of scruple and an insatiable appetite for the possessions of others." Polybius is biased in his writing, he preferred the Aetolians' rivals, the Achaean League.

219. Ehrenberg, *The Greek State*, 125.

220. York, *Leagues and Nations*, 30.

221. Ehrenberg, *Greek State*, 125.

so they could weaken other city-states and take advantage of the chaotic situation to plunder them with piratical raids. They were justifiably hated and feared.²²²

The Aetolians apparently raided wherever they found the opportunity. They attacked ships, islands, and coastal areas for cargo, and took captives for ransom and slaves.²²³ An inscription from Naxos (dated to the late 3rd century B.C.) described a raid by the Aetolians on the island of Naxos, south of Delos, in which two hundred and eighty people were captured and carried off by the pirates.²²⁴ Other islands were stormed by pirates as well. Aetolians, perhaps in league with the Cretans, plundered the island of Amorgos, southeast of Naxos,²²⁵ and captured thirty people.²²⁶ Amorgos is a small island and the thirty people taken might well have been a sizeable portion of the population. The Aetolians offered cities and islands the opportunity to join the

222. Polybius, IV.6. Polybius used the term "fleet" to describe Aetolian forces.

223. Polybius, IV.6.

224. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 140. (IG, 520).

225. Brulé dates this raid to about 200 B.C. Brulé, *La Piraterie Crétoise*, 51-2.

226. Elpida Hadjidaki, "Hellenistic Cretan Piracy," in *Scholar, Patriot, Mentor: Historical Essays in Honor of Dimitrijie Djordjevic* (New York: East European Monographs, 1992), 53. (Ditt Syll-3, 521).

Aetolian League.²²⁷ Membership in the League was supposed to safeguard the member cities from Aetolian pirates.²²⁸ By raiding or by extortion pirates grew wealthy, and piracy took its toll on Hellenistic civilization. The Aetolians were a typical example of organized piracy during the Hellenistic Age. They were hated for their piratical acts, yet they were tolerated because of the services they provided, such as dealing in slaves.

Philip II of Macedon used the navy and pirates to devastate the commercial traffic serving Athens.²²⁹ In 340 B.C., Philip captured two hundred and thirty Athenian merchant ships that were in a convoy from the Bosphorus.²³⁰ Philip used pirates to help his navy capture so many vessels.²³¹ Athens was devastated by the loss of so many ships and surrendered to Philip.²³² With the help of the

227. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 140. The island of Ceos and town of Lysimacheia, as well as Thrace, are thought to have joined to avoid the Aetolian's raids.

228. Magie, *Roman Rule*, 100.

229. Bengston, *History of Greece*, 193.

230. Diodorus Siculus, 16.77.

231. Bradford, *Philip II*, 119-20.

232. Pritchett, *The Greek State*, vol. 1, 74.

pirates, Philip gained control of Athens.

The Macedonians pursued opposing policies toward pirates. Philip V of Macedon made public displays aimed at ending piracy. Since Aetolian pirates had often seized Macedonian ships, he stormed and captured the Aetolian capital of Thermon as a gesture of his anti-pirate policy.²³³ More often than not, the Macedonians, like other powers of the age, used pirates as additional forces in their wars of conquest. Philip V of Macedon gave Dicaearchus of Aetolia twenty ships to carry out pirate raids on the islands and to help the Cretans in their war with Rhodes, which was a chief foe of Macedonia.²³⁴ During the Third Macedonian War (171-167 B.C.), Perseus of Macedon sent Antenor to raid enemy shipping as they left the port of Delos.²³⁵

Crete at this time was one of the largest pirate havens, with many towns counting themselves as pirate towns.²³⁶ The

233. Polybius, IV.6.1. Reger cites IG XII 5.125 for Philip's inscription about Thermon. Reger, *Regionalism*, 25.

234. Diodorus Siculus, XXVIII.1;

235. Livy, *The History of Rome*, trans. B. O. Foster (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1943-1963), 44.28.2. Livy (born c. 64 or 59 B.C.). Reger, *Regionalism*, 28-9.

236. Hadjidaki, "Hellenistic Cretan Piracy," 53-4. Pirate towns included Phalasarna, Knossos, Kydonia, Olus, Gortyn, Phaestos, and Itanos.

city of Miletus negotiated a treaty with Crete designed to exempt Milesians from being kidnaped or harassed by Cretan pirates. The treaty mentioned twenty-eight city-states on Crete, all of which were involved in piracy.²³⁷ Recent archaeological investigations on Crete provide some clues about what life on Crete may have been like at this time. Archaeologist, Elpida Hadjidaki, has excavated much of the Cretan town of Phalasarna. Situated on the western end of Crete, Phalasarna had two harbors, which were not visible from the sea. A channel, fifty meters long by ten meters wide, was cut through stone to connect the harbor with the sea, an expensive task. The harbor itself was protected by stone walls that contained five stone towers. The town also possessed a second, walled harbor. Walls ran from the main harbor to the fortified acropolis on an adjacent promontory.²³⁸ It is unlikely that the plain next to the town would have been fertile enough to support such expensive undertakings. The harbor itself was shallow and seemed more suited to light draft pirate vessels than to merchant

237. Hadjidaki, "Hellenistic Cretan Piracy," 54.

238. Elpida Hadjidaki, "The Hellenistic Harbor of Phalasarna in Western Crete: A Comparison with the Hellenistic Inner Harbor of Straton's Tower," *Caesaria Maritima: A Retrospective After Two Millennia*, eds. Avner Raban, Kenneth G. Holum (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 55-61.

vessels.²³⁹ Piracy probably provided very well for Phalasarna, which survived until destroyed by Metellus during the Roman war against pirates in 68 B.C.²⁴⁰ Despite constant attempts by the Rhodian navy to suppress Cretan piracy, they were able to raid throughout the Aegean.²⁴¹

The Classical period (5th and 4th centuries B.C.) saw the alliance of two small Cretan towns to better manage the gains from their piracy. The Hellenistic Age saw entire groups of pirates join forces in alliances that terrorized the Mediterranean.²⁴² The Cretans and the Aetolians allied their forces by at least 229 B.C., and their combined forces raided the Aegean, including Attica and the islands.²⁴³ The Cretans were not above fighting among themselves.²⁴⁴ The

239. Hadjidaki, "Hellenistic Cretan Piracy," 58. Ms. Hadjidaki plans to excavate the harbors and hopes to find the remains of vessels which would have been trapped in the harbors when Metellus destroyed the towns. Any such vessels may provide greater insights into pirate ships of the Hellenistic Age.

240. Hadjidaki, "Hellenistic Harbor," 61.

241. Richard M. Berthold, *Rhodes in the Hellenistic Age* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 98-9.

242. R. F. Willetts, *Ancient Crete: A Social History from Early Times Until the Roman Occupation* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), 144.

243. Wilhem Dittenberger, *Supplemental Inscriptiones Graecae* (New York: G. Olms, 1970), 3-535. Willetts, *Ancient Crete*, 244-5.

244. Berthold, *Rhodes*, 98.

cities of Cnossos and Gortyna fought the town of Lyttus, and called on the Aetolian allies for help in subjugating the town. The people of Lyttus called on the Achaean League for help, which sent forces that included over four hundred Illyrians.²⁴⁵ As time progressed, alliances grew, and the Cilicians replaced the Cretans as the foremost pirates of the Hellenistic and the Roman Ages.

The successors to Alexander (*epigoni*) were not above using pirates in their efforts to secure a larger portion of the empire. The *epigoni* all used pirates in their operations at one time or another.²⁴⁶ The Ptolemies generally tried to end piracy rather than perpetuate it, though they resorted to it in the second Syrian War against Antiochus.²⁴⁷ No clear distinction was made between mercenary forces and pirates. Both were central forces in the constant warfare that engulfed the age. Piracy was unlikely to disappear when the central powers were more than willing to use pirates to achieve their own ends. The use of pirates by the men who controlled the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean validated

245. Polybius, IV.53-55.

246. W. W. Tarn, *Hellenistic Civilization* (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1952), 92.

247. Janice Gabbert, "Piracy in the Early Hellenistic Period: A Career Open to Talents," *Greece & Rome* 33 (1986): 156-7. Reger, *Regionalism*, 30.

piracy as a means of achieving military or personal goals.

Pirates were used against opponents, and were paid by plunder. According to Diodorus Siculus, the Antigonids used pirates against their enemies, the Ptolemies and their allies, the Rhodians.²⁴⁸ In 305 B.C., Antigonus fought Ptolemy and tried to sever the trade connections between Egypt and Rhodes. The Rhodians refused to break their treaty with the Ptolemies. Antigonus responded by sending a naval force to confiscate all shipping between the two regions. Rhodes defeated Antigonus' naval force and kept the commerce moving.²⁴⁹ Antigonus' son, Demetrius, sent to punish Rhodes, laid siege to the island, using many pirate ships in his naval force.²⁵⁰ Modern sources estimate that as many as a thousand pirate and private ships accompanied Demetrius to Rhodes, all hoping to cash in on the wealth of the island once it fell to the Antigonids.²⁵¹ The number of pirates was growing, and no one, except Rhodes, sought to limit their growth.

248. Diodorus Siculus, XX.82.1-5; XX.83.1; XX.97.5-6.

249. Diodorus Siculus, XX 82.1.

250. Diodorus Siculus, XX 82.4. Gabbert, "Piracy," 157.

251. John Warry, *Warfare in the Classical World* (London: Salamander Books, Ltd., 1995), 90. There were apparently more pirates than naval vessels, pirates = 1000, navy = 350, including auxiliaries.

It seems that piracy became much more prevalent in the Hellenistic Age, although it may be simply that more documentation of it has survived than has survived from earlier periods. Diodorus Siculus noted the efforts of Eumelus, king of Cimmerian Bosphorus, against pirates in the Pontus, in the first quarter of the 4th century B.C.²⁵² Other pirates from the Black Sea region were also noted by ancient authors, and the Black Sea seemed to have no end of pirate troubles.²⁵³ The Cycladic Islands also saw their share of pirates, as the Etruscans are known to have raided through the Cyclades, and for which the Delians sought a loan of five thousand *drachmae* to battle the Etruscan pirates.²⁵⁴ The Etruscan pirates also engaged the Rhodians during the 3rd century B.C.²⁵⁵

Increased piracy may also have been due to the incessant warfare that plagued the Mediterranean during the era.²⁵⁶ Men

252. Diodorus Siculus, XX.25.1-2.

253. Demosthenes, LII.5, the Bithynians as Black Sea pirates.

254. Dell, "Origin," 355. IG, XI.2, 148, 73f.

255. Dell, "Origin," 355.

256. A few examples of some wars of the age: Punic Wars (Rome vs. Carthage) 264-241; 218-201; 149-146. Macedonian Wars: 215-205; 200-197; 172-168. Syrian Wars: 276-272; ?-258; 247/6-243/2; 219-217; 202-198.

went out from their homes as mercenaries to fight for the highest bidder,²⁵⁷ and both mercenaries and pirates fought alongside the soldiers in the wars of the Hellenistic Age.²⁵⁸ During peaceful periods, mercenaries could easily turn to piracy.²⁵⁹ In the constant warfare, some city-states allowed their citizens to raid the commercial traffic of the enemy and keep whatever profits they gained.²⁶⁰ Raiding became the easiest way for city-states to pay for their military expenditures, and there seemed to be no lack of volunteers for raids throughout the Mediterranean. The disruption of war throughout the Hellenistic Age also caused many people to be displaced.²⁶¹ The exile had few choices concerning what he could do or where he could live. Without a country and without work, it is highly likely that such men were drawn

257. Diodorus relates the continual fighting during the Peloponnesian War with the increased number of mercenaries in the subsequent periods. Diodorus Siculus, xiv.23.4.

258. Pierre DuCrey, "Les Cyclades A L'Epoque Hellenistique La Piraterie, Symptome D'un Malaise Economique et Social," in *Les Cyclades: Materiaux Pour Une Étude de Géographie Historique*, (Paris: Éditions Du Centre National De La Recherche Scientifique, 1983), 146.

259. Griffith, *Mercenaries*, 263.

260. Signe Isager and Mogens Herman Hansen, *Aspects of Athenian Society in the 4th Century B.C.*, trans. Judith Hsiang Rosenmeier (Denmark, Odense University Press, 1975), 56.

261. Bengston, *History of Greece*, 181.

into piracy for survival.²⁶²

The Liburnian pirates developed their own types of pirate vessels, a large, two-level ship manned by nearly two hundred men. The *liburnian* had a shallow draft, so it could maneuver in shallow water to elude its pursuer.²⁶³ The Liburnians or Illyrians may have developed the *lembos*.²⁶⁴ The term, *lembos*, indicated a very small, fast skiff, though it may have undergone changes from its inception before the 3rd century B.C.²⁶⁵ The Liburnians are also credited with developing the *pristis*, "the shark,"²⁶⁶ which was a ship large enough to carry a ram.²⁶⁷ The *pristis* is thought to have been quite similar in design to the *lembos*.²⁶⁸ Both the *lembos* and the *pristis* were well known for their speed and

262. Tarn, *Hellenistic*, 92.

263. Warry, *Warfare*, 183.

264. Polybius, V.109.

265. Casson, *Ships and Seamanship*, 162.

266. Cecil Torr, *Ancient Ships* (Chicago: Argonaut, Inc., Publishers, 1964), 121.

267. Polybius, xvii.

268. Casson, *Ships and Seamanship*, 127.

maneuverability,²⁶⁹ and both became standard naval vessels in Hellenistic navies.²⁷⁰

It is of particular interest that the Liburnians developed several types of vessels designed for piracy. The Liburnians were unable to produce enough from their lands along the rocky Adriatic coast to meet their needs, so piracy provided the opportunity to gain money and goods, and it seems to have been practiced on a large scale by the Liburnian people. Ships developed by the Liburnian pirates represented a capital investment in piracy, which must have been a major factor in the economy of the region at the time.

One of the best known pirate vessels was the *hemiolia*, which dated to the 2nd half of the 4th century B.C.²⁷¹ The *hemiolia* was listed as part of the forces used by such men as Alexander the Great, Demetrius Poliorcetes, Philip V of Macedon, and Pompey.²⁷² The *hemiolia* was basically a two-

269. Casson, *Ships and Seamanship*, 125-6.

270. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 167, note 2.

271. Theophrastus, *Characters*, trans. J. M. Edmonds (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), 25. Arrian, *Arrian*, trans. P. A. Brunt (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), III.2.4. J. S. Morrison, "Hemiolia, Trihemiolia," *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 9 (1980): 121. (trihemiolia is spelled with and without an "h") Theophrastus (born c. 370 B.C.). Arrian (born c. early 2nd century A.D.).

272. Morrison, "Hemiolia," 121.

level ship,²⁷³ but it differed from other two-level ships in that it operated under sail and oar. Generally, merchant ships used only sail. War ships had both sails and oars, but used oars only when heading into battle or when chasing the enemy. The combination of sails and oars made the *hemiolia* faster than merchant ships. It was designed to allow the last fourteen rowers, seven per side, to work the sails while approaching the intended vessel or while fleeing pursuit.²⁷⁴ Once the pirates closed the range to a nominal distance, the fourteen men would lower the mast and then take their places at the oars. The sails and oars gave the ship the necessary speed and power to overtake the unfortunate quarry.²⁷⁵ The use of sails and oars meant that pirate vessels could go where wind alone could not take them, enabling them to pursue sailing vessels that could only move with the wind.

The pirates who invented the *hemiolia* had the resources, such as money for materials and shipwrights, to design and build their own type of pirate vessel. Such a capital

273. There is still some controversy as to the exact composition of *hemiolias* and *trihemiolias*. Morrison and Casson differ on whether the ships were decked or not. See Morrison, "Hemiolia, Trihemiolia," 123-26, for a discussion of Casson and Morrison's arguments for each vessel type.

274. Casson, *Ships and Seamanship*, 128-9.

275. Warry, *Warfare*, 19.

investment shows that piracy was a primary occupation for such men, and they sought to make the most of every opportunity to pursue their careers. These men did not supplement their incomes by opportunistic piracy. Rather, they were dedicated to piracy as a full time occupation and sought ways to improve their effectiveness, and ultimately their gains.

The Rhodians were credited with designing the *trihemiolia* to combat the *hemiolia*.²⁷⁶ Part of the crew on the uppermost deck of the three-level *trihemiolia* worked the sails until they approached the *hemiolia*. Once in range, they lowered the mast and manned their oars, or prepared to board the enemy.²⁷⁷ *Trihemiolias* were noted in the inventories or inscriptions of Rhodes, Philip V of Macedon, and Ptolemy Philadelphus.²⁷⁸ It is notable that at this time specific vessel types were created both to partake in piracy and to combat it. According to Polybius, the Rhodians were considered the highest authority concerning all maritime

276. Diodorus Siculus, XX.93.3-4. Casson, *Ships and Seamanship*, 129.

277. Warry, *Warfare*, 19.

278. Morrison, "Hemiolia," 122.

matters.²⁷⁹ They developed their merchant marine and their navy, which was eventually used to fight pirates.²⁸⁰ They went to great lengths to protect commercial shipping, not only of their own merchants, but of others as well.²⁸¹ The fact that they developed a ship specifically designed to combat piracy suggests the great extent to which piracy had grown during the Hellenistic period. No longer were all pirate actions unplanned operations. Piracy had grown to huge proportions. The Rhodians appointed themselves the police of the seas to reduce the depredations of the pirates. They were the only force which consistently fought against piracy in the Hellenistic Age.

It is perhaps the scale of pirate operations, more than anything else, that sets piracy in the Hellenistic Age apart from anything that occurred earlier. As noted above, whole peoples were described, accurately or not, as pirates. The entire island of Crete was considered a pirate nest. The Aetolians were considered pirates. More people seemed to have been practicing piracy, and more records survived to attest to their deeds. As piracy grew, so to did the

279. Polybius, IV.47.1.

280. Brulé, *La Piraterie*, 30-32.

281. Polybius, IV.47.1-7.

audacity of their raids. Not even the sacred was safe from the greed of pirates. Throughout the Hellenistic period, many temples were raided and ransacked. Island temples were especially vulnerable to pirate attack and the temples on the islands of Claros, Didyma, and Samothrace were all sacked.²⁸² The temple to Asclepius at Epidaurus, Poseidon's temples at the Isthmus, Taenarum and Calauria were all raided, as were the temples to Apollo at Actium and Leucas, and the temples to Hera at Samos, Argos and Lacinium.²⁸³ Temple raids were profitable because the temple usually acted as a depository, containing the "first fruits" dedicated to the god from the community. "First fruits" might be anything from grain or crops to precious metals such as gold, silver, iron, or bronze. A raid on a temple might also yield desirable slaves either from the temple's staff or from the suppliants. Booty from raiding temples was enormous, but those caught defiling a temple were often punished by being thrown into the sea.²⁸⁴

The Cretan pirates interfered with trade on such a large scale, throughout the Mediterranean, that Rhodes felt it necessary to declare war on them in order to make the seas

282. Plutarch, *Pompey*, 24.

283. Plutarch, *Pompey*, 24.

284. Bengston, *History of Greece*, 191. This was the punishment meted out by Philip II to those that had ravaged Delphi.

and shores safe. The first Cretan War occurred in 205/4 to 201 B.C. The war was instigated by Philip V of Macedon, who was a rival of the Rhodians.²⁸⁵ Philip V supported the pirates and sent supplies and help for the pirates to defeat the Rhodians, who nonetheless prevailed, forcing the Cretans to sign a treaty in which they stipulated that they would no longer practice piracy.²⁸⁶ The Cretans, however, returned to their old ways. For example, in 154 B.C. they raided the island of Siphnos, ²⁸⁷ taking many people as slaves and plundering the temple.²⁸⁸ Rhodes again declared war on the Cretan pirates.²⁸⁹ And was successful in stopping or reducing piracy only for brief periods. Their task was difficult for they received no substantial help from other powers. The Rhodian declaration of war set a precedent for how to deal with the pirate problem. Others, especially the Romans, were to follow the Rhodian approach to combatting piracy.

Many cities and regions joined forces with pirates in the hopes that they would be spared the devastation of pirate

285. Willetts, *Ancient Crete*, 145.

286. Reger, *Regionalism*, 19. Dittenberger, *Supplemental*, 3-581.

287. Polybius, XXXIII.4, 13, 15-16.

288. Diodorus Siculus, XXXI.45.

289. Willetts, *Ancient Crete*, 168.

raids.²⁹⁰ The town of Side developed a slave market to accommodate the large number of pirates in that town,²⁹¹ obviously gaining a large profit in the affair. Towns helped the pirates by providing harbors, markets, and supplies, and in exchange received immunity from piratical raids.²⁹² Leagues, such as the Nesiotic League, formed around 314 B.C., were organized for commerce and the protection of the inhabitants of the Aegean from pirates.²⁹³ Antigonus and Demetrius, the rulers of Macedon, helped develop this League, and they dominated it until approximately 287 B.C.²⁹⁴ The Ptolemies commanded the League for a time and attempted to reduce piracy in the Cyclades.²⁹⁵ The Rhodians controlled the revitalized Nesiotic League after the Second Macedonian

290. Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, trans. Earnest Cary (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954), XXXVI.20. Dio Cassius (born mid-1st century A.D.). Magie, *Roman Rule*, 100.

291. Strabo, XIV, 664.

292. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 208.

293. Reger, *Regionalism*, 30, (IG IV-2 1.68, II.38-39). This league is known by various names, The Hellenic League, the Island League or the Nesiotic League.

294. Diodorus Siculus, 19.62.9. Reger, *Regionalism*, 16-7.

295. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 130; Reger, *Regionalism*, 17.

War,²⁹⁶ but the League ended when Rhodes began to decline due to direct Roman intervention starting in the year 167 B.C.

The entry of Rome in the affairs of the Mediterranean forever altered the region. It is unlikely that the city-states that called upon Rome to help settle differences in the eastern Mediterranean could have known that once Rome entered the region, she would not leave for six centuries. The Romans provided pirates with more targets to plunder, as greater numbers of ships carrying more valuable goods traveled back and forth to Rome. Eventually, the Romans were forced to reduce piracy.

296. Reger, *Regionalism*, 20.

Chapter IV

Piracy in the Roman Period

The political uncertainties that were prevalent throughout the Mediterranean in the Hellenistic Age were responsible for drawing Rome into eastern Mediterranean affairs. Internal and external threats caused Rome to develop her military power, which she eventually exercised throughout the Mediterranean. First, Rome began to fight against the pirates infesting the Italian waters, beginning in the 4th century B.C.²⁹⁷ In the following century, Roman forces moved into the Adriatic and then into the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean. Rome was originally invited into the eastern Mediterranean to help stabilize the region which was suffering under the intrigues of Philip V of Macedon.²⁹⁸ Once involved in the area, Rome remained and ultimately gained control of the entire region.

"All roads lead to Rome," was a process that began when the network of roads grew as the city developed from a small cluster of dwellings on the Tiber River to the mighty giant that came to rule over the largest empire ever known. To administer such an empire required good roads to facilitate

297. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 161.

298. Magie, *Roman Rule*, 15. Rhodes requested Roman aid in 201 B.C. against Philip V, Rome sent an army.

the movement of people, information, and goods, both into and out of the city. Rome sent armies and supplies out to her provinces and colonies, while many goods flowed into Rome to supply the ever-growing demands of her population. This flow of goods provided a target for piracy on the roads and on the sea. While Rome was situated a safe distance from the sea,²⁹⁹ and was thus secure from direct sea raids, the goods which she imported came in via the coast and the Tiber River and were subject to piratical predations. As the wealth of the world moved into Rome, piracy played a greater role in Roman affairs.

One of the most vital Roman imports was grain, which Rome began importing from the surrounding areas of Italy as early as the 6th B.C.³⁰⁰ It is likely that Republican Rome imported grain from Egypt prior to the annexation of Egypt as a province,³⁰¹ and from Sicily, Sardinia and North Africa during the Republican period.³⁰² It was imperative that the grain trade not be interrupted. From the time of the Tarquin

299. Howard Scullard, *The History of the Roman World: from 753 to 146 B.C.* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1966), 23.

300. Robert Joseph Rowland, Jr., *Roman Grain Legislation, 133-50 B.C.* (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1964), 3.

301. Casson, *Ancient Trade*, 82.

302. Casson, *Ancient Trade*, 82.

kings, a portion of the population of Rome received a dole (free or reduced price grain).³⁰³ Disruptions in the grain shipments caused trouble with the population of Rome, so the situation was avoided whenever possible and quickly remedied if interruptions were unavoidable. Drastic actions were often taken to protect the grain trade. Accusing the Istri of pirating her incoming grain shipments,³⁰⁴ Rome declared war against them in 221 B.C. The price of grain always rose when famine threatened,³⁰⁵ then grain ships would have been good targets for pirates. The grain could be sold to the starving city, at a high price, since Rome had to buy the grain to avoid rioting by the populace. Rome sought to safeguard the ships that brought a world of goods to the city.

Grain was not the only import into Rome. Many other items found their way to the city. According to Strabo, Rome

303. Rowland, *Roman Grain*, 2.

304. Eutropius, *Breviarium ab Urbe Condita*, trans. H. W. Bird (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1993), 3.7. (Eutropius born early 4th century A.D.). Rowland says that the Istri were not located close to the shipping routes and that the Romans used piracy as a pretext to go to war. Rowland, *Roman Grain*, 27.

305. Rowland, *Roman Grain*, 18.

participated in trade with India and East Africa.³⁰⁶ As Rome expanded her power throughout the eastern Mediterranean, countless works of art and rare, expensive items were taken from their native regions and shipped to Rome.³⁰⁷ By the 1st century B.C., Rome received immeasurable resources from her provinces. From Spain alone, Rome received timber, perfumes, horses, gold, silver, iron, and salt.³⁰⁸ Such commodities attracted pirates and piracy grew to unprecedented proportions.

One of the factors forcing Rome to become a sea power was piracy.³⁰⁹ The Romans began to fight pirates in the region around the Tiber at least as early as the 4th century

306. Strabo, XVII.1.13. Trade with India occurred earlier. How & Wells note that Herodotus' mention of cotton (Herodotus, III.106.3) is the first Western reference to that plant, How & Wells, *Commentary on Herodotus*, vol. I, 290.

307. As evidenced by the bronze statues found off the Italian coast at Riace, which were being transported to Rome. Joseph Alsop, "Warriors from a Watery Grave," *National Geographic* 163 (June, 1983): 821-827. Bascom, *Deep Water*, 51.

308. Parker, "Classical Antiquity," 362.

309. The Romans developed their navy during the Punic Wars, especially the first Punic War, but they did not maintain a navy in times of peace when they counted on the navies of Roman allies to serve Rome, see Polybius, I.16.20. Thiel notes that only under Augustus does Rome acquire a permanent navy. Johannes H. Thiel, *Studies on the History of Roman Sea-Power in Republican Times* (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1946), 14.

B.C.³¹⁰ Prior to that time, the Romans were primarily concerned with affairs in Italy. The Etruscans, located in Etruria, the land north of the Tiber River, acted as pirates to protect their territory and their trade from the encroachments of the Greeks.³¹¹ The observation has been made that Etruscan ships, as evidenced from tomb paintings, appear better suited to piracy than to trade.³¹² Etruscans pirates were forced out as new forces grew within the area; first the Greeks, then the Romans.³¹³

One of the first state-organized efforts by the Romans to deal with pirates concerned the pirates of Liguria,³¹⁴ located to the north of Rome, in the general area of modern-

310. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 161.

311. Theodor Mommsen, *History of Rome* vol. 1, translated by William Dickson (London: R. Bentley, 1895), 182. Mauro Cristofani, *The Etruscans: A New Investigation*, translated by Brian Phillips (London: Orbis Publishers, 1979), 64. This view of Etruscans as pirates is slowly changing as terrestrial and maritime archaeological excavations increase our understanding of Etruscan trade practices, which indicate that trade played a vital role in the Etruscan economy. Elizabeth B. Shuey, "Etruscan Maritime Activity in the Western Mediterranean CA. 800-400 B.C.: An Archaeological Perspective on Historical Interpretations" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1982), 1-4, 108-9, 116-7.

312. Rougé, *Ships*, 152. The same was noted of the Phocaeen ships.

313. Scullard, *History of the Roman World*, 84.

314. Johannes H. Thiel, *A History of Roman Sea-Power Before the Second Punic War* (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Co., 1954), 343.

day Genoa, and consisting of several tribes of peoples in a region where the land was barren and poor.³¹⁵ The Romans organized their first naval squadron specifically for patrols against these pirates,³¹⁶ who harassed commerce on land throughout the Po Valley and at sea throughout the Ligurian, Tyrrhenian, and Mediterranean Seas, as far as the Pillars of Hercules.³¹⁷ This naval squadron numbered only ten ships, but eventually the pirates moved to less well protected areas.³¹⁸ The Romans fought the Ligurians for over one hundred years,³¹⁹ until they were finally pacified in the early 2nd century B.C.³²⁰ Once the west was under control, Rome turned her attention to the east.

The Romans were first motivated to interfere in the

315. Diodorus Siculus, IV.19.20.

316. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 164.

317. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 151.

318. Strabo, V.232. Thiel sees the movement of the pirates to other areas as an indication that Rome was beginning to develop naval strength some fifty years earlier than the First Punic War, which most scholars, like Starr, credit as the start of Rome's navy. Thiel, *Roman Sea-Power Before the Second Punic War*, 11. Chester G. Starr, *The Emergence of Rome as Ruler of the Western World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1953), 43.

319. Scullard, *History of the Roman World*, 170, 284-5.

320. Michael Crawford, *The Roman Republic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 90.

affairs of eastern areas because of the damage that Illyrian pirates inflicted on Roman trade.³²¹ Their early raids were carried out to obtain food, but as power shifted among city-states through the 4th and 3rd century B.C., the Illyrians took advantage of the turmoil to expand their raids from food-gathering sorties to raids aimed at acquiring wealth.³²² The Illyrians were limited in their raiding by the successful resistance of the Rhodians.³²³ But the decline of Rhodes allowed the Illyrians to resume raiding without opposition. They attacked both coastal targets and ships at sea.³²⁴ Pirates became such a menace to Roman shipping and travel that several wars were declared against the pirates beginning in the late 3rd, early 2nd centuries B.C.³²⁵ The Illyrians were perhaps the most important pirates of all the pirates who practiced close to Rome, because they were first group of pirates on which Rome declared war, setting the precedent for Roman dealings with pirates in the future (such as the Istri, already mentioned).

321. Polybius, II.44.1.

322. Dell, "Origin," 356, 358.

323. Polybius, III.16; IV.16-19.

324. Strabo, XI.2.12.

325. Polybius, II.8.

The coasts of Italy and all shipping to and from Rome were not safe from Illyrian raids. As the pirates grew in wealth and strength, they increased the amount of territory under their control.³²⁶ The growing audacity of the Illyrians, who were not bound by many laws nor greatly restricted by their monarchs, caused the Romans to worry.³²⁷ In a move that echoes the older practices of the Phoenicians, the Illyrians lured victims into a false sense of security by trading goods with locals, who got the better deal. As more local inhabitants flocked to the docks to take advantage of the bargains, the Illyrians took people and goods and ran for their ships and the sea.³²⁸ They either ransomed or sold their captives. The Illyrians were willing to plunder all, and if confronted, the pirate raid became a military raid, such as Epirus, in 231 B.C.³²⁹ The pirate situation had to be dealt with and the Romans were the only ones capable of doing anything at all to curtail the pirates.

326. Scullard, *History of the Roman World*, 173.

327. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 172; Crawford, *Roman Republic*, 57.

328. Polybius, II.5.

329. Polybius, II.5. The author said that the Illyrians were surprised to find 800 Gauls (mercenaries) in Epirus to defend against pirate attack. The Illyrians, rather than fleeing, besieged the place, received reinforcements from home and took Epirus.

The Romans tried the diplomatic and military methods to try to bring the Illyrians into order.³³⁰ Diplomacy, however, was not the answer to Rome's problems in the Adriatic. The envoys were harassed, and one was killed on the way home.³³¹ Rome resigned herself to armed intervention in Illyria in 229 B.C. Rome found Demetrius of Pharos (late 3rd century B.C.) helpful in their efforts to subdue the Illyrians. Demetrius was granted control of Illyria when Rome subjugated the region.³³² The Roman treaty dealt harshly with the Illyrians, limiting the number of ships Illyria could have and how far those ships could sail.³³³ Demetrius defied the limits imposed upon him by the Romans and set out with the Illyrians on pirate raids. In 219 B.C., Rome went to war for the second time against the Illyrians, and Demetrius was forced to flee for his life.³³⁴ Rome now controlled the eastern side of the Adriatic, and the region became the Roman province of

330. Polybius, II.8.

331. Polybius, II.8.

332. Polybius, II.11.

333. Polybius, II.12.

334. Polybius, III.18.

Illyricum.³³⁵ In the space of ten years, Rome reduced piracy in the Adriatic and increased the size of the territory under her control. Unfortunately, not all pirate problems would be resolved so quickly, nor so satisfactorily. The region erupted again under the Dalmatian pirates beginning in the mid-second century B.C.³³⁶ The eastern Mediterranean proved to be even more troublesome when it came to pirates.

Many areas of the Mediterranean had geographic features which contributed to piracy in that region. Much of the Mediterranean had thin soil cover, and that soil was littered with rocks.³³⁷ The uncertainties of the weather meant that, in many areas, food shortages were a common event.³³⁸ These geographical features seem to have been prominent in many regions in which piracy developed, and Illyria was a good example. Poverty and the lack of natural resources were major factors in spurring men to become pirates. When the land did not provide man with his basic needs he turned to

335. Scullard, *History of the Roman World*, 177; Magie, *Roman Rule*, 11.

336. Polybius, XXXII.9. The Dalmatian wars c. 157 B.C., again in 119 B.C., and in 78 B.C.

337. M. Cary, *The Geographic Background of Greek and Roman History* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1949), 13.

338. Starr, *Economic and Social*, 43.

piracy.

The Romans tried many methods for eliminating or avoiding pirates. The merchants attempted to sail together in convoys as a form of protection against pirate attack.³³⁹ Rome instigated winter sailing after the pirates grew strong enough to disrupt the bulk of the summer trade going to Rome.³⁴⁰ The Romans attempted to use both old and new methods to reduce the pirates.

After the subjugation of Illyria, Rome had her feet firmly planted at the door of the Greek world and was poised to step through. The invitation to intervene in Greek affairs came from the Rhodians in 201 B.C.³⁴¹ Rhodes and Attalus of Pergamum were fighting against Philip V of Macedon. Their combined forces did well against Philip V, but Philip split their forces and both Rhodes and Pergamum were defeated.³⁴² Rome had just defeated the Carthaginians in the Second Punic War, and Rhodes sought to make an alliance

339. Bascom, *Deep Water*, 60.

340. Semple, *Geography*, 580. Winter sailing may have started earlier, as evidenced by the winter sailing trip Julius Caesar took in 78 B.C. when he was captured by pirates.

341. Polybius, XVI.24.3.

342. Polybius, XVI.2-9. The Battle of Chios is an example of how Rhodes and Pergamum held their own against Philip V.

with them against Macedon. Philip was already at odds with Rome, in part because he wanted to control Illyria, which is perhaps why he took in the defeated Demetrius of Pharos.³⁴³ He had also made an alliance with Carthage against Rome in an attempt to gain Illyria.³⁴⁴ Rome sent an army to help Attalus and the Rhodians, thereby becoming intimately involved in the political and piratical affairs of the eastern Mediterranean. The Romans entered the area to control the Macedonians, but soon faced other problems, including the pirates of Cilicia.

Cilicia had geographic features similar to those of Illyria, and much of the area was known for its piracy. Ancient Cilicia, located in what is modern-day southwestern Turkey, was variously controlled by the Seleucids, the Ptolemies, and finally Rome.³⁴⁵ The Cilician coast is cut off from the interior by the Taurus Mountains. Strabo described the two regions that made up Cilicia, Cilicia Tracheia and Cilicia Pedias, which mean "rough" and "smooth", respectively. Cilicia Pedias consisted of alluvial plains, Cilicia Tracheia was rugged, with steep mountains and a

343. Frank W. Walbank, *Philip V of Macedon* (New York: Archon Books, 1967), 68-9.

344. Polybius, VII.11.

345. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 200-1. Diodorus Siculus noted control of Cilicia by: Persia, IV.11.2; Alexander, VIII.17.27; Macedon, IX.3.1; Ptolemy, XX.19.4.

narrow coast in places.³⁴⁶ It was difficult to travel through the mountains. There were no good roads, except in part of the old Persian Empire and elsewhere, beginning in the Roman Republic,³⁴⁷ so the most obvious route for transportation and communication was the sea. Lacking the natural resources to participate in legitimate trade, the Cilicians took to the sea as pirates to survive.

The Romans reduced the power of the Rhodians, the only authority in the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean sea that had been working to control piracy, and piracy, especially among the Cilicians, grew to unprecedented levels. Cilician geographical features provided not only a spur to piracy, but a haven. Cilicia Tracheia had a few, small harbors which were often too small for commerce.³⁴⁸ The entrances to several of the harbors were hard to find, which enabled the pirates to hide in a maze of small ports.³⁴⁹ The mountains

346. Strabo, xiv.5.1.

347. Crawford, *Roman Republic*, 211. The Via Appia dates to c. 312 B.C.

348. Robert L. Vann, "A Survey of Classical Harbors in Cilicia," in *Proceedings*, eds. Donald Keith & Toni Carrell (Society for Historical Archaeology, 1992), 76.

349. Vann, "Classical Harbors," 76.

themselves provided protection from land-based attacks.³⁵⁰ The pirates fortified the headlands and the gorges leading into the interior and provided themselves with formidable security against outside forces,³⁵¹ (pirates preferred death to surrender,³⁵² since captured pirates faced execution³⁵³). The main stronghold of the pirates was Coracesium. Lesser pirate havens were Zenicetus, Laertes, Charadrus, and Celenderis.³⁵⁴ Cilicia Tracheia offered protection and afforded a superb location on the coastal trade route for ships from Egypt and the Levant bound for the Aegean Sea, the Black Sea, and the western Mediterranean.³⁵⁵

The traffic that passed along the coast of Cilicia Tracheia provided the pirates with an abundance of money, cargo, and slaves. They prospered so greatly, and grew in such strength and numbers, that they increased the range of

350. Semple, *Geography*, 648; Meiggs, *Trees and Timber*, 147.

351. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 192-8.

352. Diodorus Siculus, XVIII.22.

353. Plutarch, *Julius*, 2.

354. Strabo, xiv.5.2-7. Other areas in the region were also pirate havens, including Lycia with the fortresses at Cragos and Anti-Cragos; Pamphylia had Olympos and Phaselis (Semple, *Geography*, 585).

355. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 205.

their operations, bringing them into conflict with Rome. The Cilician pirates formed an alliance with the Pontic king, Mithridates, who sought to enlarge his kingdom.³⁵⁶ Pontic kings in the early 2nd century B.C. had been allies to Rome but Mithridates VI turned against Rome. He developed a navy to help control the empire he created, and enlisted Cilician and Cretan pirates to serve as sailors³⁵⁷ when war broke out between Rome and Pontus (88-85 B.C.).³⁵⁸ Mithridates made effective use of his pirate allies.

The pirates had many ships at their disposal. The *camara*, a pirate vessel used in the Black Sea, was double-ended, meaning it could be rowed in either direction.³⁵⁹ It was manned by 25-30 men, but was still light enough to carry ashore during pursuit or at the onset of winter.³⁶⁰ The region also lacked suitable harbors, which was another reason

356. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 209.

357. Appian, *Sicelica*, trans. Horace White (London: William Heinemann, 1930), 6.1. Appian (born early 1st century A.D.).

358. Several Mithridatic wars were fought ending with Mithridates VI's death in 63 B.C. when Pompey's forces caused Mithridates' people to revolt and assassinate him.

359. Torr, *Ancient Ships*, 107.

360. Strabo, XI.2.12;

for carrying ships onto the shore.³⁶¹ Such small and portable vessels indicate that piracy was practiced on a small scale. These people may have lacked the resources to develop or obtain larger ships that could be used more effectively as pirate craft against larger merchant vessels. These ships were perhaps designed for other purposes, such as fishing, and were pressed into service as pirate ships whenever a suitable opportunity arose.

The *myoparo* was a broad-beamed craft, suitable for open sea travel, and it was large enough to carry the crew and booty.³⁶² The *myoparo* did not required highly skilled sailors, as did the *hemiolia*. The Cilicians were known to have used both the *hemiolia* and the *myoparo*.³⁶³ The *liburnian* discussed in the preceding chapter, not only operated as a pirate ship, but it also became a standard model for naval vessels of the Romans.³⁶⁴

The gradual incorporation of much of the eastern Mediterranean into the Roman sphere of influence reduced the number of slaves collected for Rome. Piracy provided a share

361. Strabo, XI.2.12.

362. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 30; Torr, *Ancient Ships*, 118.

363. Rougé, *Ships*, 109.

364. Warry, *Warfare*, 183.

of the slaves that were eventually sold in Rome, which is perhaps why the Romans avoided interfering with pirate operations for so long.³⁶⁵ The Romans preferred the "more civilized" (Hellenized) slaves from areas such as Egypt and Syria, as opposed to slaves from the Black Sea area.³⁶⁶ The most difficult jobs for slaves were in mines, such as the silver mines in Spain.³⁶⁷ These slaves worked hard, and in dangerous conditions and they needed to be replaced rather frequently.³⁶⁸ The number of slaves in agriculture increased over time.³⁶⁹ Eventually, the slave population grew too large, and rebellions marked the second and first centuries

365. Meiggs, *Trees and Timber*, 148; Rougé, *Ships*, 109. The authors agree that prisoners of war provided the bulk of slaves in any period. Harris and Jones cite breeding, and foundlings as important sources for slaves, especially after cessation of wars by Augustus. William V. Harris, "Towards a Study of the Roman Slave Trade," in *The Seaborne Commerce of Ancient Rome: Studies in Archaeology and History*, eds. J.H. D'Arms and E.C. Kopff (Rome: American Academy in Rome, 1980), 122. Jones, "Slavery," 9.

366. M. L. Gordon, "The Nationality of Slave Under the Early Roman Empire," in *Slavery in Classical Antiquity*, edited M. I. Finley (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, Ltd. 1960), 172.

367. Strabo, III.147. Strabo lists 40,000 men at the mines. Richardson notes that Strabo's words are vague, there may have been that many men in the area, but not all in the mines, and they may not have all been slaves. J.S. Richardson, "The Spanish Mines and the Development of Provincial Taxation in the Second Century B.C.," *Journal of Roman Studies* 66 (1976), 142-3.

368. Diodorus Siculus, V.36.

369. Jones, "Slavery," 8.

B.C.³⁷⁰

The Cilicians used many tactics to carry out their business of plundering. Posing as traders, spies scouted out the different ships and cargoes in a port. Earmarking the wealthiest ship, they captured it at high sea.³⁷¹ The Cilicians also charged tolls on all trade passing along the Cilician coast during Roman Republic.³⁷² The toll was, in effect, protection money paid to keep the ships safe from molestation by the pirates. The Cilician pirates reached a height of organization and professionalism rivaled by no other group of pirates.

The Romans drafted the first known laws that attempted to suppress piracy.³⁷³ The law, dated to approximately 100 B.C., was apparently inscribed on stone and distributed to

370. William Westerman, *The Slave Systems of Greek and Roman Antiquity* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1955), 63-6. Slave revolts = 198 B.C. in Carthage; 196 B.C. in Etruria; 135-132 B.C. in Sicily; 103-99 B.C. in Sicily; 73-72 B.C. in Italy, led by Spartacus.

371. Strabo, XIV.644.

372. Semple, *Geography*, 585.

373. Mark Hassall, Michael Crawford and Joyce Reynolds, "Rome and the Eastern Provinces at the End of the Second Century B.C.: The so-called 'Piracy Law' and a New Inscription from Cnidos," *Classical Journal* 74 (1978): 207.

several areas.³⁷⁴ The Romans declared Cilicia a praetorian province and subject to Roman law. The law called for various rulers of the area, such as the kings of Cyprus and Egypt, to unite and take action against pirates.³⁷⁵ These leaders were to prevent pirates from using their territories as bases or markets. The officials Rome sent to govern these areas had to swear an oath that they would not break this, or other, laws.³⁷⁶

Roman officials in many regions were not able to stop the pirates. People on land, as well as those at sea, were not safe from pirate raids. Pirates from the Black Sea raided land and ships alike.³⁷⁷ Travellers on any coast were liable to be kidnapped and ransomed. Cilician pirates abducted P. Claudius Pulcher, a prominent Roman official. He was eventually ransomed and set free.³⁷⁸ In 78 B.C., pirates

374. There has been much controversy over the date of the law. See Jones for a summary of the debate. Jones' finding in 1926 are corroborated by the findings of Hassall, et al. H. Stuart Jones, "A Roman Law Concerning Piracy," *Journal of Roman Studies* 16 (1926): 155-173.

375. There were no kings in Cyrene after 96 B.C., which helps to date the law. Jones, "Roman Law," 163.

376. Hassall, "Rome and the Eastern Provinces," 208. There was a 200,000 sesterii fine for each violation of the law.

377. Strabo, XI.2.12.

378. Strabo, XIV.6.6.

kidnapped Julius Caesar off the island of Pharmacussa, just north of Lesbos in the Aegean Sea.³⁷⁹ Again, diplomacy and litigation were not effective, and men were commissioned to reduce the pirates by destroying their bases.

Several men were entrusted with the job of extirpating piracy. Their efforts met with varying degrees of success. In 102 B.C., the Senate appointed M. Antonius to clear the seas of pirates. He apparently helped establish Cilicia as a province, but the pirate problem was not eliminated, and soon other men were appointed to eradicate them.³⁸⁰

In 74 B.C., Marcus Antonius, son of the earlier M. Antonius, was dispatched to the eastern Mediterranean to deal with the pirates and with Mithridates. The war which Antonius initiated did not proceed well for the Romans, he was defeated by the Cretan pirates. His surrender, a humiliation for a Roman commander, ended the war and the

379. Suetonius, "Julius Caesar," in *The Twelve Caesars*, trans. Robert Graves (London: Penguin Books, 1979), I.4. Suetonius (born c. 69 B.C.) wrote that the pirates asked a ransom of 20 talents, which Caesar claimed was too little and told them to demand 50 talents, which was paid. It is interesting to note that Suetonius wrote that Caesar was sailing in the winter. Perhaps the threat of pirates was so great that Caesar's ship was sailing in winter in hopes of achieving a safe passage. Plutarch related the story of Caesar and the pirates, and wrote that the seas were infested with pirates, Plutarch, *Julius*, 2.

380. Peter Garnsey, *Famine and Food Supply in the Graeco-Roman World: Responses to Risk and Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 204.

resulting treaty was an embarrassment to Rome.³⁸¹ M. Antonius returned to Rome without resolving the pirate situation.

Though the Cretans were victorious, the older men among the Cretans, in an attempt to curry favor with Rome to ward off retribution, sent emissaries to Rome in 69 B.C. The Roman Senate, however, declared that Rome would only look favorably upon Crete if the islanders gave up all their ships and sent hostages to Rome. They were to pay a four thousand talent indemnity for the war waged against M. Antonius. When the Cretans refused such terms, Rome, in 68 B.C. declared war a second time.³⁸²

Rome sent Q. Caecilius Metellus with proconsular powers to suppress piracy in Crete.³⁸³ Metellus appears to have started his campaign at the western end of the island, perhaps near Phalasarna.³⁸⁴ Metellus ruthlessly subjugated the island,³⁸⁵ sacking several towns, and killing all the

381. Diodorus Siculus, XL.1.

382. Diodorus Siculus, XL.3.

383. Diodorus Siculus, XL.3.

384. Frank Frost, "The Last Days of Phalasarna," *Ancient History Bulletin* (3.1 1986): 16.

385. Cassius Dio, XXXVI.18.

Cilicians he found in the Cretan town of Lappa.³⁸⁶ He was so harsh in his treatment of the Cretan pirates that many of them appealed to Pompey, who was also appointed to suppress piracy in the Mediterranean. The Cretan pirates surrendered to Pompey, who then ordered Metellus to leave them in peace. But Metellus, despite warnings from Pompey, did not stop until he subjugated the entire island of Crete.³⁸⁷

While Metellus was appointed to fight Cretan piracy, other acts of piracy forced the Romans to face the issue of piracy throughout the entire Mediterranean. The island of Delos was so thoroughly sacked and destroyed by pirates in 69 B.C. that the island never recovered.³⁸⁸ Pirates had attacked the Italian coast, including the port of Gaieta and the facilities at the mouth of the Tiber River.³⁸⁹ Piracy interfered with the business and the lives of everyone in the Mediterranean. Every region, no matter what the season, was

386. Cassius Dio, XXXVI.18. It is interesting to note that there were apparently many Cilicians in this town, and perhaps on the rest of Crete, as well. This perhaps attests to the close relationship between Cretan and Cilician pirates.

387. Cassius Dio, XXXVI.19.

388. Casson, *Ancient Trade*, 80. The island had been sacked in 87 B.C., but had been rebuilt. The island was left on its own after the raid in 69 B.C. and had withdrawn from the business world by 48 B.C. Gordon, "Nationality," 172.

389. Meiggs, *Trees and Timber*, 148.

threatened by pirates.³⁹⁰ They cut off the grain supply to Rome.³⁹¹ The problem was so great that the Roman Tribune, Gabinius, proposed that one man be invested with power sufficient enough to render the pirates harmless throughout the entire Mediterranean.³⁹²

In 67 B.C., Pompey was the man chosen and he was granted imperium, or supreme command, for a period of three years. His power included the ability to commandeer ships, men, and money, resources which he could use in any of the coastal regions and up to fifty miles inland, in any area in which Rome held power, throughout the Mediterranean.³⁹³ Pompey requisitioned over five hundred ships and sailors, as well as twelve thousand infantry. He divided the Mediterranean into thirteen regions and divided his forces among those regions. He then simultaneously swept his forces through all the regions and kept the pirates on the run, denying them any

390. Cassius Dio, XXXVI.20.

391. Cassius Dio, XXXVI.20-37.

392. Cassius Dio, XXXVI.23.4. Cassius Dio noted that the pirates were so organized that they came to each other's aid, XXXVI.21.

393. Plutarch, *Pompey*, 24-28.

opportunity to unite.³⁹⁴ According to Florus, a 1st century A.D. Roman historian, the entire eastern Mediterranean was enclosed as if by a net and Pompey's forces so overwhelmed the pirates that most surrendered without bloodshed.³⁹⁵ Pompey cleared the western Mediterranean within forty days, and the remainder of the Mediterranean within a year.³⁹⁶ The numerous men that he captured were relocated to regions that were unlikely to tempt the men back into piracy.³⁹⁷

It was a remarkable feat. He managed to curb the pirates, in the entire region, when no other power ever could. It showed the power and resources that were available to the Romans when they turned their attention full upon a subject. Unfortunately for the Mediterranean world, the attention that Pompey lavished on the pirate problem was not maintained by Rome. The might of Rome was sufficient to crush piracy, but the effort needed to be maintained over a

394. Pompey blockaded areas such as the Adriatic to deny the pirates a chance to unite. The pirates who did escape gathered in Cilicia, where Pompey had planned to face the majority of the pirates. John Leach, *Pompey the Great* (Dover, NH: Croom Helm Ltd., 1978), 71-2.

395. Lucius Annaeus Florus, *Epitome of Roman History*, translated by Rev. John Selby Watson (London: George Bell and Sons, 1889), III.6.7-14.

396. Plutarch, *Pompey*, 27; Cassius Dio, XXXVI.20-37.

397. Plutarch, *Pompey*, 28. Plutarch cited 20,000 prisoners, indicating a large number of men involved in piracy.

long period of time. Rome was unwilling or unable to keep up the pressure on the pirates, and they returned as soon as it was safe to do so. Piracy returned when Rome found herself occupied by other matters.

Epilogue

The political uncertainties of the late Republican Period (133-31 B.C.) allowed piracy to return. Pompey's accomplishment was soon undone, as new men turned to piracy and they increased their power in the eastern Mediterranean by 55 B.C.³⁹⁸ The cyclical nature of piracy, evident from the earliest mention of piracy, continued; in times of weak central authority, piracy increased, times in which a strong central authority was present, piracy diminished. The Roman period, down to the time of Pompey, experienced all phases of the cycle. Augustus limited pirate activity but pirates continued to carry out raids, and the power struggles in Rome, especially from 69 A.D. onward meant that piracy erupted whenever the controlling authority was not strong enough to cope with the pirates.³⁹⁹ Ormerod noted that pirate attacks plagued the Mediterranean from the 15th to the 19th centuries.⁴⁰⁰ Only in the modern age has piracy been reduced to a minor, infrequent annoyance in the Mediterranean, as will be discussed shortly. The economic factors that drove men in the centuries before Christ to piracy for survival,

398. Cassius Dio, XXXIX.56.1.

399. Tacitus, *The Histories*, trans. Kenneth Wellesley (London: Penguin Books, 1964), 3.47. Tacitus (born c. A.D. 56).

400. Ormerod, *Piracy*, 16-17, 28, 38

are still extant in many regions of the world, as seen in the increase in piracy in some regions of the world today.⁴⁰¹

The study of ancient piracy may be aided by the study of modern piracy. It is interesting that pirate operations have changed very little in the two-thousand years since Pompey's pirate war.⁴⁰² Modern governmental agencies are slow to respond to pirate attacks, and often can do little against the pirates.⁴⁰³ Many modern governments simply ignore the problem altogether (except for the profits, which they welcome).⁴⁰⁴ The worst instances of modern piracy are in regions that are underdeveloped and have a high poverty rate.⁴⁰⁵ Piracy is still an alternative to relieving poverty,

401. Piracy has been increasing throughout the world in the 1990's. John Grissim, "Yo-Ho-Ho, a Ski Mask and Gun: Modern-Day Pirates are Terrorizing the High Seas," *Washington Post*, 22 June 1997, C1.

402. Grissim notes that the 225 reported pirate attacks in 1995, worldwide, included attacks against moored vessels and against ships in both coastal and deep water. Grissim, "Yo-Ho-Ho," C1.

403. A new agency has been created to specifically deal with piracy, the Regional Piracy Centre, in Malaysia. Grissim, "Yo-Ho-Ho," C4.

404. The Brazilian government does nothing to curb the high rate of pirate attacks in Brazilian harbors or waters. Grissim, "Yo-Ho-Ho," C4.

405. Southeast Asia has the highest incident rate for piracy, followed by the Americas. Grissim, "Yo-Ho-Ho," C4.

although it is now universally condemned.⁴⁰⁶

Inscriptions provide information concerning the prices of many different commodities over time. Shipwreck excavations supply details on the types of commodities that were shipped throughout antiquity. Over twelve hundred shipwrecks have been discovered, by 1992, in the Mediterranean,⁴⁰⁷ and more than half of them have been assigned reasonably accurate dates.⁴⁰⁸ Shipwrecks can delineate the types, and perhaps the amount, of goods that were moving by sea, and a comparison of prices and cargoes gives a tentative idea of what a merchant ship may have been worth; providing a basic idea of how much money pirates might gain when they captured a ship. The figures for wages throughout antiquity are scanty, but some information is available, and the comparison of the wages earned and estimated ship/cargo values indicates that piracy was a more profitable endeavor than legitimate employment. "Ancient

406. In 1958, the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea adopted convention articles related to piracy. These articles defined piracy and designated who had the authority to deal with pirates. Many jurists believe that the 1958 Articles need to be updated. Barry Hart Dubner, *The Law of International Sea Piracy* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1980), 8-10.

407. The wrecks are dated up through 1500 AD. A. J. Parker, "Cargoes, Containers and stowage: The Ancient Mediterranean," *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 21.2 (1992): 89.

408. Hopkins, "Models" 97.

piracy should itself be recognized as a form of commercial enterprise."⁴⁰⁹ An enterprise that was carefully monitored by the ruling parties of ancient city-states. On occasion the city-state, as an official entity,⁴¹⁰ caused the captured of ships and goods in an manner that can only be considered piratical.

Archaeology may one day provide more conclusive evidence of how pirates operated in the Mediterranean throughout antiquity. The discovery of ancient shipwrecks is an ongoing process that will continue to provide archaeologists with information about maritime cultures in the ancient Mediterranean, especially as the innovations in deep water technologies continue to improve our ability to look at previously unstudied areas of ocean floor. In 1997, explorer Robert Ballard, along with his archaeological director Anna McCann, released information on eight shipwrecks they had documented off the coast of Tunisia.⁴¹¹ These wrecks date

409. Cohen, *Athenian Economy*, 143.

410. The Byzantine authorities seized ships that sailed in or out of the Bosphorus. Aristotle, "Economics," in *Metaphysics*, trans. Hugh Tredennick (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1933), ii 1346b. Cyzicus and the Calchedonians also seized ships passing their coasts when those cities were short of supplies. Demosthenes, v.25; i.6

411. Ballard and McCann began their surveying project in 1988. Ken Ringle, "An Ocean Floor Show," *Washington Post*, 31 July 1997, A1, A12.

from the 3rd century B.C. through the 20th century A.D. Ballard has identified the oldest ship as a merchant ship that carried a cargo of bronze vessels and amphorae.⁴¹² Ballard is convinced that more ships sailed deep water routes in the ancient period than has previously been thought.⁴¹³ The technology now exists to access deep water wrecks,⁴¹⁴ wrecks that have, for the most part, never been looted by sport divers or damaged by fishermen. As more and more deep water sites are discovered and studied, then more information concerning pirate activities may develop, providing a clearer picture of piracy in the Ancient Mediterranean.⁴¹⁵

Future research should include a re-examination of the shipwrecks that have already been discovered, with the aim to evaluate them with the specific goal of determining what

412. Ringle, "Ocean Floor Show," A12.

413. Ringle, "Ocean Floor Show," A12.

414. Ballard notes that the range for exploration of the sea floor has expanded from 200 feet, the limit to which scuba divers can safely reach, to 2,800 feet, the limit to which remote operated vehicles and submarines can reach. This will allow researchers to examine more of the ocean floor for shipwrecks than has ever been possible before. Ballard also writes that improved sonar and photographic technology can produce maps of wreck sites in a few hours instead of a few months. Robert Ballard, "High-Tech Search for Roman Shipwrecks," *National Geographic* 193 (April 1998), 32-41.

415. Ballard plans to do a study of the Black Sea, where he expects to find ships in excellent conditions due to the lack of oxygen in the deep waters of the Black Sea. Ballard, "High-Tech Search," 40.

information the wrecks might provide concerning piracy. That information could be related to trade; investigation of the correlations between wreck site and known pirate haunts; and re-examination of possible causes for the ship's sinking. Parker lists fifty-two Mediterranean wrecks in his article on ancient cargoes, these wrecks are the ones that have published reports on the wrecks.⁴¹⁶ There are countless wrecks that have been examined, even excavated, that have no associated published materials.⁴¹⁷ Future research should include the examination of unpublished reports or site notes so that previously unavailable information can be incorporated into our growing knowledge of piracy in the ancient Mediterranean.

416. Twenty-two of the wrecks are before the 1st century A.D. Parker, "Cargoes, Containers," 96-98.

417. Katzev excavated a 4th century B.C. shipwreck off the coast of Cyprus in the late 1960s. Except for a few articles in *National Geographic*, no final report has been published. Katzev found spear point under the ships hull during excavation and he posited pirates as a possible cause of the ship's sinking. He later attributed the sinking to foul weather. It would be interesting to read the final report and see how he reached his conclusions. Michael L. Katzev, "Resurrecting the Oldest Known Greek Ship" *National Geographic* 142 (November, 1970): 841-857.

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