

Imperial Policy in the East: Rome and Asia Minor

This paper argues that the policy of the Roman Republic when dealing with the eastern frontier, specifically Asia Minor, did not align with any particular strategy, but rather was highly reactive, formed by the actions and reactions of Roman generals on that frontier. This builds on the earlier work of Sherwin-White (1983), who offered much this same analysis of Roman foreign in Asia, but did not begin as early as Rome's first contact with Pergamum, and who lacked access to recently discovered epigraphic documents, which create an updated understanding of Roman foreign policy.

Literary accounts of Roman (e.g. Polybius, Livy, and Appian) reveal how the Republic viewed its presence on this frontier, and develop a general idea of its strategies for dealing with it. Fortunately, these accounts begin with the start of Roman relations with Asia Minor, the treaty with Pergamum in 205 BCE as at the end of the First Macedonian War, and conclude with the end of the Third Mithridatic War in 63 BCE. The primary sources in use for this period are Appian's *Mithridatica* and Polybius' *Histories*, Livy also being consulted. Recent discoveries of relevant inscriptions are also discussed in order to more clearly understand the events surrounding Attalus III's bequest. These inscriptions include the Customs Law of Asia, a Pergamene tax law repurposed by the Romans after they acquired the kingdom in 133 BCE, now published in Cottier's volume (2008), and several epigraphic documents from Metropolis in the second century, written on by Jones (2004) and dated to the second century.

This project offers valuable insight into Roman policy towards the eastern frontier, as it is a topic not much discussed in recent years, not often since Sherwin-White's publication in 1983. It will, therefore, allow for our knowledge of Rome's foreign policy to evolve and be improved by modern findings.

Bibliography

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