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ROMAN HEGEMONY AND NON-STATE VIOLENCE: A FRESH LOOK AT POMPEY'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE PIRATES*

By MANUEL TRÖSTER

Ancient history and modern thought interact in multifarious ways. While modern concepts can help us to understand, or serve to obscure, ancient reality, the remote past can also be used as a point of reference for contemporary debates about political issues and strategies. In fact, pundits and politicians alike are used to invoking the lessons of (ancient) history in order to justify their recommendations and decisions. This is often done in a most arbitrary and selective way, without regard for the fact that the interpretation of history is too complex a task to yield uncontroversial and straightforward answers to contemporary problems. Nevertheless, it would be rash to dismiss this kind of analysis as unsuitable for academic research; for it should not be overlooked that it can help to broaden the understanding of structural patterns and give a sense of the variety of options available to decision-makers.

One of the areas in which historical analogies are looming particularly large is the nature of the current international system and the direction of American foreign policy. While comparisons are frequently drawn between the United States and various other hegemonic powers of the modern world, most notably the British Empire,[1] ancient Rome is cited no less insistently as a precedent for the supposed unipolarity of the interstate system in the post-Cold War

* I am grateful to Heinz Heinen and Axel Niebergall for their helpful suggestions and criticism.

[1] See, for example, B. Porter, *Empire and Superempire. Britain, America and the World* (New Haven, CT, 2006), esp. 172–7; D. Kennedy, 'Essay and Reflection: On the American Empire from a British Imperial Perspective', *The International History Review* 29 (2007), 83–108; also the bestselling studies by N. Ferguson, *Empire. How Britain Made the Modern World* (London, 2003), 367–9 and *passim*; idem, *Colossus. The Price of America's Empire* (New York, 2004), 14–26 and *passim*. For more general reflections on the lessons of empire, see D. Lal, *In Praise of Empires. Globalization and Order* (New York, 2004); C. S. Maier, *Among Empires. American Ascendancy and its Predecessors* (Cambridge, MA, 2006), and the contributions collected in C. Calhoun, F. Cooper, and K. W. Moore (eds.), *Lessons of Empire. Imperial Histories and American Power* (New York, 2006).

era.[2] In many cases, the underlying intention is fairly obvious, owing to the fact that Rome is stereotypically viewed as being either a positive model of efficient administration and transcultural integration or an evil example of tyrannical rule and aggressive militarism. The predictions and prescriptions derived from these comparisons are, of course, as different as the periods and features of Roman history that they choose as their starting points. Consequently, references to Rome can be found in pronouncements of unilateralists and multilateralists, of hawks and doves, of advocates and critics of America's global leadership alike.[3]

The episode to be investigated in the present paper is concerned with a particular stage in the process that probably attracts most attention among those comparing America to Rome in the political arena as well as in the academic world, namely the rise of the ancient city-state to undisputed hegemony in the Mediterranean.[4] Regarding Pompey's command against the pirates, some of the issues involved have recently been discussed by bestselling novelist Robert Harris in the New York Times and by Raimund Schulz in a German periodical of historical teaching.[5] While Schulz makes various observations

[2] The current structure of the international system is a matter of controversy, of course. While most analysts view the United States as by far the most powerful state in world politics, her dependence on the co-operation of other state and non-state actors is increasingly recognized. See, for example, J. S. Nye Jr., *The Paradox of American Power. Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone* (New York, 2002).

[3] See the examples cited in E. Eakin, 'All Roads Lead to D.C.', *The New York Times* (31 March 2002), <http://tinyurl.com/6owavs>, accessed 7 November 2008; P. S. Golub, 'Tentation impériale', *Le Monde diplomatique* (September 2002), 8 f.; S. Roda, 'Strategie imperiali', in M. Pani (ed.), *Storia romana e storia moderna. Fasi in prospettiva* (Bari, 2005), 115–32; also M. Wyke, 'A Twenty-First-Century Caesar', in eadem (ed.), *Julius Caesar in Western Culture* (Malden, MA, 2006), 305–23. On the other hand, the historical parallel is sometimes forcefully rejected but this tends to reflect erroneous ideas about a supposedly omnipotent Rome. Cf. for example, D. Kagan, 'Comparing America to Ancient Empires is "Ludicrous"', *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution* (6 October 2002), <http://www.newamericancentury.org/defense-20021006.htm>, accessed 7 November 2008), with the critical remarks in Roda, 124–6.

[4] See, for example, P. Bender, *Weltmacht Amerika. Das neue Rom* (Stuttgart, 2003); also idem, 'America: The New Roman Empire?', *Orbis* 47 (2003), 145–59; M. Tröster and A. Coskun, 'Amerika auf den Spuren Roms? Zum Thema der Freundschaft in den Außenbeziehungen der Vereinigten Staaten und des Römischen Reiches', *GWU* 55 (2004), 486–501; G. Zecchini, 'Egemonie a confronto: Roma e gli Stati Uniti', in Pani (n. 3), 155–66. Other studies focus on the Principate (e.g., C. Meier, 'Von der "Pax Romana" zur "Pax Americana"', in Alfred Herrhausen Gesellschaft für internationalen Dialog (ed.), *Pax Americana?* [München, 1998], 95–122) or Roman decline in late antiquity (e.g., F. G. Sampaio, 'A decadência e queda de Roma ocidental: uma comparação com o presente estágio do imperialismo americano', *Escola Superior de Geopolitica e Estratégia, Textos* [31 July 2003], <http://www.defesanet.com.br/esge/Roma3107.pdf>, accessed 7 November 2008).

[5] See R. Harris, 'Pirates of the Mediterranean', *The New York Times* (30 September 2006), <http://tinyurl.com/6dq4b7>, accessed 7 November 2008; R. Schulz, 'Roms Kampf gegen die mediterrane Piraterie: ein Beispiel für einen asymmetrischen Krieg in der Antike?', *Geschichte, Politik und ihre Didaktik* 34 (2006), 76–84, esp. 82 f. For a more general attempt to draw lessons

regarding the asymmetric character and the strategic implications of the wars against ancient pirates and modern terrorists, Harris explores the constitutional significance of the *lex Gabinia* and of current anti-terror legislation within the context of Roman and American domestic politics. Granted, these are two interesting ways of drawing lessons from the ancient superpower's reaction to the challenge posed by piracy, yet Schulz tends to view the parallels rather too narrowly in the realm of military strategy, whereas Harris' political agenda leads him to exaggerate the consequences of the ancient law as marking 'the beginning of the end of the Roman republic'.

If the present study is focused on the foreign-policy side of Pompey's command, this is not to say that the implications for Roman politics and the Republican constitution ought to be considered of secondary importance.[6] After all, the domestic sphere is essential for a full understanding of the affair and must not be left out of the picture. Starting from a broader perspective on the provision of public goods in international relations, the following enquiry will look at the rationale behind Rome's policies towards the pirates, whose activities kept expanding in the eastern Mediterranean over several decades in the second and first centuries BC. As for Pompey's campaign, special attention will be devoted to the interplay of military and non-military instruments, as well as to the treatment of the vanquished pirates and the representation of the commander's motives in the sources. Finally, some conclusions will be drawn regarding the implications of the ancient episode for understanding the parameters of hegemony, international order, and political strategies for dealing with threats posed by violent non-state actors.

Before we can proceed with this agenda, an important preliminary point needs to be made. The very definition of certain activities as piratical, criminal, or terrorist necessarily involves an element of subjectivity and arbitrariness. Indeed, history provides countless examples of separatists and insurgents evolving into legitimate

from a comparison of piracy and terrorism, see D. J. Puchala, 'Of Pirates and Terrorists: What Experience and History Teach', *Contemporary Security Policy* 26 (2005), 1–24, on whose conclusions see below, n. 62.

[6] See the arguments deployed in the heated debate about the *lex Gabinia* in Cass. Dio 36.24–36; also Plut. *Pomp.* 25.7–12; Vell. 2.32.1 f.; further, Cic. *Manil.* 52–64, and, e.g., the discussion in R. Seager, *Pompey. A Political Biography* (Oxford, 1979), 33–36 (= updated edition, 2002, 44–6). On the nature of Pompey's command, see S. Jameson, 'Pompey's "Imperium" in 67: Some Constitutional Fictions', *Historia* 19 (1970), 539–60 (in favour of *imperium maius*) and K. M. Girardet, '"Imperia" und "provinciae" des Pompeius 82 bis 48 v.Chr.', *Chiron* 31 (2001), 171–6 (against *imperium maius*), repr. in idem, *Rom auf dem Weg von der Republik zum Prinzipat* (Bonn, 2007), 22–8, with further references.

representatives of states and sometimes back again. The distinction between piracy and conventional naval warfare, too, can be as blurred as it is fundamental, for, in many cases, labels such as 'pirate' or 'buccaneer' are simply the terminology applied by those wishing to discredit activities that may actually be difficult to distinguish from more respectable forms of trade and violence. In other words, one country's pirates may in fact be another country's freedom fighters.

Evidently, this ambiguity applies a fortiori to a somewhat 'primitive' international society in which piracy is not only long established and structurally embedded but also forms part of the tactical repertoire of traditional naval powers. Against this background, it has even been suggested that Pompey's campaign against the well-organized Cilician pirates might actually have been a conventional war against a regular enemy rather than a policing operation against outlaws.[7] Undoubtedly, this is an important issue to raise, the more so as it serves to transcend the essentially one-sided perspective provided by the extant sources, which tend to adopt a markedly pro-Roman point of view.

While this partiality ought to be stressed, and may in fact be quite deplorable, the gaps left by the biased tradition cannot be compensated for by an outright and no less biased rejection of the victors' version of events. At any rate, it is not very helpful to dismiss the Roman outlook as mere 'imperial' propaganda;[8] for those labelled as pirates apparently did resort to means that their enemies genuinely perceived to be at variance with the practice of conventional warfare. Of course, this does not rule out the possibility that at least some of these people were driven by a set of motives that extended beyond desperation or a desire for profit and personal advantage.[9] However, there is little to commend modern attempts to characterize and idealize the pirates as champions of political and socio-economic resistance to Roman domination and

[7] See A. Avidov, 'Were the Cilicians a Nation of Pirates?', *MHR* 12.1 (1997) 5–55, esp. 14–20.

[8] Thus P. De Souza, '"They Are the Enemies of All Mankind": Justifying Roman Imperialism in the Late Republic', in J. Webster and N. J. Cooper (eds.), *Roman Imperialism. Post-Colonial Perspectives* (Leicester, 1996), 125–33; Avidov (n. 7), 41–4 and *passim*; also note the references cited in n. 10.

[9] In this context, note N. K. Rauh, 'Who Were the Cilician Pirates?', in S. Swiny, R. L. Hohlfelder, and H. W. Swiny (eds.), *'Res maritimae'. Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean from Prehistory to Late Antiquity. Proceedings of the Second International Symposium 'Cities on the Sea'* (Atlanta, 1997), 272–80, on maritime brotherhoods and their defiant contradistinction to conventional norms.

exploitation.[10] Such a reconstruction is indeed too far removed from the sources to make further historical analysis meaningful. Rather than stopping at this point, the present enquiry starts from the assumption that the pirates were felt to threaten the Roman sphere of power as a force defying the rules of interstate relations.

Action and inaction against piracy: between national interests and international order

The spread of piracy in the second and first centuries BC and Rome's efforts to contain and suppress it may usefully be compared with the rise of another hegemonic empire, namely that of Britain. For a long time, the English navy adopted privatized naval warfare as a core element of the strategy pursued most notably in the conflict with the world power of Spain, raiding wealthy cities and ports, harassing the thriving gold trade, and attacking merchant ships en route between the New World and the Iberian Peninsula.[11] This device, which was also employed by French and Dutch squads, proved remarkably successful at a time when England was no match for the major power from southern Europe in terms of economic and military resources. Yet the tide turned after the defeat of the Spanish Armada and the establishment of British naval supremacy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Having become the leading colonial power, with possessions on all continents, Britain no longer profited from

[10] Apart from Avidov (n. 7), esp. 29–40 on the pirates' role in an 'anti-Roman bloc', see R. Schulz, 'Zwischen Kooperation und Konfrontation: Die römische Weltreichsbildung und die Piraterie', *Klio* 82 (2000), 433 f., who likewise suggests that they formed part of a 'breite Front gegen die römische Ausbeutung' ('a wide front against the Roman exploitation', 434); also idem, *Die Antike und das Meer* (Darmstadt, 2005), 176 f.; idem (n. 5), 78 f. and – somewhat more cautiously – 83; further G. Marasco, 'Aspetti della pirateria cilicia nel I secolo a.C.', *GFF* 10 (1987), 129 f.; H. Pohl, *Die römische Politik und die Piraterie im östlichen Mittelmeer vom 3. bis zum 1. Jh. v.Chr.* (Berlin, 1993), 165–7. Schulz's argument actually calls to mind the Hobsbawmian concept of 'social banditry' (see A. Blok, 'Social Banditry Reconsidered', in *Honour and Violence* [Cambridge, 2001], 14–28; R. W. Slatta, 'Eric J. Hobsbawm's Social Bandit: A Critique and Revision', *A Contracorriente* 1.2 [2004], 22–30 <http://www.ncsu.edu/project/acontracorriente/spring_04/Slatta.pdf>, accessed 7 November 2008; K. A. Wagner, 'Thuggee and Social Banditry Reconsidered', *Historical Journal* 50 [2007], 353–76 for critical discussion and up-to-date bibliography). Also note M. Clavel-Lévêque, 'Brigandage et piraterie : représentations idéologiques et pratiques impérialistes au dernier siècle de la République', *DHA* 4 (1978), 22–8, who presents a distinctly 'anti-imperialist' reading of the pirates' activities from a Marxist perspective.

[11] See P. M. Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery* (London, 1976), 25–35; N. A. M. Rodger, *The Safeguard of the Sea. A Naval History of Great Britain, vol. 1: 660–1649* (London, 1997), 238–96; A. Herman, *To Rule the Waves. How the British Navy Shaped the Modern World* (London, 2005), 75–143, with further references.

privateering but rather stood to be the main beneficiary of open and secure trade routes across the oceans. Consequently, her navy eventually set out to eradicate piracy, thus seeking economic as well as political and military advantages for herself, while at the same time providing the public good of maritime security for the benefit of the international community.[12]

Evidently, Rome's path to hegemony was quite different in several ways. First of all, the city on the Tiber was primarily a land power and only developed significant naval capabilities in response to specific threats. Moreover, it was merely indirectly that she initially derived advantages from the spread of piracy in the eastern Mediterranean because it hampered the rise of potential rivals and helped to satisfy the growing demand for slaves in Latium and Italy.[13] At the same time, the successive victories of the emerging superpower only aggravated the largely self-inflicted instability of the Hellenistic states, which greatly facilitated the increasingly daring undertakings of the pirates. Thus, when the latter's activities reached their peak in the first century BC, Rome had already become the dominant power in the Mediterranean world and it was one of her enemies, Mithridates VI of Pontus, who co-operated with at least some of the pirates in his unsuccessful challenge to Roman supremacy.[14]

Notwithstanding these differences, there are quite a few structural similarities between Roman and British hegemony and the way in which the two powers sought to subdue piracy and eventually created spheres of relative peace and prosperity. Much of this positive assessment is, of course, a matter of perception and propaganda since both empires continued to be involved in wars, suppressed revolts in territories under their control, and failed to bring equal rights and opportunities to all of their subjects.[15] Still, it is correct to point out that both Rome and Britain were quite successful in providing political stability and economic development at least within their core spheres of dominance. Beyond this, various actors on the fringes of

[12] See, for example, Kennedy (n. 11), 164 f.; Herman (n. 11), 440–3.

[13] The pirates' role in supplying the slave market (as described in Strab. 14.5.2) may be a red herring, though. See Avidov (n. 7), 25–9.

[14] See L. Ballesteros Pastor, *Mitridates Eupátor, rey del Ponto* (Granada, 1996), 436–42; also B. C. McGing, *The Foreign Policy of Mithridates VI Eupator, King of Pontus* (Leiden, 1986), 139 and *passim*; more broadly, E. Maróti, 'Die Rolle der Seeräuber in der Zeit der Mithradatischen Kriege', in L. De Rosa (ed.), *Ricerche storiche ed economiche in memoria di Corrado Barbagallo* (Naples, 1970), i.479–93; G. Marasco, 'Roma e la pirateria cilicia', *RSI* 99 (1987), 135–43.

[15] For the Roman Empire see, for example, G. Woolf, 'Roman Peace', in J. Rich and G. Shipley (eds.), *War and Society in the Roman World* (London, 1993), 171–94, who critically analyses the ideological construction of the *pax Romana* under the Principate.

their empires, such as weak governments and foreign merchants, also benefited from the hegemons' ability to quell disturbances by brigands and pirates and to deter attacks by rivals and potential challengers, whose compliance could be encouraged by side payments or enforced by coercion. In other words, a number of third parties were allowed a free ride on the public goods of relative security and open trade routes offered by the respective superpowers.[16]

On the other hand, failure to provide these public goods could ultimately pose a challenge not only to secondary beneficiaries on the margins of the imperial orbit but also to the hegemon itself. Thus, the rampant growth of piracy and its extension to the coast of Italy and the western Mediterranean in the first century BC was by no means an inevitable consequence of conditions in the Hellenistic East but to some extent due to the connivance or lack of determination on the part of the dominant power. Of course, pirates had been operating long before the rise of Rome, and there were obviously structural as well as contingent reasons for their flourishing. Still, there is no doubt that their business benefited significantly from the vacuum created by the decline of the eastern monarchies, most notably the Seleucids, who lost effective control over Cilicia and parts of the Levant in the course of the second century. Civil strife and political instability in what might today be termed a 'failed state' produced social unrest and economic uncertainty, with no one of the neighbouring powers being capable of remedying the situation.[17] At the same time, the Rhodian navy, which used to be a major force in the region, was seriously weakened, owing to the new Roman policy of curtailing the power of the island after the war against Perseus. This is not to say that the Rhodians or anyone else had consistently sought to police the seas in the preceding decades,[18] yet the rising level of disorder and anarchy in the eastern Mediterranean undoubtedly contributed to the thriving of piracy.

Consequently, no one but the Romans was left to take the lead in the struggle against the menace of the sea but, over several decades,

[16] For the concept of global public goods in the contemporary world, see Nye (n. 2), 141–7; also R. Gilpin, *Global Political Economy. Understanding the International Economic Order* (Princeton, 2001), 97–102, both citing the precedent of the British Empire.

[17] For the connexion between the decline of the Seleucids and the growth of Cilician piracy, see Strab. 14.5.2, and Marasco (n. 14), 122–9; Pohl (n. 10), 117–27; S. Tramonti, *'Hostes communes omnium'. La pirateria e la fine della Repubblica romana (145–33 a.C.)* (Ferrara, 1994), 27–33; P. De Souza, *Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World* (Cambridge, 1999), 98–100.

[18] See the nuanced picture in H.-U. Wiemer, *Krieg, Handel und Piraterie. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des hellenistischen Rhodos* (Berlin, 2002), 116–42. Also note Pohl (n. 10), 127–39; De Souza (n. 17), 48–53 and 80–91.

the measures adopted were piecemeal and improvised rather than systematic and comprehensive.[19] In 102, the praetor M. Antonius was sent out to fight pirates in Cilicia; shortly thereafter, the new superpower sought to enlist the support of various regional powers to clear the seas, as is documented by the extensive inscriptions of the so-called piracy law (*lex de provinciis praetoriis*).[20] This initiative is of particular interest in view of the co-operation that it envisaged between Rome and her friends and allies, though the latter obviously lacked the resources, and in some cases the determination, to take decisive action in the absence of a more resolute commitment on the part of the hegemon. Moreover, it is noteworthy that the law places special emphasis on the denial of bases to the pirates, thus indicating that they were not without local support and prospered where effective state authority was lacking. Evidently, the phenomenon – like present-day terrorism – was transnational, in the sense that it transcended state borders and intrastate hierarchies, and therefore required a concerted effort rather than a unilateral and purely military approach.

The transnational character of the threat is also confirmed by Rome's subsequent undertakings, which all heavily relied on contributions by allies but were not sufficient in scope to have more than a transitory impact. During the Mithridatic Wars, naval forces assembled by Lucullus repeatedly defeated piratical squads along with Pontic contingents without, however, depriving them of their retreat areas and supply bases.[21] Nor did various other governors of Asia or P. Servilius Vatia, who campaigned in southern Anatolia in the early 70s, achieve more than some limited success on the local level.[22] A more comprehensive effort may have been envisaged when another M. Antonius, the praetor of 74 and father of the Triumvir, was invested with wide-ranging powers throughout the Mediterranean, but he soon got bogged down in an abortive campaign in

[19] On Rome's efforts to suppress piracy prior to Pompey's command, see generally Pohl (n. 10), 208–78; Tramonti (n. 17), 33–60; R. M. Kallet-Marx, *Hegemony to Empire. The Development of the Roman Imperium in the East from 148 to 62 BC* (Berkeley, CA, 1995), 229–39, 304–11, and *passim*; De Souza (n. 17), 102–61; also the earlier standard work by H. A. Ormerod, *Piracy in the Ancient World. An Essay in Mediterranean History* (Liverpool, 1924), 208–27.

[20] For the text, see M. H. Crawford (ed.), *Roman Statutes* (London, 1996), i.231–70, with discussion and further references.

[21] Hence Ormerod (n. 19), 221 unduly exaggerates when he states that Lucullus deserves 'most of the credit for the later successes gained by Pompeius against both the pirates and Mithridates'.

[22] For a broad outline of Servilius' activities, see A. N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Foreign Policy in the East, 168 BC to AD 1* (London, 1984), 152–8.

Crete.[23] Following this setback, Q. Caecilius Metellus was sent out to conquer the island and eradicate piracy there, yet his uncompromising attitude towards the enemy prevented him from earning a swift victory.[24] Considering these recurring initiatives, it would be inaccurate to say that the Romans were basically indifferent to the challenge posed by the pirates, yet a comparison with the rapid mobilization for the ensuing campaign under Pompey makes it clear that it was only then that the issue became a top priority.

This, in turn, had much to do with the sudden immediacy of the threat to the life and wellbeing of citizens in Italy and Rome. No longer was it only Romans travelling overseas who were exposed to grave risks, but the pirates eventually started taking prisoners, including senior magistrates, along the Via Appia and raided the port of Ostia.[25] To make matters worse, they disrupted the corn supply of the city of Rome, thus creating immense political pressure for resolute counter-measures. Once the vital interests of the *plebs* were at stake, decisive action had to be taken and was authorized within a couple of weeks. Among the political elite, there was fierce opposition against a major command for Pompey, whose powers were feared to throw the aristocratic system off balance, but in this instance popular demands proved impossible to resist.[26] Consequently, the experienced general was endowed with extensive powers to organize the war effort against the pirates and to exercise command in the whole Mediterranean, as well as the coastal zones of the adjacent provinces.

Humanitas and resettlement: a political solution to a socio-economic problem?

Pompey's campaign in 67/66 BC proved successful for a variety of reasons. Evidently, the allocation of financial resources and the mobilization of naval power, including forces provided by allies, were indispensable to the operation, so that several hundred ships could rapidly be assembled under his command.[27] At the same time,

[23] On the nature of his command, see E. Maróti, 'On the Problem of M. Antonius Creticus' "Imperium Infinitum"', *AAntHung* 19 (1971), 259–72, and note Girardet (n. 6), 171 f. (= repr. 2007, 23) for further references.

[24] On Metellus' harshness and his conflict with Pompey, see below, notes 43–6.

[25] See Cic. *Manil.* 32 f.; Plut. *Pomp.* 24.8–11; Cass. Dio 36.22.1–3; App. *Mithr.* 93.427.

[26] See the references cited in n. 6.

[27] Plut. *Pomp.* 26.3 mentions 500 ships, whereas App. *Mithr.* 94.431 speaks of 270. Flor. 1.41.8 records the involvement of Rhodian forces.

planning, organization, and the appointment of up to twenty-four or twenty-five legates were key factors in dealing with a highly mobile and tactically experienced enemy who could make use of plenty of coastal bases and hiding places.[28] Thus, the decision to divide the Mediterranean into thirteen command districts and to proceed systematically from west to east turned out to be a most efficient strategy, enabling the Roman forces to clear the seas within a matter of weeks.[29] Beyond this, the rapid succession of victories was also due to the psychological impact of Pompey's nomination, which apparently generated as much confidence among the Romans as it provoked awe among the pirates, though Cicero's encomiastic remarks to this effect are presumably exaggerated.[30] As the contemporary orator indicates, instant success seemed sufficiently certain to make the corn price drop immediately upon the commander's appointment, suggesting that this was accomplished 'by the name of a single man and the hope that he inspired (*unius hominis spe ac nomine*)' (Cic. *Manil.* 26.4).[31]

However, the ancient tradition also cites another factor, which belongs to the realm of persuasion rather than to that of physical power and its perception. For the mercy displayed by Pompey is said to have induced many pirates to surrender to him, thus helping the progress of the final stage of the campaign against enemy strongholds in Cilicia.[32] In this context, the double triumphator may also have taken advantage of the personal contacts that he had established in many parts of the Mediterranean earlier on, though it is speculative to surmise that he had somehow prearranged the surrender of numerous pirates well before the launch of the operation.[33] According to Plutarch, moreover, the Roman commander understood that piracy

[28] Twenty-four legates according to Plut. *Pomp.* 26.3, twenty-five according to App. *Mithr.* 94.431, who goes on to mention thirteen of them by name (*Mithr.* 95.434–6). A partially different list is provided by Flor. 1.41.9 f. See also the detailed discussion in L. Pulci Doria Breglia, 'I legati di Pompeo durante la guerra piratica', *AFLN* 13 (1970/71), 47–66; further, T. R. S. Broughton, *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic, vol. 2: 99 BC–31 BC* (New York, 1952), 148 f.

[29] The entire operation apparently took less then three months (thus Plut. *Pomp.* 28.3): forty days for clearing the western Mediterranean (Plut. *Pomp.* 26.7; App. *Mithr.* 95.438) and forty-nine days for the defeat of the Cilician pirates in the east (Cic. *Manil.* 35). Also note Liv. *per.* 99.3; Flor. 1.41.15.

[30] See Cic. *Manil.* 43–6. Also note App. *Mithr.* 95.438–96.441.

[31] See also Plut. *Pomp.* 26.4.

[32] See Plut. *Pomp.* 27.6–28.2; App. *Mithr.* 96.441 f.; Cass. Dio 36.37.4 f.

[33] Thus Schulz, 2000 (n. 10), 437: 'dass Pompeius und seine im ganzen Mittelmeerraum tätigen Agenten bereits vor 67 mit einer großen Zahl kooperationswilliger Piraten Arrangements getroffen haben, die er 67 nur noch einlösen musste'; similarly idem, 2005 (n. 10), 180; idem (n. 5), 81.

was related to a broader set of socio-economic problems and therefore required a comprehensive solution, involving a long-term perspective for the reintegration of the people concerned:

> Reflecting, therefore, that by nature (*φύσει*) man neither is nor becomes a wild or an unsocial creature (*οὔτ' ἔστιν ἀνήμερον ζῷον οὐδ' ἄμικτον*), but when he degenerates through the unnatural practice of vice (*τῇ κακίᾳ παρὰ φύσιν χρώμενος*), he may be softened (*ἐξημεροῦται*) by new customs (*ἔθεσι*) and a change of place and life (*τόπων καὶ βίων μεταβολαῖς*); also that even wild beasts put off their wild and savage ways (*τὸ ἄγριον καὶ χαλεπόν*) when they partake of a gentler mode of life (*διαίτης κοινωνοῦντα πραοτέρας*), he determined to transfer the men from the sea to land, and let them have a taste of a more suitable life (*βίου γεύειν ἐπιεικοῦς*) by being accustomed to dwell in cities and to till the ground. (Plut. *Pomp.* 28.5)[34]

This passage and the whole section on the suppression of piracy in Plutarch, as well as the parallel accounts in Appian and Cassius Dio, have been ascribed to the influence of the Stoic philosopher and historian Posidonius, who is known for his profound interest in culture, ethnography, and social relations, including problems such as the conditions of slavery and the treatment of subjects.[35] Indeed, Posidonius is attested to have written about Pompey, who visited him in person on the island of Rhodes, either in an excursus of his *Histories* or in a separate work (Strab. 11.1.6).[36] Yet what does this mean for the Roman commander's actual motivation to resettle the pirates? After all, even if the attribution to Posidonius were beyond doubt, it would still remain quite unclear to what extent Pompey himself was driven by such insights regarding the human condition. Certainly, he did not treat the pirates simply as criminals but made promises to

[34] See also Cass. Dio 36.37.5: Pompey 'would give them any lands he saw vacant and cities that were in need of settlers, in order that they might never again through poverty fall under the necessity of improper deeds (*ἐς ἀνάγκην πονηρῶν ἔργων*)'; App. *Mithr.* 96.444: he settled the pirates, 'who most of all seemed to have fallen into this way of life not from wickedness (*ὑπὸ μοχθηρίας*), but due to the difficulties of life (*ἀπορίᾳ βίου*) consequent upon the war'. Translations are adapted from the Loeb Classical Library.

[35] See H. Strasburger, 'Poseidonios on Problems of the Roman Empire', *JRS* 55 (1965), 43 and 50 f.; G. P. Verbrugghe, 'Narrative Pattern in Posidonius' "History"', *Historia* 24 (1975), 200 f.; also L. Pulci Doria Breglia, 'La provincia di Cilicia e gli ordinamenti di Pompeo', *RAAN* 47 (1972), 349–57, with a more detailed discussion of the historical tradition on Pompey's treatment of the pirates. On the other hand, A. Dreizehnter, 'Pompeius als Städtegründer', *Chiron* 5 (1975), 243 f., may be right to suggest that the above-quoted passage contains distinctly Plutarchan elements as well. Also note H. Heftner, *Plutarch und der Aufstieg des Pompeius. Ein historischer Kommentar zu Plutarchs Pompeiusvita. Teil I: Kap. 1–45* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1995), 46–8, 178 f., and 204 f.; see further, B. Scardigli, *Die Römerbiographien Plutarchs. Ein Forschungsbericht* (Munich, 1979), 121.

[36] There appear to have been two encounters: see Cic. *Tusc.* 2.61; Plut. *Pomp.* 42.10; Plin. *nat.* 7.112. On the question of Posidonius' history of Pompey, see J. Malitz, *Die Historien des Poseidonios* (Munich, 1983), 69–74 and *passim*; J. Engels, *Augusteische Oikumenegeographie und Universalhistorie im Werk Strabons von Amaseia* (Stuttgart, 1999), 169–74.

those who surrendered to him, offering to pardon them so that they might start a new life as colonists. But does this imply that Pompey acted as an enlightened statesman and far-sighted administrator who was truly concerned with empire, its subjects, and its responsibilities?

An even more complimentary picture of Pompey's qualities and skills is painted in Cicero's speech on the Manilian law, which presents the general not only as a capable commander and efficient organizer but also as a man inspiring trust, respect, and admiration in the Roman provinces and beyond. Significantly, the orator's idealized depiction of Pompey as a virtuous general and administrator is influenced to a large degree by Hellenistic concepts of good kingship, attributing *humanitas*, *temperantia*, and related qualities to the victor over the pirates.[37] While this catalogue quite obviously reflects Cicero's encomiastic purpose, it should not simply be dismissed as empty rhetoric, for it shows that these notions were not alien to the beliefs and expectations of the Roman public and could be expected to meet with a favourable response in the Forum.

What is more, a similar image was very probably projected by the general himself and by his circle of friends and advisors. In the late Republican period, ideas of philanthropy and benign rule used to be propagated above all by Greek intellectuals who joined the retinue of Roman promagistrates such as Pompey and Lucullus.[38] To be sure, the effective impact of these advisors on practical decisions can rarely be demonstrated, yet this should not be taken to imply that they were merely intended to lend an air of sophistication to the cultural pretensions of leading aristocrats.[39] Of course, their presence was exploited to impress the public and thus helped to project a positive image of Roman politicians and policies, very obviously so in the case of Theophanes of Mytilene, who accompanied Pompey during his campaign in the East and praised his achievements in an encomiastic

[37] See esp. *Manil.* 13, 36–42, and the analysis in J. Gruber, 'Cicero und das hellenistische Herrscherideal: Überlegungen zur Rede "De imperio Cn. Pompei"', *WS* 101 (1988), 243–58; also C. Rothe, *'Humanitas', 'fides' und Verwandtes in der römischen Provinzialpolitik. Untersuchungen zur politischen Funktion römischer Verhaltensnormen bei Cicero* (Berlin, 1978), 60–6; C. E. W. Steel, *Cicero, Rhetoric, and Empire* (Oxford, 2001), 130–5.

[38] See generally E. Rawson, 'Roman Rulers and the Philosophic Adviser', in M. Griffin and J. Barnes (eds.), *'Philosophia Togata'. Essays on Philosophy and Roman Society* (Oxford, 1989), 233–57, esp. 237–43; L. M. Yarrow, *Historiography at the End of the Republic. Provincial Perspectives on Roman Rule* (Oxford, 2006), 46–50. For Lucullus' entourage, see M. Tröster, *Themes, Character, and Politics in Plutarch's 'Life of Lucullus'. The Construction of a Roman Aristocrat* (Stuttgart, 2008), 136 f.

[39] As suggested by M. H. Crawford, 'Greek Intellectuals and the Roman Aristocracy in the First Century BC', in P. D. A. Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker (eds.), *Imperialism in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, 1978), 203–6.

account that clearly left its mark on the later tradition.[40] Hence it is important to acknowledge the instrumental side of advertising the commander's humanity and magnanimity, but we should no overlook the fact that these ideas also formed part of a broader discourse on benefactions and good governance that undoubtedly influenced the mental world of politicians and generals.

However exaggerated the emphasis on Pompey's ingenuity and the success of his strategy may be in the extant sources, there is no reason to doubt that his clemency helped to bring the campaign to a speedy conclusion. Considering the urgency of the operation, the expectations of the Roman public, and the dramatic circumstances of his appointment, this swiftness of victory was obviously of utmost importance. Still, it would be naive to deny that there were also other motives, related to Pompey's personal ambition, that made the humane treatment of the pirates a prudent policy. For one thing, he could add to the glory won as a result of his earlier successes in Italy, Africa, and Spain and thus give a further boost to his reputation as an outstanding general and efficient problem solver. At the same time, he would enlarge his following and gain influence in Asia Minor and beyond by receiving the resettled pirates into his already sizeable *clientela*.[41] Finally, Pompey's rapid victory over the pirates enabled him to assume responsibility for the ongoing war against Mithridates, though it is unclear at what point he started actively to seek this new command.[42] Consequently, there was no trade-off between practising

[40] On their relationship, see B. K. Gold, 'Pompey and Theophanes of Mytilene', *AJPh* 106 (1985), 312–27; eadem, *Literary Patronage in Greece and Rome* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1987), 87–107; Yarrow (n. 38), 54–67; also W. S. Anderson, *Pompey, His Friends, and the Literature of the First Century BC* (Berkeley, CA, 1963), 34–41; L. Robert, 'Théophane de Mytilène à Constantinople' (1969), in *Opera minora selecta. Epigraphie et antiquités grecques*, vol. 5 (Amsterdam, 1989), 561–83, esp. 563–7.

[41] This point is emphasized – and exaggerated – by M. Martina, 'Le clientele piratiche di Pompeo', in *La rivoluzione romana. Inchiesta tra gli antichisti* (Naples, 1982), 175–85, esp. 177 f.; also Dreizehnter (n. 35), 243; Schulz 2000 (n. 10), 438; idem 2005 (n. 10), 180 f.; idem (n. 5), 81 f. By contrast, M. Dingmann, *Pompeius Magnus. Machtgrundlagen eines spätrepublikanischen Politikers* (Rahden, Westfalen, 2007), 290–3, stresses the paucity of the evidence for the pirates' role as Pompey's clients during the Civil War, concluding that they were of limited significance in terms of political power.

[42] The notion of a 'master plan' (E. S. Gruen, *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic* [Berkeley, CA, 1974], 131) designed to recall Lucullus in order to reserve the eastern command for Pompey even before the beginning of the campaign against the pirates has been convincingly refuted by R. S. Williams, 'The Appointment of Glabrio (*cos.* 67) to the Eastern Command', *Phoenix* 38 (1984), 221–234; also B. Twyman, 'The Metelli, Pompeius and Prosopography', *ANRW* 1.1 (1972), 864–73, and Kallet-Marx (n. 19), 312–15; *contra*, for example, J. M. Cobban, *Senate and Provinces, 78–49 BC. Some Aspects of the Foreign Policy and Provincial Relations of the Senate during the Closing Years of the Roman Republic* (Cambridge, 1935), 115–26; more recently, A. Keaveney, *Lucullus. A Life* (London, 1992), 120 f.; P. Southern, *Pompey the Great* (Stroud, 2002), 66–9; also Seager (n. 6), 32 (= updated edition, 2002, 43), but note his second thoughts in 2002, 175.

humanitas on the one hand and pursuing personal ambitions on the other; rather, the general could have the best of both worlds by furthering his own political career while simultaneously striving to reintegrate the pirates into a more stable regional order.

Significantly, Pompey's approach contrasted sharply with that adopted by Metellus, who was still engaged in campaigning in Crete. As Metellus was trying to vanquish the enemy by sheer military force and threatening them with severe punishment, the promise of clemency made many of the Cretan pirates ready to surrender directly to Pompey rather than to the proconsul fighting on the island. After ordering his colleague to stop the war, Pompey went on to undermine Metellus' authority by calling on the cities to ignore him and by sending one of his own officers, L. Octavius, to put an end to the hostilities. The rationale behind this intervention was obviously open to different readings, as is shown by the widely diverging accounts of Plutarch and Cassius Dio: while the former strongly condemns Pompey's action and interprets it as a mark of personal envy and excessive ambition (*Pomp.* 29),[43] the latter chooses to highlight the ills suffered by the Cretans and describes Metellus' campaign as serving to enslave them (Cass. Dio 36.18 f.).[44] Evidently, both Pompey's assertive way of exercising command and his clement policies towards the pirates were far from uncontroversial, not only among later authors but also among the late Republican aristocracy.[45] Above all, his interference with the conduct of the Cretan war created bitter and lasting antagonism with Metellus, just as his subsequent reversal of earlier decisions in Asia Minor provoked opposition on the part of the long-time commander, Lucullus.[46]

While the sources are not uncritical of Pompey's fervent ambition and contentiousness vis-à-vis his peers, they tend to be quite generous in their praise for his military and organizational achievements. Yet to what extent did the celebrated commander bring about a lasting solution to the piracy problem? And how comprehensive a plan did he pursue in order to further the recovery of Cilicia and the Near East? According to two Latin authors, Velleius Paterculus and Florus, he purposely settled the former pirates far from the sea in order to

[43] See the commentary by Heftner (n. 35), 207–13.

[44] See also Flor. 1.42.4–6.

[45] Criticism of his treatment of the pirates is explicitly mentioned in Plut. *Pomp.* 29.1 and Vell. 2.32.6.

[46] On the conflict with Lucullus, see Dingmann (n. 41), 296–9; Tröster (n. 38), 143–8; also R. Ziegler, 'Ären kilikischer Städte und Politik des Pompeius in Südostkleinasien', *Tyche* 8 (1993), 214–19.

prevent them from reverting to their old ways.[47] However, a closer look at the distribution of the settlement places mentioned in the sources shows this claim to be false. Dyme in Achaea and Soli (which was renamed Pompeiopolis) were in fact coastal cities, while Adana, Mallus, and Epiphania were located only a few miles from the sea.[48] Consequently, the emphasis on the resettlement of the pirates as farmers situated at a distance from the coast ought to be regarded as an item of propaganda that is likely to have been elaborated and amplified in the face of hostile charges voiced by critics and detractors.[49]

The ongoing need to defend Pompey's policies towards the pirates must be seen against a background of renewed insecurity at sea in the following decades. For piratical activities resurfaced on a major scale during the Civil War, most notably under Sex. Pompeius, whose recruitment efforts could build on the multifarious connexions created by his father. To be sure, the derogatory image of the son of Pompey as a pirate is largely shaped by the hostile propaganda of his victorious opponent, the son of Caesar, whose own legitimacy as a Triumvir remained highly questionable.[50] Accordingly, the extant sources certainly fail to give a fair estimate of Sextus' policies and

[47] See Vell. 2.32.5: *reliquias eorum contractas in urbibus remotoque mari loco in certa sede constituit*; Flor. 1.41.14: *maritimum genus a conspectu longe removit maris et mediterraneis agris quasi obligavit*. For a detailed analysis of this 'Latin tradition', see Pulci Doria Breglia (n. 35), 357–63.

[48] All of these cities are mentioned in App. *Mithr.* 96.444, 115.562; some in Strab. 8.7.5, 14.3.3, 14.5.8; Plut. *Pomp.* 28.6 f.; Cass. Dio 36.37.6; Mela 1.71. In addition, note Verg. *georg.* 4.125 ff., referring to a Corycian farmer settled at Tarentum, with the comm. ad loc. in Servius and Ps.-Probus; see further, J. Reynolds, 'Cyrenaica, Pompey and Cn. Cornelius Lentulus Marcellinus', *JRS* 52 (1962), 100 and 102, who suggests that Pompey established a colony of defeated pirates at Ptolemais in Cyrenaica (ibid., no. 7). See generally Pulci Doria Breglia (n. 35), 349–87; Dreizehnter (n. 35), 235–44; Martina (n. 41), 177 f.; P. Siewert, 'Le deportazioni di Tigrane e Pompeo in Cilicia', in M. Sordi (ed.), *Coercizione e mobilità umana nel mondo antico* (Milan, 1995), 230–3; C. Rubino, 'Pompeyo Magno, los piratas cilicios y la introducción del Mitraísmo en el Imperio romano según Plutarco', *Latomus* 65 (2006), 921–3. The proximity of the individual places to the sea is stressed by De Souza (n. 17), 176, who concludes: 'It is abundantly clear that Soli and Dyme, the main cities turned over to the pirates, were ideally situated not for farming, but for piracy'.

[49] The genesis of this theme is analysed by Pulci Doria Breglia (n. 35), 360–3.

[50] The vilification of Sex. Pompeius as a brigand in both contemporary propaganda and the literary tradition is brought out in Tramonti (n. 17), 109–22; De Souza (n. 17), 185–95; A. Powell, '"An Island amid the Flame": The Strategy and Imagery of Sextus Pompeius, 43–36 BC', in idem and K. Welch (eds.), *Sextus Pompeius* (London, 2002), 115–18; L. Watson, 'Horace and the Pirates', in Powell and Welch, 213–28, esp. 215–19. More broadly, see F. Senatore, 'Sesto Pompeo tra Augusto e Ottaviano nella tradizione storiografica antica', *Athenaeum* 79 (1991), 103–39; F. J. A. M. Meijer, 'Sextus Pompeius: slachtoffer van Augustus' propaganda?', *Lampas* 27 (1994), 305–18; A. M. Gowing, 'Pirates, Witches and Slaves: The Imperial Afterlife of Sextus Pompeius', in Powell and Welch, 187–211. Also note the pioneering work by M. Hadas, *Sextus Pompey* (New York, 1930), 68–71 and *passim*.

objectives, yet it is quite clear that some of his experienced men were, in fact, former pirates, and there is no doubt that he adopted their old strategy of disrupting the supply routes to Rome and Italy.[51] As a result, criticism of the measures adopted by Pompey in the 60s must have been a fairly obvious reaction among those looking back at these earlier events under the impression of developments in the Triumviral period. Beyond this, the notion of an inadequate response to piracy under the Republic was further reinforced by Augustus' subsequent efforts to present himself as the true champion of peace and order in general and of maritime security in particular.[52]

Whatever the degree of distortion brought about by Republican and Imperial propaganda, it would be quite unrealistic to assume that piracy could have vanished entirely in the aftermath of Pompey's campaign. Hence it is not surprising that some scattered remarks in the sources suggest that it continued, if on a reduced scale, as a local and regional phenomenon along the coasts of Asia Minor and Syria.[53] Seeking to defend the contributions imposed on the Asian provincials by his client Flaccus, Cicero argues that it was still necessary to guard against piratical activities in 62 (*Flacc.* 27–33), while Cassius Dio (39.56.1 and 5; 39.59.2) indicates that Syria was exposed to piracy at the time of Gabinius' proconsulship in the mid-50s. As for the Dymaeans, moreover, Cicero states in a letter from July 44 that they made the sea unsafe again after having been driven out of their land (*Att.* 16.1.3 = 409.3 Shackleton Bailey). Against this background, it is all the more noteworthy that Florus (1.41.15) emphatically insists on the *perpetuitas* of Pompey's settlement – an

[51] For the traditional view of pirates and slaves as Sextus' principal power base, see, for example, E. Maróti, 'Die Rolle der Seeräuber unter den Anhängern des Sextus Pompeius', in H.-J. Diesner, R. Günther, and G. Schrot (eds.), *Sozialökonomische Verhältnisse im Alten Orient und im klassischen Altertum* (Berlin, 1961), 208–16. This is no longer tenable in the light of the more recent studies cited in the previous note, yet one should not therefore go to the opposite extreme of completely denying Sextus' reliance on former pirates and piratical methods.

[52] See most notably *Res gestae* 25.1: *mare pacavi a praedonibus* ('I made the sea peaceful and free from pirates') – a rather obvious allusion to the war against Sex. Pompeius. On this statement as part of an *aemulatio* of Pompey, see J. Fugmann, '"Mare a praedonibus pacavi" (R.G. 25,1): Zum Gedanken der "aemulatio" in den "Res gestae" des Augustus', *Historia* 40 (1991), 310–12. Also note Suet. *Aug.* 98.2 on the exuberant gratitude towards Augustus on the part of travellers and sailors from Alexandria. In actual fact, piracy was by no means totally eradicated under the Principate either: see D. Braund, 'Piracy under the Principate and the Ideology of Imperial Eradication', in Rich and Shipley (n. 15), 195–212; De Souza (n. 17), 195–218; also M. Reddé, *'Mare nostrum'. Les infrastructures, le dispositif et l'histoire de la marine militaire sous l'Empire romain* (Rome, 1986), 327–30.

[53] See the detailed discussion in De Souza (n. 17), 179–85. However, also note Pohl (n. 10), 164 and 279 f., who points out that the evidence for the years after Pompey's campaign is not particularly rich.

affirmation that is somewhat difficult to reconcile with his own narrative of the war against Sex. Pompeius.[54]

Nevertheless, it would be quite inappropriate to conclude that the success of Pompey's campaign was only ephemeral and should essentially be regarded as a brilliant propaganda coup.[55] After all, it was evident from the start that the reintegration of the defeated pirates would only be feasible provided that they were offered a stable environment and adequate prospects in civilian life. Considering this fundamental precondition, it is significant that the subsequent resurgence of piratical activity was clearly related to renewed instability and plight – that is, to the very problems that Pompey had striven to solve, not least in his own interest, by establishing a lasting order throughout Asia Minor and the Near East. In this endeavour, he was certainly not quite as ingenious and successful as is claimed by most of the extant sources and many a modern study of the subject,[56] yet we must not overlook the daunting nature of his task in a region shattered by continuous strife and intense rivalry between cities, dynasts, and tribes.[57]

In assessing Pompey's effort to suppress piracy, it is clear, then, that the laudatory picture presented by the sources needs to be qualified in several ways. Evidently, his strategy was to a large extent shaped by the necessity and ambition to produce results as quickly as possible, thus allowing him to maximize his benefits in terms of personal power and prestige. This meant that his measures did not and probably could not respond exclusively to the 'objective' requirements of a sustainable long-term solution. If Plutarch and others credit the general with a deeper understanding of the socio-economic conditions

[54] See Flor. 2.18, including an explicit contrast between the policies pursued by father and son: *o quam diversus a patre! ille Cilicas exstinxerat, hic se piratica tuebatur* ('O how different from his father! The one exterminated the Cilician pirates, the other watched over them') (2.18.2).

[55] See the scornful judgement expressed by De Souza (n. 17), 175–7.

[56] See, for example, G. Wirth, 'Pompeius – Armenien – Parther: Mutmaßungen zur Bewältigung einer Krisensituation', *BJ* 183 (1983), 1–60; G. J. Wylie, 'Pompey "Megalopsychos"', *Klio* 72 (1990), 445–56; E. Baltrusch, 'Auf dem Weg zum Prinzipat: Die Entwicklung der republikanischen Herrschaftspolitik von Sulla bis Pompeius (88–62 v.Chr.)', in J. Spielvogel (ed.), *'Res publica reperta'. Zur Verfassung und Gesellschaft der römischen Republik und des frühen Prinzipats. Festschrift für Jochen Bleicken zum 75. Geburtstag* (Stuttgart, 2002), 251–62, all of them contrasting Pompey's policies with those of his less fortunate predecessor, Lucullus. At the other end of the spectrum, P. W. M. Freeman, 'Pompey's Eastern Settlement: A Matter of Presentation?', in C. Deroux (ed.), *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History*, vol. 7 (Brussels, 1994), 143–79, radically questions the complexity of Pompey's settlement. Also note Dingmann (n. 41), 307–10.

[57] Thus, J. D. Grainger, *Hellenistic Phoenicia* (Oxford, 1991), 159–162 concludes that disorder and discord in Syria essentially continued in the wake of Pompey's intervention.

that had favoured the spread of piracy, this may first of all reflect the views of Posidonius, as well as constituting a pragmatic attempt to justify Pompey's political strategy. However, it has also been seen that these ideas did form part of contemporary discourse, and therefore they must not simply be dismissed as meaningless or irrelevant, a mere fig leaf for the relentless pursuit of ambition. While the commander's personal goals were undoubtedly an important factor, this should not obscure the fact that the campaign successfully combined military and non-military instruments and thus not only removed a pressing threat to Rome in the short run but also prepared the ground for a more lasting settlement that might allow the vanquished pirates to be reintegrated into civilian life.[58] Granted, the latter objective was only imperfectly achieved; yet this has more to do with the failure to provide for order and stability in the Near East and the Mediterranean as a whole than with any fundamental flaw in the strategy implemented by Pompey.

Conclusion

As the preceding discussion has shown, the lessons to be derived from Pompey's campaign against the pirates are far from straightforward. Evidently, different perspectives can be adopted and different aspects of the episode and its representation in the sources can and should be highlighted. Thus, one might choose to emphasize the military efficiency of the operation, the exaggeration of its success in providing a lasting solution, or its implications for Pompey's standing and Roman politics in the ensuing decades. Starting from a number of comparative observations regarding Roman and American as well as British foreign policy, the present contribution has focused on other facets of the affair with a view to interpreting the response of a hegemonic

[58] A more idealized picture is given in most modern biographies of Pompey. See, for example, P. Greenhalgh, *Pompey. The Roman Alexander* (London, 1980), 95–8, esp. 96: 'In modern terminology Pompey belonged to the environmental school of social studies, but unlike so many modern theorists he had both the courage and the ability to put his convictions to the test'; also M. Gelzer, *Pompeius*, second edition (Munich, 1959), 76–8 = expanded reprint edition (Stuttgart, 1984), 71–3; Seager (n. 6), 37 f. = updated edition, 2002, 47 f.; K. Christ, *Pompeius. Der Feldherr Roms. Eine Biographie* (Munich, 2004), 63–5. Contrast these with the references cited in notes 41 and 55, as well as Tramonti (n. 17), 89 f., all of them placing much emphasis on the realpolitik dimension of Pompey's decisions. Further note T. Liebmann-Frankfort, *La Frontière orientale dans la politique extérieure de la République romaine. Depuis le traité d'Apamée jusqu'à la fin des conquêtes asiatiques de Pompée (189/8–63)* (Brussels, 1969), 252 f., who interprets the settlement of the pirates primarily as a means to strengthen Rome's strategic position on the eastern frontier.

power to the challenge posed by violent non-state actors who threaten international order and stability.

Of course, it is not unproblematic to draw this kind of historical parallel, the more so as there are major differences between the ancient and modern worlds in terms of their socio-cultural setting, their technological level of development, and the degree of interdependence and institutionalization in international relations.[59] Consequently, some of the tools employed to analyse contemporary world politics obviously need substantial modification for the study of antiquity – a fact that is reflected in the ongoing debate on the extent of strategic thinking practised by the Romans and, more specifically, on their ability to devise a 'Grand Strategy' to defend their borders.[60] With this in mind, it is evident that Pompey's campaign against the pirates cannot provide anything approaching a policy blueprint for tackling today's problems. However, a closer look at the ancient episode can help to bring a number of strategic parameters and options into sharper focus.

From this vantage point, it has been stressed that the Roman political class was slow to understand the inherent danger of the piracy problem to its own welfare before finally taking decisive action, thus providing the public good of maritime security both in its own interest and to the benefit of the international community. Notwithstanding considerable distortion and exaggeration in the extant sources, it is clear that Pompey eventually implemented a complex strategy to deal with the pirates by military as well as non-military means, by wielding the stick of Rome's overpowering war machine and by offering the carrot of clemency, including the prospect of reintegration into civilian life. In other words, the hard power of military resources was applied along with the soft power of inducing the pirates to surrender and accept the order to be established by the hegemon.[61] To be sure, this order proved elusive in the following decades, not least because of

[59] See Tröster and Coskun (n. 4), esp. 487–92, who highlight similarities as well as differences between the parameters of Roman and American hegemony.

[60] See the survey in C. R. Whittaker, *Rome and Its Frontiers. The Dynamics of Empire* (London, 2004), 28–49, with further references. Also note the recent attempt by A. M. Eckstein, *Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War, and the Rise of Rome* (Berkeley, CA, 2006), esp. 1–36, to apply international relations theory to Roman foreign policy, which is vitiated, however, by a one-sided preference for 'realist' concepts such as multipolar anarchy and balance of power. Some of the issues neglected by Eckstein are discussed by P. Low, *Interstate Relations in Classical Greece. Morality and Power* (Cambridge, 2007), esp. 7–32.

[61] On the importance of soft power in the contemporary world, see J. S. Nye Jr., *Bound to Lead. The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York, 1990), 173–201; idem (n. 2), 8–12 and *passim*; idem, 'Soft Power and American Foreign Policy', *Political Science Quarterly* 119 (2004), 255–70.

the unrelenting pursuit of personal ambition by Pompey and his peers, and it remained somewhat imperfect even under the Principate. Despite its obvious shortcomings, however, the approach adopted by Pompey vis-à-vis the pirates clearly demonstrates the importance of conceiving transnational threats as complex phenomena that require not only military intervention but also a long-term commitment to provide peace, stability, and development.[62]

[62] Contrast Puchala (n. 5), 13, 19 f., and *passim*, who rather one-sidedly stresses the need for a pro-active military strategy: 'The historical fact is that *pirates were suppressed when they were sought out, hunted down and forcefully destroyed along with their strongholds and sanctuaries*' (p. 13, emphasis in original).