

The Late Roman Republic and the Pirates

In the early 1st century BCE, as Rome had its third bout with the King of Pontus, Mithridates VI, they [Rome] became increasingly desperate for triumph as their resources began to dwindle as a result of piratical interference in shipping lanes in the mid-70s BCE.¹ Soon after, in 73 BCE, L. Licinius Lucullus had been in command of the efforts against Mithridates,² though, for reasons we will see in the coming pages, Lucullus would soon see the end of his command of the campaign against Mithridates and the pirates.³ In 67 BCE, a new military figure would get his turn with the pirates; his name was Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus, or Pompey the Great as many know him by.⁴ Pompey was given command of the campaign against Mithridates; not only was he put in command, but his authority was so great that no other man had been given that much power in the history of Rome to that point.⁵ Pompey soon made quick work of the pirates, only taking him three months to complete the task.⁶ Rome, though one of the most powerful states in the Mediterranean, had multiple bouts with pirates and brigands. Rome during the Late Republic was not efficient at suppressing the pirates. This is not to say that they were completely and utterly useless at fighting pirates. Rome had plenty of battles against brigands and pirates where Rome came out on top. Suppressing piracy was not an easy task, however, and Rome lacked efficiency due to their motivations and underestimation of their enemy until Pompey was given command. Rome during the Late Roman Republic was not focused on eradicating piracy, but rather protecting shipping and gaining glory from smaller enemies.

Rome and Pirates Before First Century BCE

¹Tom Holland, *Rubicon: The Triumph and Tragedy of the Roman Republic* (London: Abacus, 2013), 173.

² Philip de Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), 125.

³ Holland, *Rubicon* (2013), 174.

⁴ Holland, *Rubicon* (2013), 174.

⁵ Holland, *Rubicon* (2013), 174.

⁶ Holland, *Rubicon* (2013), 175.

Two major themes become apparent in the anti-pirate ‘campaigns’ of the second and third centuries BCE. First, Rome, though victorious in the end, was not always prepared for battles and underestimated their piratical enemies. And second, the campaigns were not always aimed at directly taking out pirates for the sake of eradicating piracy. There was usually another motive for the campaigns, whether it be protecting their own shipping lanes or military men seeking a triumph for their political career. This is not to suggest that the Romans were incompetent and useless against piratical enemies, it is to say that their motives were not to keep the seas clear of pirates and they were not always swiftly taking out their enemies with no trouble.

To start out, we will look at a variety of events that took place before the first century BCE, specifically from c. 250-100 BCE, then the events of the early first century BCE up until Pompey’s campaign. To get the most perspective out of these events, we will look at the primary sources when available, as well as secondary sources.

According to Robert de Souza, throughout the third century BCE a group known as the Aitolians began to expand their territory through central and southern Greece; by the 250s BCE their navy had become a true force around the Aegean.⁷ Philip V and Macedon were the other players on the Greek-Aegean stage during this time and the Aitolians butted heads with them to which de Souza says made the Aitolians a natural ally to the Romans who were also butting heads with Philip V.⁸ Philip was eventually defeated and the Aitolians became inferior to the Romans.⁹

⁷ De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*, 70.

⁸ De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*, 70.

⁹ De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*, 70.

The Aitolians were known for their very relaxed sea laws which did not condemn plundering or reprisal which they used to oppress smaller states in the Aegean.¹⁰ Polybius in his *Histories* mentions incidents where the Aitolians engaged in plundering. One incident from book 4 talks about how the Aitolians had no sense of the laws or peace or war and how they burned sacred buildings.¹¹ Polybius goes on further to explain that the Aitolians partook in the burning of sacred buildings and that they “had no regard for the laws of peace or war.”¹² Polybius goes on to criticize Philip V for using outside forces to fight for him in book 13 and said the Romans still held their morality to not do the same.¹³ This is ironic considering that the Romans used the Aitolians, who Polybius himself considers criminals, to fight against Philip V and Macedon. One could argue that the Aitolians were not pirates since they were a somewhat organized state and that Polybius is biased toward the Aitolians, but this is an interesting look into the source material from an account of Rome partnering with a group that could have been considered “criminals” to fight against another group of criminals. It shows Rome’s odd relationship with pirates.

One group that the Romans did not have good relations with were the Illyrians. Located just to the east of the Italian peninsula on the east of the Adriatic Sea, the Illyrians were considered a group of “warlike Hellenizing tribes.”¹⁴ Gail Reardon says that Rome did not have much interest in controlling the area of Illyria.¹⁵ Polybius records that the Illyrians had been terrorizing Italian merchants for a long time; when complaints of the Illyrians plundering reached

¹⁰De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*, 70.

¹¹ Polybius, *Histories*, trans. Evelyn S. Shuckburgh, Perseus Digital Library (London, New York. MacMillan. 1889). 4.67.

¹² Poly. *Histories*, 4.67.

¹³ Poly. *Histories*, 13.3.

¹⁴ De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*, 76.

¹⁵ Reardon, Gail. “Ignoble Robbers: bandits and pirates in the Roman World,” PhD diss., (University of Tasmania, 1997). 158

Rome, Rome did not act, but instead chose to ignore them for some time.¹⁶ Aaron Beek tells that until 230 BCE Illyria had been ruled by King Argon; after his death his wife, Queen Teuta, took control and initiated a series of plundering attacks, one of which was on Phoenice.¹⁷ Polybius goes on to say that eventually Rome sent two ambassadors to Illyria to confront Teuta to which Teuta said she would not send any harm against any Romans.¹⁸ After the ambassadors spoke to Teuta, she was enraged and sent out a fleet to kill them.¹⁹ Teuta, according to Polybius, then went on a spree of banditry along the Greek coasts until Rome finally intervened in 229 BCE; Teuta then submitted to Rome and agreed to pay tribute.²⁰ Rome was not quick to respond as Reardon says ‘unheeded complaints’ were made to Rome about the Illyrians.²¹ Though the Illyrians did not directly threaten Italy and were not against Roman territory, they did demonstrate that they were a force that was too dangerous to be left alone.²² Shortly after the events of 229 BCE, the Illyrians signed a treaty with terms such as Illyrians having to sail in less than two ships at a time and had to be unarmed.²³ The Istrians were a group that Rome had battles with after the Illyrians. Roman consuls Minucius and Cornelius had taken up the lead against the Istrian pirates in 221 BCE and had apparently suffered significant losses from the fights.²⁴ This suggests that Rome had severely underestimated the pirates to which they had to ask for reinforcement so they did not suffer a defeat.²⁵

¹⁶ Poly., *Histories*, 2.8.

¹⁷ Beek, Aaron L. “Freelance Warfare and Illegitimacy: the Historians’ Portrayal of Bandits, Pirates, Mercenaries and Politicians.” PhD diss. (University of Minnesota, 2014). 50.

¹⁸ Poly., *Histories*, 2.8.

¹⁹ Poly., *Histories*, 2.8.

²⁰ Poly., *Histories*, 2.9-12.

²¹ Reardon, Gail. “Ignoble Robbers,” 158

²² Reardon, Gail. “Ignoble Robbers,” 158

²³ Reardon, Gail. “Ignoble Robbers,” 158

²⁴ Reardon, Gail. “Ignoble Robbers,” 159

²⁵ Reardon, Gail. “Ignoble Robbers,” 159

Demetrius of Macedon had also been causing some trouble around the same time. The Romans were not the direct victims of Demetrius' raids, but one of his fleets was found by the Romans and had broken the treaty of 228.²⁶ Demetrius' forces were quickly defeated by Rome, though the original motive may not have to stamp out piracy as triumphs were given out at the end of the episode suggesting that it was more of a triumph seeking opportunity.²⁷

The Dalmatians had been the subject of another piratical conflict. The residents of Issa had sent Rome several complaints regarding Dalmatian attacks which Rome would have considered piracy.²⁸ Rome, again, was reluctant to respond to the complaints as they would have considered the Dalmatians unworthy opponents; finally in 158 BCE, Rome investigated the complaints and in 156 Marcus Figulus was sent out and attacked the city of Delminium.²⁹ P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica, consul of 155, took the city and was awarded a triumph.³⁰

Jumping forward to the mid to early first century, we will look at the campaign of Q. Caecilius Metellus in the west. H. A. Ormerod writes that securing the trade route between Rome and Spain was the cause of sending a fleet to the Balearic Islands.³¹ According to John Rich, there had been little fighting in Spain from 178-154 BCE and after 133 BCE.³² Often when fighting did take place, it was in the areas that Rome already controlled and wanted to secure.³³ Strabos, in his *Geography*, mentions the Balearic Islands and says that they went into battle with very little clothing and used javellines and slings as their weapons.³⁴ In 123 BCE, Metellus took

²⁶ Reardon, Gail. "Ignoble Robbers," 160

²⁷ Reardon, Gail. "Ignoble Robbers," 160

²⁸ Reardon, Gail. "Ignoble Robbers," 166

²⁹ Reardon, "Ignoble Robbers," 166-7

³⁰ Reardon, "Ignoble Robber," 166-7

³¹ Henry Arderne Ormerod, *Piracy in the Ancient World: An Essay in Mediterranean History* (Liverpool, UK: University of Liverpool LTD., 1924), 166.

³² Rich, John, "Fear, greed, and glory: the causes of Roman war-making in the middle Republic". *War and Society in the Roman World*, Vol. 5 (1993). 58

³³ Rich, "Fear, greed, and glory" 58

³⁴ Strabos, *Geography*, Perseus Digital Library (London. George Bell & Sons. 1903). 3.5.

charge against the Balearic Islanders.³⁵ Beek's interpretation of Orosius's account of the events says that Metellus slaughtered the islanders to stop piracy.³⁶ Beek also interprets Florus' account as Rome justifying their imperialistic civilizing efforts as more important than its immediate effect (the slaughter of islanders).³⁷ Metellus must have killed more than 5000 enemies since he was awarded a triumph for the campaign in 121 and also took the name 'Baliaricus.'³⁸

As seen from these events, Rome was not necessarily focused on eradicating piracy for the sake of eradicating piracy. The motives behind their attacks were aimed toward protecting Roman shipping lanes and gaining glory from defeating enemies.

Campaigns Against Cilicia in the Early First Century BCE

The largest campaign effort by Rome against piracy during the first century BCE was that of the Cilician and Mithridatic Campaigns. These events are some of the most significant pirate campaigns as Rome spent close to 40 years fighting in Anatolia against the brigands with three separate wars against Mithridates VI Eupator, king of Pontus. According to de Souza, the earliest known account of a Roman campaign in Cilicia is Marcus Antonius in 102 BCE.³⁹ Some have tried to argue that there was another campaign that took place in 103 BCE,⁴⁰ but for the argument we are exploring it is a moot point and the evidence is thin.

In Livy's *Periochae* book 68 he says, "Praetor Marcus Antonius pursued the pirates to Cilicia."⁴¹ De Souza comments that Antonius could have used the opportunity to gain a triumph and boost his political popularity in Rome before running for consul.⁴² De Souza goes on to

³⁵ Reardon, "Ignoble Robbers", 168

³⁶ Beek, A.L. "Where Have All the Pirates Gone?" *Invisible Cultures: Historical and Archaeological Perspectives* (2015). 278

³⁷ Beek, "Where Have All the Pirates Gone?". 279

³⁸ Reardon, "Ignoble Robbers," 169

³⁹ De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*, 102

⁴⁰ De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*, 102

⁴¹ Livy, *Periochae*, trans. Jona Lendering, Livus.org (2009). 68.1

⁴² De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*, 104

theorize that the original objective of the campaign was to keep the local fiefdoms under control in ‘Cilicia’ by using land and sea attacks.⁴³ Reardon says that with the slave trade going on there were complaints of piracy from the area with little evidence of Antonius’ campaign.⁴⁴ The campaign must have been a success since Plutarch says that Antonius was given a triumph for his campaign.⁴⁵ Reardon also notes that the pirates must not have been a huge concern to the Romans as they sent a praetor against them and not a consul.⁴⁶

It was after this event that the Romans took legislative action against piracy by passing the *Lex de provinciis praetoriis*.⁴⁷ The content of these laws are in regards to piracy and how to reduce it with laws like providing provisions given to Rome and its allies and forbidding the harboring of pirates in ports.⁴⁸ The laws are significant because it is the first known legislation passed that showed Rome’s position toward piracy.⁴⁹ The laws also show how the Romans had been successful in dealing with piracy. It was by denying the pirates a base of operations and attacks on land rather than by sea.⁵⁰ Beek offers another perspective on the *LdPP*. Beek mentions how it would appear from the laws that piracy was becoming a big problem but that may not have been the case.⁵¹ The ‘pirates’ were whoever Rome said they were and may not have been ‘pirates proper’ but rather fugitives or leftover enemies of Rome.⁵² So the laws could have been more of an attempt at preventing old enemies from becoming a problem and finishing them off.⁵³

⁴³ De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*, 104

⁴⁴ Reardon, “Ignoble Robbers,” 171

⁴⁵ Reardon, “Ignoble Robbers,” 172

⁴⁶ Reardon, “Ignoble Robbers,” 173

⁴⁷ De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*, 108

⁴⁸ De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*, 111-2

⁴⁹ De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*, 113

⁵⁰ De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*, 114

⁵¹ Beek, “Freelance Warfare,” 122

⁵² Beek, “Freelance Warfare,” 122

⁵³ Beek, “Freelance Warfare,” 122

Mayor writes that after a stalemate with Rome over control of Cappadocia in 95 BCE, Mithridates went back to Pontus on the southern coast of the Black Sea where he focused on Armenia to the east.⁵⁴ In 94, Mithridates formed an alliance with the king of Armenia, Tigranes II.⁵⁵

In Appian's *Mithridatic Wars*, he talks about the rise of piracy after first warring with the Romans, saying Mithridates sent out pirates and plundered around the province of Asia.⁵⁶ Over time, Mithridates fleet grew from small boats to larger boats with captains like a navy as they terrorized towns and took wealthy citizens for ransom.⁵⁷ Mithridates was linked with the Cilicians as he was the one who was blamed for supplying resources to the Cilicians.⁵⁸ Ormerod argues that the rise of piracy in this area was due to Rome's failure to patrol the seas.⁵⁹ Not only did they fail to keep the seas under control, but they allowed it to happen; Rome used the pirates as slavers to supply slaves to the Republic.⁶⁰ The next adventure of the Romans in Cilicia came with Sulla in 92 BCE against Mithridates.⁶¹ Mithridates ordered the slaughter of thousands of Roman civilians in Anatolia and sent his forces to occupy Greece.⁶² In 87, Sulla pulled up to Greece with five legions⁶³; he pursued Mithridates who suffered great losses in Greece.⁶⁴

⁵⁴ Mayor, Adrienne. "Common Cause Versus Rome: The Alliance Between Mithridates VI of Pontus and Tigranes II of Armenia, 94-66 BCE," *Tarihçe Türkler ve Ermeniler* (2014). 101.

⁵⁵ Mayor, "Common Cause Versus Rome." 103.

⁵⁶ Appian. *The Mithridatic Wars (The Foreign Wars)*, ed. Horace White, Perseus Digital Library (New York: The MacMillen Company, 1899), 92.

⁵⁷ Appian. *The Mithridatic Wars*, 92

⁵⁸ De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*, 117

⁵⁹ Ormerod, *Piracy in the Ancient World*. 207.

⁶⁰ Ormerod, *Piracy in the Ancient World*. 207.

⁶¹ Ormerod, H. A., "The Campaigns of Servilius Isauricus Against the Pirates," *The Journal of Roman Studies*, Vol. 12 (1922). 36

⁶² Mayor, "Common Cause Versus Rome," 106.

⁶³ De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*. 118

⁶⁴ Mayor, "Common Causes Versus Rome," 106.

Mithridates also failed to take Rhodes in 88 BCE;⁶⁵ in 85, Sulla returned to Rome after signing the Peace of Dardanus with Mithridates.⁶⁶

Rome knew that the Mithridatic wars were not over and Sulla's successors in the area launched more raids against Mithridates to try to provoke him into further war.⁶⁷ Murena was the successor of Sulla who initiated the raids against Mithridates after 85 BCE, but his campaigns were of little importance and he was eventually recalled in 81 BCE.⁶⁸ In 79, Servilius Isauricus was the next consul of Cilicia and he brought in a forward policy with regards to Cilicia.⁶⁹ Servilius led a series of campaigns between 78 and 75 which focused on the areas of Eastern Lycia, Pamphylia, the Isaurians, and the Orontides where he focused on the reduction of those areas.⁷⁰ His campaigns were successful and he returned to Rome in 74 to celebrate a triumph where he gained the name 'Isauricus.'⁷¹

Lucullus headed the next war against Mithridates in 73 BCE.⁷² De Souza quotes Appian's *Mithridatic Wars* chapter 78 which details Mithridates' escape to Pontus in which he was held up in Sinope and then was taken to Amisos.⁷³ Lucullus then knew it was time to fight against Tigranes and Mithridates, so he went to Sinope and killed many of the inhabitants and burned the city.⁷⁴ Lucullus then set his sights on Pontus; he led a siege on the kingdom and by 71, Lucullus held control of Pontus.⁷⁵ Mithridates was yet to be captured, and Lucullus went on a chase

⁶⁵ De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*. 118

⁶⁶ Mayor, "Common Causes Versus Rome," 106.

⁶⁷ Holland, *Rubicon*. 155-6.

⁶⁸ Ormerod, *Piracy in the Ancient World*. 214.

⁶⁹ Ormerod, "The Campaigns of Servilius Isauricus Against the Pirates." 37.

⁷⁰ Ormerod, "The Campaigns of Servilius Isauricus Against the Pirates." 37.

⁷¹ De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*. 128.

⁷² De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*, 125.

⁷³ De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*, 125.

⁷⁴ Plutarch, *Plutarch's Lives: Lucullus*, trans. Bernadotte Perrin. Perseus Digital Library (Cambridge, MA. Harvard University Press. London. William Heinemann Ltd. 1914). 23.2.

⁷⁵ Holland, *Rubicon*. 159

throughout Armenia until 68.⁷⁶ By 68, Lucullus' men were starting to get angry with Lucullus and his failure to capture Mithridates, and in 68, his men went on strike.⁷⁷ In 67, Lucullus was relieved of his command and Pompey was given full control and defeated Mithridates and the pirates in three months.⁷⁸

Again, we see how Rome's motivations were not to eradicate piracy in an anti-pirate campaign. Their motive was to keep territories under control and keep their shipping lanes clear of threats so they could move goods without getting attacked and plundered.

The Effectiveness and Ineffectiveness of Rome Against the Pirates

In this section we will look at ways in which Rome was initially ineffective and the reasoning behind their ineffectiveness. During the late third to mid second century BCE, Rome was not the superior force against pirates in the Mediterranean. Rhodes was the main ally that Rome often relied on for support against enemies in the Eastern Mediterranean. As Keith Fairbank notes, Rhodes had been the state that combated piracy in the Mediterranean.⁷⁹ Rhodes was known for their superior naval fleets and for their navy being hostile to pirates.⁸⁰ Rome had sought out the help of Rhodes during the battles with Antiochus III in the early second century BCE.⁸¹ The Rhodian superiority as pirate police came to an end around the 150s BCE as Rome infringed on Rhodian authority and even with Rhodes and Rome working together, piracy would still remain as there were many areas to operate out of.⁸²

The *Lex de provinciis praetoriis*, as stated earlier, was Rome's first written stance against 'piracy'. Rome was not concerned with eradicating piracy with this legislation, however, as they

⁷⁶ Holland, *Rubicon*. 162-5

⁷⁷ Holland, *Rubicon*. 167

⁷⁸ Holland, *Rubicon*. 174-5

⁷⁹ Fairbank, Keith. "The Strength of Rhodes and the Cilician Pirate Crisis." *Studia Antiqua* 6, no. 1 (2008). 87.

⁸⁰ Beek, "Freelance Warfare." 76

⁸¹ Reardon, "Ignoble Robbers." 133

⁸² De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World*. 90-91

were aiming toward getting rid of old enemies that had not been taken care of during previous wars.⁸³ The effectiveness of this legislation is debatable, however. It is a matter of broad or strict interpretation; if interpreted as legislation to eradicate piracy, the *LdPP* failed, but if interpreted as an attempt to suppress piracy in Cilicia, the legislation was not necessarily a flop as Rome eventually saw success in the east against Cilicia.⁸⁴

Rome also had other events going on during the late second and early first century BCE that required their immediate attention. Rome's expansion throughout the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, and eventually became the largest city in Italy.⁸⁵ During the second century BCE, Rome had been entangled in an internal conflict; Roman citizenship had only been given to people who lived in the city of Rome, whereas those who still lived in Rome's territory but not in the city were not given citizenship.⁸⁶ Finally, after two decades of fighting, the war was over in 70 BCE with the Italics gaining citizenship.⁸⁷ This war caused a severe shakeup in Rome's political and social culture as it involved high participation and fighting on the Italian peninsula.⁸⁸ There is no doubt that this event had pulled Rome's attention away from piracy and toward protecting the city of Rome. Rome would have been more concerned with protecting the city.

The main reason that Rome was not successful at eradicating piracy during the Late Republic was Rome's motivation. Glory was a large part of Roman society and generals often sought out glory through achievement in military participation.⁸⁹ Pirates and common brigands

⁸³ Beek, "Freelance Warfare." 122

⁸⁴ Beek, "Freelance Warfare." 123

⁸⁵ Oakley, Stephen. "The Roman Conquest of Italy," *War and Society in the Roman World*, Vol. 5 (1993). 11

⁸⁶ Carla-Uhink, Filippo, "(Re-)Founding Italy: The Social War, Its Aftermath and the Construction of a Roman-Italic Identity in the Roman Republic." *History in Flux* (2019). 8

⁸⁷ Carla-Uhink, "(Re-)Founding Italy," 10

⁸⁸ Patterson, John. "Military Organization and Social Change." *War and Society in the Roman World*, Vol. 5 (1993). 93

⁸⁹ Reardon, "Ignoble Robbers." 137.

were not seen as worthy opponents to face in wars.⁹⁰ Rome only considered those who could form a strong and trained army to be a worthy opponent.⁹¹ This belief led to a few problems with Rome's attempts at suppressing piracy. First, this led to Rome underestimating their piratical opponents. Rome saw this in the battles against Demetrius of Macedon; Rome had underestimated their enemy and was forced to call in support so they didn't suffer a defeat.⁹² This theme was also seen against Spartacus in 73 when Rome suffered defeats in the beginning due to underestimating their enemy.⁹³ Given that Rome sought glory through military means and some groups were considered unworthy opponents, this means that Rome did not see glory so they were reluctant to engage, or, contrapositively, only engaged in battles to seek triumph when there was enough enemies to gain a triumph. Metellus' campaign in the Balearics is an example of the latter as he was seeking a triumph so he chose to engage with an arguably unworthy enemy that would bring him a triumph.⁹⁴ Rome's motivations were also not aimed toward eradicating piracy, but rather toward protecting their shipping lanes as seen above.

Conclusion

Finally, after many years of fighting against Mithridates, the Mithridatic campaigns became a top priority for Rome.⁹⁵ Pompey had been given an authority that no single man had been given in the history of the Republic; Pompey was given 500 ships, 120,000 men, and command over the entire Mediterranean that extended fifty miles inland and three years to complete the task.⁹⁶ Rome seemed desperate for a victory against Mithridates. Pompey had been

⁹⁰ Reardon, "Ignoble Robbers." 141.

⁹¹ Lonergran, Brady B., "Roman Banditry: Scorning Senatorial Skullduggery in Sallust." *Penn History Review*: Vol. 18: Iss. 1, Article 6 (Fall 2010). 79

⁹² Reardon, "Ignoble Robbers." 159.

⁹³ Reardon, "Ignoble Robbers." 144.

⁹⁴ Reardon, "Ignoble Robbers." 145.

⁹⁵ Henley, Ian. "Pompey's Pirate Campaign, and its Surprisingly Underwhelming Significance." (2017). 8.

⁹⁶ Holland, *Rubicon*. 174-5

successful in his campaign; not only successful, but successful in the blink of an eye. It only took Pompey three months to capture Mithridates.⁹⁷ As Holland puts it, “It was a brilliant victory, a triumph for Pompey himself and an eye-opening demonstration of the reserve of force available to Rome.”⁹⁸

Rome’s efficiency against piracy reflected their motivations toward suppressing piracy. Though they were overall successful against pirates, they were not always efficient in their battles. As we have covered in this paper, Rome was not efficient for a variety of reasons. Rome did not show much concern for piracy as they were concerned with other things such as the Social War, seeking triumph in other matters, protecting their shipping lanes, and a lack of concern for smaller groups of opponents they considered unworthy. Rome finally was fed up with their losses against the pirates and gave Pompey free reign to combat them. After Pompey’s campaign, Rome saw its true potential when dealing with an enemy in a serious manner.

⁹⁷ Holland, *Rubicon*. 175.

⁹⁸ Holland, *Rubicon*. 175.

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