

Other Possible Fragments of Cleitarchus

1) Alexander and the Pirates

Cicero - De Republica and De Legibus (The Republic and Laws). Translated by Clinton Walker Keyes. Harvard University Press, 1961

The Republic III. (XIV) 24. A passage of considerable length is lost, of which the following fragment may be a part. ". . . for when he was asked what wickedness drove him to harass the sea with his one pirate galley, he replied: "The same wickedness that drives you to harass the whole world."*

*The reference is to Alexander the Great. St. Augustine (De Civ. Dei IV, 4. 25) tells this story of Alexander and the pirate, which he probably took from Cicero.

St. Augustine is quoted:

"Indeed, that was an apt and true reply which was given to Alexander the Great by a pirate who had been seized. For when that king had asked the man what he meant by keeping hostile possession of the sea, he answered with bold pride, "What thou meanest by seizing the whole earth; but because I do it with a petty ship, I am called a robber, whilst thou who dost it with a great fleet art styled emperor."

Karl Soundy: I have been looking into Issos and the concomitant naval campaign, for another long piece and there is an instance when Alexander meets a pirate; it is at Arrian III 2 iv the man was Aristonikos of Methymna and he was captured in Khios by a trick; he was told by the locals that Hegelochos' fleet was actually Pharnabazos'. He was taken to Alexander in Egypt possibly at the building site of Alexandria. The dialogue if it was in any early source might suit Kleitarchos, being rhetorical and not pro-Alexander, he also seems to have exaggerated the roles of various Greek characters and he was very popular in Cicero's time, indeed we can be certain Cicero had read him since he complains of his style in one of his critical essays. This is all circumstantial...

Andrew Chugg: I can see more reasons why this is a credible suggestion: for example, Cleitarchus was an early citizen of Alexandria, so Karl's association of the tale with that city is particularly apt for Cleitarchus and also Cicero is the source for several other known fragments of Cleitarchus.