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THE CITIES OF THE GREEK EAST AFTER THE FIRST MITHRIDATIC WAR. ASPECTS OF SULLA'S FINANCIAL POLICY

SIMONE RENDINA

Abstract. The military results of Sulla's war against Mithridates were inconclusive. Appian overlooked this fact, probably because his narrative of this war very much relied on the memoirs of Sulla himself or on a source that emphasized Sulla's point of view. For the same reason, Appian did not really stress the harsh effects of the fines that Sulla imposed on many cities of the Greek East after the war. On the other hand, the end of the First Mithridatic War did contribute to the establishment of good relations among the Romans and notables from the Greek East, as has recently been claimed. By analyzing these facts, this paper reconstructs the aftermath of the First Mithridatic War and thus contributes to the reflections on the interaction between Rome and the Greek East.

1. SULLA AND MITHRIDATES IN THE SOURCES

Appian's narrative of the First Mithridatic War (88-85 B.C.) terminates with his description of the conditions of the cities of Asia Minor. He also describes the measures Lucius Cornelius Sulla took in order to punish the cities that had been disloyal towards Rome before and during that war. Appian also records that Sulla gave a speech in Ephesus shortly after the end of the war, in the winter of 85-84 B.C., which was

addressed to the most important citizens of the cities that had betrayed Rome.¹

The cities that were not punished were, of course, those cities that had been allied to Rome during the conflict, and, in some cases, had been punished by Mithridates for their loyalty to Rome. These cities were Ilium, Chios, the cities of Lycia, Rhodes, and Magnesia. To all these cities, Sulla granted freedom and the *φιλία* of the Roman people.² Sulla also took measures in order to restore the social order, which had been overturned by Mithridates, who had freed all the slaves in the cities of Asia Minor (App. *Mith.* 9.61). Sulla's speech (App. *Mith.* 9.62) is immediately followed, in Appian's text, by the description of the consequences of the measures taken by Sulla in Asia Minor (*Mith.* 9.63).

Having settled the affairs of Asia, Sulla bestowed freedom on the inhabitants of Ilium, Chios, Lycia, Rhodes, Magnesia, and some others, either as a reward for their cooperation, or a recompense for what they had suffered from their loyalty to him, and inscribed them as friends of the Roman people. [...] After this a proclamation was sent around commanding the principal citizens to come to Ephesus on a certain day to meet Sulla. When they had assembled

¹ For Sulla's speech in Ephesus, see Campanile 2003; Santangelo 2007, 57, 107; Thein 2014, 172; Eckert 2016, 112. For the Ephesians' allegiance to Mithridates during the initial phase of the First Mithridatic War and their eventual punishment by Sulla, see Mastrocinque 1999b, 89; Santangelo 2007, 108; Coudry and Kirbihler 2010, 50. According to Santangelo (2007, 117, 120-121) and Coudry and Kirbihler (2010, 1, 20-22, 33, 78), Sulla formulated a *Lex Cornelia*, which was aimed at reorganising the province of Asia, shortly after that war.

² App. *Mith.* 9.61: ἡ συμμαχίας ἀμειβόμενος, ἢ ὧν διὰ προθυμίαν ἐπεπόνθεσαν οὐ ἔνεκα, ἐλευθέρους ἠφίει καὶ Ῥωμαίων ἀνέγραφε φίλους. ("Sulla bestowed freedom [...], either as a reward for their cooperation, or a recompense for what they had suffered from their loyalty to him, and inscribed them as friends of the Roman people"). All translations from Appian in this paper are by H. White. See Dowling 2000, 319, 330; Santangelo 2007, 108; Eckert 2016, 112. The aforementioned city of Magnesia was Magnesia ad Sipylum: see Mastrocinque 1999b, 88; Santangelo 2007, 108.

Sulla addressed them from the tribune as follows: "We first came to Asia with an army when Antiochus, king of Syria, was despoiling you. We drove him out and fixed the boundaries of his dominions beyond the river Halys and Mount Taurus. [...] I shall only impose upon you the taxes of five years, to be paid at once, together with what the war has cost me, and whatever else may be spent in settling the affairs of the province. I will apportion these charges to each of you according to cities, and will fix the time of payment. Upon the disobedient I shall visit punishment as upon enemies." After he had thus spoken Sulla apportioned the fine to the delegates and sent men to collect the money. The cities, oppressed by poverty, borrowed it at high rates of interest and mortgaged their theatres, their gymnasiums, their walls, their harbours, and every other scrap of public property, being urged on by the soldiers with contumely. Thus was the money collected and brought to Sulla. The province of Asia had her fill of misery (App. *Mith.* 9.61-63).

This passage is key to understanding Roman imperialism, especially its economic aspects.³ Sulla tried to explain the reasons for the Roman expansion and its economic consequences on Asia Minor, by taking into account the age from the Treaty of Apamea (188 B.C.) until the age in which he was living. The Roman authorities are shown to have been very positive towards Asia Minor, where they established solid political and social conditions. Sulla's attitude towards his audience, however, had him overlook some ambiguous aspects of the Roman conquests in that area. For example, he did not mention the fact (of which we are aware through Polybius) that the concession of Lycia to Rhodes was interpreted differently by the inhabitants of Lycia and Rhodes.⁴ While the Rhodians had been convinced that Lycia belonged to them until the end of the Third Mace-

³ Another key document is the text of the speech that Sulla is supposed to have addressed to Mithridates (App. *Mith.* 8.57-58), which narrates the Romans' initial decision not to administer Phrygia, Mithridates' aggressive foreign policy (aimed at destroying the Roman power), his liberation of slaves and cancellation of debts, and his massacre of the Romans and Italians.

⁴ Polyb. 22.5.1-10.

donian War, Sulla declared in his speech that the Lycians had been freed by the Romans very soon. This is what Sulla declared in the speech he gave in Ephesus, as far as the Treaty of Apamea and later events were concerned:

We did not retain possession of you when you had become our subjects instead of his, but set you free, except that we awarded a few places to Eumenes and the Rhodians, our allies in the war, not as tributaries (ὑποτελεῖς), but as clients (ἐπὶ προστάταις). A proof of this is that when the Lycians complained of the Rhodians we freed them from the authority of Rhodes (App. *Mith.* 9.62).⁵

As recorded by Appian (*Mith.* 9.62), the Romans inflicted a collective punishment, i.e. upon each one of the rebel cities (κοινήν). However, each city had to undergo a different treatment (διαιρήσω δὲ ταῦθ' ἐκάστοις ἐγὼ καὶ κατὰ πόλεις καὶ τάξω προθεσμίαν ταῖς ἐσφοραῖς). Sulla's measures generally consisted of forcing the cities to pay five years of taxes. Those taxes had to be paid *αὐτίκα* ("at once"). In addition, the cities had to compensate in monetary terms for the cost of the war against Mithridates to Sulla (τὴν τοῦ πολέμου δαπάνην, ὅση τε γέγονέ μοι), and for whatever the establishment of the province might cost (καὶ ἔσται καθισταμένω τὰ ὑπόλοιπα).

In Appian's text, the end of the First Mithridatic War is presented as a crucial moment as well as being a perfect opportunity to draw conclusions on Roman policy in the Greek East.⁶ Appian was not the only historian who had this attitude towards this historical event. Cicero also considered Sulla's policy in the Greek East as a turning point in the relations between Rome and the eastern provinces, as is demonstrated by a passage from *De officiis* (2.26-27), where Sulla's policy is presented as the end of the previous form of dependence of the rest of

⁵ For the loyalty of Rhodes to the Romans, see Santangelo 2007, 31.

⁶ From this point of view, these passages by Appian can be compared to Mithridates' letter to King Arsaces, in Sall. *Hist.* 4.69 M. This is another summary of the key events of the Roman expansion before the First Mithridatic War. This text, too, especially refers to the conditions of Asia Minor. For the ideological aspects of Mithridates' hostility towards the Romans, see Gabba 1990, 213-215.

the world on Rome (*patrocinium*) and as the beginning of a new and stronger form of command (*imperium*).

The consequences of Sulla's fiscal policy were soon clear: the cities, oppressed by poverty, obtained loans with a very high interest rate from moneylenders and mortgaged the public buildings, due to the pressure exerted by the soldiers (App. *Mith.* 9.63).

Appian's source for the information he gave in these passages is not known with certainty. The part of *Mithridaticus* dedicated to Sulla's expedition possibly owes much material to Sulla's memoirs, or to some historian who was sympathetic towards Sulla, such as Sisenna.⁷ The speeches that Sulla gave to Archelaus, Mithridates' general, and to Mithridates himself (App. *Mith.* 54, 57), are self-legitimizing, especially in the passages that raised some questions concerning Sulla's own legal status in Asia Minor.

Another important expression of an attitude in favour of Sulla is the way Appian narrates some events involving Gaius Flavius Fimbria. Fimbria was an enemy of Sulla. At first, Appian presents him as a skilled and willing collaborator of Lucius Valerius Flaccus, who had been chosen as the leader of the expedition against Mithridates, and who was a supporter of Gaius Marius (*Mith.* 8.51). Fimbria also accomplished some successful military operations (*Mith.* 8.52). However, later his ambitions got the better of him.⁸ Using a source favourable to Sulla, Appian presents Fimbria as if he had been the killer of Flaccus, and as if he had usurped Flaccus' role in the expedition against Mithridates (*Mith.* 8.52). On the other hand, Livy and Strabo seem to be more favourable to Fimbria, and stress the fact that he held a formal office. He was Lucius Valerius Flaccus' *legatus*, according to Livy (*Per.* 82), and he was his *quaestor*, according to Strabo (13.1.27 = 594).⁹

Before Gaius Flavius Fimbria died, his behaviour became somewhat undignified: he was forced to ask for help from his soldiers, one by one, and to persuade them to "fight against their fellow-citizens" (App. *Mith.*

⁷ For this problem, see Mastrocinque 1999a, 59-75.

⁸ See Santangelo 2007, 33, for Fimbria's feats and his eventual failure.

⁹ See Mastrocinque 1999a, 60.

9.59). He also paid a slave in order to have Sulla assassinated. Finally, Fimbria committed suicide. Sulla did not insult Fimbria's corpse, but rather treated it respectfully – contrary to what Cinna and Marius did to the corpses of their dead enemies (*App. Mith.* 9.60).

Appian thus makes Sulla appear as the only true hero of the expedition against Mithridates. In his heroism, Sulla also had to bear the destruction of his own properties and the murder of his own friends in Rome, in addition to being declared a public enemy of the Roman people (*Mith.* 8.51).

Appian's narrative of Sulla's siege and storming of Athens in 86 B.C. shows similar features to those mentioned above with regard to his treatment of the cities of Asia: Sulla did slaughter many of its inhabitants, but also pardoned the rest of them; he allowed the soldiers to plunder Athens, but forbade the burning of the city (*App. Mith.* 6.38-39).¹⁰ According to Appian, Sulla's punishment of Athens was not excessive.

The chapters of Appian's *Mithridaticus* concerning Sulla's war against Mithridates are, overall, an attempt to eliminate the blame that could have been put on Sulla because he had seized the command of the war from the followers of Marius, and he had thus prevented them from ending the war and vanquishing Mithridates.¹¹ Sources also record that after the Peace of Dardanos (85 B.C.) it was presumed that a new war was approaching.¹² Sulla's obstructionism was especially clear when

¹⁰ For the siege and sack of Athens by Sulla, see Thein 2014, 170-171; Eckert 2016, 86-102; Kuin 2018, 617, 634 ("Appian does not emphasize the looting that took place after the siege of Athens").

¹¹ Santangelo 2007, 8: "Sulla's decision was by no means ill-founded. He needed to hasten his return to Italy and to concentrate his energies on the imminent confrontation with his enemies." (See also p. 117); Thein 2014, 176-177; Eckert 2016, 115.

¹² See Sall. *Hist.* 1.32 M: *Quis rebus Sulla suspectis maximeque ferocia regis Mithridatis in tempore bellaturi*. Flor. 1.40.3.11: *Et debellatum foret, nisi de Mithridate triumphare cito, quam vere maluisset*. In the first case, it would be interesting to ascertain whether Sallust was using documents written immediately after the First Mithridatic War or his observation was simply *ex eventu*. See Mastrocinque 1999a, 64. Will (1979-1982, II: 485) seems to overestimate the extent of

Mithridates was caught up in a siege in Pitane by Fimbria, and Sulla interrupted the siege.¹³ Sulla also needed to justify his quick return to Italy, where the civil war was about to reignite. He thus hurriedly agreed with Mithridates on a peace, the terms of which were very favourable to the King.¹⁴ On the other hand, leniency towards Mithridates may have been justified by the fact that the Romans (especially Manius Aquilius) were also responsible for the outbreak of the war.¹⁵

While Plutarch (*Sull.* 24.7) claims Sulla's soldiers made a complaint about the lightness of Mithridates' punishment, Appian seems to justify Sulla's attitude towards Mithridates, by highlighting the impossibility of Sulla conducting the war until Mithridates' final defeat. Appian stresses the fact that Sulla managed to accomplish several military operations in Asia Minor against all odds: "Sulla had no ships; [...] his enemies at Rome had sent him no money, nor anything else, but had declared him an outlaw" (*App. Mith.* 54).¹⁶

Plutarch was an author who stressed the negative effects of Sulla's economic innovations. Plutarch notes Sulla's ruthlessness and highlights the economic consequences of Sulla's punishment of the cities of Asia Minor. As *Plut. Sull.* 25.4-5 records, "Sulla imposed upon Asia a

Sulla's victory: "Paix coûteuse pour Mithridate, obligé d'accepter toutes les conditions de Sulla, à savoir, pour l'essentiel, l'évacuation de tout ce qu'il avait conquis en Asie Mineure."

¹³ *Liv. Per.* 83: *Fl. Fimbria in Asia fuisis proelio aliquot praefectis Mithridatis urbem Pergamum cepit obsessumque regem non multum afuit quin caperet. Urbem Ilium, quae se potestati Syllae reservabat, expugnavit ac delevit et magnam partem Asiae recepit.* Although Livy here seems to acknowledge Fimbria's valour, he had previously defined him as a *ultimae audaciae homo* (*Per.* 82). Cf. *App. Mith.* 8.52 on Mithridates being sieged in Pitane and on his escape to Mytilene. See *Plut. Sert.* 23.6 on Fimbria's reconquest of Asia; *Plut. Sull.* 23; and *Oros.* 6.2.9.

¹⁴ In addition, as *Plut. Sull.* 23.1-5 mentions, Sulla was accused of giving 10,000 *plethra* to Mithridates in Euboea and the title of friend and ally of the Romans shortly before the Peace of Dardanos.

¹⁵ For the relations between Rome and Mithridates until 89 B.C., see Harris 1979, 273.

¹⁶ See also *App. Mith.* 56 for some difficulties Sulla overcame during the expedition.

collective (κοινῆ) fine of 20,000 talents and ruined the private patrimonies of individuals with the arrogance and rapacity of the soldiers who were lodged at their houses. Every master of a house was forced to pay to his lodger four tetradrachms every day and feed him and any friends that the lodger decided to invite. On the other hand, an official had to receive fifty drachmae, clothes for staying at home, and clothes for going out to the square.”

This passage is crucial for understanding the quantitative data of the financial punishment inflicted upon the Greeks of Asia Minor. This sum of money is also confirmed by other passages in Plutarch’s *Lucullus* at 4.1 (“once peace had been established, Mithridates sailed to the Euxine Pontus, while Sulla fined Asia 20,000 talents”) and at 20.4 (“that debt originated from the 20,000 talents of the fine that Sulla imposed on Asia. Twice as much was paid to moneylenders, who had already raised the sum to 120,000 talents, due to the interest”). In the latter chapter, Plutarch describes the disastrous conditions of the province of Asia due to the unethical practices of the moneylenders (*Luc.* 20.1-2).

Exactly why 20,000 talents had to be paid is still an open issue. It is not clear whether the sum of 20,000 talents mentioned by Plutarch included both the arrears of the missing years of taxes (corresponding to the First Mithridatic War, 88-85 B.C.) plus the indemnity of the cost of the war, or just the indemnity alone.¹⁷ In any case, this sum was extremely high compared to the war reparations that Rome forced other defeated enemies to pay: for example, at the end of the Second Punic War, Carthage was forced to pay the Romans 3,200 talents, 1,000 of which had to be paid immediately;¹⁸ the indemnity Antiochus III had to pay according to the Treaty of Apamea consisted of 15,000 talents.¹⁹

¹⁷ This discussion was quite intense between the 19th and the 20th centuries, and was summarized by Rostovtzeff 1966-1980, III: chap. 7, 17 n. 30. For the financial implications of the reconquest of Asia Minor by Sulla, see Mastrocinque 1999b, 87; Santangelo 2007, 5, 58, 111-112, 114, 124, 227; Thein 2014, 183; Eckert 2016, 116-117; Delrieux 2010, para. 8-9.

¹⁸ Polyb. 1.62.8-9; 1.63.3; 3.27.5.

¹⁹ Polyb. 21.43.19; Liv. 38.38.

Mithridates, who bore the greatest responsibility for the war, was also forced to pay a fine according to the terms of the Peace of Dardanos (85 B.C.). According to Plutarch, it was 2,000 talents, namely one-tenth of the sum that the whole province of Asia had to pay. In addition, Mithridates had to leave Asia and to deliver seventy ships (Plut. *Sull.* 22.9). The exact sum is not mentioned by Granius Licinianus. However, Granius does mention the request of delivering seventy decked ships (35.77, p. 21, ed. N. Criniti), which seems in line with what Plutarch reported. As B. Scardigli rightly observes in her commentary on this passage by Granius, the sum reported by Plutarch (2,000 talents) appears to be very low, as the island of Chios had been asked for the same amount by Mithridates during the war (App. *Mith.* 47).²⁰

The historian Memnon of Heraclea tells a slightly different story and mentions a fine that Mithridates had to pay consisting of 3,000 talents and 80 ships.²¹ Whether Plutarch or Memnon is right, the sum that Mithridates had to pay was very low compared to the much higher sum that Sulla made the cities of Asia Minor give to the Romans.²² In fact, Mithridates had much greater leverage than the cities. Since the results of the war were still inconclusive, Mithridates' agreement was crucial for stopping the war, while the cities had much less bargaining power. Since the war was not over yet and Sulla tried to make the most of his temporary military superiority, it is perhaps difficult to suppose that he subjected the cities of Asia to a planned and consistent financial policy.²³

²⁰ Scardigli 1983, ad loc.

²¹ *FGrHist* 434 F 1.25: βεβαιωθῆναι δὲ Μιθριδάτη τοῦ Πόντου παντὸς τὴν βασιλείαν, παρασχεῖν δὲ ἰδίως Σύλλα τριήρεις π' καὶ τάλαντα τρισχίλια πρὸς τὴν ἰδίαν ἐπὶ τὴν Ῥώμην κάθοδον ("that the kingdom of Pontos in its entirety would be secured for Mithridates, that Mithridates would provide specifically to Sulla eighty triremes and three thousand talents for his own return to Rome from exile." Trans. Keaveney and Madden). See Eckert 2016, 115, 119.

²² Santangelo 2007, 114.

²³ For the Romans' attitude towards the future (on which their ability to conduct a consistent economic policy would depend), see Shaw 2019.

At first, before the final terms of the Peace of Dardanos were decided, Sulla proposed to Archelaus that Mithridates should indemnify all the expenses of the war (App. *Mith.* 55). The final agreement, however, was far more favourable towards Mithridates. In fact, the Peace of Dardanos was a private agreement and its terms were never written down, nor was the Peace formally ratified in Rome by the Senate, due to Sulla's exceptional position of power (App. *Mith.* 64)²⁴. Sulla's unorthodox control of Asia Minor, which was pacified by means of unofficial agreements, might thus have allowed the Roman winners to arbitrarily collect tributes and reimbursements. The Roman soldiers' dissatisfaction with the light punishment of Mithridates (Plut. *Sull.* 24.7) was balanced by the leeway they had in Asia Minor after the war. It was, of course, Sulla who gave them this freedom of action (Plut. *Sull.* 25.4-5).

2. SULLA AND THE CITIES OF THE GREEK EAST

The economy of the cities of Asia Minor was heavily damaged after the First Mithridatic War. Lucius Cornelius Sulla needed large sums of money in order to conduct the upcoming civil war, and to satisfy the needs of his soldiers.²⁵

Tax collection was generally farmed out to *publicani*. However, there are no witnesses to the presence of *publicani* in Asia Minor immediately after the conflict ended. There is actually no mention of *publicani* in Plutarch or in Appian (in *Mith.* 9.63, there is just a reference to the pressure exerted by the soldiers in order to obtain the money, σὺν ἕβρει στρατιωτῶν ἐπειγόντων). A heavy load of taxes and fines was imposed on a large number of cities, with the exception of Ilion, Chios, the cities of Lycia,

²⁴ πρόεσβεισιν αὐτοῦ, τὰς συνθήκας προτείνουσιν, οὐκ ἔφη συνθήκας ὄραν· οὐ γὰρ συνεγέγραπτο Σύλλας, ἀλλ' ἔργω τὰ λεχθέντα βεβαιώσας ἀπήλλακτο. ("When the [king's] ambassadors appealed to the treaty he replied that he saw no treaty; for Sulla had not written it out, but had gone away after seeing what he proposed orally carried out in fact"). See Kallet-Marx 1995, 263; Santangelo 2007, 114 n. 31.

²⁵ See Campanile 1996.

Rhodes, and Magnesia,²⁶ along with those cities that had acquired freedom and *immunitas* and which are mentioned by Cicero.²⁷

As mentioned above, the Greek cities initially had to pay 20,000 talents to the Romans. This sum ended up being multiplied by six in the following years, due to the interest to be paid to moneylenders, until it became 120,000 talents (Plut. *Luc.* 20.4). Meanwhile, as already mentioned, Mithridates had to pay only 2,000 talents: thus, the cities had to pay a much higher sum than Mithridates. The distress of the Greeks was great, as Plutarch observed (*Luc.* 20.1-2).

The reason why Sulla did not ask for the help of the *publicani* in order to collect taxes in Asia Minor is not completely clear. P. A. Brunt argued that a basic aspect of the Roman economy, such as the activity of the tax-farmers, was impossible to eliminate.²⁸ It would thus be unlikely that Sulla excluded the *publicani* from collecting taxes in Asia Minor due to his hostility towards the equestrian order, to which the *publicani* generally belonged. It seems probable that during the Asiatic Vespers of 88 B.C., many of these tax-farmers were assassinated, and that many others escaped from Asia Minor. However, the *publicani* were temporarily replaced by the Roman soldiers billeted in the province.²⁹

Inscriptions provide a *terminus ante quem* for the return of the tax-farmers to Asia Minor, as the *locatio* of *vectigalia* to the *publicani* is mentioned in the *Senatus consultum de Asclepiade Clazomenio sociisque* of 78 B.C. (line 16 of the Latin text = line 23 of the Greek text).³⁰ Another tes-

²⁶ See Campanile 1996.

²⁷ Cic. *Off.* 3.87: *quas civitates L. Sulla pecunia accepta ex senatus consulto liberavisset, ut eae rursus vectigales essent*. See Mastrocinque 1999b; Eckert 2016, 113-114. One of these cities was Smyrne according to Mastrocinque 1999b, 89-92.

²⁸ Brunt 1956.

²⁹ For the Asiatic Vespers, see Santangelo 2007, 5, 32; Bowersock 2013, 378; Kuin 2018, 617. For the absence of *publicani* in Asia Minor after the First Mithridatic War, see Mastrocinque 1999b, 87; Santangelo 2007, 113, 124.

³⁰ See Brunt 1956, 21; Raggi 2001; Santangelo 2007, 56. The city of Clazomenae, from which Asclepiades came, had already been subject to Rome before the war, and remained in that condition after Sulla's reconquest of Asia Minor: see Santangelo 2007, 122.

timony to this event is provided by a passage written by Memnon of Heraclea on the presence of Roman *publicani* in Bithynia in 74 B.C. (*FGrHist* 434 F 1.27.5-6).

Although the people of the province of Asia (not including Mithridates) were the scapegoat for the First Mithridatic War, not every city and social class was punished by Sulla. There were two kinds of favourable conditions: those attributed to certain cities, and, as F. Santangelo observed, there were individual members of the social strata who had prestige and managed to reach privileges and high positions through their connection to Roman magistrates,³¹ for example, Asclepiades and his *socii* in the already mentioned *Senatus consultum de Asclepiade*. Asclepiades and his associates managed to obtain fiscal immunity and judicial privileges in the difficult years following the First Mithridatic War, even though they were never awarded the Roman citizenship.³²

However, a prejudice against the Greeks of Asia was still alive in the following decades. J. Thornton has stressed the lasting influence of the attitude of Cicero, who in the *Pro Flacco*, separated the Greeks who had supported Mithridates from those who had fought against him. This was a way of making some of them feel guilty for their fellow citizens' crimes and thus making them more submissive towards Rome.³³ The followers of Mithridates were presented as members of the lower classes, and his enemies as members of the upper classes. This enabled Cicero to be gracious towards the inhabitants of Asia Minor who were his personal allies, and to accuse his personal enemies of having been the accomplices of Mithridates in the Asiatic Vespers.³⁴ This was probably not the case, since also most of the Greek elites initially saw Mithridates as a liberator, and were later let down by him, especially when he started cancelling their borrowers' debts and freeing their slaves.

³¹ Santangelo 2007, 65, 128, 132.

³² Santangelo 2007, 56.

³³ Thornton 1998, 291ff.; Santangelo 2007, 126.

³⁴ See, for example, Cic. *Flac.* 52, 57-60.

Many members of the upper classes who initially supported Mithridates were based in Magnesia, Ephesus, and Mytilene.³⁵ The attitude of some communities towards Mithridates was mixed. Pergamon was initially pro-Mithridatic.³⁶ A plot against Mithridates later took place in that city.³⁷ However, in the same city there also lived a man called Mithridates of Pergamon, who had been initially educated at the court of Mithridates and was considered to be his illegitimate son, but would later become a supporter of the Romans and a friend of Julius Caesar.³⁸ Pergamon was also the capital of Mithridates' reign in Asia Minor, and was his shelter during a critical phase of his first war against the Romans.³⁹

Sulla's reaction to the Greek communities depended on whether they had supported Mithridates or fought against him. Some cities received favours and fiscal privileges in return for their loyalty during the war; Rhodes, for instance, obtained the city of Caunos back from the Romans.⁴⁰ The finances of Stratonicea had been heavily damaged during the First Mithridatic War (App. *Mith.* 3.21, 12.82). However, Stratonicea was helped in recovering the goods lost during the war by a *senatus consultum* (RDGE 18, ll. 60-63; 114-118). Ilion, Chios, the cities of Lycia, and Magnesia were freed again and obtained the friendship of the Roman people (App. *Mith.* 9.61). In particular, Chios received proof of Sulla's benevolence through the concession of freedom and autonomy, even as far as judicial matters were concerned.⁴¹ Ilion had been severely damaged by Gaius Flavius Fimbria during the conflict between him and Sulla (App. *Mith.* 8.53). The privileged treatment of

³⁵ App. *Mith.* 21; SIG³ 742 of 85 B.C., ll. 9-14.

³⁶ For the punishment of Pergamon by Sulla, see Santangelo 2007, 60.

³⁷ App. *Mith.* 48.

³⁸ Str. 13.4.3 = 625c; *BAlex.* 78.1-2. See Arrayás Morales 2010, 383; Bowersock 2013, 380.

³⁹ Plut. *Sull.* 11; App. *Mith.* 52.

⁴⁰ Cic. *QFr.* 1.1.33; Str. 14.2.3 = 651. Caunos had been a point of contention since the end of the Third Macedonian War. For Rome's treatment of Caunos, see Delrieux 2010, para. 4, 11.

⁴¹ See SIG³ 785.

Ilion by the Romans, however, may have also been encouraged for cultural reasons, such as the Trojan legend and its connection with Rome. However, in around 70 B.C., Ilion was still not in a good economic state.⁴² Finally, some other cities were treated with leniency because their leaders had given large sums of money to Sulla under the counter (*Cic. Off.* 3.87).

Some favours bestowed by the Romans were justified by cultural or religious aspects. For example, Sulla aided the *technitai* of Dionysus (artists devoted to Dionysus) in Ionia and in the Hellespont (in around 84-81 B.C.) with tax exemptions.⁴³ Sulla also rewarded some temples, such as that of Hecate at Lagina, near Stratonicea, in Caria, to which he attributed the *asyllia*.⁴⁴ However, the region of Caria had in any case generally been loyal to Rome.⁴⁵ Another sanctuary that Sulla was magnanimous towards was the temple of Daulis, in Phocaea.⁴⁶ But not all the temples received such treatment. In fact, the temples of Epidaurus and of Olympia in Greece were exploited by Sulla as he needed money in order to conduct the siege of Athens (86 B.C.).⁴⁷ Sulla also had a strong connection to the temple of Aphrodite in Aphrodisias, in Caria (*App. B Civ.* 1.97-98), and to that of Isis and Serapis in Mopsuestia, in Cilicia. To these two sanctuaries, Sulla had already conferred the privilege of *asyllia* during his governorship of Cilicia (96-93 B.C.).⁴⁸ Sulla also consulted the Oracle of Delphi, with which he had

⁴² See *Ivllion* 10, ll. 13-19, block A; *Ivllion* 71. For the destruction of Ilion by Fimbria and its economic conditions, see Santangelo 2007, 58; Thein 2014, 171-172, 179.

⁴³ *RDGE* 49; Le Guen 2001, 56, B, ll. 8-13.

⁴⁴ *SC de Stratonicensibus*, *RDGE* 18, ll. 113-118. See Santangelo 2007, 51.

⁴⁵ See, for example, the case of Aphrodisias in *App. B Civ.* 1.97-98; Reynolds 1982, No. 5; Marek 1988; Santangelo 2007, 130; Delrieux 2010, para. 17. For the loyalty of Caria to the Romans, see Santangelo 2007, 50.

⁴⁶ *SEG* 1.175. See Santangelo 2007, 52.

⁴⁷ *Plut. Sull.* 12, 5ff.; *App. Mith.* 54.

⁴⁸ *SEG* 44.1227. Sulla also granted full fiscal immunity to the shrine of Amphiaraios near Oropos (*RDGE* 23). See Santangelo 2007, 201ff. For Sulla's governorship of Cilicia, see Santangelo 2007, 3.

a tight relationship.⁴⁹ Sulla's attitude with regards to temples shows his complex behaviour towards the Greek world: he had as many allies in the Greek East as enemies and he presumably developed tight connections to key figures in the temples.

Jones, Thornton, and Santangelo highlighted how good relations were formed between the Greek elites and Rome after the end of the First Mithridatic War.⁵⁰ Inscriptions show that during the following decades many Greek notables, who were sent on diplomatic missions to the Roman senate and to Roman magistrates, often obtained financial concessions for their own cities.

Because of the harsh financial measures that Sulla imposed on the cities of Asia, the members of the elites in Asia Minor needed to forge connections with members of the Roman elite and thus seek support. In the years between the Peace of Dardanos and the Third Mithridatic War, there was indeed an "intense diplomatic activity directed by Asia to Rome and the Roman magistrates in the province."⁵¹ One aspect that is generally not emphasized, however, is that at least one of the people who was sent to Rome as an envoy, i.e. Xenocles of Adramyttium, was accused of being sympathetic towards Mithridates (μιθριδατισμός) since he defended the cities of Asia Minor in the Roman Senate. In fact, Xenocles is known from a passage of Strabo who mentioned Xenocles' speech in the Senate in defence of the cities of Asia Minor and in defence against the accusations he had received

⁴⁹ Santangelo 2007, 50, 52, 207-209.

⁵⁰ For the Roman patronage of Greek communities after the First Mithridatic War and the local elites' increasing search for support of the members of the Roman elite, see Jones 1974, 204-205; Thornton 1998, 302; Santangelo 2007, 65, 128, 132; Arrayás Morales 2010; Delrieux 2010, para. 17, 20-23.

⁵¹ Jones 1974, 203. One example that sheds light on the attitude of the Greek elites towards the Romans in that period is that of Diodorus Paspáros. For Diodorus, see Jones 1974; Virgilio 1994; Jones 2000; Santangelo 2007, 61; Arrayás Morales 2010, 379-381; Coudry and Kirbihler 2010, para. 44. Before Jones' article (1974), it was still debated whether Diodorus began to be active after the First Mithridatic War, or much earlier, i.e. shortly after the Romans' war against Aristonicus of Pergamon.

(Str. 13.1.66 = 614). Xenocles is also mentioned as a former teacher of rhetoric of Cicero (a few years after the end of the First Mithridatic War) in the latter's *Brutus* (316). What we know about Xenocles highlights once again the type of connections that formed between Rome and the Greeks of Asia Minor after the First Mithridatic War. The Romans ultimately developed good relations with the Greeks, although the diplomacy between Greeks and Romans was sometimes damaged by the suspicion many Romans had of the Greeks, as a long-term consequence of the massacre that had happened in the Asiatic Vespers, as demonstrated by Cicero's *Pro Flacco*.⁵²

Another case of members of the elites in Asia Minor going to Rome as ambassadors is that of Diodorus Zonas, an orator who "many times defended Asia, and at the time of the attack of King Mithridates was accused of trying to provoke a rebellion against Mithridates by the cities; however, he defended himself and was exonerated from the calumnies."⁵³ It is possible that this orator provoked an insurgence against Mithridates because he had always been a supporter of the Romans.⁵⁴ In the Greek East, in any case, being connected to Mithridates would later become the proof of the prestige that could be displayed by Greek notables along with one's good relations to the Romans, as G. W. Bowersock has recently demonstrated with regards to Strabo's narrative of his own family history.⁵⁵

The First Mithridatic War thus contributed to creating solid relations between the Roman elites and many members of the Greek elites of Asia Minor, who were also the envoys of their own cities. Secondly, the results obtained by the Romans during the First Mithridatic War were still inconclusive, although Appian's *Μιθριδάτειος* overlooks

⁵² In the *Pro Flacco*, Cicero exploited the suspicion of *μιθριδατισμός* in order to accuse the Greeks of committing crimes, as we have already seen above.

⁵³ Str. 13.4.9 = 628.

⁵⁴ The source of much of this information is Strabo's *Geography*. Strabo's family had been tightly connected to the dynasty of Mithridates VI Eupator. See Bowersock 2013, 380, 383; Kuin 2017.

⁵⁵ Bowersock 2013, 380, 383-384.

this fact, probably because it derives from Sulla's own memoirs or from a source favourable to him.

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