

Lend Lease Episode 6 - Piracy

Books: *Republic of Pirates* by Colin Woodard; *The Many Headed Hydra* by Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker

Nate's section:

Golden age of piracy/atlantic world

Hydrarchy

War of spanish succession

enclosure/putney debates

Impressment

Privateer pardon/ end of the golden age

<https://pdjeliclarke.wordpress.com/2012/09/19/pirates-hydrarchy-and-the-motley-crew-beyond-arrgggh/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grace_O%27Malley

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3F1reDFH2c>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q8MaGAJNHLA>

<https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=9903589>

<https://ashesashes.org/blog/episode-54-golden-age>

<https://www.nps.gov/articles/piracyandprivateering.htm>

<https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1689&context=nwc-review>

Rachel's section:

<https://www.thechinastory.org/ritp/chinese-pirates/>

<https://rejectedprincesses.tumblr.com/post/95919347653/ching-shih-princess-of-the-chinese-seas>

Nobody knows much of her early life. Even the name Ching Shih isn't her own — it translates to “widow of Ching”, her late husband and commander of the Red Flags before her. We do know that before her husband died, he (and by extension, his fleet) was so renowned that the Emperor gave him the title “Golden Dragon of the Imperial Staff,” effectively promoting him to the rank of prince — and thus, one could argue, obliquely making her a princess.

When he died unexpectedly, Ching Shih took on the family business, assuming control of the Red Flag fleet. According to legend, following her husband's death, she summoned the scattering fleet captains and announced: “Under the leadership of a man you have all chosen to flee. We shall see how you prove yourselves under the hand of a woman.”

She was a leader unlike any they'd had before. Where her husband had been brash and loud, she was quiet and calculating. Soon into her rule, she took a charismatic man named Chang Pao as her husband and installed him as head of the fleet. This proved a savvy move for a number of reasons. Chang Pao had been her husband's right hand man (and lover... and adopted son... yeah, it's a bit weird), and was widely

respected among all the pirate fleets. Moreover, he was an illiterate fisherman's son (he'd been taken by the pirates as a child and received little to no schooling), and likely easy to manipulate.

Under Chang Pao's name (and Ching Shih's guiding hand), many unruly pirate fleets united under the Red Flag banner, eclipsing the size of all other pirate group. Every single ship, no matter how small, was given an edict from Ching Shih to display in a common area. This outlined an incredibly hardcore code of conduct:

- Ching Shih okays all attacks beforehand. Disobey, and you're beheaded.*
- You give all loot to your superior, who distributes it afterwards. Disobey once, you're beaten severely. Disobey twice, you're dead.*
- Don't desert your post or take shore leave without permission. Disobey once, we cut off your ears (since you clearly weren't using them) and parade you around. Disobey twice, you're dead.*
- Rape a female captive, better believe that's a beheading.*
- Have consensual sex with a female captive without permission, you're headless and she's taking a swim with a lead weight.*
- If you want to have sex with a female prisoner, you take her as your wife. You are faithful to her. You treat her well. Or we take your head.*
- Oh, and don't use the word "plunder." Instead, say "transferring shipment of goods." It just sounds nicer.*

In 1809, the Chinese government sprang a trap. Blockading them in a bay, the authorities laid siege to the pirates for three straight weeks with an overwhelming amount of firepower. In the end, the Red Flags strode out through a graveyard of government ships, largely unscathed. When the government sent "suicide boats" — ones loaded up with straw and explosives, set on fire, and launched at the pirates — the Red Flags extinguished the flames, repaired the ships, and incorporated them into the fleet. In the end, the pirates lost 40 people and lost not a single ship. The leader of the government expedition falsified the reports to make himself look better and later committed suicide in shame.

Eventually, the government's persistent interference became too troublesome for even Ching Shih, and she put up her swords — but here, too, her genius shines through. Instead of merely negotiating amnesty by informing on her shipmates, she spent months bargaining with the government. The end result: she actually retired. The government gave over a big chunk of cash, cancelled all warrants for her, and made Chang Pao lieutenant in the Chinese navy. One of his first acts? Using the government forces to destroy their old pirate rivals.

Ching Shih spent her final years running a brothel and gambling den. She died at age 69, a wealthy and widely-respected woman.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eli_Boggs

One of the last active ocean-going pirates operating off the coast of China during the 1850s. Based near [Hong Kong](#), Boggs constantly raided outgoing [clipper ships](#) carrying highly valuable cargo of [opium](#) throughout the decade. He is most particularly known for his cruelty, as in one recorded incident he had the body of a captured Chinese merchant cut into small pieces and had them delivered to shore in small buckets as a warning against interference in his criminal activities. In 1857, after a violent and bloody siege, Boggs was forced to swim ashore after his [junk](#) was destroyed by rival pirates. However, after holding his captors at bay with a knife, Boggs was finally apprehended and imprisoned in a [Hong Kong](#) jail for three years, eventually being tried for murder before his deportation to the United States.

Bully Hayes and Blackbirding

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bully_Hayes

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blackbirding>

In May 1866 Hayes acquired the [brig](#) Rona and operated in the Pacific with bases in [Apia](#), [Samoa](#), and in [Mili Atoll](#) in the [Marshall Islands](#).^[16] Hayes became notorious in the Pacific because of his recruiting of Pacific islanders to provide labour for the plantations of [Tahiti](#), [Fiji](#), [Samoa](#) and Australia. While there was some voluntary recruitment of Pacific islanders, the activity predominantly involved kidnapping, coercion and tricks to entice islanders onto ships, on which they were held prisoner until delivered to their destination.

Blackbirding involves the coercion of people through deception and/or [kidnapping](#) to work as unpaid or poorly paid [labourers](#) in countries distant to their native land. The term has been most commonly applied to the large-scale taking of people indigenous to the numerous islands in the [Pacific Ocean](#) during the 19th and 20th centuries. These blackbirded people were called [Kanakas](#) or [South Sea Islanders](#). The owners, captains and crew of the ships involved in the acquisition of these labourers were termed blackbirders. The demand for this kind of cheap labour principally came from European colonists in [New South Wales](#), [Peru](#), [Queensland](#), [Samoa](#), [New Caledonia](#), [Fiji](#), [Tahiti](#), [Mexico](#) and [Guatemala](#). Labouring on sugarcane, cotton and coffee plantations in these lands was the main usage of blackbirded labour but they were also exploited in other industries.

Blackbirding ships began operations in the [Pacific](#) from the 1840s and continued into the early 1910s. In the 1860s, Peruvian blackbirders sought workers at their [haciendas](#) and to mine the [guano](#) deposits on the [Chincha Islands](#).^[2] From the late

1860s, the blackbirding trade focused on supplying labourers to [plantations](#), particularly those producing [sugar-cane](#) in [Queensland](#) and [Fiji](#).^{[3][4]}

Examples of blackbirding outside the South Pacific include the early days of the [pearling industry in Western Australia](#) at [Nickol Bay](#) and [Broome](#), where [Aboriginal Australians](#) were blackbirded from the surrounding areas.

<https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199730414/obo-9780199730414-0077.xml>

Bill's section:

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Mediterranean_piracy
 - Both shipping raids and raids on land were very common. There were lots of convenient places to hide in the Mediterranean and piracy became such a huge source of economic activity (especially the slave trade) that many people joined it (especially when the economy was bad) and many cities had to relocate their populations inland away from the actual port to reduce the danger from landing parties. Sometimes they would be mercenary navies (proto-privateers) for specific governments, which was a much more common feature in the modern era of Mediterranean piracy. Many ships had some form of democracy or quasi-democracy similar to that in some Greek cities.
 - Ancient Egypt preserved hundreds of records of correspondences between their monarchy and foreign monarchies about the problem of pirate raids, including but not limited to the Sea Peoples period. Their eventual downfall and capture by the Egyptian armies farther inland points toward the core problem of pirate landings which is that failure to get out quickly spells defeat.
 - Linguistically, pirates were often referred to in this era by the local term used for “thief” or other standard land raiders because so much piracy was amphibious landings to steal treasure and people. This land-oriented component continues into the middle ages and so on (think Vikings), maybe because (this is my own speculation) there were not good shore defenses until the advent of cannons, which would probably explain why piracy in the “Golden Age” of piracy is typically depicted as being more about ship boardings.
 - http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Lives/Caesar*.html#1: *on his voyage back, was captured, near the island Pharmacusa, by pirates, who already at that time controlled the sea with large armaments and countless small vessels. 2 1 To begin with, then, when the pirates demanded twenty talents for his ransom, he laughed at them for not knowing who their captive was, and of his own accord agreed to give them fifty. 2 In the next place, after he had sent various followers to various cities to procure the money and was left with one friend and two attendants among Cilicians, most murderous of men, he held them in such disdain that whenever he lay down to sleep he would send and order them to stop talking. 3 For eight and thirty days, as if the men were not his*

watchers, but his royal body-guard, he shared in their sports and exercises with great unconcern. 4 He also wrote poems and sundry speeches which he read aloud to them, and those who did not admire these he would call to their faces illiterate Barbarians, and often laughingly threatened to hang them all. The pirates were delighted at this, and attributed his boldness of speech to a certain simplicity and boyish mirth. 5 But after his ransom had come from Miletus and he had paid it and was set free, he immediately manned vessels and put to sea from the harbour p447 of Miletus against the robbers. He caught them, too, still lying at anchor off the island, and got most of them into his power. 6 Their money he made his booty, but the men themselves he lodged in the prison at Pergamum, and then went in person to Junius, the governor of Asia, on the ground that it belonged to him, as praetor of the province, to punish the captives. 7 But since the praetor cast longing eyes on their money, which was no small sum, and kept saying that he would consider the case of the captives at his leisure, Caesar left him to his own devices, went to Pergamum, took the robbers out of prison, and crucified them all, just as he had often warned them on the island that he would do, when they thought he was joking.

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbary_pirates (Corsairs)
 - Often served as mercenaries or privateers to North African or Ottoman regimes in major wars (or also working closely with the Dutch to attack Spain during the eighty year Dutch Wars of Independence -- and one English privateer [an elected Captain!] Jack Ward served against Spain and then after a deteriorating relationship to the English government retired to Tunis where he and his crew converted to Islam and became Barbary pirates to continue their lucrative raids against Venetian shipping https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jack_Ward). This geopolitical and quasi-religious involvement also led to counter-piracy operations by Christian religious orders that had been forced out of the Holy Land but remained in the Mediterranean, although this tended to get very blurred.
 - Focused on capturing sea crews for slavery or villagers for ransom -- which was very lucrative once many countries or religious orders established ongoing ransom funds to buy Christian captives out of North African prisons
 - Many islands in the western Mediterranean built large forts to try to deter raids
 - The decline of Barbary piracy began once emerging nation-states began funding standing navies with specific anti-piracy ships. Apart from people like Jack Ward with a naval & artillery background, Barbary pirates (often on rowed galleys) were largely unequipped to engage in combat beyond hand-to-hand and would usually run away at the first sign of a warship, so the arrival of anti-piracy frigate patrols began putting an end to their operations.
 - Heavy naval bombardment and the rise of proto-gunboat diplomacy emerges with European and American efforts to stop the pirate raids from North Africa <https://www.theglobalist.com/why-americans-love-bombardment/>
 - The final blow (after many significant counter-raids by the English or Americans) came when France invaded and annexed Algeria in large part to end the raiding

- <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0014498315000169>
Chaney, Eric (2015-10-01). "Measuring the military decline of the Western Islamic World: Evidence from Barbary ransoms". *Explorations in Economic History*.
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sayyida_al_Hurra
 - https://web.archive.org/web/20110718141222/http://www.yementimes.com/defaultdet.aspx?SUB_ID=33836 *A Moroccan of Andalusian origin, Sayyida Al-Hurra belonged to a family of Andalusian nobles who fled to north Africa after the fall of Grenada in 1492. Marrying Sultan Al-Mandri, they embarked on war against the Portuguese and she ascended to power while managing her husband's affairs. After the death of her husband in 1515, Al-Hurra, although already a prefect of Tetouan, she was bestowed with the title "Al-Hurra" which denoted a woman wielding sovereign power. Subsequently, she had herself named governor of the city-state. Following the death of her husband, she wed the King of Morocco, Ahmed Al-Wattasi, but she requested that he travel from Fez to Tetouan for the wedding to indicate that she had no plans on abdicating her power following their marriage. After making contact with the Turkish corsair Barbarossa, she assembled a fleet and began privateering in the western Mediterranean. It was in this endeavor that she earned for herself the title of undisputed Queen of the Pirates of the region. Perhaps using piracy to continue her first husband's war against the Portugese, Al-Hurra used piracy to wreak havoc on Portuguese shipping lines. Specifically, in 1520, her forces captured the wife of the Governor and damaged Portuguese colonial shipping. She was deposed in 1542, by her son-in-law, ending 30 years of rule. She was stripped of her property and power and her subsequent fate is unknown.*