

THE NATURE OF THE THALASSOCRACIES OF THE
SIXTH-CENTURY B. C.

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to study the nature and extent of the sixth century thalassocracies through the available ancient evidence, particularly the writings of Herodotus and Thucydides. In Chapter One the evidence for their existence is established and suggested dates are provided. Chapter Two is a study of their naval aspects and Chapter Three of their commercial aspects. This study leads to the conclusion that these thalassocracies were unaggressive mercantile states, with the exception of Samos during Polycrates' reign.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AJA	American Journal of Archaeology
CAH	Cambridge Ancient History
CQ	Classical Quarterly
Cons. ad. Helv. Matrem	De consolatione ad Helviam Matrem
JHS	Journal of Hellenic Studies
NH	Naturalis Historia
Qu. Gr.	Quaestiones Graecae
Rhein. Mus.	Rheinisches Museum für Philologie

CHAPTER ONE.

THE EVIDENCE

The physical geography of Greece is such as to force her inhabitants to turn to the sea to ensure their survival. Sea-routes, complete with all the hazards of sudden squalls and hidden rocks, were preferable to land-routes because of the latter's many natural and almost impregnable barriers. Since the soil was thin throughout much of the country, few of the Greek poleis could be self-sufficient. Thus traffic and communication by sea became an important factor in Hellenic history at an early date. Given this state of affairs it would be natural to suppose that the various Greek states would attempt to gain a measure of strength at sea, or to establish some form of control over the major sea-routes. Minos is reputed to have controlled the seas and cleared them of pirates¹. Both the character and extent of the thalassocracy of fifth-century Athens are well known through the writings of Thucydides. However, the evidence for the thalassocracies of the late seventh and sixth centuries B. C. is vague and scattered, and the authenticity of some of it is doubted. This study is an enquiry into the nature of these thalassocracies through an examination of the available evidence.

¹Herodotus, 3.122; Thucydides, 1.4.

Eusebius' Chronicon² contains a list of thalassocracies from the fall of Troy until the crossing of Xerxes into Greece in 480 B. C. This outline gives names, the duration of each thalassocracy, and the years of its control. It thus includes a general tabulation of sixth-century thalassocracies, but an understanding of their character and extent must be sought through Herodotus and Thucydides, both their specific statements about the names given in Eusebius' Chronicon and their historical allusions to the period in general.

There has been some debate³ whether the "List of Thalassocracies" in Eusebius can be used as valid evidence that originated in the fifth century

²For a study of the manuscripts see M. Miller, The Thalassocracies;

J. L. Myres, "On the 'List of Thalassocracies' in Eusebius", JHS 26 (1906) 84-130; J. K. Fotheringham, "On the 'List of Thalassocracies' in Eusebius", JHS 27 (1907) 75-89.

³For validity: F. Bork, "Zur altkleinasiatischen Geschichte", Klio 28 (1935) 16-19; A. R. Burn, "Greek Sea-Power 776-540 B. C. and the 'Carian' Entry in the Eusebian Thalassocracy List", JHS 47 (1927) 165-177; W. G. Forrest, "Two Chronographic Notes; The Tenth-Thalassocracy in Eusebius", CQ NS19 (1969) 95-106; D. Hogarth, "Lydia and Ionia", CAH 3.517; W. W. How and J. Wells, Commentary on Herodotus, 1.295; G. Murray, The Rise of the Greek Epic, 322; J. L. Myres, op. cit., 84-130; "On the 'List of Thalassocracies' in Eusebius; A Reply", JHS 27 (1907) 123-130; P. N. Ure, The Origin of Tyranny, 95.

B. C. J. L. Myres⁴ argues that the list of Eusebius is a descendant of one composed in the fifth century between the time of Herodotus' writing and that of Thucydides. He believes that Thucydides' brief survey of sea-powers shows his acquaintance with such a work while Herodotus nowhere attempts to outline them⁵. Further, since the list covers the period from the fall of Troy to the crossing of Xerxes, while Diodorus and others recorded Minos and pre-Achaean thalassocracies, it corresponds to the period surveyed by Thucydides. He asserts that the fact that this register ends with the Persian Wars favours a fifth-century origin. Myres admits the possibility that the list may have been composed in the generation of Castor and Diodorus, that is, the first century B. C. Nevertheless, he feels that it can be shown to be of fifth-century origin and that it did not undergo any serious modification in its transmission if it agrees with the statements of Herodotus.

Against validity; W. Aly, "Kastor als Quelle Diodors im 7 Buch", Rhein. Mus. 66 (1911) 585-606; J. K. Fotheringham, "On the 'List of Thalassocracies' in Eusebius", JHS 27 (1907) 75-89; R. Helm, "Die Liste der Thalassokratien in Der Chronik des Eusebius", Hermes 61 (1926) 241-262; E. Meyers, Geschichte des Altertums, 2.2, 61 n.1; M. B. Sakellariou, La Migration Grecque, 473.

⁴J. L. Myres, "On the 'List of Thalassocracies' in Eusebius", JHS 26 (1906) 81-130.

⁵W. G. Forrest, op. cit., 95, does not agree that the list was unknown to Herodotus.

W. G. Forrest⁶ suggests that the catalogue of thalassocracies is doubly theoretical in that it attempts to credit states with sea-power similar⁷ to that of fifth-century Athens as early as the Trojan War and also because it tries to do so chronologically. He does believe that the work was based upon history and that both Herodotus and Thucydides thought of naval history in a way that was broadly similar to the tone of the list; and both historians may have been acquainted with some such work as the Eusebian source.

J. K. Fotheringham thinks that the "List of Thalassocracies" is of no historical value since it cannot be determined when it was drawn up. He states that the catalogue shows little resemblance to Thucydides' brief survey of sea-powers and that the dates of Thucydides disagree with those in it. He admits the possibility that Thucydides' survey suggested the idea of composing an outline of the thalassocracies but, since it is impossible to ascertain this, he argues that the attempt to date its origin is useless. In the view of W. Aly⁹, the "List of Thalassocracies" given in Eusebius was taken from the work of Castor of Rhodes¹⁰, a contemporary of Diodorus. He does not believe that it has any value as evidence originating in the fifth century B. C., but that it is a work of the first century B. C. He thinks

⁶W. G. Forrest, op. cit., 95.

⁷The list itself gives names and dates. It does not make any reference to Athenian naval power.

⁸J. K. Fotheringham, op. cit., 89.

⁹W. Aly, op. cit., 585-606; see also M. Miller, The Thalassocracies, 52-54.

¹⁰Suidas assigns a history of sea-powers to Castor of Rhodes.

that the tabulation of sea-powers was based on various passages in Herodotus in which the latter makes some comment on a city's seamanship. Not all the material is Herodotean. If Castor of Rhodes formed the list through a study of Herodotus' work and that of other writers, then Eusebius' list, for the most part, would contain a general idea of the fifth-century view of the thalassocrats of the previous century. The main difficulty is that, if this were the case, then Herodotus' comments could not be used to reinforce the validity of the names given in Eusebius' Chronicon. Yet I can see no reason to regard the list as taken from Herodotus by a first-century writer; rather, it may be from an earlier lost source and we should ascertain whether Herodotus and Thucydides confirm it.

Thucydides, when he cites previous sea-powers, gives his opinion of them, or the reason for their greatness, while Eusebius' outline gives only names and dates. Nonetheless, the combination of Eusebius' names and the comments of the historians would provide us with a reasonably accurate impression of the nature and extent of the sixth-century thalassocrats, if Eusebius' list is accepted as representing fifth-century information. It seems reasonable to think, with J. L. Myres, that Eusebius' catalogue is the descendant of some such work composed in the fifth century¹¹. The idea of thalassocracies¹² was obviously familiar to Herodotus and Thucydides, since Herodotus does mention several states that controlled the seas¹³ and

¹¹J. L. Myres, op. cit., 84-130.

¹²Herodotus uses *Θαλασσοκράτει* only once, in 3.122.2, concerning Polycrates; and *Θαλασσοκράτωρ* once, 5.83.2, to describe the Aeginetans.

¹³Herodotus, 1.17.3; 3.122.2.

Thucydides cites the previous thalassocracies¹⁴. Also the fact that the list ends with the Persian Wars tends to confirm the view of a fifth-century origin.

By comparing the "List of Thalassocracies" in Eusebius with the information in Herodotus and Thucydides, I conclude that the majority of states found in the list can be shown to have had some sea-power. Also I think that the absence of confirming evidence in the historians for some of the states may be explained by Thucydides' comment on the smallness of all navies before the Persian Wars¹⁵.

The Armenian version of Eusebius' Chronicon, as edited by Alfred Schoene¹⁶, is as follows.

Jam inde ex Diodori scriptis breviter, de temporibus

Thalassocratorum, qui maria tenebant.

Post bellum Trojanum, Mare obtinuerunt

I	Lidi et Maeones	annos XCII
II	Pelasgi	annos LXXXV
III	Thrakii	annos LXXIX
IV	Rhodii	annos XXIII
V	Phrygii	annos XXV
VI	Kiprii	annos XXXIII
VII	Phynikii	annos XLV
VIII	Egiptii	annos (...)

¹⁴Thucydides, 1.13-1.16.

¹⁵Thucydides, 1.14.3.

¹⁶A. Schoene, Eusebi Chronicon Liber Primus, 226.

IX	Melesii	annos (...)
X	(...)	annos (...)
XI	Lesbii	annos (...)
XII	Phokaei	annos XLIV
XIII	Samii	annos (...)
XIV	Lakedemoni	annos II
XV	Naxii	annos X
XVI	Eretrii	annos XV
XVII	Egineses	annos X

usque ad Alexandri¹⁷ transfretationem.

This study is concerned with numbers IX-XVII inclusive. The interval between the Milesians and the Lesbians was occupied by the Carians, whom A. Schoene¹⁸ removed to a footnote. This entry is open to serious doubt and alternate readings have been suggested. A. R. Burn¹⁹ argues that there are difficulties in placing a Carian thalassocracy during the age of the so-called Ionian Renaissance, which had its economic basis in the new development of maritime commerce, since it seems impossible that a Carian thalassocracy existed without destroying it²⁰. Also Herodotus and Thucydides mention Carian sea-power only in very early times²¹. J. L. Myres

¹⁷This is generally agreed to be a scribal error for Xerxis;

J. L. Myres, op. cit., 89; M. Miller, op. cit., 5-6.

¹⁸A. Schoene, op. cit., 226.

¹⁹A. R. Burn, op. cit., 166.

²⁰Burn dates the tenth thalassocracy to the mid-seventh century while I accept Forest's lower date. See pp. 19-20. W. G. Forrest, op. cit., 98 and J. L. Myres, op. cit., 107-109, also state that the Carian entry in place

conjectures that the Carians should come at the top of the list immediately following the Trojan War, or else that entry IX originally had Milesii et Cares and they became separated through error²². A. R. Burn suggests that the entry Cares is a corruption and the original reading was Megares²³, while W. B. Forrest²⁴ believes that the original reading was Corinthii. Although either the Megarians or the Corinthians would fit reasonably well, I prefer to use W. G. Forrest's suggestion of the Corinthians since the evidence in ancient authors favours it²⁵. Also Burn's arguments for Megara are based on the Megarian colonization of the mid to late seventh century, while I accept the dating of the tenth thalassocracy to the late seventh and early sixth century.

The information in Herodotus and Thucydides regarding a thalassocracy for each of these states is as follows.

IX Milesii

Herodotus, 1.17.3: τῆς γὰρ θαλάσσης οἱ Μιλήσιοι

ἑπεκράτειον, ὥστε ἐπέδρας μὴ εἶναι ἔργον τῇ στρατιῇ.

X is impossible.

²¹Herodotus, 1.171; Thucydides, 1.8.

²²J. L. Myres, op. cit., 108-109.

²³A. R. Burn, op. cit., 167.

²⁴W. G. Forrest, op. cit., 99.

²⁵See pp. 9-10.

This statement is made during Herodotus' discussion of Alyattes' and his predecessors' wars against the Milesians. It provides confirmation for the Milesian entry in Eusebius' list.

Thucydides, 1.13.6: καὶ Ἰῶσιν ὕστερον πολὺ γίγνεται ναυτικὸν ἐπὶ κύρου Περσῶν πρώτου βασιλεύοντος καὶ Καμβύσου τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, τῆς τε καθ' ἑαυτοὺς θαλάσσης κύρῳ πολεμοῦντες ἐκράτησάν τινα χρόνον.

If the Milesians are included in Thucydides' statement, as is a reasonable assumption, he does not confirm a Milesian thalassocracy, or a Lesbian one. Yet Thucydides is speaking of the time of Cyrus, which is later than the Milesian supremacy mentioned by Herodotus, and more appropriate for the time of the Phocaeen and Samian thalassocracies, which he goes on to mention. Herodotus' definite statement is sufficient to counteract the omission in Thucydides' brief survey of maritime affairs, and to substantiate the inclusion of Miletus in the "List of Thalassocracies".

X Corinthii

Herodotus, 1.24.1: τοῦτον τὸν Ἀρίωνα λέγουσι, τὸν πολλὸν τοῦ χρόνου διατρίβοντα παρὰ Περσῶν, ἐπιθυμήσαι πλῶσαι εἰς Ἰταλίην τε καὶ Σικελίην, ἐργασάμενον δὲ χρήματα μεγάλα θελήσαι ὀπίσω εἰς Κόρινθον ἀπικέσθαι. ὁρᾶσθαι μὲν νῦν ἐκ Τάραντος, πιστεύονται δὲ οὐδαμῶς μᾶλλον ἢ Κορινθίους μισθώσασθαι πλοῖον ἀνδρῶν Κορινθίων.

This is Herodotus' only notice of the competence of Corinthian sailors, but Thucydides has a great deal to say about them.

Thucydides, 1.13.2: πρῶτοι δὲ Κορίνθιοι λέγονται
ἐγγύτατα τοῦ νῦν τρόπου μεταχειρίσασθαι τὰ περὶ τὰς ναῦς,
καὶ τρεῖς ἐν Κορίνθῳ πρῶτον τῆς Ἑλλάδος ναυπηγηθῆναι.
φαίνεται δὲ καὶ Σαμίοις Ἀμεινοκλῆς Κορίνθιος ναυπηγὸς
ναῦς ποιήσας τέσσαρας. ἔτη δ' ἔσσι μάλιστα τριακόσια
ἐς τὴν τελευταίαν τοῦδε τοῦ πολέμου ὅτε Ἀμεινοκλῆς
Σαμίοις ᾗλθεν.

This statement shows that there was a tradition of Corinthian excellence in shipbuilding, while the passage that follows makes it clear that the Corinthians not only built ships but made extensive use of them.

Thucydides, 1.13.5: ἔπειδ' ὅτε οἱ Ἕλληνες μᾶλλον
ἐπλωζαν τὰς ναῦς κτησάμενοι τὸ ληστικὸν καθήρουν, καὶ
ἐμπόριον παρέχοντες ἀμφοτέρωθεν δυνάτην ἔσχον χρημάτων
προσόδῳ τὴν πόλιν.

Thucydides does not date this but in his next sentence he discusses the Ionians during the time of Cyrus, so it is conceivable that he is referring to the early part of the sixth century in this comment. There are indications in both authors of Corinthian naval superiority but Thucydides gives more definite statements, in view of which W. G. Forrest's emendation Corinthii instead of Carii as number X in the "List of Thalassocracies" seems most plausible²⁶.

²⁶Nicolaus Damascenus, frag 58: Periander plied both seas; also Herodotus,

XI Lesbii

No argument can be made for a Lesbian thalassocracy from the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides. Herodotus does provide some negative information.

3.39.4. ἐν δὲ δὴ καὶ Λεσβίους πανστρατιῇ βοηθόντας
Μησίοιοι ναυμαχίῃ κρατήσας ἔειλε (Πολυκράτης), οἱ τὴν
τάφρον περὶ τὸ τεῖχος τὸ ἐν Σάμῃ πᾶσαν δεδεμένον
ῥύσαν.

The only information that this gives us is that Herodotus thought the defeat of the Lesbian and Milesian fleets was one worthy of note, which, however, is not evidence for any Lesbian supremacy, or even competence at sea. This leaves one entry on the list unsupported by the comments of the historians.²⁷

XII: Phokaeii

Herodotus, 1.163.1: οἱ δὲ Φωκαεῖς οὗτοι ναυτικῇσι
μακρῇσι πρῶτα Ἑλλήνων ἐχρήσαντο, καὶ τὸν τε Ἀδρίην καὶ τὴν
Τυρσηνίην καὶ τὴν Ἰβηρίην καὶ τὸν Ταρτησσὸν οὗτοί εἰσι
οἱ καταδέξαντες. ἐναυτύλλοντο δὲ οὐ στρογγύλῃσι νηυσὶ
ἀλλὰ πεντηκοντέροις.

6.89: Corinth rented ships to Athens at the end of the sixth century; thus she still had a fleet of considerable size.

²⁷Lesbos contributed a large contingent of ships in the Ionian revolt (Herodotus, 6.8). Only Miletus and Chios provided more. She continued to have a strong fleet in the fifth century. It is probable that Lesbos had

This is a comment on the maritime excellence and daring of the Phocaeans. Although it is not a definite indication of control of the seas, it does show that the Phocaeans were noted for their ability.

Thucydides, 1.13.6: Φωκαῆς τε Μασσαλίων οἰκίζοντες
καρχηδονίους ἐνίκων ναυμαχοῦντες.²⁸

Thucydides included Phocaea in his survey of sea-powers, mentioning their defeat of the Carthaginians. Thus the inclusion of Phocaea in the list is confirmed by both historians.

XIII Samii

Herodotus, 3.122.2: Πολυκράτης γάρ ἐστι πρῶτος τῶν
ἡμεῖς ᾤδμεν Ἑλλήνων ὃς θαλασσοκρατέειν ἐπενόηθη, παρέξ
μίνω τε τοῦ κνωσίου καὶ εἰ δὴ τις ἄλλος πρότερος τούτου
ἤρξε τῆς θαλάσσης. τῆς δὲ ἀνθρωπίνης λεγομένης γενεῆς
πολυκράτης πρῶτος, ἐλπίδας πολλὰς ἔχων Ἰωνίης τε καὶ
νῆσων ἄρξειν.

Herodotus, 3.39.3: ἐν χρόνῳ δὲ ὀλίγῳ αὐτίκα τοῦ
πολυκράτους τὰ πράγματα ἤρξετο καὶ ἦν βεβωμένα ἀνά τε
τὴν Ἰωνίην καὶ τὴν ἄλλην Ἑλλάδα· ὅκου γὰρ ᾤθυσεν
στρατεύεσθαι, πάντα οἳ ἐχώρει εὐτυχέως ἐέκτητο δὲ

some maritime power in the sixth century.

²⁸Thucydides then says, "δυνατώτατοι γὰρ ταῦτα τῶν ναυτικῶν ἦν."

He has discussed the Corinthians, the Ionians in general, the Samians and the Phocaeans.

πεντηκοντέρους τε ἑκατὸν καὶ χιλίους τοξότας ἔφερε δὲ καὶ ἦγε πάντας διακρίνων οὐδένα τῷ γὰρ φίλῳ ἔφη χαρίεσθαι μάλλον ἀποδιδούς τὰ ἔλαβε ἢ ἀρχὴν μηδὲ λαβῶν. συχνὰς μὲν δὴ τῶν νήσων ἀραιοῖκεε, πολλὰ δὲ καὶ τῆς ἡπείρου ἄσπεα.

Thucydides, 1.13.6: καὶ Πολυκράτης Σάμῳ τυραννῶν ἐπὶ Καμβύσου ναυτικῷ ἰσχύων ἄλλας τε τῶν νήσων ὑπηκόους ἐποίησατο καὶ Ῥήνεια ἐλὼν ἀνέθηκε τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι τῷ Δηλίῳ.

Thucydides, 3.104.2: ἀπέχει δὲ ἡ Ῥήνεια τῆς Δήλου οὕτως ὀλίγον ὥστε Πολυκράτης ὁ Σαμίων τύραννος ἰσχύσας τινα χρόνον ναυτικῷ καὶ τῶν τε ἄλλων νήσων ἄρξας καὶ τὴν Ῥήνεια ἐλὼν ἀνέθηκε τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι τῷ Δηλίῳ ἁλῦσαι δῆσας πρὸς τὴν Δήλον.

The testimony of both Herodotus and Thucydides makes it clear that Samos, during the tyranny of Polycrates, was a thalassocracy, and, in fact, a rather remarkable one. Thucydides mentions Polycrates' fleet as his means of gaining power over the neighbouring islands, and Herodotus credits him with being the first, with the exception of Minos, to plan the control of the seas. There can be no doubt that the Samian entry in Eusebius' list is correct, as it is so well attested by the historians.

XIV Lacedemonii

The case for a Spartan thalassocracy is as weak as that for Samos is strong. Perhaps the Spartans were included because they attempted to

besiege Polycrates, the recognised power of the time.

Herodotus, 3.54.1: Λακεδαιμόνιοι δέ, στόλῳ μεγάλῳ ὥς
 ὀπίκοντο, ἐπολιόρκεον Σάμον. . . . 3.56.1: Λακεδαιμόνιοι δέ, ὥς σφι
 τεσσαράκοντα ἑγεγόνεσαν ἡμέραι πολιορκέουσιν Σάμον ἐς τὸ
 πρόσω τε οὐδέν προεκόπτετο τῶν πρηγμάτων, ἀπαλλάσσοντο ἐς Πελοπόννησον.

As in the case of Lesbos, there is only a defeat of Sparta mentioned by Herodotus, although he does credit Sparta with a large fleet, while Thucydides says nothing about a Spartan thalassocracy. Nonetheless, it is possible that the attempt to besiege Samos while Polycrates was so powerful was seen as such a daring undertaking that the Spartan fleet acquired some notoriety from it.

XV Naxii

Herodotus, 5.28.1: τοῦτο μὲν γὰρ ἡ Νάξος εὐδαιμονίῃ τῶν
 νήσων προέφερε. . . . 5.30.4: . . . πυνθάνομαι γὰρ ὀκτακισχιλίων
 ὀσπίδα Ναξίοισι εἶναι καὶ πλοῖα μακρὰ πολλά. 5.91.2: . . . τοῦτο
 δὲ νήσους βασιλεῖ προσκλήσας αὐτὴν τε Νάξον καὶ τὰς ἐκ
 ταύτης ἡρημένους, Πάρον καὶ Ἄνδρον καὶ ἄλλας τὰς Κυκλάδας
 καλευμένας.

Although Thucydides does not mention Naxian power, these statements of Herodotus confirm that Naxos had some stature at sea, although certainly not as a great or extensive power.

XVI Erétrii

Herodotus, 5.99: ... ἅμα ἀγόμενοι Ἑρετρίων πέντε

τριήρας οἱ οὐ τὴν Ἀθηναίων χάριν ἐστρατεύοντο ἀλλὰ τὴν
αὐτῶν Μηλησίων ὀφειλόμενά σφι ἀποδιδόντες... 5:31.3: ἐνθεῦτεν
δὲ ὀρμώμενας εὐπετέως ἐπιθήσεαι εὐβοίῃ, νήσω μεγάλῃ τε καὶ
εὐδαίμονι, οὐκ ἐλάσσονι Κύπρου καὶ κάρτα εὐπετεῖ αἶρεθῆναι.

Once again there is no evidence for a thalassocracy in Thucydides and the statements of Herodotus are not evidence of a thalassocracy or even vague indications of one, although he does speak of the prosperity of the island. Herodotus' mention of the five Eretrian ships occurs again at the time of their defeat by the Persians. Thus, for the three states in the "List of Thalassocracies" for which Herodotus does not give any indication of sea-power, he mentions their fleets when they are defeated by other powers.

XVII Egineses

Herodotus, 5.81.2: Ἀγινῆται δὲ εὐδαίμονίη τε μεγάλη

ἐπαρθέντες καὶ ἐχθρῆς παλαιῆς ἀναμνησθέντες ἐχούσης ἐς Ἀθηναίους,
τότε Θηβαίων δεηθέντων πόλεμον ἀκήρυκτον Ἀθηναίοισι ἐπέφερον.
ἐπικειμένων γὰρ αὐτῶν βοιωτοῖσι ἐπιπλώσαντες μακρῆσι νηυσὶ
ἐς τὴν Ἀττικὴν κατὰ μὲν εὐοῦραν Φάληρον, κατὰ δὲ τῆς ἄλλης
παραλίας πολλοὺς δήμους, ποιεῦντες δὲ ταῦτα μεγάλως
Ἀθηναίους ἐσίνοντο.

Thucydides, 1.14.3: Αἰγυῖται γὰρ καὶ Ἀθηναῖοι, καὶ εἰ
τινες ἄλλοι βραχέα ἐκέκτηντο, καὶ τούτων τὰ πολλὰ πεντηκοντόρους.

The ancient evidence confirms the entry of the Aeginetans in the "List of Thalassocracies".

It has been shown that the majority of the states in the "List of Thalassocracies" of Eusebius are mentioned in either Herodotus or Thucydides as having some control over, or influence in, maritime affairs. Evidence is lacking to confirm the thalassocracies of Lesbos, Sparta and Eretria. The common factor for these three states is that Herodotus mentions naval defeats. Possibly each was powerful at sea before its defeat, thus making the defeat itself worthy of note, as putting an end to, or diminishing, its power. This is not the case for Sparta, since she was defeated by Polycrates, who had been the leading thalassocrat for some years, and the Spartan thalassocracy is shown as succeeding the Samian in Eusebius' outline. Yet the Eretrian thalassocracy is supposed to have existed just before the Persian destruction of Eretria. Thus Herodotus made note of the beginning of its end. Strabo²⁹ states that Eretria had control over Andros, Ceos, Teos and other islands and Myres³⁰, following W. W. Goodwin, believes that the passage refers to the establishment of a regular hegemony over the Cycladic islands in the late sixth century, although Strabo does not give an indication of the date. If so, Eretria not only succeeded Naxos chronologically but took over control of her former possessions. This information is late

²⁹Strabo, 448.

³⁰J. L. Myres, op. cit., 97.

but I think that it, combined with Herodotus' comment on Eretrian prosperity and the sending of five Eretrian ships to Miletus, perhaps marking the end of Eretria's power, is enough to confirm the Eretrian entry in the "List of Thalassocracies".

The Lesbian fleet was defeated by Polycrates, and according to Eusebius' register Phocaea maintained control of the seas between the hegemonies of these two thalassocrats. This defeat could have been the final blow to a state whose naval power had been waning for some time, while that of Phocaea increased. The thalassocracies of Lesbos and Phocaea would not have interfered with each other as Phocaea was interested mainly in transporting goods to the far west. They could have lived peacefully side by side. However, Polycrates attempted to gain complete control of the seas and, according to Herodotus' description³¹, it is unlikely that he allowed even a second-rate power to exist within close range. Thus the defeat of the Lesbian and Milesian fleets might have been an attempt finally to eliminate former powers, now somewhat weakened. It is possible and reasonable to think that Lesbos had some sea-power before the time of Polycrates, but there is no proof³². Possibly the lack of evidence for the thalassocracy of the Lesbians can be explained if one considers Thucydides' remark on the smallness of fleets before the Persian Wars³³, but the entry on Eusebius' list cannot be confirmed from ancient historians.

³¹Herodotus, 3.122.2; 3.39.3.

³²See also note 27 above.

³³Thucydides, 1.14.3.

Perhaps the defeat of the Spartans by Polycrates heralded the beginning rather than the end of the Spartan thalassocracy. An attempt to lay siege by sea to a power that was noted and marvelled at by the Greeks as the greatest and most extensive sea-power since the legendary times of Minos would not go unnoticed. This attempt, although unsuccessful, and magnified by talk, could be responsible for the inclusion of the Spartans in the "List of Thalassocracies"³⁴. Also, the time given to Sparta as a thalassocrat is very short³⁵, leading one to believe that, in the absence of any great power, the action taken by Sparta against Samos caused her to be named as a thalassocrat.

Miller³⁶ suggests that the Spartan thalassocracy was the result of a struggle between the Chilonian and Agiad parties in Sparta, during the reign of Kleomenes. Dorieus, when Kleomenes succeeded to the throne, left Sparta to establish a colony in Libya. He returned a few years later, having been driven out of Libya by the Carthaginians. Then he set out to establish a colony in western Sicily. The attempt of Dorieus in North Africa has been interpreted as an attempt to set up tributaries, or areas under Sparta's control³⁷. Thus Sparta may have tried to establish herself as a thalassocrat, and this attempt brought about her inclusion in the list of Eusebius.

³⁴J. L. Myres, op. cit., 100, suggests that this shows Sparta aiming to be a thalassocrat.

³⁵See pp. 20 below.

³⁶M. Miller, op. cit., 39.

³⁷J. L. Myres, op. cit., 98.

All the entries in Eusebius' "List of Thalassocracies" have been confirmed by the comments of Herodotus and Thucydides, and Strabo in the case of Eretria, with the exception of Lesbos and Sparta, for whom there is little or no ancient evidence. Nonetheless I believe that the thalassocracy of Lesbos existed and should remain in its place on the list. I intend to use Lesbos, as well as the other thalassocracies that are attested by Herodotus and Thucydides, in my inquiry into the character of these sixth-century thalassocracies. I consider the alleged thalassocracy of Sparta to be an exaggeration. I shall use Sparta yet, if it is necessary or helpful in understanding these thalassocracies. The others have been shown to be historical.

The sequence of the thalassocracies in Eusebius' list is generally accepted, with the exception of the Carians in place X, yet the dates and durations for some of these have been questioned and vastly different ones proposed. The following scheme was derived by W. G. Forrest³⁸.

No.	Power	Duration	Eusebius' dates		Approximate real date
			Scheme I	Scheme II ³⁹	
I	Lydians	92	1172-1080	1184-1092	
II	Pelasigians	85	1080-995	1092-1003	
III	Thracians	79	995-916	1003-928	
IV	Rhodians	23	916-893	928-905	

³⁸W. G. Forrest, op. cit., 105.

³⁹Scheme I is based on 1172 B. C. as the date for the fall of Troy. Scheme II is calculated by the addition of the three Anolympiads as bonuses of four years (668, ca. 600, 364 B. C.). Thus Forrest adjusts the beginning

V	Phrygians	25	893-868	905-880	750-720
VI	Kypriots	32	868-836	880-848	720-710
VII	Phoenicians	45	836-791	848-803	710-668
VIII	Egyptians	43	791-748	803-760	668-625
IX	Milesians	18	748-730	760-742	625-600
X	(Karians)	71	730-669	742-681	600-585
XI	Lesbians	96	669-573	681-581	585-575
XII	Phokaians	44	573-529	581-533	575-540
XIII	Samians	17	529-512	533-516	540-516
XIV	Spartans	2	512-510	516-514	516-510
XV	Naxians	10	510-500	514-504	510-500
XVI	Eretrians	15	500-485	504-489	500-490
XVII	Aiginetans	10	485-475	489-479	490-480

These dates are not accepted by all⁴⁰, as some prefer to use the dates in Eusebius' list, making adjustments such as the ending of the Eretrian and Aeginetan thalassocracies. J. L. Myres⁴¹ dates are slightly different but correspond closely enough to raise no major problems, except in the case

of each thalassocracy by twelve years down to 669 B. C. (no. XI); by eight for no. XII, by four thereafter.

⁴⁰Accepting lower dates: F. Bark, op. cit., 19; J. Fotheringham, op. cit., 76; J. L. Myres, op. cit., 88; not accepting: A. R. Burn, op. cit., 165; D. Hogarth, op. cit., 517; M. Miller, op. cit.; R. Helm, op. cit., 252. But see A. R. Burn, "Dates in Early Greek History", JHS 55 (1935) 130-146.

⁴¹J. L. Myres, op. cit., 88.

of Miletus, whose prominence Myres dates as beginning in 604 B. C., a difference of twenty-one years from Forrest's suggested date.

The ancient evidence ties the Milesian thalassocracy to the time of Thrasybulus⁴². When speaking of Corinthian sea-power Thucydides refers to the dates 704 B. C. and 664 B. C. but he implies that Corinthian control continued for some time⁴³. Herodotus' reference to Corinthian seamanship is in the time of Periander⁴⁴. This corresponds to Forrest's suggested dates. As for Lesbos, since we have no evidence in Herodotus or Thucydides that it was a thalassocracy, obviously we have none with which it could be dated. The suggested dates for the thalassocracies of Phocaea and her successors as far as Aegina conform more closely to the dates derived from Eusebius, and the ancient evidence provides confirmation. Phocaea had a powerful navy about the time of her defeat of the Carthaginians⁴⁵ and Samos enjoyed a thalassocracy under Polycrates⁴⁶. Naxos possessed a powerful fleet before the Ionian revolt⁴⁷ and Aegina owned a navy before the Persian Wars⁴⁸. Thus the ancient evidence substantiates the dates suggested by

⁴²Herodotus, 1.20.1.

⁴³Thucydides, 1.13.5.

⁴⁴Herodotus, 1.24.1.

⁴⁵Thucydides, 1.13.6.

⁴⁶Herodotus, 3.122.2.

⁴⁷Herodotus, 5.30.4.

⁴⁸Herodotus, 5.81.2.

Forrest and Myres. This is particularly important as far as Miletus and Corinth are concerned since these dates differ as much as one hundred years from those of Eusebius. Unfortunately, one cannot resolve the difference between Forrest's and Myres' dates for the start of the Milesian thalassocracy, since it is known only that Thrasybulus ruled about the end of the seventh century and the beginning of the sixth. There are no absolute dates for his reign.

It has been established that the majority of the names in Eusebius' "List of Thalassocracies" can be confirmed by the evidence of Herodotus and Thucydides, and that the suggested dates of Forrest fit the ancient evidence. Thus we have a list of thalassocracies and approximate dates for them.

CHAPTER TWO.

THE NAVAL ASPECTS

Since the evidence for the thalassocracies has been established, I shall inquire into the naval aspects of a thalassocracy of the late seventh and sixth centuries. In order to do this I shall consider the naval battles engaged in by these states and their causes, and I shall ascertain whether the allies, if there were any, of each thalassocrat were land forces or inferior naval powers, and whether these allies were necessary to maintain the superiority of the thalassocrat. I shall consider also whether a thalassocrat had many challengers and the extent and influence of piracy among these states. It will be useful to inquire into the type of boat used and innovations or adaptations to the boats effected by a thalassocrat. Once again Herodotus and Thucydides provide the bulk of the ancient evidence. By applying the information in those historians to these questions, one should obtain a general idea of the naval aspects of these thalassocracies, if they contain common factors; or else it will be seen that these states were totally individual in the way in which they obtained and exercised power.

First let us consider the naval and other battles. There is evidence that Erythrae aided Miletus against Naxos¹ and that Miletus aided Chios against Erythrae². Then Chios assisted Miletus against Ardys³. These three

¹Plutarch, De Mulierum Virtute, 17.

²Herodotus, 1.18.3.

³Herodotus, 1.18.3.

wars are early. The only datable one is that between Miletus and Ardys, which came during the reign of Thrasybulus, sometime in the late seventh or early sixth century, and the war between Chios and Erythrae predated it⁴. These battles imply an interesting fluctuation in Miletus' attitude towards other poleis. She turns against Erythrae, who was obviously an ally, in order to aid Chios, who later helps her in a war against a foreign power. Or, if the war against Erythrae came first then it was either beneficial to Erythrae, or necessary to aid her former enemy. A. G. Dunham suggests that Chios was a more important ally for Miletus than Erythrae, because the anchorage at Chios was better than what Erythrae could offer and it was necessary for Miletus to use it. These two battles were probably disputes over a few acres of land or possibly, in the case of Chios against Erythrae, over the control of the straits between the island and the mainland. The struggle between Naxos and Miletus could have been over rights to a trade-route or trading area. It is not known whether these were land battles or sea battles. The battle between Miletus and Alyattes, according to Herodotus' description⁶, was an annual raid for plunder by the Lydians, which ended in a treaty of friendship, since the Milesians controlled the seas and the Lydians were not able to overcome them⁷.

These battles took place during, or just before, Miletus' hegemony.

⁴Herodotus, 1.18.3.

⁵A. G. Dunham, The History of Miletus, 63.

⁶Herodotus, 1.17.3.

⁷Herodotus, 1.22.4.

They appear to be local quarrels and thus fit into Thucydides' description⁸ of wars of this period as local affairs between neighbours. They certainly do not resemble the aggressive actions of a thalassocrat attempting to establish or expand her control. Indeed, Miletus was not the aggressor in the wars against Ardys and Erythrae, and that against Naxos appears to be retaliatory⁹.

There is also a record of a battle, or the threat of one, between Miletus and Sicyon¹⁰. In this account Thrasybulus appears in the harbour of Sicyon, attempting to seize it. Frontinus includes it in a discussion of attacks in which the generals managed to obtain their objectives by surprise tactics. This is characteristic of an aggressive leader, who, in this instance, is some distance from his local waters. Such an attack seems out of character compared with the other hostilities in which Miletus was involved, and the evidence itself is doubtful¹¹. However, if it is accepted, perhaps Miletus pursued a more aggressive policy towards Greek poleis than appears likely from her previous quarrels. On the other hand it may be the effort of a waning power to regain some of her former glory by asserting herself. In any case Frontinus' reference confuses our understanding of Miletus' behaviour as a thalassocrat. I think it more likely that Miletus was an unaggressive leader who became involved in local struggles for the immediate advantages that she would gain and that this appearance in the harbour of Sicyon was unusual, if it occurred at all.

⁸Thucydides, 1.15.2.

⁹Plutarch, De Mulienum Virtute, 17.

¹⁰Frontinus, 3.9.7.

¹¹W. G. Forrest, "Two Chronographic Notes; The Tenth Thalassocracy in

Lesbos fought against Athens in Sigeum¹². This battle is dated to about 590 B. C.¹³ It appears to have been a prolonged struggle, the outcome of which was finally decided by arbitration¹⁴. Sigeum was the colonial territory of Lesbos but Athens laid claim to it, arguing that the Lesbians had no more right to the land than they, or any other Greeks who fought in the Trojan War. Sigeum was an important colony, strategically located at the entrance to the Propontis, and the benefits to a mother-city, such as harbourage and free passage through the area, could be considerable. The colony was awarded to Athens by Periander¹⁵. This took place a short time before Lesbos' reputed thalassocracy. Possibly the battle was fought mostly on land, as it is unlikely that Lesbos suffered much harm at sea immediately before becoming a thalassocrat. Again, the loss of a colony that could benefit a trading state did not affect her leadership at sea. This battle ended during the Corinthian thalassocracy and it was the arbitration of Corinth's tyrant that took it from Lesbos. Yet there is nothing to indicate any hostility between these two states; on the contrary, the arbitrator in such an affair had to be acceptable to both parties involved¹⁶. This battle was initiated by Athens. Lesbos, according to the evidence, did not establish or try to strengthen her power through a show of force. However, there is little evidence concerning Lesbos.

Eusebius", CQ N.S. 19 (1969) 98.

¹²Herodotus, 5.95.2.

¹³D. Hogarth, "Lydia and Ionia", CAH 3. 516.

¹⁴Herodotus, 5.95.2.

¹⁵Herodotus, 5.96.

¹⁶M. N. Tod, International Arbitration Amongst the Greeks, 96.

Corinth, during her thalassocracy, fought against Corcyra¹⁷ and against Epidaurus¹⁸. According to Herodotus¹⁹, Periander undertook these wars for motives of personal revenge and won both of them. It is possible that these wars were attempts by Corinth to subdue or injure competitors, although Herodotus does imply that Corcyra initiated her feud with Corinth²⁰. That is to say, Periander took the opportunity to destroy Corcyraean interference in his thalassocracy, after Corcyra started the dispute. Possibly the war against Epidaurus was a dispute over territory or an attempt to impress her strength upon her neighbours. These battles apparently concerned only the competitors, as Corinth fought unaided. Nonetheless Corinth appears also to have been an unaggressive leader, involving herself only in matters that directly affected her.

During the Corinthian thalassocracy Athens and Megara fought over Salamis²¹, which was an important possession for both these states, given its location. This is another case of a long drawn-out struggle, which was finally submitted to a Spartan board of arbitrators²². The matter was a local concern and did not affect the thalassocrats but it does contain a point of interest. Athens and Corinth were reasonably friendly at this

¹⁷Herodotus, 3.53.7.

¹⁸Herodotus, 3.52.7.

¹⁹Herodotus, 3.50; 3.52.

²⁰Herodotus, 3.49.

²¹Plutarch, Solon, 8.

²²Plutarch, Solon, 8.

time²³, while Megara and Corinth had been age-old rivals²⁴; the fact that Corinth at no time interfered in this struggle possibly confirms that she was a peaceful thalassocrat. It probably was beneficial to Corinth that Salamis was under Athenian control; she might thus avoid harassment of her ships sailing east. Corinth kept out of a struggle whose outcome, although indirectly, was of concern to her.

Samos fought against Priene²⁵, as did Miletus a few years later²⁶. It is not known whether these were land battles or sea battles, but they were probably struggles over land, or the control of the straits between the island and the mainland. This is the type of battle in which Miletus was usually involved. These disputes take place before the thalassocracy of Samos and probably after that of Miletus. They provide examples of local struggles apparently of concern to no one other than the participants.

Samos fought against Megara in Perinthus²⁷, during the Milesian thalassocracy. This battle is clearly of the same type as that between Lesbos and Athens in Sigeum, a dispute over colonial territory. Samos won this battle and Megara received no help from Miletus, although Miletus had apparently allowed Megarian colonization in territory that she dominated²⁸. Samos took the colony from Megara in order to have friendly territory in the Propontis for trade and moorage. Once again, the affair was left to the

²³See A. R. Burn, "The So-Called 'Trade Leagues' in Early Greek History and the Lelantine War", JHS 49 (1929) 22; M. N. Tod, op. cit., 96.

²⁴See A. R. Burn, op. cit., 22.

²⁵Plutarch, Qu. Gr. no. 20.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Plutarch, Qu. Gr. no. 57.

combatants and Miletus took no interest in it, even though it was in an area through which her ships must pass to reach her colonies in the Black Sea.

The Persians laid siege to Phocaea²⁹ at a time when Phocaea controlled the seas. This ended the Phocaeen thalassocracy in Ionia, as the Phocaeans emigrated to Corsica³⁰.

A few years later the Phocaeans fought against the Carthaginians in Alalia³¹. Herodotus states that the cause of this battle, which was initiated by the Carthaginians, who had interests in the western trade, was the piracy of the Phocaeans. The Phocaeans won, but their power was destroyed because of the number of ships lost or damaged³². Thus there were two attacks made against the Phocaeans, one by land and one by sea, which ended her thalassocracy. Phocaea did not pursue an aggressive policy to obtain or strengthen her power, but she was almost certainly destroyed by force.

Samos fought against the combined fleets of Miletus and Lesbos, during her thalassocracy³³. The aggressor in this instance is not known, but Samos succeeded in destroying the fleets of both states. It seems more than likely that this battle was not merely a struggle over territory, but a question of deciding power and supremacy, since we find two previous

²⁸A. R. Burn, op. cit., 24.

²⁹Herodotus, 1.163.

³⁰Herodotus, 1.165.

³¹Herodotus, 1.166.1.

³²Herodotus, 1.166.

³³Herodotus, 1.39.4.

thalassocrats engaged in a struggle with the existing leader. Herodotus' description³⁴ of Polycrates' activities leads one to believe that he insisted on a maritime monopoly. Thus it is possible that he was the aggressor. It is equally possible, however, that Miletus and Lesbos found his piracy³⁵ so detrimental to their prosperity that they combined to take action against him. In any case, this is the first example of a recognized sea-power fighting against states with reputations as thalassocrats.

Sparta and Corinth laid siege, by sea, to Samos during Polycrates' tyranny³⁶. Herodotus gives the piracy³⁷ of the Samians as the cause for the attack made by Corinth and Sparta. This siege was completely unsuccessful and resulted in the withdrawal of Sparta within forty days³⁸. Polycrates was the acknowledged power of the eastern Greek world, and in this instance was merely defending himself against attack, not conducting any aggressive actions or reprisals against these states. Yet, once again we find a former thalassocrat, Corinth, engaged in an attack on the present leader. Although it is not known whether Polycrates committed any aggressive action besides his continuous and widespread piracy, his thalassocracy was certainly unacceptable to other powerful Greek poleis. Samos is the first state found to be involved not in local disputes only, but in struggles with leading poleis.

³⁴Herodotus, 3.39.

³⁵Herodotus, 3.39.4.

³⁶Herodotus, 3.54.1.

³⁷Herodotus, 3.48.

³⁸Herodotus, 3.56.

The Persians ended the rule of Polycrates³⁹ and the Samian domination of the sea. The Persians also put an end to the Naxian hegemony⁴⁰ and that of Eretria⁴¹.

The Aeginetans and Cretans fought against the Samians in Zancle⁴². Herodotus states that this battle arose from an attack made, many years previously, by the Samians on the Aeginetans⁴³. The cause was probably a dispute over territory, or possibly piracy. This attack occurred either at the end of the Samian control of the seas, or during that of Sparta, but it seemed to concern only the antagonists.

Aegina fought against Athens⁴⁴ twice in the later sixth and the early fifth century. Herodotus states that the first of these disputes arose from the long-standing hatred between these two poleis⁴⁵. Again it is more probable that it was caused by the struggle over control of local waters and the long-standing hatred was merely a convenient excuse. The first battle marks the rise of Aegina as a thalassocrat and, while it was a local struggle, it is the first instance we have of a thalassocrat establishing herself by means of force. Nonetheless Aegina does not seem to have been an aggressive leader involved in other than local disputes.

³⁹Herodotus, 3.125.3.

⁴⁰Herodotus, 5.34.

⁴¹Herodotus, 6.101.

⁴²Herodotus, 3.59.3.

⁴³Herodotus, 3.59.4.

⁴⁴Herodotus, 5.81.2.

⁴⁵Herodotus, 5.81.2.

The majority of the battles mentioned fit Thucydides' description of them as local affairs between neighbours. They were disputes over bits of land, or control of local waters, or colonial territory, and they did not have any effect on others than the combatants. The thalassocrats, for the most part, do not seem to have made any attempt to force their supremacy on other Greek states, or to have established their supremacy through naval battles. Possibly Samos, under Polycrates' tyranny, pursued a more aggressive policy than the others, and Aegina did establish her supremacy more firmly by her defeat of Athens, yet Miletus, Lesbos, Corinth, Phocaea, Sparta, Naxos and Eretria seem to have been peaceful leaders, involved only in local struggles, if any. Thus far, it appears that the late seventh- and sixth-century thalassocrats were unaggressive, establishing and keeping their control of maritime affairs by other means than naval battles.

Was the supremacy of a thalassocrat ever challenged by another polis? There are several cases in which a thalassocrat, during its suggested period of power, is found fighting another state. However, in most cases, it is impossible to determine whether a thalassocrat has been challenged, or if the thalassocrat is attempting to strengthen its control. One example of this is Polycrates' defeat of the Milesians and the Lesbians⁴⁶. While it is clear that Lesbos did not initiate the struggle, since she went to the aid of Miletus, whether Miletus or Polycrates was the aggressor is unknown and either is possible. Was Miletus challenging Polycrates' control of the sea or was Polycrates strengthening his control by getting rid of competitors? We cannot provide the answer. On the other hand, it is known that Sparta,

⁴⁶Herodotus, 3.39.4.

with the aid of the Corinthians, initiated an attack on Samos during Polycrates' rule⁴⁷. Since piracy seems to have been an integral part of Polycrates' policy, and it is the cause given for the attack⁴⁸, it is quite possible that these states were attempting to end the Samian hegemony. Although no one succeeded in the struggles against Polycrates, it appears that other Greek poleis were unwilling to accept a Samian thalassocracy, though those of other states do not seem to have disturbed them. This perhaps can be explained by Polycrates' interference with others, unusual conduct in a sixth-century thalassocrat.

Corinth, during the time of Periander, had trouble with Corcyra⁴⁹. This information presents difficulties, since the troubles between these two states were continuous. Thucydides⁵⁰ states that the first known sea-battle took place between these two states, and that they fought again just before the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War⁵¹. Herodotus clearly implies that Corcyra initiated the trouble during Periander's rule⁵², so possibly this instance can be considered a direct attack on a thalassocracy. Again it was unsuccessful. It is reasonable to conclude that Corinth won, since Periander sent three hundred Corcyrean boys to Alyattes at its conclusion⁵³.

⁴⁷Herodotus, 3.54.1.

⁴⁸Herodotus, 3.48.

⁴⁹Herodotus, 3.49.

⁵⁰Thucydides, 1.13.4.

⁵¹Thucydides, 1.29.

⁵²Herodotus, 3.53.7.

⁵³Herodotus, 3.48.2.

Corcyra certainly had a fleet at the beginning of the Persian Wars⁵⁴ and Thucydides⁵⁵ mentions her as one of the first to have triremes in any numbers; it is probable that she had a fleet during the time of Periander. Possibly she was attempting to gain power on the seas by defeating Corinth. Yet Corcyra tended to stay out of Greek affairs⁵⁶ and operate on her own. So she may have had no interest in a position of thalassocracy. It seems likely that this incident was just another of the many struggles between these two states, arising from Corinth's ambitions in the west.

In the preceding cases actions taken against a thalassocrat were both direct and unsuccessful, yet the battles between Lesbos and Athens in Sigeum⁵⁷ and Megara and Samos in Perinthos⁵⁸ are of a different order. Sigeum and Perinthos were colonies established in an area dominated by Miletus and the battles over them involved Milesian allies⁵⁹. These wars took place about the end of the seventh century or the beginning of the sixth⁶⁰, at the end of the suggested time of Miletus' thalassocracy. This presents a possible challenge to a thalassocracy through attacks on its allies, or perhaps it is a sign of the weakening of the power of Miletus.

⁵⁴Thucydides, 1.14.

⁵⁵Thucydides, 1.14.2.

⁵⁶Thucydides, 1.32.

⁵⁷Herodotus, 5.95.2.

⁵⁸Plutarch, Qu. Gr. no. 57.

⁵⁹A. R. Burn, op. cit., 24.

⁶⁰Herodotus, 5.95.2, speaks of Periander's arbitration.

There are other explanations offered for these events: that Miletus had changed alliances, or that the change in control of these two colonies was unimportant to her, or that her thalassocracy had already ended. It becomes a very slight possibility that a thalassocracy was being challenged through her allies. I believe that Miletus, since she was an unaggressive thalassocrat⁶¹, simply took no part in a matter that was not of immediate concern to her. Thus it seems that no Greek thalassocracy was ever seriously threatened by another Greek state, although attempts were made against Polycrates' Samos.

On the other hand the thalassocracies of the Phocaeans, Samians, Naxians, Eretrians and Aeginetans were not only threatened but ended by the Persians. All these states, except Aegina, were overrun or destroyed. The Aeginetans did not suffer at Persian hands, but on the contrary disabled many Persian ships at Salamis and were said to have given the most distinguished service of all the Greeks⁶³. Yet after the Persian invasion of 480 their power was eclipsed by Athens. Thus the rise of Persia was a disaster for the Greek thalassocracies of the time. The Persians did not defeat the Greeks at sea. The Persians were dependent on the Phoenician navy, which was defeated by the Ionian fleets at the time of the Ionian revolt⁶⁴. Thucydides states⁶⁵ that the Ionians when they fought against Cyrus were masters of all the Ionian sea, yet were forced to pay tribute and come to terms⁶⁶. During the time of

⁶¹See page 25.

⁶²Herodotus, 8.91.

⁶³Herodotus, 8.93.

⁶⁴Herodotus, 5.112.

⁶⁵Thucydides, 1.13.6.

⁶⁶Herodotus, 1.169.

Darius, although the Persians were said to be afraid of the smaller Greek fleet, the Ionians chose not to fight⁶⁷. Thus a land power was able to put an end to many Greek thalassocracies. However the Greek states do not seem to have challenged the position of a thalassocrat.

The coastline of Greece, with its many inlets and islands, is particularly suited to the activities of pirates. It is known that piracy was an honourable profession among the early Greeks and Thucydides makes several comments about it⁶⁸. Minos used his power at sea to get rid of pirates⁶⁹. Even as more dishonour became associated with piracy, it flourished, since it was very profitable. It has been suggested that the Dipylon ware, which portrays Athenian ships, shows a force intended to protect Attica from pirates⁷⁰. The Athenian thalassocracy of the fifth century once again cleared the seas of pirates. What may be said about professional piracy during the late seventh- and sixth-century thalassocracies?

According to Herodotus⁷¹ some battles among the Greek states were reprisals against piracy. Piracy would obviously have a strong effect on seafaring nations, but it is difficult to know how widespread it was during the late seventh and sixth centuries. Ancient evidence gives some indication of where and why piracy flourished. Histiaeus of Miletus organized eight

⁶⁷Herodotus, 6.9; 6.14.

⁶⁸Thucydides, 1.4; 1.5; 1.7.

⁶⁹Herodotus, 3.122; Thucydides, 1.4.

⁷⁰P. N. Ure, The Origin of Tyranny, 324, following Helbig.

⁷¹Herodotus, 3.47.1; 1.166.1.

Lesbian ships to sail to Byzantium and seize all vessels coming out of the Black Sea and hold them until they agreed to obey his orders⁷². Plutarch states⁷³ that the Samians, in obedience to an oracle, changed their abode from Samos to Mycale and supported themselves by piracy there for ten years, after which they sailed again to Samos and overcame their enemies. After the failure of the Ionian revolt, the Phocaeen commander Dionysius sailed to Sicily, which he made his base for piratical raids against Carthaginian and Tyrrhenian ships; but he never attacked Greek ships⁷⁴. We have a political figure using piracy as a means to gain his own ends, and examples of nations supporting themselves by piracy. These instances, except that given by Plutarch, are at the end of the period with which we are concerned. Nevertheless they do help to give some idea of the prevalence and strength of piracy.

There are examples of Greek thalassocrats engaging in piracy. Apparently the Phocaeen emigration to Alalia resulted in the Phocaeans supporting themselves by piracy⁷⁵. There is no evidence that the Phocaeans practised piracy during their thalassocracy in Ionia. Perhaps the change in their residence brought about a change in their practices.

Samos, under Polycrates' rule, is known to have practised widespread piracy, attacking the ships of both friends and enemies⁷⁶. The two states

⁷²Herodotus, 6.5.3.

⁷³Plutarch, Qu. Gr. no. 55.

⁷⁴Herodotus, 6.17.

⁷⁵Herodotus, 1.166.

⁷⁶Herodotus, 3.48.

mentioned as engaging in piracy, Samos and Phocaea, are the only Ionian sea-powers Thucydides notes⁷⁷, so possibly the idea of thalassocracy contained some notion of successful piracy. Yet Thucydides does not discuss the piracy of these states; the information comes from Herodotus⁷⁸. Also the Phocaeans do not seem to have been pirates while they were operating in Ionia, as the leading sea-power, although the Samians engaged in piracy, while in this position. Possibly a thalassocracy included piratical activities, but there are several other logical explanations of Thucydides' having singled out Samos and Phocaea as sea-powers. Perhaps Samos and Phocaea are mentioned because each indulged in piracy as a national policy, or Samos is noted because of her strength and Phocaea because of her venturesome traders and innovations in seafaring. The question remains whether Samos' behaviour during her thalassocracy was exceptional or whether it was the greatest example of a conventional practice. There is no evidence that any other thalassocrat engaged in piracy as a regular policy, although it is not unlikely that individual citizens of a thalassocracy did so. I think that Polycrates' Samos was unusual in this respect, as in so many others, for a sixth-century thalassocrat, which caused it to be noted.

The Corinthians⁷⁹, and Minos in legendary times⁸⁰, are said to have cleared the sea of pirates, which would be a more likely pursuit of the

⁷⁷Thucydides, 1.13.6.

⁷⁸Herodotus, 1.166; 3.48.

⁷⁹Thucydides, 1.13.5.

⁸⁰Thucydides, 1.4.

sixth-century thalassocrat. Since the evidence concerning piracy is scanty, and its significance hard to determine, it is possible that the thalassocrats engaged in piracy to a greater extent than I have allowed⁸¹.

Obviously the piracy of Samos would have had a strong effect on other seafaring states during Polycrates' rule. But what effect did the piracy of individuals throughout the century have on the thalassocrat? It is more than likely that the profession continued to flourish during this time, since there is no evidence that any state succeeded in clearing the seas of pirates. While the pirates obviously would not face a state's fleet, they could do much damage to the prosperity of the state by constant attacks on its merchant vessels. It is possible that the thalassocrats joined together with other states in an amphictyony or some such league in order to discourage pirates from preying on their ships⁸². For example, Miletus and neighbouring states, or Lesbos and Chios, could show enough force, and perhaps provide some sort of patrol, so that the pirates would consider their chances to be better elsewhere. But this is conjecture. It is equally possible that the Milesians, Lesbians and the rest, regarded piracy as an inescapable evil and accepted the losses rather than defended themselves against it.

Phocaea changed from using merchant vessels to penteconters, usually naval vessels, on her long voyages⁸³. Perhaps this change was caused in

⁸¹L. Casson, Ancient Mariners, 83. He states that merchants had to ward off attacks from commercial rivals since such attempts were an acknowledged means of discouraging competition.

⁸²Cf. J. P. Harland, Prehistoric Aigina, 108. He believes that the mutual protection offered by an amphictyony would tend to suppress piracy in a

part by the need to defend herself against pirates. L. Casson⁸⁴ suggests that the Phocaeans travelled in packs. Again, this could be an attempt to frustrate the pirates. Samos, by becoming a powerful pirate state, probably found the best defence against individual piracy, although the defensive aspect was almost certainly not the motivating cause.

Just as there is little evidence to show whether or not the thalassocrats were also pirates, there is little to show how, if at all, they defended themselves against piracy. Piracy was a constant condition in their world and perhaps the losses to a thalassocrat were not great enough to do much to her prosperity. On the other hand, since it was the merchants who were the greatest losers, perhaps the organization of some sort of defense was left to them. The only certainty is that the extent of piracy, what effect it had, and the defenses taken against it are unknown. We can assume that piracy existed and made life uncomfortable for the merchants, but we cannot be more specific.

I shall now consider the allies of each thalassocrat, whether they were land- or sea-powers, and whether they were necessary to maintain the superiority of each thalassocrat. Herodotus is our main source of information for these alliances, but, as he nowhere lists the allies, the information is given haphazardly and undoubtedly is not complete. Still, we may have enough information to obtain a general idea of the alliances and

limited area.

⁸³ Herodotus, 1.163.

⁸⁴ L. Casson, op. cit., 81.

thus come closer to determining the nature of the thalassocrats.

Miletus was allied to Chios⁸⁵ during her thalassocracy, to Erythrae⁸⁶ when she was fighting against Naxos, and to Lesbos⁸⁷. Thrasybulus, the tyrant of Miletus, was friendly with Periander⁸⁸, the tyrant of Corinth, and also was a friend and ally of Alyattes⁸⁹. Miletus was on good terms with Sybaris⁹⁰, and possibly with Megara⁹¹, as well as the Egyptian rulers as proved by her appearance at Naucratis⁹². The Greek states with which Miletus was friendly were mostly islands or coastal cities that had fleets. The only land powers with whom she had alliances were non-Greeks. Possibly the intention was to prevent their encroaching on her territory, and to obtain trading rights in their countries. Most of Miletus' Greek allies were within her area, with the exception of Corinth, Megara and Sybaris. It is known that Corinth and Miletus were on good terms during this period, although the only explanation of this friendship is the common denominator of tyranny. It has been suggested⁹³ that Miletus' relationship with Sybaris was a result of the friendship of Periander and Thrasybulus. This seems plausible, as Miletus did not have other connections with the west.

That Miletus, while supreme by sea, formed alliances with her neighbours was probably the result of her desire to continue her trade undisturbed. This desire might also explain her choice of sea-powers, for the most part,

⁸⁵Herodotus, 1.18.3.

⁸⁶Plutarch, De Mulierum Virtute, 17.

⁸⁷Herodotus, 3.39.4.

⁸⁸Herodotus, 1.20.

⁸⁹Herodotus, 1.22.4.

⁹⁰Herodotus, 6.21.

as allies. Battles would diminish prosperity and, since Miletus was in a relatively well-populated area, she would have to befriend those who could help her in trade or those who could cause serious disruptions, if unfriendly. We have seen that the battles that Miletus fought during her control were local and, in the case of one ally fighting another, Chios against Erythrae, for example, she helped the one who could benefit her more in her trade⁹⁴. At any rate, Miletus appears to have followed a policy of getting along with as many states as possible and antagonizing only when necessary. This attitude also explains why Miletus kept clear of the battles between her allies and other states over colonial territory in an area that she dominated.⁹⁵ The number and type of Miletus' allies reinforce the suggestion that her thalassocracy was unaggressive.

Periander, the tyrant of Corinth, was on good terms with the Egyptian rulers⁹⁶ and Alyattes⁹⁷, as well as with Athens⁹⁸ and probably Lesbos⁹⁹.

I have mentioned that Periander was friendly with the Milesian tyrant.

Corinth seems to have been allied mainly with eastern states, both Greek and foreign, and apparently dominated in the west unaided. Possibly the friendship between Corinth and Lesbos was an offshoot of the relationship between Miletus and Corinth, or, since Periander's thalassocracy came between that of Miletus and that of Lesbos, he might have been merely keeping himself on good terms with the eastern Greek powers. Since there does not appear

⁹¹Cf. A. R. Burn, op. cit., 15-37.

⁹²Herodotus, 2.178.

⁹³A. R. Burn, op. cit., 21.

⁹⁴See page 24.

⁹⁵See above, note 28.

to have been any friction between Miletus and Lesbos, even though they were successive powers in Ionia, Periander would have had no trouble remaining friendly with both.

Periander was also allied with the eastern foreign powers, probably for the sake of trade. Nicolaus Damascenus says that Periander plied both seas.¹⁰⁰ Thus, being on good terms with the eastern Greek sea-powers and the foreign land-powers, Periander could carry on trade with no harassment.

Periander was quite probably well-disposed towards Athens, as shown by his arbitration of Sigeum. It was beneficial to Corinthian merchants to be free from trouble while sailing through the Saronic Gulf towards the east. Corinthian wares were in competition with Athenian in the early sixth century, when the latter was beginning to show better craftsmanship¹⁰¹; this suggests friendly co-existence between trading states.

Corinth does not seem to have had many allies in western Greece. However, the only other Greek state with a large fleet was Corcyra, whom Corinth fought and defeated during Periander's rule¹⁰². Thus, since Corinth had the dominant fleet, she did not need alliances in the west and she

⁹⁶Nicolaus Damascenus, Fragment 60.

⁹⁷Herodotus, 3.48.2

⁹⁸Herodotus, 5.95.2; see Tod, op. cit., 96.

⁹⁹Herodotus, 5.95.2; see Tod, op. cit., 96.

¹⁰⁰Nicolaus Damascenus, Fragment 58.

¹⁰¹John Boardman, The Greeks Overseas, 29.

¹⁰²Herodotus, 3.53.7.

procured those that were of use to her in the east. Once again, Corinth does not seem to have been aggressive as a thalassocrat and her alliances appear to follow a policy of befriending those with whom she might collide through her trading interests or those who might be of use.

Lesbos was present at Naucratis and thus probably on friendly terms with Egyptian rulers¹⁰³, as well as with Miletus¹⁰⁴. There is not much evidence for the alliances of Lesbos, but it is quite likely that she was placed in much the same position as Miletus. She would need to be allied to the neighbouring islands and coastal cities in order to carry on her trade unmolested. Not much information can be gained from Lesbos.

Phocaea asked Sparta for help against Cyrus but Sparta refused¹⁰⁵. She was present at Naucratis also¹⁰⁶. Most of Phocaea's trade was in the far west where no other Greeks were in competition with her. Phocaea's troubles, if any, would come from the natives of the far western countries in which she traded, and, since the other Greeks did not usually travel so far, Greek alliances would be of little use. For the most part, she seems to have gone her own way quietly. She would have had less need of co-operation from surrounding states than the other Ionic powers because of her practice of travelling in warships rather than merchant vessels. She appears to have avoided involvement with other poleis, except for her request for aid from Sparta.

¹⁰³Herodotus, 2.178.

¹⁰⁴Herodotus, 3.39.4.

¹⁰⁵Herodotus, 1.152.

¹⁰⁶Herodotus, 2.178.

Cambyses asked Polycrates for help against Egypt¹⁰⁷, and Amasis had previously sent signs of goodwill to Polycrates¹⁰⁸. According to Herodotus, overtures for alliance were made to Polycrates by the Lydians¹⁰⁹. Samos again breaks the general pattern of the sixth-century leaders. Polycrates was on good terms, or apparently good terms, with the foreign powers while antagonizing the Greek states. Thus Samos was allied with land-powers and no sea-powers. Polycrates, through his piracy and through his defeat of the Milesian and Lesbian fleets¹¹⁰, was able to dominate the sea traffic of the time, while his alliances with foreign land-powers would enable Samos to trade in their countries.

Samos did not seek the friendly co-operation of others in order to carry on her trading, but rather she destroyed the competition. Perhaps this is part of the basis of Herodotus' comment that Polycrates was the first thalassocrat after the time of Minos¹¹¹. That is, Samos was the first state to be the recognized power on the seas, unsupported by any other Greek poleis. There had been other states who controlled the seas, but none of them did so while making enemies of and then defeating other Greek states. Samos' lack of alliances combined with her naval actions against Greek states confirm the suggestion that she followed an aggressive policy against other Greeks during her thalassocracy.

¹⁰⁷Herodotus, 3.44.

¹⁰⁸Herodotus, 2.182.2.

¹⁰⁹Herodotus, 3.12.

¹¹⁰Herodotus, 3.39.4.

¹¹¹Herodotus, 3.122.2.

Croesus asked Sparta for an alliance and aid¹¹² while both Phocaea¹¹³ and Miletus¹¹⁴ sought her help. Amasis of Egypt sent presents to Sparta¹¹⁵. Sparta did not seek alliances but other states turned to her for help. Sparta agreed to help Croesus and was preparing ships to send to him when she was defeated, but she refused to help Phocaea and Miletus when they asked for aid against the Persians. However she did send one penteconter to Phocaea and a herald from the boat went to Sardis to tell the Persians not to advance¹¹⁶. It is more likely that Sparta was asked for help as a land-force than as a naval force, since the Ionians were capable of defeating the Persians at sea but could not defend their cities. At any rate, Sparta did not involve herself in the alliance and affairs of the other Greeks, and she does not appear aggressive as a sea-power. Her behaviour does not add much to our information about sixth-century thalassocrats and it need not be of concern, since I have already stated that Sparta's thalassocracy was the result of the reputation and glory gained by her unsuccessful attack on Polycrates.

While it is known that Lygdamis, the tyrant of Naxos, was friendly with Peisistratus, the tyrant of Athens¹¹⁷, this alliance precedes the Naxian

¹¹²Herodotus, 1.69.

¹¹³Herodotus, 1.152.

¹¹⁴Herodotus, 5.49.

¹¹⁵Herodotus, 3.47.

¹¹⁶Herodotus, 1.152.

¹¹⁷Herodotus, 1.61.4.

thalassocracy. There is no evidence of Naxian alliances during her period of power. As to Eretria, it is known only that she helped Miletus against the Persians¹¹⁸. I assume that these two states, Naxos and Eretria, also kept on reasonably good terms with other seafaring states.

Aegina was aided by Thebes¹¹⁹ in her war against Athens early in the fifth century, though Argos refused to help because of a previous transgression by Aegina¹²⁰. Aegina was also among the Greek states at Naucratis.¹²¹ Aegina, as a trading nation, was probably on peaceful terms with most other Greek states, although antagonistic to Athens, a neighbouring polis who was acquiring a fleet.

The majority of the Greek states were on good terms with one another, or at least had no trouble with one another, and were friendly with foreign powers. The conclusion is that the Greek states cultivated friendships and avoided enmities, with the notable exception of Samos, who acted in the opposite fashion.

One very noticeable point is that most of these states were allied to or on good terms with Asiatic rulers. Miletus, Lesbos, Samos, Phocaea and Aegina all had trading interests in Naucratis, which shows not only that the Egyptians accommodated Greeks but also that the merchants of the various states had no trouble existing alongside one another¹²². In a few cases

¹¹⁸Herodotus, 5.99.

¹¹⁹Herodotus, 5.89.

¹²⁰Herodotus, 6.92.

¹²¹Herodotus, 2.178.

¹²²J. Boardman, op. cit., 148. He argues that the agreeable state of affairs among the merchants in Naucratis does not necessarily reflect the situation

Asiatic rulers, such as Necho¹²³ and Cambyses¹²⁴, appear to have called upon their Greek allies for additions to their fleet. Possibly the trade brought by the Greeks into the eastern Asian countries increased the prosperity of the Asians.

The alliances confirm the impression given by the naval battles of the various states, that they were, for the most part, unaggressive in their relations towards other states.

I shall now consider the type of boats used, or adaptations and innovations made, by the thalassocracies in order to improve their fleets. Once again we are hindered by lack of information. Thucydides states that the Corinthians were skilled in ship-building and were the first to use the methods still prevalent in his day¹²⁵. Herodotus tells us that the Phocaeans used to travel in penteconters rather than merchant vessels on their trading voyages¹²⁶. Merchant vessels were built to carry heavy loads and could accommodate easily the necessary food supplies for a long voyage, while the penteconter was usually a troop-transport with a ramming device on its bow. Gomme¹²⁷ points out the difference in the routes used by merchant vessels and by triremes. The triremes had to hug the coastline in order to obtain food, a problem that did not face penteconters as they were large ships and could carry their own supplies. The use of a warship as a

at home.

¹²³Herodotus, 2.159.2.

¹²⁴Herodotus, 3.44.

¹²⁵Thucydides, 1.13.2.

¹²⁶Herodotus, 1.163.

¹²⁷A. W. Gomme, "A Forgotten Factor of Greek Naval Strategy", JHS 53 (1933) 16-24.

merchantship would ensure the Phocaeans and their cargo of greater safety on long voyages. There is no indication that Phocaea made the changes in order to act aggressively against the merchantships of other states, but it is a possibility¹²⁸, according to some. Did this innovation of the Phocaeans help to make them thalassocrats? Thucydides mentions them as a sea-power¹²⁹ but does not speak of this practice, while Herodotus gives us the information¹³⁰ without dating the innovation, so we cannot know. I doubt that this change of itself made thalassocrats of the Phocaeans but it would make their trading more stable and profitable, thereby increasing their prosperity.

It is known that the Corinthians were skilled ship-builders and among the first to build triremes. It is reasonable to suppose that the Corinthians made improvements or adaptations, but there is no evidence of this. We know of Corinth's reputation but not of specific improvements.

A new type of ship, the Samania, was invented during Polycrates' rule. According to Plutarch it was a swift ship, with a ram, and a good deep-sea traveller¹³¹. Obviously it would make a sound merchant vessel, well able to ward off attack, or a ship that could be used aggressively. Unfortunately, although we have a record of its invention, evidence of how or when it was used is lacking.

¹²⁸L. Casson, op. cit., 83; see above, note 81; A. G. Dunham, op. cit., 63, states that trade secrets were jealously guarded and the appearance of a rival was a question of life or death. I can see no evidence for this; the evidence shows co-operation.

¹²⁹Thucydides, 1.13.6.

¹³⁰Herodotus, 1.163.1.

There is some question whether Polycrates had a fleet of triremes also. When triremes first came into use in Greece is disputed. Some scholars¹³² believe that Thucydides is referring to the triremes in his statement

φαίνεται δὲ καὶ Σαμίῳς Ἀμεινοκλῆς Κορίνθιος
ναυπηγὸς ναῦς πολέσας τέσσαρας;¹³³

and thus the trireme was invented in the late eighth century. Others believe that Thucydides is not referring to triremes, and that these ships were invented in the last half of the sixth century¹³⁴. Davidson states that it is doubtful that the trireme evolved during two hundred years into the clumsy and unseaworthy shape that fought at Salamis while the Athenians improved it in ten years by changes in construction, manning and tactics that gave them sixty years of supremacy on the sea¹³⁵. He also thinks that if triremes had been invented earlier the Phocaeans would have used them on their long voyages¹³⁶. It is possible that the triremes were invented at the end of the eighth century, but, because they were so strikingly innovative, did not become popular until the last half of the sixth century. At any rate, it is

¹³¹Plutarch, Pericles, 26.

¹³²J. S. Morrison and R. T. Williams, Greek Oared Ships, 159; A. W. Gomme, Commentary of Thucydides, 1.122; P. N. Ure, The Origin of Tyranny, 325.

¹³³Thucydides, 1.13.3.

¹³⁴J. A. Davidson, "The First Greek Triremes", CQ 41 (1947) 18-24; Rhys Carpenter, "Greek Penetration of the Black Sea", AJA 52 (1948) 7.

¹³⁵J. A. Davidson, op. cit., 18-24.

¹³⁶Cf. A. W. Gomme, "A Forgotten Factor in Greek Naval Strategy" JHS 53(1933) 16-24.

known from Thucydides that triremes were in use in the late sixth century, but no one state had many, except the Corcyraeans and the Sicilian tyrants just before the Persian War¹³⁷.

It has been suggested that Polycrates during his tyranny acquired a fleet of triremes¹³⁸. Herodotus credits him with a fleet of one hundred penteconters at the beginning of his tyranny¹³⁹, but, when Cambyses was invading Egypt, Herodotus¹⁴⁰ says, Polycrates sent forty triremes to his aid. It is difficult to reconcile this information with Thucydides' statement. Davidson suggests that Polycrates shifted from penteconters at the beginning of his reign to triremes a few years later, as three years sufficed for the building of the Athenian fleet that fought at Artemisium and Salamis¹⁴¹. Nonetheless, if Polycrates sent forty triremes to Cambyses, which assuredly would not have been all his fleet, he must have had a sizable number. A few scholars have suggested a fleet of about one hundred triremes¹⁴². A hundred triremes could certainly not be considered a negligible number and it is very doubtful that Corcyra and the Sicilian tyrants had a significantly larger number.

Davidson asserts that Polycrates may have been the first Greek to adopt the trireme as the line-of-battle ship of his navy and that this might help to explain the important rôle that he played in international politics¹⁴³.

¹³⁷Thucydides, 1.14.2.

¹³⁸J. A. Davidson, op. cit., 21; M. Miller, The Thalassocracies, 28; J. S. Morrison and R. T. Williams, op. cit., 130.

¹³⁹Herodotus, 3.39.3.

¹⁴⁰Herodotus, 3.44.2.

¹⁴¹J. A. Davidson, op. cit., 20.

Certainly a sizable fleet of triremes would have been of great benefit to Polycrates, but its existence is not necessary to explain the position he occupied. Rather, we should posit his aggressive attitude towards other Greek states. Thucydides' comment is in total opposition to the idea that Polycrates had a fleet of triremes numbering one hundred.

For the most part, there is no evidence to show that the thalassocrats made any improvements or adaptations to their fleets, although it is likely.

An examination of the ancient evidence, which in some respects is too scanty to allow one to do more than guess at the behaviour of the sixth-century thalassocrats, shows that these sea-powers were relatively peaceful states, except, of course, Samos. Each state appears to have been involved only in local quarrels and to have sought alliances rather than become naval combatants as well as commercial rivals. Although the information we have undoubtedly is not the whole story, it is enough to give a general picture of the naval aspects of these thalassocracies.

¹⁴²J. S. Morrison and R. T. Williams, op. cit., 130; J. A. Davidson, op. cit., 21.

¹⁴³J. A. Davidson, op. cit., 24.

CHAPTER THREE.

THE COMMERCIAL ASPECTS

In this chapter I shall inquire into the trading and colonizing practices of each thalassocrat to see if they controlled trade to any extent and, if so, over how large an area. I shall ascertain whether these states show any appreciable difference in their pattern of behaviour throughout the sixth century, and whether there were different powers simultaneously in the Aegean and Ionian seas. I shall inquire whether there are periods during some of the eras assigned to the individual states by Eusebius' list in which power was divided. I shall also explain the absence from the list of some states that seem to have all the attributes of the thalassocrats.

First I shall look at the colonizing of each state to see if the number of colonies, or the area in which they were situated, was of importance to the power of a thalassocrat.

Miletus is known to have colonized extensively in the area of the Black Sea. Strabo mentions many Milesian colonies¹. Dunham lists about thirty colonies of Miletus in the Hellespont, Thracian Chersonese, Propontis, on the coasts of the Euxine, and some in the region of Maeotic Lake and the Tauric Chersonese that she dates to the seventh century². Miletus was one of the most active colonizers and tradition assigned³ to her the founding of

¹Strabo, 7.3.17; 7.4.4; 7.6.1; 13.1.19; 13.1.22; 13.15.2; 12.3.4; 12.3.11; 12.3.14; 7 fragment 52.

²A. G. Dunham, op. cit., 56-62.

³Seneca, Cons. ad. Helv. Matrem, 7.2; Pliny, NH 5.112.

seventy-five to one hundred colonies, mostly established in the eighth and seventh centuries. Both Herodotus and Strabo⁴ speak of the abundance of fish in the area of Milesian colonies such as Olbia on the Borysthenes and others on the coasts of the Euxine. The district around the Borysthenes also provided excellent grazing⁵ and Strabo comments on the flocks of sheep there⁶. Herodotus mentions the rich harvests on the banks of the Borysthenes⁷ and Strabo notes that the area between Theodosia and Ponticapaëum, both Milesian colonies, was fertile and much corn was grown there⁸. Thus Miletus' colonies, which were established well before her thalassocracy, were both numerous and concentrated in a fertile area. It is probable that the ensuing co-operation⁹ and trade between Miletus and her colonies were of great benefit to her as a naval power and in becoming one also. She dominated a productive area and thus would have some control over which states colonized and traded there. Her colonies also furnished a strong basis of trade with other states.

Corinth founded Corcyra¹⁰ ca. 734¹¹, after overcoming an earlier Eretrian settlement, and Strabo says that she established colonies in

⁴Strabo, 7.6.2; 12.13.19; Herodotus, 4.53.

⁵Herodotus, 4.19.

⁶Strabo, 7.3.18.

⁷Herodotus, 4.53.

⁸Strabo, 7.4.4; 5.6.

⁹Cf. A. J. Graham, Colony and Mother City in Ancient Greece, 212.

¹⁰Plutarch, Qu. Gr., 11.

¹¹Thucydides, 6.1-7.

Apollonia, Potidea and Syracuse¹², the latter ca. 734¹³. She also established colonies overlooking the entry to the Gulfs of Corinth and Ambracia¹⁴. These colonies were founded in the late eighth and the seventh centuries¹⁵. It has been suggested that the Corinthian colonies were established as ports along a trade route to the west¹⁶, although Corcyra proved to be a disadvantage. Nevertheless it seems likely that the colonies of Corinth, like those of Miletus, were useful in gaining power on the sea. The colony of Potidea, in the Chalcidice, was founded by Corinth ca. 600 B. C.¹⁷ just before her period of thalassocracy. This colony was rather isolated from other Corinthian colonies and it is doubtful that it was beneficial to Corinth in becoming a thalassocrat.

Lesbos established the colonies of Sestus and Madytus¹⁸, in the Hellespont, and Aenus¹⁹ on the Thracian coast, probably in the seventh century²⁰. The first two colonies gave her a position of importance in that the states wishing to colonize or trade in the area of the Propontis or the Black Sea, such as Miletus, would have to keep on reasonably good terms with her. However, Lesbos fought with Athens, and was defeated, over the colonization of Sigeum, a strategic site at the entrance to the Hellespont, ca. 590 B. C.²¹, just before her thalassocracy. Thus defeat weakened her control over those

¹²Strabo, 7.5.8; 7 fragment 25; 8.6.22.

¹³Thucydides, 6.1-7.

¹⁴Cf. J. G. O'Neill, Ancient Corinth, 153-156; N. Hammond, History of Greece to 322 B. C., 116.

¹⁵Cf. H. T. Wade-Gery, "The Growth of the Dorian States", CAH 3, 533-535.

¹⁶J. G. O'Neill, op. cit., 158; R. M. Cook, "Ionia and Greece, 800-600 B.C.",

entering the Hellespont, but did not destroy it. The fact that Athens was not yet powerful and Sigeum was her only colony in that area probably allowed Lesbos to retain her influence. Lesbos did not colonize widely; her colonies could have been useful in gaining influence, even though she lost Sigeum, perhaps the most important of them.

Phocaea established her colonies in the far west, largely during the sixth century. Massilia, an important foundation, was established ca. 600 B. C.²² Alalia, in Corsica, was not established until ca. 560 B. C.²³, twenty years before the Phocaeans emigrated from Ionia. It has been suggested that Phocaea concentrated on the far west because she was late in colonizing²⁴. Phocaea could colonize the west without the rivalry of other Greek states and without having to take over previous Greek settlements. These western colonies most likely helped Phocaea gain her reputation as a thalassocrat, since they provided a basis of trade. Phocaea also founded some colonies in the Hellespont and the Black Sea during the seventh century.²⁵

JHS 66 (1946) 80.

¹⁷J. L. Myres, "The Colonial Expansion of Greece", CAH 3,652.

¹⁸Strabo, 7 fragment 55b.

¹⁹Strabo, 7 fragment 51.

²⁰J. L. Myres, op. cit., 657-660; A. J. Graham, "Patterns in Early Greek Colonization", JHS 91 (1971) 42.

²¹D. Hogarth, op. cit., 516.

²²Strabo, 4.1.4; for date see J. Boardman, op. cit., 220.

²³Herodotus, 1.165; for date see W. G. Forrest, op. cit., 105.

²⁴A. R. Burn, "The So-Called Trade Leagues in Early Greek History", JHS 49 (1929) 17.

These were often joint efforts with other colonizing states, and while they were probably of some use in trade it was the western colonies that were most beneficial in Phocaea's establishing herself as a thalassocrat.

Samos, according to Strabo, founded Perinthus, in the Propontus, and Plutarch relates the struggles of the Samians against the nearby Megarian settlements²⁶. Samos also founded Amorgus in the Aegean Sea, and Nagidus and Celenderis in Cilicia²⁷. Apparently these colonies were not successful²⁸. Samos did not colonize widely and, although Perinthus was in an important region, it was the only Samian colony there. Thus colonization was of little importance to Samos in establishing herself as a thalassocrat, or in creating a basis of trade.

Sparta founded Thera in the eighth century²⁹, and the Therans in turn founded Cyrene in the seventh century³⁰. The Lacedaemonians also founded Sêlge³¹. In the sixth century Sparta attempted to establish a colony in Libya, and, when this was unsuccessful, established one in Sicily³². This sixth-century attempt at colonization has been connected with the Spartan period of thalassocracy in Eusebius' list by some scholars³³. However, Sparta is the most prominent example of a state that annexed neighbouring territory rather than colonize and it is doubtful that Sparta's few colonies,

²⁵ Cf. A. G. Dunham, op. cit., 57, 59.

²⁶ Strabo, 7 fragment 55; Plutarch, Qu. Gr. 57.

²⁷ Suidas; Pomponius Mela, 1.13.

²⁸ A. R. Burn, op. cit. 18.

²⁹ Strabo, 10.5.1.

³⁰ Herodotus, 4.156.

³¹ Strabo, 12.7.3.

including the sixth-century attempt at colonization, increased her strength or influence.

Colonization was not important or helpful to the last three thalassocracies of the sixth century, Naxos, Eretria and Aegina. Aegina did not colonize at all. Eretria colonized extensively in the eighth and seventh centuries³⁴ but she lost control of many colonies and her thalassocracy appears to be based on control of the Cyclades,³⁵ as was that of Naxos.

Colonization was not a function of the sixth-century thalassocrats, with the exception of Phocaea, since most colonies were founded well before the probable time of their naval power. Yet in the case of several thalassocrats, such as Miletus, Lesbos, Corinth and Phocaea, it appears that the founding of colonies was of some use in establishing their thalassocracies and providing a basis of trade. On the other hand colonization did not affect the power of Samos, Sparta, Naxos, Eretria and Aegina. This is one difference between the thalassocrats of the first half of the sixth century and those of the last half, who flourished during the rise of Persia.

All the states listed as thalassocracies were of major importance in trade, either as merchants or because of their control of routes, but none to

³²Herodotus, 5.42; 5.46.

³³M. Miller, op. cit., 39; J. L. Myres, "The 'List of Thalassocracies' in Eusebius", JHS 26 (1906) 98.

³⁴Cf. A. J. Graham, op. cit., 46; J. L. Myres, "The Colonial Expansion of Greece", CAH 3, 649-653; 616-623.

³⁵See discussion in Chapter One.

the exclusion of all others. The ancient evidence for the trade of the late seventh and sixth centuries is scanty since Herodotus, for the most part, mentions only unusual incidents connected with trade, not common events. Archaeology can provide some views of daily activity but it cannot identify precisely the wares of each state, nor can it explain all the finds. Nonetheless, we should be able to reconstruct in outline this aspect of the thalassocracies to complete the inquiry into their nature and extent.

It is obvious that Miletus drew upon numerous trading connections, such as her colonies in the Black Sea, since she was able to feed her citizens, although Ardys, Sadyattes and finally Alyattes burnt her crops and trees for twelve consecutive years, during the time of Thrasybulus³⁶. Then Alyattes arranged a truce with Miletus as he was not able to starve the Milesians by this method. It is possible that special efforts were made by the Milesian colonies to aid the mother-city during this struggle but it is also possible that Miletus had regular trading connections within this area, both to supply her own citizens and to trade with other states.

Herodotus states that the Milesians built a temple to Apollo in Naucratis³⁷, which had been given to the Greeks as a commercial headquarters by the Egyptian ruler ca. 625-600 B. C.³⁸ Archaeological studies have identified the site of the Milesian temple and coin-boards of Milesian type³⁹ have been found, but there are difficulties in identifying Milesian

³⁶ Herodotus, 1.18-20.

³⁷ Herodotus, 2.178.

³⁸ W. G. Forrest, op. cit., 105; J. Boardman, The Greeks Overseas, 134.

³⁹ J. Boardman, op. cit., 146.

pottery. J. Boardman argues that, among the latest finds at Al Mina, dated to the end of the seventh century, and the earliest at Naucratis, Miletus should be represented, but too little is known about Milesian pottery. He thinks that when more information is available some of the pottery now known as Rhodian will be found to be Milesian⁴⁰. This type of pottery seems to have been used throughout the Dorian states of East Greece and probably Miletus produced and used pottery of this sort. Much of the pottery found in the sites on the Black Sea, for the first half of the sixth century, is of the Rhodian type⁴¹. The archaeological finds show that Miletus was probably involved in trade in the Black Sea, Ionia and Egypt in the late seventh and early sixth centuries. Although the evidence is scanty it does give us an indication of Milesian trading activities.

The Lesbians took part in the building of the Hellenium at Naucratis⁴², and Herodotus relates the story of Charaxus of Mytilene, the brother of Sappho, who purchased the freedom of the courtesan Rhodapis there⁴³. Sappho regrets the absence of luxury items from Lydia during the tyranny⁴⁴. Perhaps imports of anything other than necessities were curtailed then. Also several pieces of Lesbian ware of the sixth century have been found at

⁴⁰J. Boardman, op. cit., 74, 139.

⁴¹J. Boardman, op. cit., 251.

⁴²Herodotus, 2.178.

⁴³Herodotus, 2.134.

⁴⁴Sappho, fg. 98b PLF.

Naucratis⁴⁵. It is probable that Lesbos exercised some control over trade routes as well. Lesbos and her colonies were strategically located to deal with the trade going into or coming out of the Propontis and Black Sea⁴⁶. Again it is possible that Lesbos, and perhaps Miletus, served as carriers for Chian and Clazomenian wares as they are found in large quantities in the Euxine area, at Naucratis, and throughout Ionia⁴⁷. It seems likely that Lesbos influenced trade through several different kinds of activities.

Thucydides states that Corinth was a mercantile centre from the time when the Greeks took to seafaring and implies that she remained so⁴⁸. Herodotus does not mention Corinth as one of the states participating at Naucratis, but Corinthian coin-boards and Corinthian wares of the seventh to mid-sixth centuries have been found there⁴⁹. However, Corinthian wares of this period are found throughout the Greek world and it is most likely that many of them were carried by merchants of other states, and that the wares do not necessarily show the range of Corinthian merchants. Probably the Aeginetans carried the Corinthian wares found in Naucratis, as they did not manufacture their own, and also those found in the Black Sea cities. The Phocaeans might have carried Corinthian wares too, as some have been found in the south of Spain⁵⁰. Corinthian and Ionian pottery has been

⁴⁵J. Boardman, op. cit., 141.

⁴⁶For discussion of strategic location of Lesbian colonies see pp. 55-56.

⁴⁷J. Boardman, op. cit., 250.

⁴⁸Thucydides, 1.13.

⁴⁹J. Boardman, op. cit., 138, 146.

⁵⁰J. Boardman, op. cit., 221.

excavated at Smyrna⁵¹, which was at the height of its prosperity at the end of the seventh century, before the sack by the Lydians. It was also plentiful in the west and in Sicily until Athenian ware became more popular about the middle of the sixth century. J. Boardman states that on both the Athenian and Corinthian wares merchants' marks scratched on the bases of vases reflect Ionian carriers⁵². He suggests that the Phocaeans, Chians or others from the eastern Aegean carried them⁵³. It appears that Corinthian trade flourished during the seventh century until the middle of the sixth, but it is difficult to know what trade was the result of Corinthian merchants travelling to a particular area and what resulted from other states acting as carriers.

Herodotus states that the Phocaeans, after the advance of the Persians, made an offer for the islands known as Oenussae, but the Chians, who were afraid that they might be turned into a new centre of trade to the exclusion of their own island, refused to sell⁵⁴. This statement together with Herodotus' remarks about the Phocaean voyages to the west imply that they had a reputation as traders among their contemporaries. Herodotus also notes that the Phocaeans helped to build the Hellenium⁵⁵, a joint effort of

⁵¹J. Boardman, op. cit., 113.

⁵²J. Boardman, op. cit., 211.

⁵³J. Boardman, op. cit., 211. Yet Chian pottery itself was widespread. See note 88 below. I think it unlikely that the Chians carried all their own ware, to say nothing of that of others.

⁵⁴Herodotus, 1.165.

⁵⁵Herodotus, 2.178.

several Greek states, at Naucratis. The Phocaean merchants are difficult to trace through archaeological studies since they were, for the most part, carriers and not manufacturers. The Greek wares found in the far west are considered to have been brought by Phocaean merchants. At Massalia⁵⁶ there is Corinthian and Athenian pottery, alongside Spartan, Etruscan and "Chalcidian" pieces. There are also Chian vases and wine jars, and much East Greek pottery. Bronze belts have been found in the south of France and the north of Spain, which the Phocaeans are thought to have brought⁵⁷. In Italy, Sicily and Gaul there are plain striped vases, which are thought to be from East Greek centres, possibly Phocaea⁵⁸. At any rate the ancient evidence shows that the Phocaeans were adept traders.

Herodotus relates the story of a Samian vessel bound for Egypt that was driven westward by easterly winds until it came to Tartessus; the merchants on their return home made more money than any other Greek except a famous Aeginetan⁵⁹. The story is dated to about 638 or 620 B. C. by modern scholars,⁶⁰ and thus much earlier than the Samian thalassocracy, but it does show that the Samians were engaged in regular trade then. According to Herodotus, the Samians had a temple in honour of Hera at Naucratis⁶¹. The separate temples of the Milesians, Samians and Aeginetans at Naucratis are a sign of their

⁵⁶Herodotus, 1.165.

⁵⁷J. Boardman, *op. cit.*, 226.

⁵⁸J. Boardman, *op. cit.*, 179.

⁶⁰N. Hammond, *op. cit.*, 120; J. Boardman, *op. cit.*, 131.

⁶¹Herodotus, 2.178.

early arrival there⁶². Samian pottery has not been identified certainly yet but the Fikellura vases, which are thought to be Samian, have been found at Naucratis, in Syracuse and Gela, at Daphnae in Egypt, and in the Euxine colonies. In fact, Boardman states⁶³ that, wherever there is evidence for Greeks, Fikellura, Clazomenian and the plainer vases are found. There is no doubt that the Samians traded with the eastern nations and the Greek states.

During her thalassocracy, Samos also influenced trade by her widespread piracy. Obviously the other trading states would be cautious of travelling near Samos at this period but it is most probable that they lost valuable cargoes to the Samian pirates.

There is no ancient evidence for Spartan trade but Spartan vases of the first half of the sixth century have been found at Naucratis⁶⁴, and those of the second and third quarters of the sixth century have appeared in Etruria⁶⁵. Boardman argues that the Spartan vases in Naucratis may be there because Samos was a foreign market for them and the Samians participated in trade at Naucratis, or possibly these finds reflect Spartan interest in Cyrene⁶⁶. There was some trading of Spartan wares, either through Samian or Spartan merchants. Nonetheless it does not appear to have been extensive and it is doubtful that Sparta exercised any influence on trade during the suggested period of her thalassocracy.

⁶²N. Hammond, op. cit., 118; J. Boardman, op. cit., 137.

⁶³J. Boardman, op. cit., 251.

⁶⁴J. Boardman, op. cit., 141.

⁶⁵J. Boardman, op. cit., 179.

⁶⁶J. Boardman, op. cit., 141.

It is known that Naxos was a very rich island during her thalassocracy and exercised control of the Cycladic islands⁶⁷. Probably Naxos influenced trade by this control of the trans-Aegean route. After Naxos had trouble with the Persians, Eretria appears to have taken over control of this route until she was sacked by the Persians.

Strabo⁶⁸ refers to Ephorus' comments that silver was first coined in Aegina by Pheidon⁶⁹, and that the island became a mercantile centre, since, on account of the poverty of the soil, the people employed themselves at sea as merchants, and thus petty wares were called Aeginetan merchandise. Herodotus notes that Aegina built a temple at Naucratis⁷⁰, the only western Greek state to do so. Aeginetan coin-boards have been found there⁷¹, but, since she produced no pottery of her own, it is thought that she was responsible for the Corinthian and Athenian pottery recovered there. Aegina, like Phocaea, mostly carried the wares of other states and thus it is extremely difficult to trace her merchants through archaeological finds. Yet the ancient evidence shows that the Aeginetans took part in trade consistently.

No one state had complete control over trade in the sixth century, but it was of utmost importance to all of them. In fact trade was the common

⁶⁷Herodotus, 5.29-30.

⁶⁸Strabo, 8.6.16.

⁶⁹This is incorrect. See Percy Gardener, A History of Coinage 700-300 B.C., 109-121.

⁷⁰Herodotus, 2.178.

⁷¹J. Boardman, op. cit., 146.

denominator for these thalassocracies, and it was this that apparently dictated their alliances and caused their struggles. The thalassocracies of the late seventh and sixth centuries B. C. were unaggressive mercantile states who exercised some form of control over, or some influence on trade. There are many differences among the states mentioned, but these are partly due to the different aspects of trade pursued by them. Phocaea and Aegina were strictly carriers and distributors of wares made by others; Miletus, Lesbos and Corinth traded their own wares and probably exercised some control over trading routes. Samos traded her own wares and indulged in extensive piracy, while Naxos and Eretria controlled the trans-Aegean route. All these states participated in trade but none had extensive control.

The majority of the suggested thalassocracies were powerful throughout the late seventh and sixth centuries, each suffering checks to its power and regaining it. That is, their thalassocracies did not result from any sudden change in their pattern of behaviour, but the suggested time of thalassocracy in each case corresponds to a particular peak of their power, or the waning of others.

It is known that Miletus was in command of the seas at the end of the seventh century and presumably had good trading connections⁷². About the middle of the sixth century Miletus was the only polis among the Ionians to gain the same terms from Cyrus as she had won from Croesus⁷³, thus she was able to carry on her trade without check from the Persians. Yet, at the time

⁷²See p. 54.

⁷³Herodotus, 1.141.

of the Samian thalassocracy, the Milesian fleet together with the Lesbian was destroyed by Polycrates, and this would have been a disaster to Milesian trade and influence. According to Herodotus⁷⁴, at the time of the Naxian thalassocracy Miletus was at the peak of her prosperity and the glory of Ionia, and Hecateus urged her citizens to take money from the treasury and work for mastery of the seas. Apparently Miletus had been weakened by two generations of civil strife before this, but it seems likely that the merchants continued to trade. At the end of the sixth century the Milesians revolted from Persia with the rest of the Ionians, providing eighty vessels for the combined fleet⁷⁵, and this attempt ended her power. The late seventh and early sixth centuries, during the reign of Thrasybulus, were Miletus' period of thalassocracy; after this she appears to have carried on relatively well until she received her first serious check from Polycrates. She recovered from this before the end of the century, as is shown by the size of her fleet at the time of the Ionian revolt. Thus Miletus, from the end of the seventh century to the end of the sixth, was prosperous and influential except for a few intervals.

Corinth, during Periander's tyranny of the late seventh and early sixth centuries, apparently flourished. O'Neill collects the references to the laws made against luxury and extravagance, as well as projects to employ the poor⁷⁶. The tyranny was overthrown in 584 B. C. and an oligarchy established. It has been suggested that this was a timocracy, that is, government by an

⁷⁴Herodotus, 5.36.

⁷⁵Herodotus, 6.8.

⁷⁶J. G. O'Neill, *op. cit.*, 130, 128.

aristocracy of merchants⁷⁷. At the beginning of the fifth century Corinth lent ships to Athens for her war against Aegina⁷⁸; later she contributed forty vessels to the Greek fleet at Salamis⁷⁹. Corinth's suggested period of thalassocracy was in the early sixth century but her trade and influence continued throughout the century. Corinth received no checks to her power through aggression from other states but the Athenian pottery did lessen the demand for her own from mid-sixth century onwards.

The information concerning Lesbos throughout the sixth century is scanty but it is known that Pittacus was the tyrant of Mytilenē ca. 590-580, or ca. 585-575⁸⁰ and it is with him that the Lesbian thalassocracy is generally equated. Lesbos was involved in a war with Athens at the beginning of the sixth century, but it did not appear to be markedly detrimental to her power.⁸¹ In the last quarter of the century her fleet was destroyed by Polycrates but she also had sufficiently recovered by the end of the century to provide seventy vessels for the Ionian revolt⁸². Lesbos suffered a setback ca. 525 but otherwise seems to have continued a course of peaceful trading throughout the century.

Nothing is known of Phocaeen affairs until the Persian invasion when her citizens emigrated to Corsica. It appears that Phocaea carried on her trade

⁷⁷J. G. O'Neill, op. cit., 134.

⁷⁸Herodotus, 6.88.

⁷⁹Herodotus, 8.1.

⁸⁰W. G. Forrest, op. cit., 98; J. L. Myres, op. cit., 107.

⁸¹See pp. 55-56.

⁸²Herodotus, 6.8.

throughout the first half of the sixth century⁸³, but was not really of any consequence after her citizens left Ionia.

Samos' period of thalassocracy was during the tyranny of Polycrates. Herodotus mentions three building efforts that he regards as the greatest in the Greek world, that is, a tunnel driven through the base of a hill carrying the town's water supply, an artificial harbour enclosed by a breakwater, and the largest of all known Greek temples⁸⁴. These were probably built before Polycrates' time⁸⁵. Samos carried on trade throughout the sixth century and apparently practised some piracy even before her thalassocracy⁸⁶. The Samians were checked by the Persian invasion of their island in the last quarter of the sixth century but they contributed sixty vessels to the Ionian revolt⁸⁷. Samos had some influence on Greek affairs throughout the sixth century, while the tyranny of Polycrates represents the height of her power in the Greek world.

Naxos and Eretria, however, seem to be two states whose only period of importance throughout the sixth century was that of their thalassocracies, during which they controlled a sea-route. It appears that the rise of the Persian power, by checking the prosperity of the Ionian states, made it possible for these two states to become influential in trade for a short

⁸³See pages 7-8; 20-22.

⁸⁴Herodotus, 3.60.

⁸⁵M. White, "The Duration of the Samian Tyranny", JHS 74 (1954) 36-43.

⁸⁶M. White, op. cit., 36-43.

⁸⁷Herodotus, 6.8.

period. They are the exception among the sixth-century thalassocrats in that they seem to show only a brief flourishing throughout the century.

The Aeginetans were traders throughout this period as is attested by their early appearance at Naucratis and the distribution of Corinthian wares in the Greek world. Aegina does not seem to have suffered any setbacks in these years, although the Athenian fleet eclipsed her fleet after the Persian Wars. While Aegina was not a great power, she was involved in trade continuously.

This summary of the thalassocracies' behaviour throughout the sixth century leads one to question whether there were different powers simultaneously in the Aegean and Ionian Seas and whether there were periods during some of the eras assigned to individual states by Eusebius' list in which power was shared. I think that this was the case, particularly in regard to the thalassocracies of the first half of the century. The suggested dates for the sea-powers separate them entirely, yet it is reasonable to suppose that, while Miletus was powerful in the Aegean sea, so was Corinth in the Ionian. The start and duration of their thalassocracies were not identical but there was probably some overlapping. Such overlapping is also possible for the thalassocracies of Corinth and Lesbos as well as of Lesbos and Phocaea, since the latter operated in the far west. Again it is possible that Miletus, while her power was fading, and Lesbos, while gaining influence, shared power in the Aegean Sea for a few years. The intervening thalassocracy of Corinth would have been exercised mostly in the Ionian sea. There was less overlapping among the thalassocrats of the last half of the

century. The predecessors of Samos left Ionia, and Miletus and Lesbos were defeated by Polycrates. Samos did not operate in the Ionian Sea; nonetheless she seems to have been the sole power throughout her thalassocracy. Since Eretria succeeded to the control that the Naxians had possessed it is very unlikely that they overlapped at all. Yet, since the thalassocracies of these two states were very limited in extent it is probable that other states were operating in different sections of the Greek world with slightly less, or perhaps even equal, power. Aegina, on the other hand, did not share power during her thalassocracy as the Persian advance had destroyed most of the substantial fleets; yet it is quite possible that Corinth, or possibly Corcyra, operated with equal strength in the Ionian Sea as Aegina's trade was, for the most part, in the east. Thus I conclude that, while the suggested dates offer a rough chronological outline, there was some overlapping in the exercise of power of these thalassocracies, and that the existence of a power on one sea, though perhaps more influential or more visible, does not preclude a separate power in another region.

So Eusebius' "List of Thalassocracies" contains an outline of the sea-powers of the sixth century and the suggested dates for them represent the acmes of their power. These sea-powers were the most influential of the trading nations of the sixth century, and they were, for the most part, non-aggressive, in that they accepted the existence and power of one another.

Yet there are differences in some of these powers other than the aspect of trade pursued. Miletus, Lesbos, Corinth and Phocaea are relatively similar as thalassocrats in that they have colonies as a basis for trade and, except Phocaea, were probably involved in more than one aspect of trade.

Samos, under Polycrates, completely changed the nature of the sixth-century thalassocracy. She had few colonies, was without allies among the Greek states, and was very aggressive towards other trading nations. Yet she was stopped by Persia and it seems to have been the Persian advance that accounted for the nature of the remaining thalassocrats. Naxos and Eretria had a very limited influence on Greek trade but they were thalassocrats, perhaps in the absence of any state having more extensive power. On the other hand, Aegina was a consistent, if somewhat unremarkable, part of the trade. She was a carrier of merchandise and had been for some time. The growth of Persian power and its intrusion into the Greek world, gave the Greek states with less power and a more restricted part in trade than the thalassocrats of the first half of the sixth century the opportunity to appear as sea-powers.

Finally, if the Greek thalassocracies of this period are defined as mercantile states that exercised some form of control over, or some influence on, contemporary trade, then some explanation is needed for the absence of Chios and Corcyra from the list. Chian pottery was widespread⁸⁸ in the late seventh and sixth centuries and Chios also provided the largest fleet, one hundred vessels, for the Ionian revolt⁸⁹. Thucydides mentions the Corcyraeans as among the first to use triremes in any number⁹⁰. The absence of the Corcyraeans can be attributed to their non-involvement in Greek affairs before

⁸⁸J. Boardman, op. cit., 73, 140, 179, 225, 244, 250, 258, 275.

⁸⁹Herodotus, 6.8.2.

⁹⁰Thucydides, 1.14.2.

the fifth century B. C.⁹¹, but that of Chios is more difficult to explain. Possibly Chios was always a second-rate power following the lead of Miletus, to whom she was allied, or Lesbos, and on her own had no noticeable control over or impact on the general trade. Again, possibly, Chios traded her wares to the powerful Ionian states and they acted as carriers and traded them to other parts of the Greek world; yet the Chians took part in the building of the Hellenium at Naucratis. The most logical, though not entirely satisfactory, explanation seems to be that Chios operated under the shadow of the existing thalassocrat.

⁹¹Thucydides, 1.32.

⁹²Herodotus, 2.178.

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