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Peirates, Leistai, Boukoloi, and Hostes Gentium of the Classical World : The Portrayal of Pirates in Literature and the Reality of Contemporary Piratical Actions.

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Chapter the First
An Introduction to Piratical Studies

My honors thesis addresses three things. I address first the history of Classical piracy, specifically, piratical and pseudo-piratical actions lurking beneath the description of events; second, the usage of language, the connotations of words used for pirates and other linguistic portrayals of pirates and piracy; and finally, through literary analysis, how literary pirates compared to real pirates, what the authors thought about pirates, how pirates could be used to portray others, and what role pirates played in society. Through these three points, I intend to prove that the pirate's role in the Classical Mediterranean was much greater than usually supposed.

It has been made abundantly apparent through modern scholarship that piracy was a prevalent force throughout the classical period. Thus, a mere re-hashing of the same old pirate stories gains us little. What is new in this work is the combination of purely fictional texts with the histories of the times in which the literature is set. Furthermore, this work shows how histories of piracy use designations of pirates in problematic ways. By this combination, I intend to show how literature betrays contemporary thought.

It is important to understand that the modern concept of piracy was not the same as the ancient concept of piracy. Rather than falling into clearly defined categories, maritime violence spanned a continuum between the fully legitimate and the fully illegitimate, with most instances somewhere in the middle. In all cases, the question of whether this violence was perceived as warfare or as piracy depended upon cultural issues, e.g., who was the agent of the violence and who was the recorder. For this reason, the modern reader has difficulty defining these instances of violence which fall along this

continuum, not because the Greeks were unsure of what to call them, but because the modern reader is unsure of how to interpret the acts of violence to understand them in a modern conception of piracy.

We also need to establish that the vast majority of the primary sources were written by Romans and Greeks, so the works often leave other peoples and cultures holding the short end of the stick. By the time that piracy is widely considered to be reprehensible, we see authors primarily ascribing the acts of piracy to 'others,' that is, non-Greeks and non-Romans who have come into conflict with the Greeks and Romans.

Finally, it is useful to examine the differences between our historic examples on one hand and the fictional opinions and portrayals of pirates on the other. This comparison shows how close to reality literary examples could be, even though the same examples usually show differences. From this comparison, we can try to surmise why ancient authors chose to portray pirates in manner that they did.

Chapter the Second.
On Language and Other Perils

Language and translations are clearly pitfalls that disrupt how we can look at the textual evidence and the purpose of the writers. To properly examine the texts, we need to have a full understanding of what the original words can mean and what connotations can get lost in translation.

Words Used for Pirates

We should look first at the words the ancient authors used for pirates. According to writers like Henry Ormerod and Philip de Souza,[1] there were three words used for pirate: λῃστής, πειρατής, and the much rarer καταποντιστής. The only Latin term I have seen is *pirata*, obviously derived from the Greek πειρατής, though the Romans occasionally referred to pirates as *hostes gentium* or *iusti hostes*.[2] These terms are not all contemporaneous with each other, however. The term λῃστής was used to refer to pirates before the other two terms came into use, πειρατής by the third or fourth century BCE, and the uncommon καταποντιστής, not used except by orators in the fifth through third century BCE.

Thus, when the translator puts in our English equivalent, we find it laden with all the English connotations that go with pirate vs. privateer, bandit vs. brigand, and all our other synonyms with various shades of meaning, such as buccaneer, sea rover, raider, or Viking. One theory implicit in this method of translation is that the ancient historians knew the difference between bandits, pirates, privateers, guerillas, and legitimate acts of

[1] Ormerod, p. 59
[2] 'enemies of the people of the world,' and 'enemies of the law,' respectively. see Ormerod, p. 60 for some

plundering in war, but could not fully express what they meant, as the language lacked the words to do so.

However, the Greeks rarely shied away from coining new words, borrowing words from other languages, or generally adding to their existing vocabulary. Furthermore, we have plenty of evidence for words only found used by one author and it is difficult to say what words might have been in usage and simply not used by any of our ancient sources. For example, Herodotus uses words like 'μηδίζω'[3] or 'τά μαγοφόνια,'[4] neither of which, logically, can be an 'original' Greek word. Surely, if Herodotus had a desire to express minute differences, he could have coined his own words or phrases, as he may have done with the word 'προδέκτορα'[5] which is a word never used by any source except Herodotus. Yet, Herodotus does not use any coined or slang words for pirates, and neither does anybody else for centuries. This implies that the words we know about were sufficient for what was needed to be said. Additionally, it means that either the Greek words are more complex than our words, or that their meanings have been adjusted by various translators.

Earlier in my research, I had theorized that the usage of these terms reflect a change in the perception of piracy, where each later term connotes a more pejorative sense. Following Ormerod, the words have developed from being neutral to pejorative over many years.[6] Yet, Avidov is convinced that these terms, (λιστής and πειρατής), indeed carried the pejorative sense and never referred to neutrals.[7] He believes that all

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terms used to describe pirates.
[3] 'to mede-ize,' 'to side with the Medes,' basically a verb of turning traitor, probably most specific to the Persian wars, but probably also used later.
[4] The slaughter of the Magians, and also the Greek name of a Persian festival.
[5] 'fore-shower'
[6] See Ormerod, pp. 59-60
[7] Or rather, he is firmly *un*convinced that they did *not*. See Avidov, 7

claims of piratical respectability are deferred to distant times or distant places. Avidov prefers to judge such cases as a difference between what is morally justifiable and economically justifiable.[8] He appears to think that pirates recognized their actions as being morally wrong, but proceeded in their actions anyway, due to an economic need or other such drive for piratically-obtained goods.

From this perhaps we can conclude that piracy has always been considered immoral to the *people upon whom it was inflicted*, but perhaps it was not considered to be a bad thing by people when it was inflicted on their enemies. In Herodotus, for example, our only example of a pirate portrayed positively is Dionysus of Phocaea.[9] Even then, the word[10] is not nonpejorative, but Herodotus needs to ameliorate the pejorative with a disclaimer, where Dionysus of Phocaea only attacks the shipping of non-Greeks. Thus even when the character is portrayed positively, the word still has negative connotations.

However, ignoring connotations for the time being, we should look at any possible semantic differences between the words. If we consider these three words from a linguistic standpoint, it is entirely possible to look at these words not as the nouns we see them to be, but as forms of the verbs from which they have come. All three of our words are created either from participial forms of a more common verb or from a more common noun. Thus, it may be logical to presume that at one time, there were people who could identify the pirates only as "the guys who took my stuff!" and the name stuck. It was in the best interest of piracy to keep one's site of origin secret, so that retribution

[8] See Avidov, pp. 10-11
[9] Who, in one translation is called a 'pirate,' and in another a 'privateer.' This illustrates some of the difficulties of the situation perfectly. See below, pg. 24. for more on Dionysus.
[10] A form of λῃστής

would not follow. It was only later that the word for 'the takers' would become 'an unidentifiable person who takes stuff.'

If we look at 'ο πειρᾶτής coming from πειράω, 'to make an attempt,'[11] 'ο ληϊστήρ[12] coming from 'η ληΐς, 'booty, usually livestock,' and 'ο καταποντιστής coming from καταποντίζω 'to throw into the sea;' we can surmise that our three words for pirate had semantic differences, where 'ο πειρᾶτής is involved with stealing women, 'ο ληϊστήρ with stealing livestock, and 'ο καταποντιστής with robbing ships at sea. From the quantity of words used in the literature, it seems as though 'ο πειρᾶτής gradually underwent a semantic shift into a meaning of pirate close to our modern-day meaning. However, this gradual shift happened primarily after the events which I will outline in the λογιοι of the next chapter.

From this linguistic debate, I hope we can conclude that the Greek language was not lacking in words to define the state of affairs, but, regardless of what other words could have been used, neither Herodotus nor Thucydides bothered to use them. This implies that they were either uninterested in the subject[13] or that the words they had were sufficient for the task of writing. Alternatively, we might be able to assume that these words are used primarily to describe, and they were used as substantives only when there was a dearth of information about the people in question.

'Ο βουκόλος

That being established, I became mystified upon finding the word 'οι βουκολοι, 'the herdsmen,' which Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus use to refer to a group of river-

[11] Often upon a woman, i.e. 'attempt to seduce, make an attempt upon a woman's honor,' as found in Liddell and Scott, pp. 1354-1355
[12] This is the earlier, Homeric, form.

bandits on the Egyptian delta.[14] We are first told about these river bandits in Achilles Tatius's *Leucippe and Clitophon* when we are told that "this land was the coast of Egypt, then wholly infested by robbers."[15] The word used here for robbers is λησταὶ, as Clitophon names the inhabitants of coastal Egypt. However, as we read on, we start having difficulties with the translation, especially when Achilles Tatius starts using *leistes* and *boukoloi* interchangeably.

The English translation is less help than it could be in deciphering the words used in this passage. When the couple is captured by these delta bandits, our translator[16] gives 'robbers' and 'buccaneer' for λῃσταῖς and λῃστὴς, respectively. One presumes that our translator is trying out variety, yet he does so oddly, as elsewhere in the text, the only words he translates as 'buccaneer' are forms of 'Ο βουκόλος, never again a form of 'ο λῃστὴς. The problem then is trying to figure out what the author and the translator are trying to convey. Is the Greek text trying to convey that these βουκολοι are piratical by nature, or just that these particular βουκολοι are acting like pirates?

'Ο βουκόλος is also translated as 'herdsman' in similar contexts, to create further bafflement on my part.[17] Winkler gives "Rangers" as the definition in Achilles Tatius's tale and J. R. Morgan calls them "Herdsmen" in the writings of Heliodorus.[18] According to the Greek and English Lexicon, however, 'ο βουκολος can mean either 'a man tending kine,' 'the gadfly,' or rarely: 'a worshiper of Dionysus in bull-form.'[19] None of these

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[13] But nevertheless thought that it was important to write about it.
[14] Xenophon of Ephesus calls an earlier group of these bandits ποιμένοι, or 'shepherds'
[15] Achilles Tatius, III. 5
[16] Referring to the translator of the Loeb Edition, S. Gaselee
[17] Also in the Loeb edition.
[18] Translation of *Leucippe and Clitophon* by John. J. Winkler, found in Reardon, *Collected Ancient Greek Novels.*
[19] L&S p.324 I did not find a Latinized version of the word in the Oxford Latin dictionary.

seem particularly piratical in meaning. By the definitions found in the Lexicon, there is no association of this word with piracy.[20]

But when does the sentence, "Oh no, it's the cattle-herders!" come to take on the sinister aspect that it evidently does take in the writings of Achilles Tatius? It was not likely to be misunderstood by his audience, but can Achilles Tatius really be intending to call doom upon all the cattle-herders in Roman Egypt? In this work, we have a word that does not mean 'pirate' used for precisely that purpose, and it is difficult to understand why.

Some enlightenment arrives when examining contemporary history. Appian does use this word to refer to a specific band of Egyptian rebels who revolted against the Roman garrisons. There are no references to piracy in his account of these rebels, though. However, the fact that this word was used as a substantive already tells us more about these herdsmen. We now know that Achilles Tatius, et. al., are referring to a specific group of ne'er-do-wells that were operating in the Nile Delta.[21] This also makes subsequent scenes, when the hero of the story is able to rally a nearby Roman garrison to his aid with remarkable ease, much more logical. Clitophon's ability to tell the garrison where a section of the rebel army is camped is much more useful to the Romans than simply telling the garrison that there were cattle-ranchers in the delta.[22] This scene, where the hero rallies the garrison, shows that the *boukoloi* were already troublesome for the garrison and thus were guilty of some other wrongdoings as well.

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[20] Liddell and Scott, p.324
[21] We would probably assume this anyway, but it is nice to know a bit more about them.
[22] Where cattle had been raised almost as long as cattle had been domesticated in Egypt. See Casson, *Everyday Life in Ancient Egypt,* throughout.

Perhaps Achilles Tatius intends to use this episode as a way of vilifying these herdsmen in particular, or perhaps he is trying to make a broad judgment. I find it more likely that the former is the case. The attribution of a piratical nature to these βουκόλοι both makes them seem more dangerous and vilifies them further. Furthermore, this band of Egyptians seems to have built quite a savage reputation for themselves in the classical world.

As seen in Heliodorus, however, these raiders are given this name of *boukoloi* even in their 6th century BCE setting, differing from Chariton's 4th century BCE setting and referral to 'shepherds' instead of 'herdsmen.' As Achilles Tatius sets his story in the second century CE, I think we must assume that the usage of this word is due to the period of writing rather than the period of setting. Apparently the word used for these Egyptians has changed in the years between the writings of Chariton and those our later two authors.

Achilles Tatius quite possibly tells us more about these Egyptian rebels in a chance encounter than the historians do in their attempts to describe all of history.[23] Heliodorus tells us that the 'herdsmen' were apt to brigandage, and that the marshes of the Nile delta attracted men of that, i.e. bandit, class.[24] Achilles Tatius, however, delivers this compact, vicious description of the βουκόλοι seen through the eyes of Clitophon. He neatly summarizes their lifestyle, their merciless ways, and their general danger to humanity in a way that Heliodorus never really does.

Thus, we see this word, βουκολοι, coming to have a different meaning than it originally had, and being used to describe piracy. However, the difficulties surrounding

[23] To be fair to the majority of the historians I have used, most of them write before this period in which the herdsmen were active. However, Appian, at least, does not pay much attention to them.

its translation and can mislead us about their actual activities. It is not clear from the texts whether or not the *boukoloi* used boats to attack their victims. Nor is it clear whether these *boukoloi* made a practice of piracy and robbery or if these particular bands were simply being opportunistic. The actions of the Roman garrison commander, however, as well as the historical evidence, suggest that some degree of piracy/banditry was common practice for the *boukoloi*.

Now we have discussed what different words that could be used for pirate meant and what other connotations could be present. However, the way authors try to use language to portray characters in their books is a matter for other chapters entirely. Before getting into the literature though, it is important to establish what the historians did have to say about piracy.

[24] Heliodorus I.6

Chapter the Third
Classical and Archaic History

In looking at the historians, it is imperative that we attempt to examine the issues they address without applying too many of our modern conceptions. So, in Herodotean style, my approach will be to string along a series of case studies, or λογιοι,[25] each of which relates to the subject of piracy or warfare. Each of these λογιοι illustrates some aspects of maritime plundering. In these λογιοι, I will show the salient points of each situation in its historical context.

The Odyssey and Dark Age Piracy[26]

At some point, before and during the Greek Dark Ages, 'piracy' had been a respected profession, the mark of a skilled war-leader, sailor, strategist and trader. In a harsh land, often the easiest way to acquire something desired was to take it from the weak. Piracy could certainly have good results for the pirates and their families, who could benefit from the piratically-obtained goods.

Odysseus claims to be a lost pirate when talking to King Alcinoos,[27] yet is accused of being a pirate by the Cyclops Polyphemos.[28] Here we see instances of piracy displayed both in a non-pejorative and in a pejorative fashion. Claiming to be a Cretan pirate[29] and veteran of the Trojan War, Odysseus was at once giving himself an excellent

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[25] Λογιοι is the term often used to refer to Herodotus's 'mini-stories.' Thus, the term is being reused to refer a number of similar stories.

[26] I use the term 'Dark Age' to refer to that period between the fall of the Mycenean culture in the 12th century BCE and the emergence of the Euboean trade and colonization in the middle of the 8th century BCE.

[27] Homer. *Odyssey* XIV.199 and following, for Odysseus's tale

[28] Ibid, IX.255

[29] Herodotus accepts that the Cretans aided the Spartan Menelaus in the sack of Ilium despite the fact that the Spartans had not joined them in their earlier attack on Sicily (Herodotus VII.169-VII.171). Furthermore,

cover story while still representing himself as a respectable figure, someone used to both wealth and command.[30] Polyphemos, however, sees those who sail around 'bringing trouble'[31] not as respectable warriors, but as riffraff (and a threat to his livelihood, as Polyphemos is a herdsman).

We can assume Odysseus's claim to being a pirate is non-pejorative, for he was in the power of the king and not likely to intentionally raise any suspicion by claiming to be either a criminal or a man with an unusual past. Furthermore, he portrays himself as a man of the sea, a profession that was probably well respected by the Phaeacians.[32] Thus, it is most likely that our "cleverest of the Greeks" simply found himself a new identity, complete with necessary details.

Now we must ask ourselves: "What is really going on here, then?" On the one hand, we have tales (supported by archaeological evidence) of Dark Age settlements moving away from the coast (presumably because of pirates)[33] and settling at defensive strongpoints inland, even if they still maintained ports on the coast. Athens with her port of Piraeus, Corinth with her dual ports of Kenchreai and Lecheion, and Argos and its port of Nauphlio are all prime examples of this phenomenon. It was the same throughout the Mediterranean from Greece and Asia Minor to the western coast of Italy. The Greeks, the Thracians, the Macedonians, and the Etruscans all cast a leery eye on that dangerous coastline.

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he states that the Cretan aid was of 'high quality.' Crete itself was known to be a base of pirates, so anyone claiming to be from Crete automatically conferred upon himself some association with piracy. Incidentally, the word used here is a form of λιστής

[30] He names himself as the leader of a band of pirates that customarily sailed against Egypt, the wealthiest country in the world.

[31] Homer, *Odyssey* IX.255

[32] The people of King Alcinoos. The people of King Alcinoos seem to be especially influenced by the sea as their princes all have names with rather nautical flavorings.

On the other hand, in the Archaic and Classical periods, the Greeks and Phoenicians began settling islands and coastlines around the Mediterranean. Frequently, these colonies were established easily enough, although after the founding, the colonists had to defend themselves from savage marauders from inland: the same peoples who were afraid to settle on the coast. This means that we have some groups of people who are avoiding settlement of the shore, due to piracy, and other groups of people apparently settling this vacated shoreline with little fear of pirates.[34] The fact that we have these occurrences implies that the later settlers are either the pirates themselves, or people who can deal with any piratical trouble.

We have a later parallel example for this migration inland, as taken from Herodotus. Early in the fifth century BCE, Aristagoras of Miletus 'recruited a band of volunteers and set sail for Thrace.'[35] His colonization goals were clear to Herodotus: he wanted a stronghold where he could hide in case the Persians were able to retake Miletus (which they did in 494 BCE). He seems to have succeeded in this endeavor, but then fell to warring with the native Thracians. His death seemed particularly ignominious to Herodotus, as 'while he was investing a town, […] the Thracians destroyed his army, and Aristagoras himself was one of the casualties.'[36] To us, Aristagoras seems like either an invader or a pirate, but to Aristagoras and Herodotus, this activity seems like standard operating procedure. This is another example of a Greek expedition not fearing the shore, but the Thracian natives settling inland. However, the Thracians are not settled so far inland that Aristagoras does not feel the need to attack a nearby Thracian town.

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[33] Thucydides, at least, gives this as the cause of the migration. See Thucydides, I.7 "Because of the prevalence of piracy, the ancient cities […] were built at some distance from the sea."
[34] See the introduction of Thucydides for more information, particularly I.7
[35] Herodotus, V.126

Whether we now can name all the Greeks marauding sea peoples or not is uncertain. We do not know if the Greeks colonizing the shore of Thrace were the same people as the pirates who killed and plundered along the shoreline. However, it is reasonable to suppose that the Thracians identified them as such, and attacked them accordingly. The surprise attacks by Thracians on almost any Greek expedition in Thrace seem to indicate that the Thracians operated on a kill-first, ask-questions-later basis when it came to the Greeks, which implies a Thracian assumption that all Greeks were the enemy.[37]

This assumption might not have been unreasonable for the Thracians. After all, the only motive bringing the Greeks into their part of the world was profit, primarily through piracy. The Greeks had the best ships and best crews, so it would have been impossible for the Thracians to contest them at sea. If the Thracians settled the coast, they would be easy prey for pirates. Thus we have the Thracians, the 'most numerous people in the entire world,'[38] helplessly watching the Greeks occupy their coast.

The Thracians were not always and forever set back into the hinterland, however. Later they maintained some cities on the coast, and built modest navies. The Persian king Xerxes incorporated the Thracians into his army: "Some of them lived along the coast, and they went along with their ships, while the inland tribes […] were all forcibly conscripted into the land army."[39] Yet I have found no examples of Thracian expeditions against any Greek city-state except for those Greek colonies along the northern coast of the Aegean. As these colonies could be reached by land, it is apparent that they never

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[36] Ibid V.126

[37] See the both the beginning and the end of Book V of Herodotus, where the Thracians attack the Greeks multiple times.

[38] Paraphrased from Herodotus V.3 "The population of Thrace is the largest in the world"

made an overseas expedition. While the Thracians were able to meet a Greek army in a land battle, they were not able to respond to attacks by sea.

In the Dark Age Aegean, piracy was an acceptable means of obtaining wealth, or at least not an unacceptable one.[40] At this time, "the blend of piracy and trade among early Phoenicians, Greeks, and Etruscans belonged to a primitive, undeveloped period when warfare was chronic, when stranger meant enemy, and when buccaneers executed a crude form of navigation act designed to crush competition in the market of the home sea."[41] Dark Age 'piracy' was a means of making a living. However, possibly by the eighth century, and definitely by the sixth century, we see that this form of plundering was ceasing to be considered a legitimate activity.

Euboea and the Piratical Industry

In the early Aegean, piracy was a substantial economic activity. It was an activity that provided both necessities and luxuries to the peoples who often had no other way to procure these items. This piratical 'industry' systematically alleviated the pressures of overpopulation and insufficient food production by sending people abroad and bringing in goods from elsewhere. The piratical industry no doubt began soon after merchant ships first took to the seas. In addition, we have countless little hints at the presence of a greater and later piratical industry than is widely claimed.

For instance, John Boardman expresses some mild bafflement about the amount of Euboean trade to the Near East during the eighth and ninth centuries BCE "It is difficult to see what eighth-century Greece had to offer [the Near East], except perhaps

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[39] Ibid, VII.110

[40] Provided that one was not the victim of the aforementioned piracy.

slaves…"[42] In almost the same breath, Boardman mentions another famed quality of the Greeks when he says that many Greeks traveled east to serve as mercenaries.[43]

Now there we have it. A nation with a surplus of fighting men par excellence, engaging in vibrant trade with prosperous Phoenicia[44], with no identifiable surplus of any valuable domestic product. In fact, the only plausible suggested exports are slaves. To me, at least, this suggests a piratical industry, where the Euboeans may have engaged both in a plundering of their weaker neighbors in Greece and in seizure of cargoes genuinely valuable to the Phoenicians: Alashiyan[45] copper, Egyptian or Sicilian grain, Etruscan iron, Iberian metals, and of course, slaves. The only materials of Greek origin from this era known to be found in Phoenicia were the Greeks themselves and their pottery.[46]

The establishment of a piratical industry concentrating on slavery has some historical equivalents; prisoners of war were often sold into slavery in the ancient world. Feuding Slavic tribes sold prisoners of war to Greeks, then to Romans in the Ancient Mediterranean. We do not hear about these Slavic tribes, between the Roman conquest and the Byzantine withdrawal, but during the Middle Ages, they appeared to carry on a similar practice in selling slaves to the Venetians in exchange for weaponry, just as West Africans would later on. It is possible that the Euboeans were participating in a similar

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[41] Semple, p. 134. Semple writes in 1916, but while her article is shaky on some of the details and dating conventions, her basic premise is sound.
[42] Boardman, p. 65.
[43] Ibid, p. 65
[44] The city in question was Al Mina, the Phoenician port city at the mouth of the Orontes River.
[45] Alashiya was the ancient name for Cyprus
[46] According to Boardman, the only ways we know of an Euboean presence in Phoenicia are large conglomeration of pottery vessels of a Greek (specifically Euboean) style in one section of the city (Al Mina) with little evidence of any of this pottery elsewhere in the city. Had the Phoenicians been trading for Greek pottery, then we would expect to find a wider, more even distribution of pottery throughout the city. Instead, the evidence points to the creation of a 'Greek Quarter.'

activity: feuding with other Greek peoples in order to procure slaves to sell in Phoenician markets. It is the active trading role of Euboeans that makes them stand out in this example.

We could cast some aspersions on the theory of a Euboaean piratical industry if it were not the Greeks traveling to Al Mina, but the Phoenicians traveling to Euboea and picking up some Euboean pottery, and various other local products. The idea of the Phoenicians as the instigators of this trade is certainly not out of the realm of possibility. After all, Herodotus has the Phoenicians trading with the Argives long before the Trojan War.[47] However, the archeological evidence shows that there was a Greek population in Al Mina, as unmistakably Greek pottery has been found almost exclusively in a certain section of town, not just for a certain time period, but for many years.[48] One might still argue that the Greeks were the merchants and factors, but goods were carried in Phoenician bottoms.[49]

However, knowing the naval reputation of the Greeks and realizing that Euboea is an island,[50] this theory does not seem to hold a lot of weight. Also, given that Pithekoussai was also colonized in the eighth century BCE, it is apparent that the Greeks knew the Mediterranean fairly well and were traveling around it by this time.

Now we have shown that the Euboeans were engaging in long-distance trade, without having either coin or barterable goods with which to trade. Certainly, Euboean wealth could have been based upon middlemen between east and west, but we still have

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[47] Herodotus I.1

[48] See Boardman, pp. 61-70, for a complete discussion of Greek settlement in Al Mina ~1200-700 BCE. If the Phoenicians had been the pottery owners, we would expect to find this pottery widespread throughout the city, unless the imported pottery was too expensive. However, the Euboean pottery was not found in an affluent section of town.

[49] This had been the case for Egyptian and Assyrian trade in the Mediterranean and would be the case in later centuries for Persian trade.

the problem of where the startup funds came from for this. I would propose that the Euboeans were instead engaging in an operation of scattered piracy and redistribution.

Here, the piratical industry shows that raiding and maritime violence were prevalent even as late as the seventh century. Furthermore, even though λιστής, the term for pirate in this time, was becoming more pejorative, that did not stop the plunderers of the day from continuing their careers.

Egypt

The role of Egypt in Greek naval development is important, for it shows that the Greeks were forced by need to export men and military know-how to the east. At this time, wealth in Greece was rare, so there was great need for the Greeks to acquire necessities and luxuries from the east, by whatever means they could. The Greeks certainly had the abilities to construct warships, but none of the Greek city-states had the wherewithal to float and fund a large navy.

In turn, Egypt was forced to acknowledge and utilize the military prowess of the Greeks as early as the seventh century BCE, despite a predominant racial enmity. Egypt, while still rich, no longer had the sheer military power necessary to stand up to the enemies on all borders. In order to withstand their enemies, the Egyptians turned outside their borders to acquire foreign aid from a people they did not respect.

Pharaoh Necho of the Sixteenth Dynasty fitted out a trireme fleet during his reign (610-595 BCE)[51], and with the Phoenicians firmly under the thumb of the Babylonians, Necho's enemies, he had to either turn to the experienced Greeks or Carthaginians to

[50] I.e. People living on islands tend to be familiar with boats.
[51] Boardman, pp. 131-132

build and probably at least partially crew his ships.[52] All else aside, the Carthaginians still were technically subject and certainly held loyalties to Phoenicia. All logic then points at the Egyptian pharaoh to have bowed to political necessity and sought Greek aid.

Furthermore, Necho's son, Psammetichos II, hired an entire 'Foreign Legion' of foreign mercenaries, either primarily Greeks or with Greeks in the most prominent role. Their Egyptian leader, Potasimpto, was called the General of the Greeks, and soldier's graffiti etched upon Southern Egyptian and Nubian monuments from 591 BCE reveals the names of an Elesibos of Teos, a Pabos of Colophon, and a Telephos of Ialysos.[53]

From Herodotus, however, we know that there was little love between Greek and Egyptian. According to Herodotus, the Egyptians saw the Greeks as impure, and would neither voluntarily touch them nor "eat the flesh of a beast which is known to be clean if it was cut by a Greek knife."[54] Thus, we can assume that the Egyptians would only consent to Greek aid if it were deemed necessary. Furthermore, Herodotus, normally recognized as a devoted Egyptophile,[55] is lambasted by the Egyptian historian, Manetho for being too anti-Egyptian at the same time as the Greeks who came after Herodotus deplored his work as being too pro-Egyptian and anti-Greek.[56] These anti-Greek opinions may have been caused by centuries of Greek pillaging. After all, Egypt is the target of the imaginary pirate raid conjured up by Odysseus.[57] Egypt certainly was a

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[52] Up until the time when the Phoenician cities were captured by the Babylonians, the Phoenicians formed the bulk of the Egyptian navy.

[53] For the expedition of Psammeticus II and employment of Greek mercenaries under Psammetichus II and his successors, see Boardman pp. 132-134

[54] Herodotus, II.41.3

[55] He names himself a lover of Egyptian culture, and Plutarch, among others, is quick to apply the label of Barbarophile.

[56] See Momigliano, p. 133

[57] Homer *Odyssey* XIV.199. and following.

predominant site of pirate raids, as the Egyptians possessed little ability to follow pirates across the sea.

In this example, we see that the Egyptians already recognized Greek military power. Furthermore, it was military power for sale. The problems of overpopulation in Greece caused many highly trained and skilled soldiers to seek fortune abroad. It was up to the men to choose whether they would seek it at sea or on land. The prevalence of so many Greek mercenaries may imply a similar growth of Greek raiders from the north. In addition, the fact that Greek warships were so much better than Egyptian warships implies that the Greeks were already using warships for some purpose, even when few Greek city-states possessed anything like a navy.

Samos

Near the end of the sixth century, a small island in the Aegean suddenly grew into a sea power all out of proportion to its size. According to Boardman, the island of "Samos prospered under Polycrates, whose ships ranged freely, sometimes piratically, in the waters of the Eastern Mediterranean."[58] Boardman says nothing further on this subject. Samos was dominated by the Persians at this time, and for a brief moment in the spotlight, the Samian navy was acknowledged to be the best and largest in the Mediterranean (though it was apparently insufficient to keep the Persians from sacking the rebellious Samos a second time in the sixth century BCE)

The Samians, after the unsuccessful Lacedaemonian siege of Samos, decided to recoup some of their losses by requesting a loan of ten talents from Siphnos. When the Siphnians refused, the Samians began plundering the island. The Siphnians sallied out in

a short battle which the Samians won, and then paid out a hundred talents to the Samians.[59] This episode, at first glance, may seem somewhat devoid of piratical action, but this type of blackmail was an isolated occurrence, not a treaty by which tribute had to be paid. The Samians simply showed up and demanded some money. When that failed, they broke a few knees and demanded a larger amount. Given this encounter, we almost have to accuse the Samians of some type of criminal organization.[60]

"Samos, […], laid the financial and naval foundations of its great power under Polycrates by a long career of piracy."[61] The Samians held sway over a wide area, blackmailing cities with their powerful fleet of penteconters.[62] These threats of blackmail were certainly not idle, as we saw from the above example from Herodotus. Those who lived in the Samian sphere of influence paid their protection money if they did not want their knees broken, their ships rammed, or their fields ravaged. Ironically, in a time where many Greeks had traveled abroad to be paid to fight as mercenaries, the Samians were becoming wealthy by being paid not to attack anyone.

Amusingly enough, this whole operation of the Samians went on while Samos was ostensibly the subject of the Persian Great King. That is to say, the Samians' actions were not the independent decisions of a fully autonomous power, but those of a subject city-state. The Persian temporary allowance of this state of affairs might have been due to the sheer power of the Samian fleet or, more likely, due to the Samians blackmailing their fellow Greeks. This state of blackmail, if it served to weaken the Greeks who were

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[58] Boardman, p. 119
[59] Herodotus III.58
[60] As the Samians were to repeat these actions against many other Greek cities as well. See Ormerod 97-103, for an accounting of Samian piracies.
[61] Semple, p. 139

the enemies of Darius and Xerxes, and strengthen those Greeks subject to the Persians, might well have been politically acceptable.

While the Samians were at least nominally subject to the Persians, we know from Book VIII of Herodotus that the Siphnians were one of the few island peoples that had not given earth and water to the Persians.[63] The profitable attack on Siphnos might have been due to a Samian wish not to push too hard against their nominal masters, or it may even have been a Persian suggestion to get the Siphnians to join the Persian/Samian 'organization.' Herodotus gives the reason for this raid as "Siphnos was at that time at the height of its prosperity"[64] and that it was rich in precious metals. There is no denying that a hundred talents was a substantial haul, and clearly would have been an excellent target for a large band of pirates.

The question is: would the Samians have attacked Siphnos if the Siphnians had given earth and water to the Persians? To assume that they would means either that the Samians were acting independently and were unafraid of their Persian overlords, or that the Persians did not care about squabbles between their subject peoples. However, to assume that they would not means that the Samians were under the thumb of the Persians and either they had to avoid offending the Persians or they were intentionally working towards Persian interests. This episode is most likely an example where we have a Greek city-state actively acting on behalf of the Persians, rather than a city-state being a coincidental benefactor of the Persians.

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[62] Penteconters literally means 'fifty-oared ships.' They are used indiscriminately to refer to Golden Age undecked galleys of fifty men or early biremes of two decks of either fifty men each or twenty four men each (with two steering oars to make fifty) These penteconters are of the latter sort.

[63] Herodotus, VIII.46

[64] Ibid, III.57

Thus, we potentially have an example of Persian privateering against the Greeks, where the Persians may have had the Samians attack the shipping of Greek states that had not submitted to Persian control yet. I feel that many of the unusual factors in play, such as Persian non-intervention in Samian piracy or the unusual size of the Samian fleet,[65] all suggest that the Samians were acting on behalf of the Persians and with Persian aid.

The notion of 'privateering' was certainly not foreign to the Greeks. Only a few decades earlier, Dionysus of Phocaea set himself up as a pirate who only attacked Phoenician and Etruscan shipping but ignored Greek shipping.[66] Based out of the Straits of Messina (where a sizable number of other Phocaeans came to settle after the Battle of Alalia), Dionysus was able to disrupt both the Phoenicia/Egypt-Carthage route along the southern Mediterranean and the north-south Etruscan-Carthaginian trade route as well as preserve the northwest-southeast trade from Massilia to Sicily. For a pro-Greek privateer, the Straits of Messina was the perfect location. Yet, Dionysus has no 'authority' from any Greek polity, and we should conclude that he was driven by ethnic preferences rather than actively acting as a privateer.

Ormerod claims that the sixth-century Aegean was split between various city-states: "Piracy was now, as on other occasions in the Mediterranean, a method of dealing with the competition of a foreign state or league."[67] Thus, much of the piracy in this era was not what we would think of as piracy, but closer to what we would, today, call privateering. However, even as our modern authors Semple, Ormerod, and Boardman all

[65] This suggests some Persian aid or funding, as the Samian fleet was disproportionately large in comparison to the small Samian population and land area.
[66] I have seen the line in question to be translated both as "he set himself up as a pirate' or as 'he set himself up as a privateer.' Herodotus VI.17.
[67] Ormerod, p. 103

name the Samians pirates, Herodotus does not. Herodotus treats this Samian 'expedition' or the Samian 'messengers' just as he would any other embassy from a city-state.

The importance of this episode with the Samians is the relative ease in which maritime violence can appear on the scene and achieve great success in a short amount of time. Furthermore, it shows that the piracy could indeed be a viable political strategy. Far from being an isolated encounter, or something minor enough to ignore, the Samian raids were powerful tools of politics, and the Samians had to be taken quite seriously by the powers of the day. The absence of any use of the word 'pirates' in application to the Samians implies that the Samian actions had some form of official or cultural sanction.

Dorieus of Sparta

In the example of Dorieus of Sparta, we see another fully legitimate (to the Greeks) expedition which can hardly have been considered fully legitimate by the non-Greeks. Unlike his diplomatic dealings with the other Greek city-states in the area, Dorieus appears to have no contact, except for violence, with the people whose land he sets out to colonize.

In either 510[68] or 516, Dorieus of Sparta set out on a colonizing mission to Libya, on the river Cinyps. At first, his venture was successful "but after two years he was driven out by a combined force of Carthaginians and a Libyan tribe called the Macaes, and returned to the Peloponnese."[69] Two years later, in either 508 or 514, he took the same people to settle Sicily instead, pausing along the way to help the Crotonians capture Sybaris. In Sicily, however, even though the expedition was at full strength, "they were

[68] This date (and the next one) is in some doubt. I am of the opinion that they might well be 516 and 514, as Dorieus made his expeditions after the sack of Samos (probably) in 516 BCE. The lists of Eusebius appear to imply that these expeditions corresponded to the era of Lacedaimonian sea power.

defeated by Phoenicians and the Segestans."[70] Dorieus died in Sicily, failing to achieve his goal of establishing a colony, and his expedition, after fighting on for a while, gave up in defeat and returned to Sparta.

Dorieus's group, however, is not our ordinary band of colonists. Herodotus specifies that Dorieus is taking 'the same group' of people to both colonial attempts, yet he also has time to fight in a war *en route* to his selected settlement area. While the expedition includes only four Spartiates, the remainder of Dorieus's group must also be skilled soldiers, all of whom seem to think that they have a chance at taking over Phoenician territory as their own.

This episode has several similarities to the episode of Aristagoras of Miletus,[71] who sought to carve out a colony in Thrace, failed and died. In both cases of colonization, we see successful settlement followed by significant military action with the locals. Similarly, both colonial leaders are obviously military men, and their expeditions are apparently comprised of soldiers. And similar to the later colonist, Aristagoras, Dorieus is killed during his expedition to Sicily while campaigning in the countryside.

Now, with the episode of Dorieus, we not only see a failed example of colonization, we also see an example of a planned invasion being considered a colonial expedition. However, it is Dorieus who is attacked by the Phoenicians and their allies, not Dorieus who is doing the attacking. This situation forces us to reevaluate both the nature of Greek colonization and Greek strategy in the area. The events connected with Dorieus suggest that maritime expeditions are repeatedly sent out to foreign lands with the purpose of weakening the locals enough so that Greek settlements can spread.

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[69] Herodotus V.42
[70] Ibid, V.46

I would suggest that these 'expeditions' of Dorieus would be considered piracy today. After all, Dorieus has no authority to prosecute any attacks, only 'permission' from the oracle at Delphi. Neither are there any declarations of war between Dorieus and the Phoenicians of Sicily or the Carthaginians of North Africa. Yet when Herodotus relates the story of Dorieus, he finds nothing blameworthy about Dorieus's expeditions, and never is there any mention of piracy or plundering. It is almost as if colonial expeditions are regularly met with armed opposition. If that is the case, it casts serious doubts upon the legitimacy of Greek colonization as a whole. If not, it casts serious doubts upon the legitimacy of this episode in particular.

Pre-500 BCE Piracy

What is truly interesting about all these pre-Persian War episodes is that the Greeks are always portrayed favorably. Dionysus of Phocaea is a pirate who only attacks Etruscan and Carthaginian shipping in a form of revenge. (Prince)[72] Dorieus of Sparta 'settles' and plunders both North Africa and Carthaginian Sicily. In another example, the Phocaeans attempted to migrate to Corsica and settle there, raiding the Etruscan coastline. When they were confronted by a combined Carthaginian and Etruscan navy, they 'won' a 'victory' at Alalia, which resulted in their crews being tortured to death by the Etruscans and the survivors sailing away from Corsica to Rhegium in Southern Italy.[73]

Clearly, these forms of warfare, some of which we would call piracy, are completely legitimate in the opinion of Herodotus. Nowhere does he condemn their actions, but instead relates the curse laid down upon the Tyrrhenians who stoned the

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[71] See above, pp. 14-15

[72] This was not the title he was given, but was the title we would give him as the eldest son of a Spartan king. Hence the parentheses.

Phocaean sailors. Neither Dorieus nor Aristagoras are treated as invaders or interlopers, but as people who settle, only to be driven out. Even the Samians have done nothing truly blameworthy to Herodotus.

What has truly happened, then, is not quite as interesting as what Herodotus says happened. Despite his best efforts to be impartial, Herodotus gives us a fairly clear view of the Greek biases and the Greek view of the world. These Greek actions are all legitimate, unlike the Caereans' actions against the Phocaeans. Thucydides, too, names the Phoenicians and Carians pirates, but the only Greek pirates he mentions are those of the golden age, hundreds of years earlier.[74] Even then, these Greek pirates remain anonymous and come from a time when everyone engages in piracy against their neighbors.

We can expect a certain amount of bias, as these are accounts given by Greek authors. Even if they are writing about city-states not their own, any Greek city-state still comes off better than any non-Greek city-state.

The pro-Greek bias is not limited to the Greeks, however. Boardman accepts Herodotus at face value and when naming colonial sites, says: "A more tragic reason [for colonization] might be like that of the Phocaeans, whose city was sacked by the Persians and went to look for a new home."[75] Of course, these refugee Phocaeans left prior to the sack of Phocaea, taking all their movable wealth, many large merchant ships, and a fleet of at least sixty warships.[76] It should certainly be remembered that Phocaea was

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[73] Herodotus I.166-167
[74] Thucydides I.1-7
[75] Boardman, p. 178
[76] Again, see Herodotus, I.166-167. See also Ormerod, p. 154

considered the supreme naval power until the Battle of Alalia in 535 BCE.[77] While losing one's home, repeatedly in the case of the Phocaeans, is certainly tragic, Herodotus alludes that the Phocaeans brought destruction upon themselves through their constant raiding of their nieghbors. Boardman, however, continues to expound upon the unjust tragedies that befell the Phocaeans at Alalia.

Indeed, it is truly tragic when a nest of Greek pirates is driven out by the local inhabitants.

Therefore, time and again we are given episodes where any Greeks are identifiable with a city-state, but pirates are savages from a less-known area. Can we possibly infer from these instances that the pirates cursed and feared so mightily throughout Greek texts were not Greek pirates? There were certainly many Greeks engaging in what we would call piracy, but are they the same pirates as the ones written about? Or are these other heartless pirates the Phoenicians of Cape Malea, the Carthaginian allies in Sardinia and the Balearics, the Thracians of the Black Sea and the Easterners from Asia Minor? After all, pirates have a tendency to be from the fringes of the Greek World. However, are they on the fringes because that is where they can survive, or are they on the fringes because that is where the non-Greeks live?

In Herodotus's introduction, he expresses a desire to explain the causes of the separation of east from west. This desire could imply a form of a general separation of easterner from westerner, a line of widespread racial enmity between Asiatics and Greeks. One might even go so far as to suggest that there was an undeclared race war, where

[77] Boardman and many others have put the date at 540 BCE. After some comparison and in keeping with more modern sources, I have elected to side with the 535 BCE side of the debate.

Asians and Europeans feuded quietly by means of piracy and occasional raids. This is quietly disputed by the Samians, supporting an Asiatic cause over a Greek one.

We should also remember that Herodotus is wont to portray the Greeks as being a single monolithic society rather than a fragmented mass of city-states. Just because this portrayal is what Herodotus wants us to believe, does not mean we can infer this about Greek society at the time. Still, Thucydides expressly tells us that unlike the Greek peoples of Homer's day, all the Greeks of Thucydides's day thought of themselves as Hellenic.[78]

As a whole, I believe the Greek concept of piracy had a very pejorative aspect during these sixth century examples and any usage of pirates or plunderers is to infer illegitimate violence. However, as the Greeks were apt to see any action undertaken by any other Greek, even one from another city-state, as more positive than a similar action by a non-Greek. Thus, we see the fragmented Greeks sticking together in a show of solidarity against the 'other.'[79]

Yet piracy was only to become more common as more and more soldiers became independent of the city-states and turned to an independent way of waging war. In other words, more and more soldiers were turning professional as mercenaries, raiders, and pirates.

[78] Thucydides I.2
[79] Though I remind the reader that Herodotus tries to present the Greeks as being a more unified society than was actually the case.

Chapter the Fourth.
Hellenistic Waters and the Roman Lake

Hellenistic Waters

The fourth century BCE was the classical age of piracy.[80] Pirates roamed the seas after the destruction of the Athenian fleet. Furthermore, the general turmoil of this time period made it easier for mercenaries, bandits, pirates and the like to carve niches for themselves. A greater demand for mercenaries in the east frequently left returning mercenaries with fewer skills upon returning home and filled the Greek world with more veterans.

During this era, sea power was used both to deter piracy from a city-state's own shores, and to promote piratical acts against enemy city-states. Sometimes this promotion took the form of the actual hiring of privateers and sometimes it took the form of simply denying other city-states the wherewithal to defend themselves from pirates.

Like the Athenians a century earlier, the second Athenian coalition claimed that their large fleets operated to eliminate piracy, and eventually claimed that all other powers should disband their fleet.[81] Greek laws rarely tried to prevent piracy, even though most Greeks would agree that piracy was morally and socially wrong.[82] Unlike the Rhodians, however, the Athenians put little social value on men able to make money in trade by sea. The Athenians valued only power over the sea and the fact that desired trade goods usually arrived. In fact, most of the goods that arrived in Athens were carried

[80] Van Wees, p. 41
[81] Ibid, pp. 199-200 for a lengthier discussion of this phenomenon.
[82] Admittedly, fewer of them would admit that landing one's troops on a random island and having them scrounge up some food from the locals (without payment, of course) was bad. Just goes to show what is in a name.

there by foreign shipping. However, the Athenian fleet easily could serve as a deterrent to the activities of fleets of other city-states.

Privateering was a recognized method of warfare. Around 390 BCE, Sparta set up a 'vigorous privateering war against Athens.'[83] Like Sparta's long campaigns into Attica, this was a campaign that severely weakened the Athenian ability to make war. Only a few decades later, the privateers of Alexander of Pherae were able to loot the Piraeus. Generally, pirates and privateers became successful enough during the fourth century to make the occupation of piracy more popular.

Van Wees admits that the weak control of Greek leaders and the independent thoughts and tendencies of their men and officers contributed to the ability of captains to engage in private acts of piracy.[84] Indeed, a fleet of ships on the move was bound to be poorly supported and prone to acts of piracy simply in order to maintain their health.[85] As we saw in the previous chapter, piracy was a way of life for the Greeks. As we see in this chapter, piracy, even though it was seen as wrong, still maintained more than enough of a following to wreck havoc in the Aegean.

Even city-states are seen to start in on the piratical opportunities of the fourth and third centuries. The raiding of the Aetolians is seen by Ormerod to be semi-piratical. The implication of piracy is seen in the fact that Aetolian raids against the Cyclades decreased during times when Athens and Rhodes were powerful and increased when they weakened.[86] This implies that the Aetolians were seen as pirates by the merchantmen

[83] Ormerod, p. 114
[84] Van Wees, p. 220
[85] i.e. to gather enough to eat.
[86] See Ormerod, pp. 139-140 and elsewhere for the Aetolian raids.

and escorts of Athens and Rhodes, even though they always put forth their raidings as being military in nature.

The fourth century BCE is often attested to be a period of great poverty, as attested by the vast quantities of Greek mercenaries and pirates.[87] This period indeed shows some excuse for the prevalence of pirates in some of the literature set during the fourth century. We see many pirates in the novels set in this period[88] because there were indeed many pirates operating at this time.

The Persians encouraged their Ionian subjects to attack the Greeks of the islands.[89] This practice continued until Alexander conquered the Ionian regions and got rid of the Persian satraps in charge of organizing these raids. Still, the Ionian pirates stayed in operation until Alexander's admirals, later supplemented by Phoenician allies were able to gradually capture the pirates.

The whole point of piracy was to acquire wealth, whether through blackmail like the Samians, mercenary work like the Illyrians of Philip V or Perseus's day, or through the more familiar routes of boarding merchantmen or raiding settlements. The latter of the last two was clearly the most commonly taken route.

Casson cites two examples taken from the second half of the third century BCE, one of which reads "'Pirates came into our land at night, and carried off young girls and women and other souls, slave and free, in all over thirty in number. They cut loose the

[87] Van Wees would argue against this argument. See Van Wees, p. 41. Other authors, such as John Boardman, would argue that an escalating population and increasing poverty at home made young men more likely to travel abroad in search of fame and fortune. Van Wees prefers to believe that it was the instability of the eastern nations that made them more willing to hire Greek mercenaries. I see no reason why they cannot both be right.
[88] See Chapter 6
[89] See Ormerod, p. 120. See also Ormerod pp. 120-122 for Alexander's efforts to deal with the pirates.

boats in our harbor, and seizing Dorieus's[90] boat, escaped on it with their captives and whatever else they had taken."[91] This episode occurred at the height of Rhodian power, so we can see that piracy persisted even when it was actively fought, even in the Cyclades, the very area that the Rhodians patrolled the most. Even well after the Dark Age days of warlords and constant raiding, the raiding of settlements was still an effective method of profiting.

However, raiding was not, the only method by which pirates could acquire money for themselves. During the end of the fourth century, rulers were willing to hand over large sums of money in exchange for skilled crews. Furthermore, pirate-leaders, or *archipiratae* were often willing to change sides for an even greater amount of money.[92] In this way, pirates could enrich themselves without having to do any of the labor usually required by piracy.

The Mercenary Pirates and Rhodes

Macedon had never really been a naval power. Alexander took his fleets from the shipyards of Phoenicia, and his predecessors hired their fleets, either from their allies or from the Illyrians to the west or the Cretans to the south. His successors strove to battle each other across the Cyclades, and for that, the Antigonids and Ptolemies required fleets. The third century thus took a drop in piracy, as the pirates joined up in a semi-legitimate war in the Aegean. In 302 BCE alone, 8,000 pirates joined the naval wing of Demetrios's army. Largely due to superior pirate forces, the Antigonid Macedonians were able to gradually push the Ptolemaic Egyptians out of the Cyclades.

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[90] An extremely common Rhodian name
[91] Casson, p. 178
[92] Andron, an arch-pirate in Demetrios's service, sold out to Lysimachus's general Lycus.

But Rhodes was another naval power in the Aegean to deal with. In 305, the Macedonians, under Demetrios Poliorcetes, attempted in a long siege to take Rhodes. In his efforts to subdue the islands, Demetrios brought out his big ships,[93] ship mounted siege engines, and hordes of Cretan pirates.[94] Ultimately, Demetrios Poliocetes failed to take Rhodes. In the aftermath of the international fame that ensued, the Rhodians set up a code of law known as the International Maritime Code of the Rhodians. As Rhodes prospered from having as many merchantmen as possible reach its harbors, it set out a fleet of pirate-chasers which saw heavy action against the islands of Cythera and Crete

As I have mentioned, Greek law generally did not seem to address the subject of piracy. However, we see that the Rhodians, at least, did have some code with provisions for the crime of piracy and its punishment. From the end of the fourth century until sometime in the second century, the Rhodians set themselves against piracy.

The Rhodians had good reason to take it upon themselves to combat piracy. The economy of Rhodes rested upon its role as a waypoint for merchants, blessed with one of the finest harbors in the Mediterranean. In order to keep as many merchants on the seas as possible, (and thus utilizing Rhodian harbors and paying 2% duties), the Rhodians outfitted and manned a swift, small fleet of pirate chasers, which saw especial action against the pirates of Crete. Furthermore, Rhodian merchantmen were heavily armed, enough to fight off an attack from a Macedonian naval squadron.[95] From this, the Rhodians gained so much esteem that when the earthquake of 224 leveled the Colossus

[93] Quinqueremes ('fives') were the stock of his fleet, with larger ships including 'sevens,' 'eights,' and 'tens,'
[94] Rhodes was often at war with the cities of Crete who the Rhodians often accused of piracy. See Ormerod, p. 122 and following for the relations between Crete and Rhodes.
[95] Ibid, pp. 137-138

(and much of the city) donations of assistance were sent from almost every city in the Greek world.[96]

Whether Rhodes created a sea-police from scratch or retained it as a carryover from Egyptian domination of the Cyclades, the inscriptions and documentation show that it existed, and that it was effective at doing its job of clearing out the riff-raff. Reports of piracy in this area at the time are rare, but when the Rhodian ships were absent, the Cyclades were again beset by piracy and organized raids from Aetolia.

However, our best view of the efficacy of the Rhodian navy is the aftermath of its lack. When the Rhodian police fleet was taken out by the Romans, without any Roman force to keep piracy in check, the Cilician pirates inherited the waves, instigating a period of crime on the waves and shoreline that nearly shut down overseas trade and sent Rome into famine.

The Roman Lake

Piracy during the late republic was taken to a whole new level, with the Cilicians rising to almost nation status. With the Roman conquest of Rhodes and Roman disinterest in the governing of the sea, the pirates found a whole sea theirs for the plundering.

During the middle of the second century, the Rhodians refused to aid Roman intervention in the east. Incensed, the Romans took one of their possessions, Delos, and made it into a free port. Suddenly, Delos took most of Rhode's trade, and the Rhodian economy, and with it, its fleet, shriveled.[97]

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[96] See Ibid, p. 137 The incident in question is documented in Polybius IV.47

[97] Delos thus also became the main pirate haven. The slave market on Delos, openly operated by Cilician pirates became the largest such market in the Mediterranean world. See Ormerod, p.35

Rome had been concerned about Rhodes because of Rhodes's preeminence as a naval power. Primarily, Rome sought to nullify the military potential of Rhodes. However, the cultural and economic backlash was significant. By the third century BCE, the Rhodians were the primary group concerned with eliminating piracy. However, a century later, all the other powers which could have filled that role were gone. Having destroyed Carthage, and having worn Greece and Macedon down into submission, the Romans were in control of the major port cities or a century earlier. Syracuse, Carthage, and Corinth had been sacked, and none of the remaining ports was fit to set up an anti-piratical fleet.[98]

Loosely based out of Cilicia Trachea,[99] the Cilician pirates engaged in piracy on an unprecedented scale, attacking ships and settlements from the Balearics to the Black Sea. Heedless to the complaints of their merchants, the Roman Senate ignored this piracy until the Cilicians were so much in control of the sea that they were able to sever the vital grain trade between Alexandria and Rome. The rioting and famine in Rome that ensued forced Rome to take action against the pirates, which they did by placing Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus[100] in charge of ridding the Mediterranean of piracy.[101]

In his famous campaign, Pompey put an end to these pirates, but after the civil wars, the Roman Emperors had little use for the sea and piracy sprung up again, mostly unchecked. The actual level of piracy during the empire is uncertain, as the Roman historians tended to play down any piratical events, while the literary authors tended to emphasize the existence of pirates.

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[98] The Ptolemies probably had the money and the ports, but they were reaching the end of their rule too.
[99] Located in southern Asia Minor
[100] Henceforth referred to as Pompey.
[101] See Ormerod pp. 190-247 for a drawn-out discussion of the problem of the Cilician pirates and the

However, both before the Romans dealt with the Cilicians and afterwards, the Romans left the sea alone, disbanding huge navies. Similar to the Athenians and many other Greeks, the Romans left the business of the sea to foreigners and freedmen. Petronius's Trimalchio is one example of such a merchant.[102] The Roman senatorial class was concerned with the land, not the sea, and thus Rome never kept a large standing navy.

It is baffling to some scholars why the Romans did not ever attempt to maintain a fleet, as their main setbacks had been against seafaring powers. However, by leaving the expenses of a fleet to civilians except when needed,[103] the Romans were able to focus more upon the needs of the land. With a culture that glorified land-owners and looked down upon those who dealt in trade, it is only logical that the Romans would have ignored the sea in preference to the land.

The Roman preference of the land essentially made the Mediterranean a great place for pirates during the Roman Period. In general, the warring between east and west created an atmosphere in which pirates could multiply. Due to Roman disinterest, pirates could operate with fewer repercussions.

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subsequent campaign undertaken by Pompey.
[102] Petronius, *Satyricon*
[103] i.e. to wage war against a seafaring group

Chapter the Fifth:
East Versus West

We find little or no mention of piracy in our accounts of the actions of Greeks and Romans. While we have ample portrayals of them in fiction, it is perhaps best to first deal with the indirect references to piracy we have in the historical texts.

Non-Greek 'piracy'.

Now we must turn to the areas where we do have reference to pirates and piracy: namely, the actions of non-Greeks in the Mediterranean. In the very beginning of Thucydides's work, he names both the Carians[104] and the Phoenicians pirates from time immemorial.[105] In addition, these Phoenicians and Carians were the peoples who had originally colonized the Cyclades.

Of course, the episodes where the Greeks are beset by pirates are numerous, but sparsely detailed. It was fear of Tyrrhenian piracy that kept the coasts of the Tyrrhenian Sea relatively free of Greek shipping and colonization. The Etruscans were also said to have attempted to sink any ship not their own which sailed into their territory.[106] The Etruscans were long linked to piracy, and brigandage, so much so that one of the earliest Greek words for an Etruscan was 'leistosalpinktes,' literally, 'robber-trumpeter.'[107]

Even more interesting is the treatment of the Greeks at the hands of these non-Greeks. While we do not have the literary examples that we can use for the Greek side of things, the same accounts of certain events can sometimes show us the opinions of the

[104] The peoples then dwelling in southwestern Asia Minor.
[105] Specifically, he says that piracy was prevalent among the islands of the Carians and the Phoenicians (meaning the Cyclades) Thucydides I.8
[106] Ormerod, p. 155
[107] 'ο ληστοσαλπιγκτής

other side. For example, the Caereans were an Etruscan people who Herodotus claims 'nobly avoids piracy,' and they, having captured the crews of some Phocaean ships, took them ashore and stoned them to death.[108] This was a punishment that the Etruscans historically reserved for pirates.

While we may express some uncertainty about how other Greek city-states may have viewed the Phocaean colonists of Alalia, we can be nearly certain that the Etruscans considered them to be pirates, not a legitimate military force, which they would have either killed more mercifully or enslaved. Herodotus tells us that the Caereans were cursed by the gods for such an improper judgment, but the fact of that judgment remains.

The Greeks' primary rivals at sea, however, were the Phoenicians and their successors, the Carthaginians. The Phoenicians and the Greeks had a long-lasting and far-reaching enmity. The Phoenicians were certainly trading throughout the Eastern Mediterranean during the fourteenth century BCE, a trade that continued and expanded with some setbacks until the Macedonian conquests of the fourth century marked the rise of powers too large for the Phoenicians to compete with.

During most of this time, the Phoenicians had relatively few markets in the west, and even less in the way of competition. With the rising development of the west, trade also increased and competition began to spring up, primarily from the Greek city-states to the northwest. In order to further trade, both civilizations began to colonize the western half of the Mediterranean.

Boardman goes against the common opinion and argues that the Phoenicians began colonization after the Greeks. He reasons that the Greeks settled all the 'good

[108] Ormerod, p. 154

places' on the eastern side of the island, and the Phoenicians took what was left.[109] While his argument is not completely devoid of merit, I feel that we must abide by nearly unanimous literary accord in the ancient sources, namely that the Phoenicians were traveling and settling the Western Mediterranean well before the Greeks.

Colonization occurred in places ideally situated for exploitation of the local natural resources, for trade with the nearby locals, or for protection of the shipping lanes back to the east. The Phoenician colonies of Utica and Carthage, for example, were sited on the lush coast of Tunisia, with secure locations, fine farmland, and nicely controlling that midpoint on the all-important east-west trade route to the mines of Southern Iberia and western North Africa. That westernmost Greek colony, Massilia (modern-day Marseilles), was a depot of the tin trade, fulfilling a similar role as Phoenician Gades (modern-day Cadiz). Tin, of course, came from Cornwall. Tin by the sea route was almost certainly cheaper than the overland route through Gaul, but the Phoenicians held the waters west of Cadiz shut to the Greeks.[110]

The Greeks were certainly not alone in the 'piratical industry.' The Phoenicians knew the seas at least as well and probably better than the Greeks, and pioneered advances in shipbuilding almost up to the Classical Era. As I said earlier, Thucydides claims that the Phoenicians had practiced piracy in the Cyclades.[111] Semple states that the island of Cythera, situated between Crete and the Peloponnesus, had long been "a depot

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[109] Most writers concur that the Phoenicians were more interested in good harbors than a fertile hinterland, and that later Greek expeditions (like Dorieus of Sparta) strove to drive the Phoenicians from their settlements.

[110] One daring Greek explorer, Pytheas of Marseilles, darted through the Strait of Gibraltar sometime between 310 and 306, but with no lasting trade improvements. Even so, a five hundred year monopoly is pretty good. See Casson, p. 125

[111] Thucydides, I.8

of Phoenician pirates."[112] When Greek naval prowess had achieved the point where they could attack Phoenician merchantmen, the Phoenicians had no choice but to defend themselves with like forces. The Greeks were not the first raiders from the sea with whom the Phoenicians had to deal. The infamous Sea Peoples, such as the Philistines and the Tjekers, plied the seas just south of the Phoenician cities from earlier centuries.[113]

I think an earlier quote needs to be reintroduced now, for this time truly was a period "when buccaneers executed a crude form of navigation act designed to crush competition in the market of the home sea."[114] The Phoenicians guarded their lands and ports jealously. Eusebius, a third century CE historian, compiled a list of thalassocracies which seems to primarily indicate the strength of navies in the east, with little mention on the forces of the western Mediterranean.[115] I certainly doubt whether tiny city-states such as Samos would have involved themselves overly in far-flung ventures to the west, leaving her home waters far behind.[116] The seas west of the Apennine Peninsula, during this time, would have been almost wholly in non-Greek hands, save for the trade route from the Lipari Isles to the city of Massilia.

However, the routes to the west were invariably contested. The need of seamen to navigate by landmarks meant that the possible sea routes were sharply limited. The ability to sail the open sea was limited by seasons and routes where winds and currents were known to allow a crossing of the sea.[117] Most ships could not sail by night, and many had to restock every several days. Every ship traveling between the eastern and

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[112] Semple, p. 143
[113] See Ormerod, pp. 74-75, Herm, pp. 47-51
[114] Semple, p. 134
[115] In the *Chronographia* of Eusebius
[116] Admittedly, we have the Euboeans, Phocaeans, Phoenicians, and Lacedaimonians all venturing into the west. However, it seems to be necessary to *establish* sea power in the east.
[117] One such locale was the five-day crossing from Crete to Cyrenaica in North Africa.

western Mediterranean was forced to pass within eyeshot of Sicily. Strategically located outposts on islands in the straits allowed seafarers to sight enemy ships, either for attack or defense.

Seeing the threat that Greek traders posed to their trade routes, the Carthaginians took steps quickly. During the seventh century, Carthage colonized Ibiza, expanded her control over North Africa and Sicily, and took control of the island of Sardinia, which neatly "proved a further barrier to the Greek advance in the Western Mediterranean."[118] Here, rather that opening new markets, Carthaginian colonial expansion is aimed at denying the Greeks access to the lucrative Carthaginian markets of the west.

Carthage, arguably the richest city on the Mediterranean, implemented a set of savagely stifling monopolies over her spheres of influence. African gold and exotic goods that came overland from Timbuktu were forced to go through the market at Carthage to reach outside markets.

Possibly, we could see these Carthaginian trade regulations as anti-piratical measures, as any Greek ship in Carthaginian waters would barely be suffered to dock and in general, be under great suspicion.[119] Certainly, their trade was limited to ship supplies and whatever few goods that sailors could unload on dock workers. Any ship trying to flout this ruling was summarily seized by the state, with ship master and crew being sold into slavery.[120]

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[118] Ormerod, p. 155

[119] In the seventeenth century, Christian merchantmen trying to dock at Corinth or Muslim ships trying to dock in Spain met with similar difficulties and suspicion, and were often turned away from the port. See Ibid, p. 37

[120] Ibid, p. 155 with Strabo XVII.802 for Carthaginians sinking foreign traders.

Regardless, Carthage simply leaped at the opportunities that monopolized trade meant, closing off both Byzacena[121] and Sardinia to non Carthaginian/Phoenician merchants. Many of Carthage's early treaties are trade treaties which remove a few limits on where foreign traders could trade in the Carthaginian sphere of influence.

The Phoenicians placed outposts to hinder Greek trade as well. The Phoenicians retained there hold on Cythera. It is certainly not for nothing that the infamous Cape Malea was feared for centuries. Quite possibly, the Phoenicians were part of the reason. However, the Phoenicians strove more to keep the Greeks from plundering Phoenician goods than they strove to seize Greek goods in return. Primarily, the Phoenicians and the Carthaginians were only fighting holding actions against superior Greek military force.

There is apparently little difference between the actions of the Greeks and the non-Greeks. Admittedly, there are no colonial ventures into Greek lands, but we do have the same patterns of settlement along trade routes, fierce protectiveness against enemy ships, and the judgment of most Greeks as enemies.

Trade or Piracy?

The first Greek colonies in the west were founded "in a position which gave the most immediate opportunities for trade with Etruria, and they were supported by foundations safeguarding the passage to them…"[122] While we have no direct reason to doubt these motives, it is important to ask from what they were safeguarding. The obvious answer is pirates. Secondly, we should realize that the best places for trade and the best places to safeguard the sea passages are also ideal bases for pirate raiders. This

[121] The Byzacena=the eastern shore of modern-day Tunisia
[122] Boardman, p. 177

is not to say that piracy was the norm rather than trade, only that, in an era where trade, piracy, and war were all very intricately connected, the other roles that these earliest settlements might have played should not be ignored.

Ormerod claims that the sixth century Aegean was split between two mercantile groups; the first comprised of Miletos, Chios, Aegina, and Eretria dealing with Sybaris, and the second comprised of Chalcis, Samos, Corinth, and Phocaea all dealing with the Greek Sicilian cities and the other Greek colonies west of Italy.[123] This example strengthens the theory that some form of privateering was used as a commonplace political tool, as it would be the most likely cause of the formation of these coalitions. With the usage of privateering, the other group's shipping was subject to raids by the other group in a form of corporate warfare nearly indistinguishable from any other type of warfare. Here, piracy is used, not as a means for gaining wealth, but as a means of preventing another group from having wealth.

To argue for an established trade war, one would almost think that it would be necessary to have trade be the preeminent concern for the powers that be amongst the nobility and ruling classes. However, since this 'war' we speak of was an unspoken war, it was something that did not have to go through 'official' channels. In fact, if it had gone through 'official' channels, it would have been more likely to result in a declared war backed by the state.

Let us then summarize the trade war: in the trade war, we can see clear patterns of settlement strewn along direct lines of trade from east to west with the Greeks along the north coast and the Phoenicians along the south coast. Straits were chokepoints that pinned trade down and kept out the competition.

The Phoenicians and Carthaginians enacted protective trade restrictions to maintain monopolies. However, this may only have increased piratical actions against Phoenician and Carthaginian merchantmen. While on the one hand, it made certain that all colonial goods would be shipped in Phoenician bottoms; on the other hand, it ensured that Greeks and many others had no recourse but to steal these goods from Phoenician ships and settlements in order to acquire them. Piracy as we would think of it was the tool which the ancient world used to determine where traders from any given locale could successfully trade.

Other Attacks on Trade

The Macedonian successor states frequently unleashed privateering campaigns against their enemies as a method of weakening them. Both the Ptolemies and the Antigonids hired pirate fleets to raid the coasts of the other's possessions.[124] The later Antigonids, Perseus and Philip V, employed Illyrian pirates to harass Roman transports and hired Cretans to wage war against Rhodes and other islands.[125]

Piracy was not the only underhanded way of covertly attacking the enemy. During the second century, the Romans strove to break the nations of the Eastern Mediterranean through the use of trade restrictions. This plan worked admirably against Delos, which effectively destroyed their fleet without the Romans having to strike a blow.

Both of these examples of attacking trade rather than military targets show that economic strangulation was a more effective technique than pure military force and simply winning battles. Furthermore, these episodes show that trade was the strength of

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[123] Ormerod, p. 102
[124] See Chapter Four for greater detail
[125] Ormerod, pp. 141-149 for the employment and portrayal of the Cretans.

these powers. The indication of trade's importance directly increases the importance of piracy and piracy's effects. That is, if we consider trade to be more important, we must also assume the danger of piracy to be of greater importance.

As I mentioned in Chapter Four, the whole point of piracy was to acquire wealth, whether through blackmail like the Samians, mercenary work like the Illyrians of Philip V or Perseus's day, or through the more familiar routes of boarding merchantmen or raiding settlements. Settlement raiding, sometimes thought to be a piratical activity more restricted to Dark Age Greece, remained the mainstay of ancient piracy. As always, the greatest profits for pirates were acquired by capturing people and holding them for ransom, or failing that, selling them into slavery.

However, we frequently see aspects of racial preference, such as Dionysus of Phocaea, who avoided attacking Greek ships. Similarly, Greek city-states formed leagues in which the settlements and ships of a league would be safe from the privateers of that league. Profit may have been the main point of piracy, but it was not the only goal at hand.

Chapter the Sixth
The Novelists and Other Writers

In this chapter I have been primarily concerned with the novelists, who contribute a greater volume of information about pirates than the writers of other types of fiction. Also, in the novels, we find pirates who have been more fully described and detailed than their counterparts of plays and poetry.

Of course, the utilization of fiction to infer information about pirate activity necessitates the assumption that our ancient writers strove to be fairly accurate about the pirates they portrayed. We need to assume that the ancient author wrote about pirates in a way that showed that he knew something about the actions of pirates. At the very least, he needed to know enough for the ancient reader not to scoff at nonsensical pirate actions.

The Novelists

To assume that the ancient author needed to be accurate in his representation of pirates, we also assume that the ancient reader would not look kindly upon a misrepresentation of sailing or piracy in the novels. Certainly, inaccuracies would be more likely to be overlooked in a farce like the comedies of Plautus or the Satyricon of Petronius, but the pirates of Achilles Tatius or Chariton should be seen to act logically. The portrayal may not be kind, but the literary pirates should act in a fashion similar to how the writers' audiences expected pirates to act.

Therefore, in this chapter, I intend to portray the most interesting of the piratical episodes and make arguments for what each one implies about the state of piracy. Out of simplicity's sake, I have decided to organize them chronologically by the date of writing.

The novelists span a relatively short period of time, from Chariton's first century CE to Heliodorus's writings of the late third century CE.[126]

Seldom does it seem believable that the author's portrayals of piracy accurately represent contemporary piracy, but it is likely that each author utilizes a contemporary body of thought about piracy, which itself contains a substantial amount of truth.[127]

Chariton

The earliest story, Chariton's *Chaereas and Callirhoe* also shows some of the most interesting elements. The story begins in a post-Peloponnesian War Syracuse, where the daughter and son-in-law of Hermocrates live a luxurious life. The piratical encounter tells us about pirates' actions, where they thought they could sell their goods, and what other people in the world thought about dealing with pirates.[128]

Firstly, the pirates who abduct Callirhoe in *Chaereas and Callirhoe* are obviously concerned with finding a market where Callirhoe will fetch a good price. In the following exchanges, Callirhoe is shown to be a commodity of high value. After all, the pirates sail significantly out of their way to sell her.[129] Theron is completely unwilling to settle for a low price, and the price he gets, an entire silver talent, is sufficient to appease his robber band and their chafing at their long[130] wait to sell her. His immediate disappearance reveals his illicit dealing to the buyer, but too late for the Milesians to be able to apprehend him.

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[126] See Reardon's introduction in *Collected Ancient Greek Novels* pp. 5-9, for more details concerning the dating of these works.
[127] And possibly an even more substantial amount of falsehood.
[128] Or rather, Chariton's opinions on the matter.
[129] Admittedly, they are also sailing out of the Greek sphere of influence into the Persian. As Theron says, this may provoke fewer questions than selling her in wealthy Greek-ruled cities.
[130] Several days

Secondly, we see that piratical slave-running is not an entirely accepted method of slave-acquisition, as the pirate-leader is unwilling to provoke the questionings that would occur in Athens and prefers to sell the girl in Asia.[131] When Demetrius discovers that he has bought not a slave but a highborn free Greek enslaved by pirates he is nearly overcome by the injustice.[132] Thus, the piratical practice of slave-running seems to be an unacceptable method of acquiring slaves for the buyers.

From these two scenes, we might infer that piracy, at least in this time period[133] was not a primary means of collecting slaves, unlike the pirates centuries earlier, who took slaves as their primary means of income. Theron's pirates are grave robbers instead, who seek to steal Syracusan gold and silver and take them to markets in Crete.[134] The discovery of Callirhoe is an unexpected bonus. It could also imply that there is a greater belief in some form of human rights at this time, where there are legitimate and illegitimate ways to acquire salves.

Furthermore, Crete is implied to be a pirate haven, where pirate crews could unload suspicious cargos without the hassle that would ensue in the wealthier cities. However, it appears either not to have the capital necessary to buy a beautiful girl like Callirhoe at a decent price or to be uninvolved in the slave trade. The first possibility is more likely, especially since Callirhoe fetches a rather high selling price in Miletus.[135]

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[131] Chariton, *Chareas and Callirhoe*, I.11
[132] Ibid, II.5-7
[133] But is this time period the era in which Chariton lives or that of which he sets his tale.
[134] Ibid, I.7-8
[135] Reardon claims that this price would be thirty times the going rate for a female slave in the fourth century BCE (one silver talent ~6,000 drachmas and a female slave ~ 300 drachmas) but he also acknowledges that prices would have changed significantly by Chariton's time. Reardon, p. 37

The fact that Theron can convince his pirate crew to spend several days lurking around Miletus implies that the price that Callirhoe will fetch is worth the wait.[136]

In a third scene, we also have Chariton vindicating his belief that pirates will get what comes to them. A. Avidov repeatedly stresses how pirates fear retribution from the gods. And Chariton reveals how the pirates meet a foul end, meeting horrible weather as soon as they leave Miletus, with only the unscrupulous Theron remaining alive on his cutter adrift on the Ionian Sea.[137] When Theron is captured and rescued by Chaereas, he claims to have been saved by his piety and to be innocent of his crimes, but when he is returned to Syracuse, the truth of his kidnapping of Callirhoe comes out and Theron is condemned to death.[138]

However, while Crete likely was a pirate haven, and pirates often did fear divine retribution, there is little indication that pirates in the fourth century BCE would have found it difficult or dangerous to sell Callihroe as a slave. Chariton seems to depict slave-taking as a rare or unusual activity for pirates, which flies directly in the face of the other evidence we have.

In opposition to the situation described in Chariton, we have sailors' monuments described in Casson's book which describe active pirate raids in the Cyclades during the approximate time of the book's setting. These raids were apparently undertaken with the sole purpose of kidnapping people for ransom or slavery.[139] For pirates to commonly undertake such raids almost necessitates that the pirates already have an intended market for the slaves.

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[136] A wait that includes the wait to unload the rest of these pirated treasures.
[137] Chariton III.3
[138] Ibid III.3-5
[139] See Chapter 4, pp. 33-34, and Chapter 5, p. 47, see Casson, p. 178

Thus, this literary episode reveals little about history and pirate activity and much more about what the author thought. The piratical episodes in Chariton betray significant retrojection on the part of our author. Chariton's pirates appear to be little interested in the capturing of women as slaves. Indeed, many of Theron's pirates wish to give up Callirhoe.[140] Thus, what may have been the rule of piracy in Chariton's day would not have been the status quo in the time of the story's setting. Chariton may well be trying to accurately portray pirates, but he gets some details wrong, and gives the piratical account an air of anachronism.

Xenophon of Ephesus

Chronologically, the second ancient novel is *The Ephesian Tale* of Xenophon of Ephesus. *The Ephesian Tale*, unlike the other romances, consists almost entirely of the couple's capture and recapture. Repeatedly. In Xenophon, the main point of interest is how Xenophon's pirates act.

Unlike our brave Chaereas, Anthia and Habrocomes beg the Phoenician pirates to enslave them.[141] Almost immediately, the Phoenician pirate captain and one of his pirates fell in love with them, but they were forced to give up the enslaved Greeks to their master, the robber-chief, when they returned to Phoenicia. Unlike Theron's band of pirates in Chariton's work, these pirates seem constrained to return to Phoenicia with their haul.

Later in the story, after being captured by a different band of robbers and rescued by a local garrison, Anthia takes poison, goes into a coma, wakes up buried in a tomb and

[140] Chariton I.10, as seen in Reardon, p. 32
[141] Xenophon of Ephesus, *An Ephesian Tale,* I.13

is captured by tomb robbers/pirates, who sail off to sell her elsewhere.[142] These pirates, like Theron's band, also spent many days in port waiting for a buyer. Their choice of port is Alexandria, where they are able to sell her to an Indian ruler.[143] On the way to India, Anthia's owner's caravan is taken by Ethiopian bandits. In the meantime, Habrocomes has gained his freedom but his ship is wrecked off the Egyptian coast and he is captured by the local herdsmen of the Nile Delta.[144] Throughout these adventures, the captors of Anthia and Habrocomes show little aptitude for staying alive after capturing the Greeks, even though neither Anthia nor Habrocomes takes an active role in their own defense.

Xenophon here shows how he thinks that these Phoenician pirates should interact with each other. He also shows the Phoenicians to be wholly consumed by lust in opposition to the discipline of the Greeks in his story.[145] The Egyptians and Ethiopians show little more control. The pirates' inability to manage themselves leads time and time again to the loss of their prize to another group, which often loses command of the prize in turn.

While few of the pirates or robbers have major roles to play, it is obvious in *The Ephesian Tale* that the pirates and robbers play a collective role. Habrocomes and Anthia are captured and sold into slavery by pirates or robbers no less than five times. The whole plot of the story is that chance keeps thrusting the pair apart, yet their love remains.[146] Since many of the pair's escapes seem to be caused through sheer luck, it is

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[142] Very similar to the beginning of Chariton's story.
[143] Ibid III.11
[144] These ποιμένοι are probably the forerunners of the βουκολοι of Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus. Ibid, III.12
[145] In particular, we have Anthia and Habrocomes' initial captors and Apsyrtus's daughter, the robber-princess, all consumed in their pursuit of sex with the Greek slaves. Xenophon I.16, II.1, and II.3
[146] It should be pointed out that this text is fragmentary, with possibly as much as half of the work missing.

possible to argue that this story shows that there is divine favor projected upon those captured by pirates.[147] Throughout the story, it is always the pirates who act, and apparently cause themselves to be ruined. Conversely, the two lovers trust to fate and are reunited by the end of the story.

Achilles Tatius

Leucippe and Clitophon is the work of Achilles Tatius. Written near the end of the second century CE, it is set near the middle of the same century. *Leucippe and Clitophon* exhibits some characteristics that make this text an unusual one. The lovers are beset by both pirates and bandits, but there are nuances in the words used that do not show up in the translations.[148] This story also exhibits a passage in which Greek pirates are offhandedly talked about.

Clitophon and Leucippe are set upon by robbers when sailing to Egypt. Even before the actual attack, a hint of this piracy is given when we are told that "(this land was the coast of Egypt, then wholly infested by robbers.)"[149] The word used here for robbers is λησταὶ, as Clitophon names the inhabitants of coastal Egypt. However, their ship sinks in a storm and the passengers are swept to the shore where Clitophon hires a riverboat to take them further.

Next, we come upon the actual robbers as Clitophon's hired riverboat is stopped by a band of savage Ethiopians that the Egyptian sailor calls 'the herdsmen.'[150] Four of

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So the story might not have been *just* about many kidnappings
[147] Or divine disfavor projected upon pirates.
[148] Refer back to Chapter 2 for a full discussion of some of these words.
[149] Achilles Tatius, III, 5
[150] 'Ο βουκόλος, Ibid, III.9

the robbers[151] board the boat, take their belongings, and take our protagonist and his companions captive. From Clitophon, we learn that this dark-skinned band calls their leader a king. Yet Clitophon prefers to name him bandit-chief.[152] Clitophon clearly does not regard the leader of the *boukoloi* as an important person, despite the respect that his captors have for the man.

Interestingly, Clitophon bewails the fact that his captors are Egyptian: "Now you have delivered us over into the hands of Egyptian robbers, so that we have not even a chance of pity. A Greek buccaneer might be moved by the human voice, prayer might soften him: for speech is often the go-between of compassion…"[153] In this version, 'Ο βουκόλος is translated both as 'herdsman' and as 'buccaneer' while Winkler gives "rangers" as the definition.[154] The difficulties in translation make it more difficult for us to know whether the author meant to imply about the *boukoloi*, especially since the author chooses to use *leistes* for both Greeks and Egyptians.

In this tale, like others we have seen, we see a prevalence of piracy, both from the Egyptian delta bandits, and the couple's encounter with the treacherous captain Chaireas. Yet Achilles Tatius belongs to an era where piracy should be gone from Mediterranean waters.[155] He also sets his tale in the same era, where pirates should be nonexistent and nothing more than a fictitious retrojection.

Of course, we know that the βουκόλοι, at least, were real. However, Clitophon offhandedly refers to 'Greek pirates' when comparing his captors to them. Thus, in

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[151] τῶν ληστῶν τέσσαρες, Ibid, III.9
[152] III.9
[153] Ibid III.10 Our translator here gives robbers and buccaneer for ληστα῀ις and ληστὴς, respectively.
[154] See Chapter 6 for a full discussion of the bizarre usage of 'Ο βουκόλος
[155] Depending on to whom you listen. See Ormerod 255 and following for his discussions on the threat of piracy. Both Strabo and Pliny the Elder claim that the Mediterranean contained no pirates, unlike the Black and Red Seas. But these pirates also sailed into the Mediterranean on occasion

addition to these physical *boukoloi*, we have some unknown Greek pirates operating in Mediterranean waters during a time when the historians claim that there were no pirates.

Unsurprisingly, the tale in which we have a half-Phoenician hero is easiest on the Phoenicians. Unlike the Phoenicians in Longus or Xenophon, the Phoenicians are sympathetic, helpful characters for the most part, with the Egyptians taking up the role of villainy. Interestingly, Achilles Tatius's tale opens a new view into contemporary views on race. The stock pirate figure aside, the story of *Leucippe and Clitophon* exhibits numerous racial stereotypes, most prominent that of an utterly merciless Egyptian bandit. Additionally, we see a half-Greek character offhandedly referring to the existence of Greek pirates. Even though they are more moral than the Egyptians, we are actually given an example here of a Greek[156] asserting that Greeks engaged in piracy.

Longus

Longus writes *Daphnis and Chloe*, which is a bucolic romance set on the isle of Lesbos. Unlike the other novels, *Daphnis and Chloe* contains only two short pirate or pirate-like episodes. Both episodes depart significantly from the stock scenes of the average romance, a fact more interesting than anything we can really glean from these two occurrences.

In the first piratical episode, Daphnis is, early on, captured by pirates, who found the young goatherd more valuable than all "the plunder from the fields."[157] But he was saved when a herd of cows jumped into the sea all at once, creating a wave that tipped the pirate ship, dumping Daphnis and the metal-armored pirates into the sea, of whom only

[156] Meaning the author, Achilles Tatius, though the fact that it is a Greek character's claim is interesting as well.
[157] Longus I.28

Daphnis was able to get to shore. It is mildly interesting both that the pirates have a markedly Phoenician-like description and that they show even more ineptitude than their literary predecessors, but as a whole, there is little said about pirates here.

Later, there is a second scene in which the Methymneans abduct Chloe. However, this abduction is portrayed as an act of war, led by a general rather than a pirate captain. Still, the portrayal is that of wrongdoing, with the rich young men of Methymna fomenting raids seemingly on a whim. These people are not pirates, but people who act in a piratical fashion.[158]

In Longus's story, piracy departs from the standard stock scenes and takes on new portrayals. Pirates show greater ineptness than before, and his heroes are common rather than noble. We can use the text of Longus to argue that by Longus's writing, piracy has changed from a contemporary phenomenon to a more purely literary phenomenon, since he has abandoned the 'accurate pirate' in favor of the stock figure.

Heliodorus

The longest of the romances is clearly Heliodorus's *An Ethiopian Tale,* or *Aithiopika*. From the writings of Heliodorus, we find three main scenes or viewpoints interesting to our study. First is the mention and portrayal both of Greek pirates and of the *boukoloi*, second, we have a Greek pirate, who actually refers to himself as a pirate, and thirdly, we have Heliodorus's generally benign treatment of different people in general and of the Phoenicians in particular.

The Aithiopika begins with a scene in which the all-too-familiar delta bandits have captured a merchant ship and the loving couple who will become our protagonists.

These bandits however, are too awed effectively take advantage of their opportunity. Then, Heliodorus, in his long narrative flashbacks, reveals that the ship ended up in the delta through the actions of pirates. There were pirates lying in wait for our protagonists, and warning comes through Tyrrhenos,[159] who tells Kalasiris: "There is a gang of pirates lying in wait for the Phoenician merchantman"[160] These Greek pirates fail to catch the Phoenican merchantman immediately, but gradually, run them down off the coast of Crete in a bloody, destructive battle. When the reaches the shore of Egypt, the pirates fight among themselves and the *boukoloi* appear to take a hand. The *boukoloi* appear inept and incompetent, but are not nearly as savage and malicious as the *boukoloi* found in *Leucippe and Clitophon*. Primarily, the boukoloi are concerned with the spoils from the ship, and seem to take the captives along almost as an afterthought.

Heliodorus also remarks on Trachinos, the Greek pirate, who shows some humanity, but also admits his own wrongdoing. Trachinos intends to try to protect his friend Tyrrhenos from the law, but he is primarily motivated by greed. "Even pirates, […] retain a certain conscience and consideration for their friends. I am sparing you all the unpleasantness you would be caused […by] the disappearance of your guests; and besides, at a single stroke I intend to win the two prizes I want above all else."[161] Here, Heliodorus has the pirate acknowledge his own unsavory character. The words, 'even pirates,' as Trachinos says, shows that even Trachinos knows that Trachinos is a villain, and the rest of his speech only serves to accentuate his villainy.

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[158] Out of boredom, apparently.
[159] Trachinos, the 'savage' man, has an odd friend in Tyrrhenos, who though not a pirate himself, bears a name that once had many piratical associations. The Tyrrhenians (Etruscans) of the Western Mediterranean had been generally considered savage pirates by the Greeks.
[160] Heliodorus V.20
[161] Heliodorus V.20 Technically, a fourthhand quote, as follows: Trachinos is talking to his friend Tyrrhenos, who relates this as a warning to the heroine's 'father' Kalasiris, who in turn tells the whole story

Trachinos is possibly the first character since Odysseus to refer to himself as a pirate. This time, however, the character portrays himself as being immoral. Through his portrayal of Trachinos, Heliodorus effectively condemns piracy, but makes it clear that this was the common belief of people at this time.

The way in which Heliodorus portrays race is also important. Heliodorus himself is a Phoenician, as we find out at the end of the story.[162] This explains much of the portrayal of Greeks and Phoenicians in his tale. Yet the general conduct of most of the Greeks and non-*boukoloi* Egyptians is blameless, while the Ethiopians are portrayed as the most pious of people.[163] Overall, there is little condemnation of any of the peoples who feature in Heliodorus's tale, though the Greeks possibly come out the worst.

Why, however, is Heliodorus's tale in Greek, and intended for a Greek audience, having Greek villains and a non-Greek heroine? J.R. Morgan takes pains to accentuate the accuracy of Heliodorus's details and his portrayal of stereotyped characters.[164] Heliodorus is acclaimed by Morgan as having written wonderful Greek. So then do we conclude that by this time, Greek and Latin had already replaced local languages as the languages of the people and of literature, or is Heliodorus intentionally writing this work for an audience of people not his own? Regardless, this work is a text that improves the reputation of Phoenicians rather than damaging it.

Over-Comical Pirates

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to Knemon and Nausikles.

[162] Heliodorus X.41 "So concludes the Aithiopika, the story of Theagenes and Chariklea, the work of a Phoenician from the city of Emesa, one of the clan of the Descendants of the Sun, Theodosios's son, Heliodorus."

[163] Of course, the great piety of the Ethiopians is attested in both Herodotus's *Histories* and Homer's *Iliad*, so we should expect some great degree of piety here.

[164] J.R. Morgan in Reardon's collection, p. 350

Even Lucian's *The True Story* cannot pass by without some mention of pirates. This off-the-wall, tongue-in-cheek narrative spins a wild tale about a voyage to the ends of the earth. Yet intermixed with Lucian's gleeful description of the people who live on the Moon and the constant warring of several of the peoples he met, is the occurrence of a band of pirates who accost our narrator on his homeward voyage.

These are surely the most pitiful of pirates, who assault the ship riding dolphins and flinging cuttlefish and squid eyes at the stalwart Greek sailors who repulse the attack without injury.[165] This event is the only such attack to befall the narrator,[166] and it barely seems of any account to him.

It is difficult to say exactly what we can take from Lucian's account, as the entire account is filled with intentionally ridiculous statements. However, I think the most important item we can glean from Lucian is proof of the stock piratical episode in literature. Just as pirates or bandits have to appear in our other novels, so too do these stereotypical villains have to put in an appearance in Lucian. If the piratical episode had not been such an important feature of the novels of Lucian's day, then it stands to reason that Lucian's pirates would not have appeared in such an obviously contrived scene. Thus, we can also acknowledge that these stock pirates are becoming less and less accurate.

Petronius's Satyricon possesses a pirate of substantially greater seriousness. Eumolpus, the poet-pirate, still serves as a comic figure, but he is a believable one…almost. The fragmentary nature of the Satyricon makes it difficult to see just what

[165] Dolphin-riding pirates actually sound fairly adept at catching ships, though one wonders how they boarded the ship and managed to carry off any of the loot.
[166] Which possibly strengthens the argument that the Romans did indeed keep the Mediterranean clear of pirates, as this pirate attack only occurs beyond the Pillars of Hercules.

Eumolpus had in mind, but he freely names Lichas a 'pirate-king.' Encolpius may never seem free of complications, but his mishaps are artfully arranged, and frequently his own fault. Of course, whatever appears to improve Encolpius's lot in life has the opposite effect, so it is only logical that if Encolpius boards a ship, it would be a pirate ship.

Something to notice about the ineptitude of pirates is that it seems to increase over time. As our authors get further away from periods in which pirates actually appeared, these pirates seem less accurate and they appear more bumbling and foolish.

Pirates in all the romances show similar signs of ineptness, passion, and carelessness. Repeatedly, heroic characters are able to escape their captors through their captors' failure to be reasonable. However, pirates also seem to be the ultimate adversity in the romances. If a couple can maintain there love even in the face of pirates, than they have proven themselves to have true love.

Race/Culture

Racial differences abound in the romances. Clitophon bewails the fact that they were taken by Egyptian pirates rather than Greek ones. Xenophon's pirates are Phoenicians who deliver their prisoners to a camp near Tyre. Heliodorus's pirates are arguably Greek, with the bandits who capture them later being Egyptian. Achilles Tatius's pirate, Theron, is a Cretan, native of a land famed for piracy.

In stories where the Phoenicians are protagonists or where the author is a Phoenician, the Phoenicians are portrayed in a much better manner. Heliodorus's Phoenicians, are of course, beset by the Greek (probably) pirate Trachinos. Trachinos and Peloros, his second in command, fall to fighting over the beautiful Chariklea, in an

escalating battle that leaves the entirety of the pirate crew either dead or in flight.[167] Similarly, the Phoenicians receive little abuse in Achilles Tatius's *Leucippe and Clitop*hon, where Clitophon is half-Phoenician himself. However, Phoenicians feature as villains in the tales of Longus and Xenophon, so the Phoenician reputation generally averages out.

The Egyptians, however, take quite the cultural beating. We have Cretan, Greek, Phoenician and Cilician pirates and bandits, but Egyptian bandits, primarily the *boukoloi*, feature highest. They are also portrayed as the most savage and brutal of the pirates. Furthermore, the only positive characters found in Egypt, as seen in the romances, are Greek prisoners, and the soldiers of the Roman garrison.

If we choose to examine these instances as social commentary, it would seem that the race of pirates and bandits is used to speak as negative commentary against the people of that race. Furthermore, the mixed portrayal of Greeks and Phoenicians show that the Greeks and the Phoenicians have still not given up their feud on the seas. The generally negative treatment of the Egyptians in literature may show that the Egyptians were actually seen as inferior or even uncivilized by the first or second century CE.

Locale

Most of these adventures take place in Egypt at some point in time. This likely implies that the Greek writers had a great interest in Egypt and that the Greeks saw Egypt as an exotic land that was prone to excitement and adventure. To the Greeks, Egypt was a land of action and romance, not as civilized and familiar as their home in Greece.[168]

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[167] In Heliodorus's defense, this unlikely outcome comes about through Theagenes and Charikleia being able to arm themselves, and their purposeful whittling-down of the winning side of the pirate mutiny. Heliodorus V.32

[168] This was a persistent attitude, as authors centuries later would live in the Middle East and Egypt for

Even Odysseus's pseudo-adventure heads to Egypt.[169] Perhaps, Odysseus's lurid tale of the Egyptians was meant to distract the Phaeacians from his own tale, but it shows that Egypt was a land of differences. As always, tales of distant lands and strange doings do not fail to interest the audience.

Historically, however, Egypt was a prime target of sea-raiding and piracy, not an instigator. From the invasion of the Sea Peoples onward, Egypt was outclassed at sea and possessed no wherewithal to chase down the swift ships built by their northern neighbors. Additionally, the many Egyptian villages along the river and the fertile delta made raids on Egypt very profitable. Cattle were often the target of pirate raids, and cattle were ubiquitous in the Egyptian delta. Furthermore, the wideness of the river, and its many mouths, made the river hard to defend and easy for the pirates to sneak ashore.

Thus, while Egypt is an utterly logical place for piracy to occur, it is odd that the Egyptians are never the victims of piracy in Egypt. Egypt is either the place from which Egyptians bandits strike or the place where Greek or Phoenician pirates try to take over Greek or Phoenician merchantmen.

The Poets and Playwrights

One aspect of this paper is complicated in that we have poetry and plays from well before the first 'historical' accounts were written.[170] It is of course tempting to glean as much history as possible from the epics which predate other textual evidence. However, we must always remember that the preservation of history was not the goal of our authors. Certainly, it was not as important as the creation of entertaining literature.

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inspiration to write their novels, the most obvious example being Gustave Flaubert, author of *Salammbo*

[169] Like most raids upon Egypt, it was a raid for cattle.

[170] Herodotus wrote his histories approximately three centuries after the works of Hesiod and Homer were written.

However, while the pirate seems to have been important in early literature, he is seldom depicted, and then, only in passing. I covered the Odyssey in great detail in Chapter Three, where Odysseus waxes eloquent to the king of the Phaeacians about an utterly fictitious account of a pirate raid on Egypt. However, Odysseus's story is only that, and we see little other evidence of piracy in Homer's epics.

In Virgil's *Aeneid*, we have the helmsman, Palinurus, being washed overboard. Upon arriving on the shore, he is recognized by the locals as a foreigner, and is beaten to death on suspicion of being a pirate.[171] Furthermore, they leave his body to be eaten by animals. This reflects a harsher and more immediate judgment of foreigners than we see in the Greek novels. Not only that, this short scene may indeed reflect greater reality than later works, as we are reminded of the similar actions taken by the Caereans against the Phocaeans and of the Carthaginian sinking of foreign ships in Carthaginian waters.[172] This scene tells us much about the degree to which pirates were disliked by non-pirates.

The playwright Plautus is one of our earliest sources for Roman opinions. Not a Roman by birth, Plautus records Roman life in his plays with the keen eye of an observer and frequently represents his own Italian culture as well as that of the Greeks. Surprisingly, Plautus seems to have had little fear of making biting social commentary. In one play, Plautus is recorded as having approved a custom of the Greeks, the Carthaginians, and of his native city as being superior to Roman customs.

Plautus does play off of the Greek custom of using many scenes of piracy. Many of Plautus's plays consist of a child (usually a daughter) having been abducted by pirates many years ago, and then being returned to his or her family through the happiest (and

[171] Vergil, Aeneid VI.359-361 for the attack on Palinurus, and following for the improper disposal of his corpse.

zaniest) of circumstances. The lost daughter in *Rudens* was taken away by pirates, and Palaestrio in *Miles Gloriosus* is likewise captured by pirates. In his *Casina*, we also have a lost-lost heroine who, we can suspect, was also abducted by pirates or bandits in her youth.

One of the few places in which Carthaginians are portrayed is in Plautus's Poenulus.[173] In it, the Carthaginians are not portrayed poorly, but rather quite sympathetically, wherein a Carthaginian child was abducted by pirates and sold to a master in Greece. For a play written around the time of the Second Punic War, this is a very humanizing work, and it shows that Plautus, unlike many classical authors, seems to judge pirates solely by their actions, rather than by their place of origin.

As a whole, however, I found that there was relatively little information about pirates to be found in ancient poetry and plays, but all of this information seems to differ from the information derived from the literature. All of these authors write in earlier years than the novelists, and their information about piracy may well be more accurate than the stock pirate of the novels.[174]

The Novelists and Historians in Context

Most of the Greek and Roman novelists write during a time when piracy has been officially extirpated from the Mediterranean. Pompey's extraordinarily successful campaign against the pirates of Cilicia seemed to have made Mediterranean waters quieter. However, the events taking place in our Greek novels would imply that piracy

[172] See Chapter 5 for these instances.
[173] Also known as 'the little Phoenician'
[174] Or simply, more accurate for their respective time periods.

was far from dead. Longus's Chloe and Achilles Tatius's Leucippe are both abducted by pirates, as are Chariton's Callirhoe and Xenophon's couple, Habrocomes and Anthia.

Chariton, we must admit, sets his work in the fourth century BCE, shortly after the Peloponnesian War. The Ephesian Tale comes later, near the end of the fourth century. As I discussed in Chapter 3, the fourth century was rife with piracy, so we should almost expect to see piracy active at this time. However, we are dealing with works of fiction, not history, so we must have some doubts about the accuracy of these pirate accounts.

Why then, can we say with any certainty that these writings prove anything about contemporaneous piracy? The fact that piracy is such a common theme is one proof. Pirates abound in all these tales. Presumably, they are a force with which the reader is not unfamiliar. Plautus's audience, for example, certainly must have felt sympathy towards the victims of pirate attacks.

To take this assumption one step further, the author must suppose that his reader, the average middle-class Greek, would be familiar with both the nautical parlance and the particulars of pirate activity.[175] Therefore, piratical actions as depicted in the Greek novels must have been in keeping with normal, contemporary pirate activity or with what people believed to be commonplace in earlier eras. However, some of the pirate depictions could created simply from piratical portrayals in the author's literary predecessors.

The piratical theme in the ancient romances stays strong, yet the differences tell us much. As I mentioned above, Chariton's pirates are shown to consider the markets for

[175] More familiar than I am, given the parlance used. For example, Achilles Tatius expects his reader to know the differences between captain and helmsman and sailor and boatswain.

the prospect of selling Callirhoe, as do the pirates who abduct Anthia.[176] However, the other pirates depicted, like the first group of pirates who capture Anthia and Habrocomes, seem content to either take what they can get or to be sailing back to a home port. These situations may indicate a difference between independent piracy and semi-official privateering.

In these texts, we see piracy everywhere in the Eastern Mediterranean. Perhaps it can hardly be supposed to be nonexistent in the west. Even Syracuse is prey to Cretan pirates, as we see in *Leucippe and Clitophon*. So piracy may be supposed to be ubiquitous in the worlds of our writers.

Still, we see little of trade or action in the west. Despite the fact that the Roman Empire has shifted some focus westwards, the bulk of the action in any of the novels occurs in Egypt, Phoenicia, Greece, or Asia Minor. Even the waters of Greece are primarily left out of the stories save as the place of origin for many of our heroes. Lucian's *The True Story* is our sole example of a great adventure voyage to the west, but we must discount, of course, his tales of the people of the Moon and the Sun.[177]

What does this tell us? People do not know what lies to the west. Everyone in our author's audiences is familiar with the Eastern Mediterranean, with Egypt and the Near East, with Persia, and with the countless islands of the Aegean. These are logical, comfortable places to tell a story. The west is not so familiar. To the Greek reader, the west is still an unknown quantity, which is an ideal setting for quests into the unknown, but not an ideal setting for romances.

[176] One set of them, anyway.
[177] And everything else, more or less.

Comical episodes abound in the romances as well. We can hardly believe that a herd of cows would upset a pirate ship and drown all the pirates as Longus tells us.[178] Daphnis's escape from the pirates is surely meant to be a farcical scene meant to make his audience roar with laughter. Xenophon, not to be outdone, equips his Phoenicians with enough lust to override logic, but not so much that the villains cannot get the heroes into yet more trouble.

Lucian's dolphin-riding pirates are even more ridiculous. A band of brigands who assault a ship armed with nothing more than cuttlefish and squid eyes are too foolhardy and ridiculously-equipped to be believable, but it drives home several points about literature. Firstly, every ancient work needs a gratuitous act of piracy,[179] and secondly, pirates have a tendency to be utterly inept.

The gratuitous act of piracy in Lucian accentuates the ineptitude displayed by pirates. After all, almost every literary group of pirates that we've seen has failed to get away with their acts of piracy. Some are taken by the gods' displeasure, like Theron's crew in *Chareas and Callirhoe*, while others are slain by their would-be prisoners, like Heliodorus's pirates in the Aethiopika, and the hapless Ethiopian guard in *Leucippe and Clitophon*. Such examples show a much greater likelihood of escape than probably would have been the case in real episodes of ancient piracy. This cannot tell us much about historical pirates and their activities, but we do know that the stock pirate is becoming less and less realistic.

Historical Authors

[178] Longus I.30
[179] J.R. Morgan refers to such scenes as part of the 'romantic furniture' of Greek novels. See Reardon, p. 357

It is more difficult to decipher who is and who is not a pirate in our historical accounts. Chapter Five dwells on the issues of pirates and the identification of pirates. I have argued there that pirates were usually considered enemies, and furthermore, that enemies would often be considered or called pirates.

Ormerod believes that often pirates were called mercenaries by their own side and pirates by the other.[180] He cites the example of Ameinias, a loyal follower of Demetrios, sometimes called an arch-pirate and sometimes called a general. Apparently, this Ameinias was particularly given to committing raids on the coasts when not attacking the enemy.

Generals were probably called pirates and vice versa depending on the writer's perceptions. Yet, the Methymnean general is not called a pirate even though he and his men act like pirates.[181] However, it does seem, at least in history, that 'pirate' was an effective name to call someone to vilify them.

Since the vast majority of our sources are Greek and Roman, we must be suspicious of the general authorial preference to identify Greeks as the victims and non-Greeks as the agents of piracy and/or violence. After all, as soon as we see a Phoenician author tackle the issue of piracy,[182] we see the roles reversed. Here, in *The Ethiopian Story*, we have Greek pirates attacking a Phoenician ship rather than vice versa. This implies strongly that authorial bias is shifting the onus of piracy onto other peoples rather than their own.

However, the historians are not entirely to blame for their identification of pirates. The custom of hiring pirates as naval mercenaries during wartime persisted for centuries.

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[180] See Ormerod, pp. 123-124
[181] Referring to an episode in Longus's novel Daphnis and Chloe. See above, pp. 56-57

Indeed it would not be unusual for one sailor to be a pirate one day and a mercenary soldier the next, without any actual change in habit or routine. In such circumstances, it becomes extremely difficult to judge the realities of the situation. Without intending to mislead their audiences, two classical authors might well portray the same group of raiders differently, depending on how they perceived the raiders, rather than on what the raiders actually did.

[182] Heliodorus.

Chapter the Seventh
Thoughts on Conclusions

From the sources, both historical and literary, it is apparent that there was a great deal of piracy in the waters of the Ancient Mediterranean. Over millennia, only Pompey's campaign proved successful in eliminating piracy, and then only for a relatively short time. Piracy always rebounded as a highly profitable occupation, albeit one with many risks. Furthermore, it was also an occupation that possessed a certain glamour. Literary works containing pirates continued to be written in relatively pirate-free-times, and according to Casson, there were middle-class readers of pirate literature who threw in with the Cilicians to take part in the romance of piracy.

There have been several histories of classical piracy, each illuminating the subject more. What is new here is the combination of purely literary texts with their contemporary histories. While there is much in the literature that lends credence to historical assumptions, there is also much that causes problems for the assessment of pirate activity in the classical Mediterranean.

We do see piracy becoming less commonplace, more sinister, and more comical. Homer hardly bats an eye at identifying his hero Odysseus as a pirate, Thucydides and Herodotus identify pirates as being a danger of the Mediterranean, Plautus indirectly vilifies pirates, the Roman historians identify pirates as being enemies of all men,[183] but don't give them much concern, and the Greek novelists portray the pirates as semi-competent men mostly without scruple.

The authors who record both history and literature were, by and large, from the upper crusts of society. Across the field of primary sources, we only have the words of

the elite and wealthy, not the words of the poor. Generally, both seem to depict the rich and noble being victimized by the poor rabble that made up the bands of pirates. Even if we can make generalized conclusions about the opinions of the upper classes, these conclusions really give us no insight into the thoughts and beliefs of the lower classes, the strata of society from which most of our pirates came.

In Conclusion

In conclusion, we can see piracy was generally determined based on the perception of the agent rather than the action. Pirates in this later period, after the Dark Age, were unlawful enemies. Therefore calling a group of plunderers 'pirates' was a way of connoting wrongdoing. In other words, it was a way to shout "that's not fair." This pirate naming might be in reaction either to actions without any official sanction or to warlike actions against the enemy during peacetime. Furthermore, this particular concept of right and wrong seems to be heavily colored by the Greek conception of us and them.

The Greek concept of piracy was not based on legitimacy as much as it was on the identity of the agent. The establishment of 'piracy' was a semantic creation to separate the identical Greek and non-Greek actions of plundering between legitimate warfare and criminality. Indeed, the very words used to denote a pirate reflect changes in meaning over time, as piracy gradually became less moral.

From the gathered λογιοι, I would thereby conclude that all the examples show that there was a definite west/east rivalry between the Greeks and the Persians, Phoenicians, and Egyptians. This rivalry was mainly present on the sea and in trade, and it is through the absence of surviving Carthaginian or Phoenician texts that we get the

[183] *Hostes gentium*, to quote Cicero.

Greek perception of all pirates being foreigners. I find it likely that many of the Greek examples in the λογιοι would have been considered by the Phoenicians to be pirates, provided that the Phoenicians used the same criteria to separate pirates from non-pirates.

From the literature, we have evidence that both supports and takes support away from this historical argument. The literature gives us ample reason to believe that there was significant piratical rivalry between Greece and Phoenicia. The portrayals of Greeks and Phoenicians in the literature imply that Greeks were the favored targets of Phoenician pirates and vice versa. Rather than one being the primary instigator of piracy, it would seem that both were equally active. However, the literature also differs with the history in depicting the amount of piracy there was in the first and second centuries CE. Achilles Tatius in particular depicts more piracy in a certain time period time period than his historian contemporaries claim exists.

Throughout the study of the history of pirates, however, there have been literary sources that depict pirates and piracy in a multitude of ways. Rather than seeking to understand piracy from our viewpoint, we should strive to understand it from the various viewpoints provided us by the literary authors.

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