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### The Aegean Greek *poleis* in the face of the Roman wars in the first century BC War and the economy

*Poleis* Grecji egejskiej wobec rzymskich wojen w I w. p.n.e.  
Wojna i ekonomia

**Abstract:** First century BC in the history of Aegean Greece was an exceptionally gloomy period. Between 88 BC and 31 BC, Rome's first war with Mithridates took place on its lands, and later three Roman civil wars ended here. The article is an attempt to look at these events from a Greek perspective. It shows how the fighting Romans used Greek human, financial and material resources, and what effects it had.

**Keywords:** Aegean Greece in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, Rome's first war with Mithridates, Roman Civil Wars, *oktobolos eisphora* in Messene

**Streszczenie:** W dziejach Grecji egejskiej I w. p.n.e. był okresem wyjątkowo ponurym. Między 88 a 31 r. p.n.e. na jej ziemiach toczyła się pierwsza wojna Rzymu z Mitrydatesem, a później miały tu finał trzy rzymskie wojny domowe. Artykuł jest próbą spojrzenia na te

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wydarzenia z greckiej perspektywy. Pokazano w nim, jak walczący Rzymianie sięgali po greckie zasoby ludzkie, finansowe i materialne oraz jakie to miało skutki.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Grecja egejska w I w. p.n.e., pierwsza wojna z Mitrydatesem, rzymskie wojny domowe, *oktobolos eisphora*

One of the best-known episodes in the history of Aegean Greece in the first century BC is Sulla's army's capture of Athens on 1 March 86 BC, following several months of a brutal siege full of dramatic events. In the aftermath, the citizens of Athens were slaughtered and the city plundered, which Sulla allowed in an attempt to compensate his soldiers for the difficult siege. It is certain, however, that the Roman general did not want to annihilate the city. The damage it suffered was caused by artillery fire during the siege and the fighting and by fires started while the legionaries were breaching the city walls.<sup>1</sup> Regardless of how cruel Sulla's treatment of Athens may seem, we cannot forget that he did not punish the city, which had first taken Mithridates' side and then resisted the Romans for long months, in any other way. Naturally, as a result of Sulla's actions, Athens' population diminished and the city itself was looted; many of its works of art and treasures were taken. The looting probably lasted long after the fighting ended. At least, this follows from Cicero's remark, according to which Gaius Verres stopped over in Athens in 80 BC, on his way to Cilicia, and took the gold overlooked by Sulla from the Parthenon.<sup>2</sup> The mentioned events must have had an impact on the city's future economic situation. However, attempts to determine the extent and persistence of this impact would divide historians.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> M. C. Hoff, *Lacerate Athenae: Sulla's siege of Athens in 87/86 B.C. and its aftermath*, in: *The romanization of Athens. Proceedings of an international conference held at Lincoln, Nebraska (April 1996)*, eds. M. C. Hoff, S. I. Rotroff, Oxford 1997, pp. 33–51. The situation was different in conquered Piraeus, where the destruction of some public buildings was deliberate: App. *Mithr.* 14; Plut. *Sull.* 14.7.

<sup>2</sup> Cic. *In Verr.* 2.1.44–45 and 2.4.71.

<sup>3</sup> It is worth citing two contrary opinions here: D. J. Geagan, *Roman Athens: Some aspects of life and culture I. 86 B.C.–A.D. 267*, *ANRW II. 7.1*, Berlin 1979, p. 375: "There are signs of lively economic activity in the period between Sulla and Augustus."

There is no doubt that in the wake of many months of siege, after the fighting, looting and destruction of Attica, Athens found itself in a difficult position. However, the opinion, expressed in the older literature on the subject, that Athens' situation was so terrible that the city had to sell Salamis, is rightly challenged today.<sup>4</sup> Even so, we have clear evidence of the difficulties the city experienced. For instance, we know that it was desperately looking for money and there were people who wanted to lend it but, knowing the city's determination, expected a high interest rate, to which the Athenians did not want to agree. At that moment, aid was provided by a man who had arrived in the city shortly after it had been conquered by Sulla and stayed there for twenty years. The man in question was Titus Pomponius, who over time received the nickname "Atticus". His business ventures linked him to Epirus and the Peloponnese, but he chose to reside in Athens, which he helped several times, for instance when, after the fighting on the Greek territory ceased, grain prices skyrocketed so much that Athens could not afford to buy any. He purchased quite a large amount of grain at his own expense and distributed it among the inhabitants of the city. Another time, when the city could not borrow money because the interest rates were too high, he took out a loan for himself and handed it over to the city free of interest. As a Roman and an entrepreneur, he was able to obtain the loan at a much lower interest rate than the one demanded of Athens. We also know that in the 50s he again donated an unknown quantity of wheat to the city.<sup>5</sup>

The history of Athens and what the city experienced at the hands of the Romans in the first century BC can be a prelude to a broader look not only at one city but the whole region during that century. We should remember that in the history of Aegean Greece this period was particularly bleak. In

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tus." T. L. Shear, Jr., *Athens: From city-state to provincial town*, "Hesperia" 1981, vol. 50, p. 356: "Athens' recovery from the destruction of 86 B.C. was slow and painful."

<sup>4</sup> J. Day, *An economic history of Athens under Roman domination*, New York 1942, p. 127. A different opinion: Ch. Habicht, *Athens from Alexander to Antony*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Cambridge–London 1999, pp. 312–313.

<sup>5</sup> Nepos *Atticus* 2.6 (grain), 2.4–5 (money). L. Migeotte, *L'emprunt publique dans les cités grecques. Recueil des documents et analyse critique*, Paris 1984, pp. 34–35. Cicero mentions the donation of wheat: Cic. *Ad Att.* 6.6.2.

88 BC, the army of Mithridates VI, King of Pontus, arrived on its territory, followed in the spring of the next year by the legions of L. Cornelius Sulla, who was given the task of defeating Mithridates. The arrival of these armies in effect meant the end of a long period of peace on the Greek lands, which had lasted from 146 BC. In his work on Roman Sparta, A. Spawforth went so far as to state that it had been not only a period of peace, but of prosperity as well.<sup>6</sup> While we can agree with the first half of his opinion, the second raises serious doubts. The available information about this period from literary texts as well as epigraphic and numismatic sources does not indicate prosperity. The picture which unfolds from these sources warrants talking about stagnation at the very least, if not a downright crash. Athens was an exception; due to its ownership of Delos, it was in a good economic situation. However, it also started to experience serious difficulties in the early first century BC.<sup>7</sup> There is no evidence that the region as a whole was in good economic shape when the Pontic and Roman armies appeared on its territory. What started to happen in Greece from the moment of their arrival and lasted with interludes until 31 BC could not have in any way improved the economic situation of the region. Over the course of these five decades, Greece was the territory where Sulla fought against Mithridates' army and later it found itself at the heart of the Roman civil wars. It was on its territory or at its borders that Pompey and Caesar faced each other at Pharsalos in 48 BC. Later, Caesar's killers, Brutus and Cassius, fought against Mark Antony at Philippi in 42 BC; finally, Mark Antony clashed with Octavian at Actium in 31 BC. During these wars, thousands of soldiers, who had to be paid, fed and accommodated, moved across the Greek lands. Successive generals replenished their troops by calling for or forcing the Greeks to raise their own military units. Various contributions and requisitions were imposed on cities. This article aims to examine the

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<sup>6</sup> P. Cartledge, A. Spawforth, *Hellenistic and Roman Sparta. A tale of two cities*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., London 2002, p. 93.

<sup>7</sup> S. Zoumbaki, *Sulla's relations with the poleis of Central and Southern Greece in a period of transition*, in: *Sulla. Politics and reception*, eds. A. Eckert, A. Thein, Berlin–Boston 2019, pp. 33–35, with older literature. On the situation of Athens during the discussed period: Ch. Habicht, op. cit., pp. 246–296; B. Antela-Bernárdez, *Athenion of Athens revisited*, "Klio" 2015, vol. 97, pp. 59–60.

mentioned wars from the Greek perspective and to show how each of them depleted their human, financial and material resources.

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One of the most striking phenomena that can be observed when analysing the actions of the Roman generals operating on the territory of Aegean Greece in the first century BC is that they used local troops.<sup>8</sup> Despite the belief sometimes voiced in the older literature that in the Hellenistic times the habit of Greek cities keeping armed forces had disappeared, we have plenty of evidence indicating that many of them kept larger or smaller permanent forces. The ones who did not were, if such a need arose, able to quickly recruit soldiers and impose taxes to fund an army.<sup>9</sup> Successive Roman generals took advantage of this option and liked to utilise *auxilia externa*, i.e. non-Italian forces. Sulla was the first to do so, when in 87 BC he arrived in Greece with a small force and even smaller funds. Exhausted by the recent War of the Allies and cut off by Mithridates from revenue from the Asian provinces, the Republic was battling a financial crisis. To be able to give Sulla any funds necessary for conducting a war, the senators decided to sell the treasure which, according to tradition, King Numa had allocated to paying for sacrifices for the gods. They managed to collect and give Sulla 9,000 pounds of gold, which was not much considering the task he was given. Additionally, as we know, soon after Sulla sailed east, L. Cornelius Cinna took over control of Rome, relieved him of command in the Mithridatic War and declared him public enemy, thus shutting down the possibility of obtaining support from Italy.<sup>10</sup> In these circumstances, it is not surprising

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<sup>8</sup> I discuss this problem in more detail in M. N. Pawlak, *Udział poleis Grecji egejskiej w rzymskich wojnach w I w. p.n.e.*, “SAMAI. Studia Antiquitatis et Medii Aevii Incohantis” (in press).

<sup>9</sup> J. Ma, *Fighting poleis of the Hellenistic world*, in: *War and violence in Ancient Greece*, ed. H. van Wees, Swansea 2000, pp. 337–376 (p. 359: “the armies of Hellenistic cities were a mixture of full-timers and temporary conscripts”); F. Millar, *Rome, the Greek world, and the East*, vol. 1: *The Roman Republic and the Augustan revolution*, Chapel Hill 2002, p. 224.

<sup>10</sup> The manner of obtaining funds: App. *Mithr.* 22; the size of the army which arrived with Sulla: App. *Mithr.* 30; the change of political situation in Rome: App. *B. Civ.* 73,

that Sulla's main concern upon landing was to secure reinforcements and funds necessary to conduct military operations. Here, we are interested in military support. We know that Sulla turned to Roman allies, the Aetolians and the Thessalians, who sent fresh troops. He also obtained military assistance from the Thracians, and the Chaeroneans and some Peloponnesian units also fought on his side.<sup>11</sup>

Another Roman general to use the local troops from Aegean Greece was Pompey, who in 49 BC, after Caesar entered Italy, sailed to Greece with his army and supporters. He spent the following months attempting to increase the number of his soldiers. The recruitment campaign spread across virtually the entire East, and as far as Greece was concerned, he was reinforced by allies from Thessaly, Boeotia, the Peloponnese and Athens. An especially large draft was reportedly conducted in Athens. As a result, he managed to expand his army from five to nine legions. According to Appian, who questioned the value of allied forces on multiple occasions, Pompey did not intend to use them in a fight but to dig trenches and service the Roman troops. We do not know whether this disparaging remark is correct, but we do know that the loyalty of troops from various parts of Greece turned out to be weak when tested. When, in January 48 BC, Caesar crossed the Adriatic and more and more regions took his side, the soldiers from those regions who were serving in Pompey's army deserted.<sup>12</sup> We also know that Pompey gathered a fleet of 500 ships. Some of them came

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77, 81; App. *Mithr.* 51. On the consequences of cutting off Italy from its revenue from the Asian provinces see F. Santangelo, *Sulla, the elites and the empire. A study of Roman policies in Italy and the Greek East*, Leiden–Boston 2007, p. 33. The situation in Rome after Sulla's departure: M. Lovano, *The age of Cinna: Crucible of late republican Rome*, Stuttgart 2002, p. 97.

<sup>11</sup> App. *Mithr.* 30: support from Aetolia and Thessaly. The presence of Thracian forces is indicated by an inscription from Chaeronea in honour of Amatocos, whose unit was stationed in the city: M. Holleaux, *Décret de Chéronée relatif à la première guerre de Mithridates*, REG 1919, vol. 32, pp. 320–337. Soldiers from Chaeronea also fought on Sulla's side: App. *Mithr.* 29; Plut. *Sulla* 11.4–5. On the presence of the Peloponnesians in Sulla's army: App. *B. Civ.* 1.79.

<sup>12</sup> On increasing the number of soldiers: Caes. *B. Civ.* 3.3–4; App. *B. Civ.* 2.49; Plut. *Pomp.* 64; Cass. Dio 41.61. The draft in Athens: Lucan *Pharsalia* 3.181: *exausit totus quavis dilectus Athenas*. The desertions are mentioned by Caesar *B. Civ.* 3.13.

from the Aegean Sea and Athens.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, Caesar commanded light infantry units of the Dolopes, Acarnanes and Aetolians.<sup>14</sup>

The cities of Aegean Greece became embroiled in another Roman civil war after Caesar's death. Six months after his murder, Brutus and Cassius left Rome and headed east to take over their provinces. They quickly realised that a conflict with the Caesarians was inevitable. Consequently, they started to look for support in the East, counting on gathering adequate forces just as Pompey had done a few years prior. Ultimately, as a result of Brutus and Cassius' energetic efforts, they managed to gather nineteen legions, although their numbers were not full. Additionally, as had been the case with Pompey's army, some of their forces were contingents that consisted of non-citizens. As for Aegean Greece, the Thessalians served under their command.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, Sparta sided with the triumvirs, sending them 2,000 soldiers, all of whom, if we believe Plutarch, were killed.<sup>16</sup>

After the battle of Philippi, the East became the domain of Mark Antony, whose attitude towards the Greeks was ambivalent at best. On the one hand, during his frequent visits to Greece, where he usually stayed in Athens, he liked to take on the role of a Hellenised Roman interested in Greek culture and visiting gymnasia. On the other hand, he frequently treated the Greeks in an oppressive and imperious way. The increased tax pressure that he placed on the Greeks will be discussed elsewhere. Here, we should mention his actions in the months preceding the final clash with Octavian. Antony and his forces arrived in western Greece in the autumn of 32 BC and set up headquarters in Patras. We know that at that time, he had an enor-

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<sup>13</sup> Plut. *Pomp.* 64; Caes. *B. Civ.* 3.3; Lucan *Pharsalia* 3.181–183 suggests that Athens gave Pompey only three ships, but Caesar's remark indicates that there might have been more.

<sup>14</sup> App. *B. Civ.* 2.70.

<sup>15</sup> App. *B. Civ.* 4.88.

<sup>16</sup> Plut. *Brut.* 41.4 and 46.1; App. *B. Civ.* 4.118. Sparta's siding with the triumvirs attracted the wrath of Brutus, who promised his soldiers that he would allow them to loot the city after their victory. A. Spawforth regarded the destruction of the Spartan contingent at Philippi as "Sparta's worst military disaster since Sellasia in 22 BC." P. Cartledge, A. Spawforth, op. cit., p. 95.

mous fleet of 300 cargo ships and 500 navy vessels.<sup>17</sup> A fleet of this size required crews, the recruitment of which must have been difficult, judging from the fact that most of Antony's ships were not fully manned. In this situation, captains recruited all sorts of wayfarers, mule-drivers and farmers from already-exhausted Greece, which however, at least in Plutarch's opinion, did not solve the problem of the shortage of oarsmen.<sup>18</sup>

It is worth keeping in mind that using Greek soldiers was not only the speciality of Roman generals who conducted land campaigns on the territory of Aegean Greece. We have information indicating that one of those who demanded that Greek communities supply soldiers was Marcus Antonius Creticus (the father of the later triumvir), who in the late 70s BC prepared a campaign against Cretan pirates. During these preparations he demanded, via his legates, recruits from the Laconian port of Gytheion (and from other Peloponnesian cities). However, the city managed to avoid it owing to the intervention of two Romans residing in the city, brothers Marcus and Numerius Cloatii (more on whom below). A similar demand was made of Epidauros but also in this case the city managed to avoid it after an intervention by the local euergetes Euanthes.<sup>19</sup> However, there were most likely many more cities which, faced with the demands of Roman generals, had no choice but to conscript soldiers. We know of soldiers and oarsmen from Messene serving under Roman orders in the first century BC from a famous inscription describing the manner of collecting a special tax in the city. However, we cannot say anything more about the time and circumstances of this service (more below).

There were at least two reasons for the frequent use of *auxilia externa* by Roman generals operating in Aegean Greece. Firstly, this was a way to increase the size of their forces. Secondly, the use of contingents provided by the local Greek communities was a solution which did not cost Rome anything, since the forces were equipped and paid by the local communities.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> On the size of the fleet: C. H. Lamge, *The Battle of Actium: A reconsideration*, "The Classical Quarterly" 2011, vol. 61, pp. 612–615.

<sup>18</sup> Plut. *Ant.* 62.

<sup>19</sup> *IG IV*<sup>1</sup> 932.

<sup>20</sup> Cic. *Verr.* 5.60. Sometimes such troops were paid for by the Romans (Caes. *B. Civ.* 3.59.60; *B. Afr.* 6.1, 8.5) but this was an exception rather than the rule.



This was important to Rome, which had been facing serious financial problems since the end of the War of the Allies. According to Polybius, the Italic allies supplied Rome with the same number of infantrymen as there were in the legions and three times as many cavalrymen, and they paid their army themselves.<sup>21</sup> After the War of the Allies this was no longer possible. The recent allies became citizens and therefore should serve in the Roman legions and receive pay.<sup>22</sup> In the new situation, utilising local contingents from outside Italy was sensible for both military and economic reasons. Such troops were commanded by local generals, who reported to the Romans. The Romans also determined the number of soldiers they needed, while the cities were in charge of the task of conscription, assigning the commander and distributing payment; this was an additional cost they bore, not only financial, but human as well. After all, not all of those who served under the Romans' orders returned home after the campaign ended.<sup>23</sup>

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The Roman generals' use of local forces had an indirect impact on the economic situation of Aegean Greek cities. However, there are also many examples of directly utilising the cities' funds. In the first century BC, this practice was started by Sulla, who arrived in Greece, as we have mentioned above, with only a small amount of money. From the beginning of his stay, the need to find additional funds was equally important to him as the need to use the local troops. The Aetolians and the Thessalians were the quickest to support him, supplying him not only with soldiers and food provisions, but with money as well.<sup>24</sup> However, when the siege of Athens and Piraeus stretched out, and money received from the Roman allies started to run out, Sulla decided to take an original and drastic step. He simply took

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<sup>21</sup> Polyb. 6.26.7–8 and 6.21.4–5.

<sup>22</sup> F. Gauthier, *The transformation of the Roman army in the last decades of the Republic*, in: *Romans at war. Soldiers, citizens, and society in the Roman Republic*, eds. J. Armstrong, M. P. Fronda, London–New York 2020, pp. 283–296.

<sup>23</sup> J. R. W. Prag, *Troops and commanders: Auxilia Externa under the Roman Republic*, “Hormos – Ricerche di Storia Antica” 2010, vol. 2, pp. 101–113.

<sup>24</sup> App. *Mithr.* 30.

the treasures collected in the sanctuaries in Olympia, Epidauros and Delphi.<sup>25</sup> Melted down, they were used for minting coins to pay his soldiers. The operation was supervised by Lucullus. According to Plutarch, most of the coins were minted on the Peloponnese and they stayed in circulation for a long time.<sup>26</sup> This information allows us to conclude that the operation was spread over time and conducted in various places, including outside the Peloponnese, so any attempts to identify coins referred to as “Lucullan” and classify them as one type are risky.<sup>27</sup>

With his back against the wall, Sulla, whose options were additionally limited by the naval domination of Mithridates’ fleet, had no choice but to turn to the resources of the Greek *poleis*. He seized their men, supplies and money – i.e. everything he needed to wage war. In doing so, he weakened the economic and human resources of the Greek *poleis*.<sup>28</sup>

The other Roman generals operating in Greece also dipped into the money belonging to the local cities. We know that Pompey drew in huge sums from Asia and Syria as well as Achaëa. His behaviour led Cicero to express, in a letter to Atticus, the fear that no other city in Greece would avoid giving up money, men and food.<sup>29</sup> Cicero himself, when he arrived in Pompey’s camp, lent him a million sesterces, which he bitterly recalled even

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<sup>25</sup> Plut. *Sulla* 12.3–4; App. *Mithr.* 54; Paus. 9.7.5–6. A. Keaveney, *Sulla. The last republican*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., London–New York 2005, pp. 71–72.

<sup>26</sup> Plut. *Luc.* 2.2; *FD* III. 3.282; the inscription confirms that they were in use even at the end of the first century BC.

<sup>27</sup> C. Boehringen, *Quelques remarques sur la circulation monétaire dans le Péloponnèse au II<sup>e</sup> et au I<sup>er</sup> siècle a. C.*, in: *Le Péloponnèse d’Epaminondas à Hadrien*, ed. C. Grandjean, Bordeaux 2008, pp. 88–89; S. Zoumbaki, *Sulla’s relations...*, pp. 36–37.

<sup>28</sup> S. Zoumbaki, *Sulla’s relations...*, pp. 37–39, who writes: “After a long period of low demands by the Romans, Sulla’s requisitions were not only a challenge for the Greek towns, but would be established as a standard practice in the following years.” According to Zoumbaki, Sulla took whatever he needed through the Greek *koina*, resurrected on this occasion. See also: eadem, *Sulla, the army, the officers and the poleis of Greece: A reassessment of warlordism in the first phase of the Mithridatic Wars*, in: *War, warlords, and interstate relations in the Ancient Mediterranean*, eds. T. Nāco del Hoyo, F. López Sánchez, Leiden–Boston 2018, pp. 362–367.

<sup>29</sup> Cic. *Ad Att.* 9.9.2.

two years later.<sup>30</sup> Caesar, on the other hand, was financially backed by Petraeus, the leader of the pro-Caesarean Thessalians. He helped the Roman general using both his own funds and those collected from his supporters.<sup>31</sup>

Brutus and Cassius stood out in terms of their desperation and brutality, which is best illustrated by the case of the island of Rhodes, a still respected naval power. The city did not want to participate in the Roman civil war and refused to lend Brutus and Cassius its support. Accordingly, in the spring of 42 BC, Cassius landed on the island and managed to blockade the city and then, by means of treason, to breach it. Cassius' subsequent actions show that the money and treasures collected in the city were equally as important to him as Rhodian ships. Having had 50 Rhodians executed and 28 others exiled, he started to loot the gold and silver kept in the temples and public buildings. Then, he set a day on which the Rhodians were to bring him everything they owned. He threatened those who tried to hide anything with death, and he promised those who informed him about such attempts one tenth of the treasure (in the case of slave informers the award was freedom). Initially, the Rhodians probably did not quite believe those threats, but when they found out that they were very real, they asked for another date, on which they brought everything they had hoped to hide and keep. According to Plutarch, 8,500 talents of silver were collected. The city, robbed of its capital, never recovered its former position. As C. Vial observed, Cassius chose his target wisely: Rhodes was not part of a Roman province and never paid tribute, so there was no shortage of either money or valuable objects.<sup>32</sup> We also know that Brutus and Cassius' army looted the Peloponnese, but we do not have any details of these events.<sup>33</sup>

Another wave of financial drainage came when the eastern part of the Empire, and by extension Aegean Greece, fell into Mark Antony's hands after the Battle of Philippi. It is very likely that it was this general who made strides to include Greece in the Roman tax system. We know that in

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<sup>30</sup> Cic. *Ad Att.* 11.3.

<sup>31</sup> Caes. *B. Civ.* 3.35.80–81.

<sup>32</sup> App. *B. Civ.* 4.65–67,73. C. Vial, *Les Grecs de la paix s'Apamée à la bataille d'Actium*, Paris 1995, pp. 199–203. While Cassius was operating on Rhodes, Brutus was pacifying Lydia with equal brutality: App. *B. Civ.* 4.75–80.

<sup>33</sup> App. *B. Civ.* 4.74.

29 BC – i.e. after the Battle of Actium – the island of Gyaros turned to Octavian with the request to lower the tax.<sup>34</sup> We can hardly assume that the tax in question had already been imposed by Octavian, who after Actium had an opportunity to see for himself in what a difficult position the Greek *poleis* found themselves. It is more likely that the Greeks had been taxed by Antony, and in the aftermath of Actium, Octavian did not change that decision.<sup>35</sup> We have one more piece of information about the Peloponnese, which confirms Antony’s fiscal pressure exerted on the Greek cities. As we know, in the Treaty of Misenum of 39 BC Antony committed to returning the Peloponnese to Sextus Pompey.<sup>36</sup> However, this never came to pass. Prior to handing over these territories, Antony decided to collect overdue taxes from the local cities. The operation apparently overran, which caused Antony to make another proposal, according to which he would give the Peloponnese to Pompey, who would collect the taxes himself and then hand them over to Antony or, alternatively, Pompey would wait to take over the Peloponnese until Antony finished collecting his taxes. Pompey did not consent to these terms.<sup>37</sup>

Blows against the economy of Greek cities were not always dealt during the war preparations and wartime. Sometimes, the decisions which could impact the economic situation of a city for better or for worse were made by Roman generals after the conflict had finished and they were an element of establishing post-war order. This is best illustrated by Sulla who, having finished fighting against Mithridates’ forces, went on to punish those who, in his opinion, had failed him by supporting the ruler of the Pontus, and to reward those who had turned out to be loyal to Rome. Most of the decisions he made had economic consequences. On Euboea, which had been one of the Pontic military bases during the war, he confiscated 10,000 *ple-*

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<sup>34</sup> Strabo 10.485.

<sup>35</sup> E. J. Owens, *Increasing domination of Greece in the years 48–27 B.C.*, “Latomus” 1976, vol. 35, pp. 721–722.

<sup>36</sup> App. *B. Civ.* 5.72 only mentions the Peloponnese, while Vel. Pat. 2.77 and Cass. Dio 48.36.5 also mention Achaëa.

<sup>37</sup> App. *B. Civ.* 5.77; Cass. Dio 48.46.1. On the treaty with Misenum see P. Berdowski, *Res Gestae Neptuni Filii. Sextus Pompejusz i rzymskie wojny domowe*, Rzeszów 2015, pp. 282–289 and 290.

*thra* of land, which he went on to gift to Mithridates' former general, Archelaus.<sup>38</sup> Thebes lost half of its territory. Sulla decided that revenue from these lands would go to the sanctuaries in Delphi, Olympia and Epidauros, which was meant to be compensation for the treasures stolen from them.<sup>39</sup> Thasos, for its loyalty to Rome, was given two islands, Skiathos and Peparethos.<sup>40</sup> Looking slightly ahead, it should be said that during the discussed period the practice of *adtributio* – i.e. confiscating land to give it to others – the deserving and the loyal, was also used after the Battle of Philippi in 42 BC by Mark Antony. It was thanks to him that Rhodes received the city of Myndos and three islands: Andros, Naxos and Tenos. The latter was wanted by the Athenians, but Antony had promised it to Rhodes. Accordingly, Athens was given Aegina, Keos, Skiathos and Peparethos. The latter two islands were taken from Thasos, where a supply base for Brutus and Cassius' army had been situated during the recent war.<sup>41</sup>

One of the most intriguing aspects of Sulla's actions towards Aegean Greece is the issue of the tax he possibly imposed on the local Greeks. At least, this seems to follow from Appian's information, according to which some regions of Greece, which had not paid taxes to Rome, after the First Mithridatic War were forced to pay them. In all likelihood, although Appian does not mention it directly, this was also Sulla's decision.<sup>42</sup> Appian's laconic remark gives food for thought about whether taxes paid to Rome became a permanent element in the life of Aegean Greek cities from that moment forward, or whether this was a summary and temporary punishment. It also raises the question of which regions of Greece Appian meant and how his remark compares to Pausanias' information that after 146 BC a tribute was imposed on Greece.<sup>43</sup> We do not know the answers

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<sup>38</sup> Plut. *Sulla* 23.2. R. M. Kallet-Marx, *Hegemony to empire. The development of the Roman Imperium in the East from 148 to 62 B.C.*, Berkeley–Los Angeles–Oxford 1955, pp. 63–64.

<sup>39</sup> Plut. *Sulla* 19.6; Paus. 10.7.4–6.

<sup>40</sup> App. *Mithr.* 29. M. D. Campanile, *Città d'Asia Minore tra Mitridate e Roma*, "Studi Ellenistici" 1996, vol. 8, pp. 155–157.

<sup>41</sup> App. *B. Civ.* 5.7; 5.30.

<sup>42</sup> App. *Mithr.* 118.

<sup>43</sup> Paus. 10.34.2–6.

to these questions. However, it is worth noting that both Pausanias' and Appian's information concerns crisis situations in the history of Aegean Greece. The former author mentions the imposing of a tax after the Achaean War, the latter writes the same after the Mithridatic War, in which some Greek cities took the side of the king of Pontus, at least in the initial phase. This strengthens the suspicion that this was a temporary punishment, rather than a permanent and systemic solution. However, the matter is further complicated by the information about Sulla granting tax exemptions, which also appears in the sources. If we are to believe Pausanias, such a privilege was given to Elatea, situated in Phocis, and the author directly linked the privilege to the city's position during the Mithridatic War.<sup>44</sup> We also know that Sulla decided that the lands belonging to Oropos and revenue from them would be consecrated to the god Amphiaraos, and therefore exempted from tax. The publicans tried to overrule this decision, claiming that Amphiaraos was not a god.<sup>45</sup> However, this exemption applied only to the local taxes, not the ones possibly imposed by the Romans. It is intriguing that the publicans were interested in the affairs of Oropos, but a lack of additional information makes it impossible to draw final conclusions.<sup>46</sup> In the light of all of these facts, we can conclude that Sulla did indeed impose taxes on some regions of Greece. However, this was likely a temporary solution, dictated in equal measure by the wish to punish some Greek communities and by an urgent need to amass funds before his return to Italy.<sup>47</sup>

In the first century BC, from Sulla's times onwards, the cities of Aegean Greece increasingly participated in the funding, obviously partial, of Roman wars. It is worth taking a look at the manner in which the Greeks ob-

<sup>44</sup> Paus. 10.34.2.

<sup>45</sup> IG VII 413; *IOropos* 308. Ch. Müller, *Les méandres de la taxation romaine en Grèce à la fin de l'époque hellénistique: une vue d'Oropos (à propos de RDGE 23)*, in: *Philorhōmaios kai philhellèn. Hommage à Jean-Louis Ferrary*, eds. A. Heller, Chr. Müller, Genève 2019, pp. 391–417.

<sup>46</sup> R. M. Kallet-Marx, op. cit., pp. 59–62 and 267–273; T. Ñaco del Hoyo, *The republican war economy strikes back: a 'minimalist' approach*, in: *Les gouverneurs et les provinciaux sous la République romaine*, eds. N. Barrandon, F. Kirbihler, Rennes 2011, pp. 171–180.

<sup>47</sup> A summary of the discussion: S. Zoumbaki, *Sulla, the army...*, pp. 367–373; eadem, *Sulla's relations...*, pp. 40–43.

tained the money needed to meet the Roman demands. A good example of a city which, backed against the wall, desperately needed to take a loan, was the port of Gytheion in the south of the Peloponnese. In 72 BC, the previously mentioned praetor Marcus Antonius Creticus, father of the future triumvir, arrived in the city. Two years earlier, he had been given broad powers and the task of putting an end to piracy, which had become a serious problem for Rome from the second half of the second century BC. Their many attempts to stop this practice were unsuccessful, mainly because piracy was not limited to one region but affected the entire Mediterranean Sea. It was for this reason that Antonius' power stretched over several provinces.<sup>48</sup> Initially, Antonius operated in the western part of the Mediterranean, where both he and his legates quickly earned a bad reputation for organising numerous requisitions and for extortion.<sup>49</sup> In 72 BC, Antonius moved to the East, where he targeted Crete and the pirates active there. Before he started military operations, he devoted several months to collecting food, resources and money and to reinforcing his army through local drafts. During these preparations, his soldiers were stationed in Peloponnesian cities, including Epidaurus. The city not only had to accommodate Antonius' soldiers, but was expected to provide him with recruits as well. It was only thanks to the intervention of the local euergetes Euanthes, most likely in the form of bribery, that it managed to avoid it.<sup>50</sup>

As mentioned above, in 72 BC Marcus Antonius Creticus arrived in Gytheion and at the exact same time the city started to need money. This concurrence was probably not accidental. Simply put, at the moment of his arrival in the city, Marcus Antonius demanded money. The authorities began to look for potential loaners, but no one was forthcoming. In the end, two Romans residing in Gytheion, brothers Marcus and Numerius Cloatii,

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<sup>48</sup> Cic. *Verr.* 2.8; 3.213; Vel. Pat. 2.31.3. T. Kudryavtseva, *Reconsidering the imperium infinitum of Marcus Antonius Creticus*, "Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. History" 2019, vol. 64, pp. 937–950.

<sup>49</sup> Sallust stated bluntly that Antonius quickly became worse than the pirates: Sallust. *Hist.* 3. fr. 2 and 3. Cicero stressed that Antonius acted to the detriment of the provinces and Roman allies: Cic. *II Ver.* 3.213.

<sup>50</sup> *IG IV*<sup>1</sup> 932. P. Foucart, *Les campagnes de M. Antonius Creticus contre les pirates*, 74–71, "Journal des Savants" 1906, vol. 4, p. 578.

stepped forward. The city's situation must have been desperate since it consented to an extremely disadvantageous interest rate. The Cloatii brothers laid out 4,200 drachmas (so the loan was not very large), and the interest rate was four drachmas on a mina, which amounted to 48% per annum. We know all of these details from an inscription found in Gytheion containing the text of a decree whereby the city honoured the brothers.<sup>51</sup> We learn from it that Antonius was not the first Roman to arrive in the city with financial demands. Earlier, between 74 and 72 BC, the city had been systematically visited by his legates (a total of six), demanding in turn soldiers, grain, and clothing. Each time, the burden of receiving and accommodating the incomers had been borne by the Cloatii brothers, who were also able to persuade their guests to abandon or limit their demands. Perhaps there had been more visits and demands, which could not be avoided. This conclusion is suggested by information about a proposal made by Spartan physician Damiadas for the city. He offered his services to all inhabitants of the city free of charge, for which he was given the title of *proxenos* and benefactor. His gesture was motivated by the fact that the city found itself in a difficult position due to the *eisphorai* – i.e. special taxes that plagued it.<sup>52</sup> Logically, it can therefore be assumed that the Cloatii brothers did not manage to protect the city against all of the Roman demands.

Marcus Antonius' and his legates' behaviour was not unusual at all. Roman generals operating in a given area frequently imposed various contributions on cities allied to Rome. These were so called *philikai leitourgiai*. Gytheion had the status of a free city (specifically *civitas amica*), which does not change the fact that it managed to avoid some of the contributions only owing to the intervention of the Romans residing in it, rather than its status. We should also remember that such unexpected payments to Rome were ruinous for the local economy. It could not be predicted when and how often the Romans would come and what and how much they would demand.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> *Syll.*<sup>3</sup> 748.

<sup>52</sup> *IG V*. 1.1145.

<sup>53</sup> The phrase *philikai leitourgiai* with regard to Sparta was used by Strabo 8.5.366. R. Bernhard, *Die Immunitas der Freistädte*, "Historia" 1980, vol. 28, pp. 190–207, concluded that a city's freedom can be measured by the frequency and size of Roman de-



It is worth recalling that the loan Gytheion took out from the Cloatii brothers following Marcus Antonius' demands was not the first one. We know of two others. The first one, of an unknown amount, was remitted, probably due to the city's insolvency. The payment of the second one, which amounted to 3,956 drachmas and was taken out in 74 BC – i.e. probably also in the context of the Roman preparations for the expedition against the Cretan pirates – also did not go smoothly. The city most likely wanted a loan deferral, or perhaps remittal of part of the debt, but the Cloatii refused. The case ended up in Athenian arbitration. Following negotiations, the Cloatii agreed to accept whatever the city offered (we do not know the exact sum).<sup>54</sup> Finally, the city incurred a third debt with the Cloatii in 72 BC. We mentioned above that the loan was given at a very high interest rate, but in the following year the Cloatii agreed to lower the interest rate from 48% to 24%, which saved the city a little over 1,500 drachmas.<sup>55</sup> Notably, the Cloatii granted loans at a high interest rate but at the same time were flexible with regard to lowering the rate or even cancelling the debt. They also protected the city against the Romans' excessive demands. Such behaviour by the Cloatii could have been influenced by many different factors, but perhaps the most important one was consideration of their business ventures. It was in their best interest for the city's financial situation to be stable. Consequently, they tried to protect it against requisitions and cancelled or reduced the debts. Probably their position and significance in Gytheion and the titles and honorary seats during various ceremonies were also of importance to them. Lending money, on the one hand, increased their funds and, on the other hand, probably enabled them to achieve a higher social standing than in their home city (we do not know where they originally came from).<sup>56</sup>

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mands. See also K. Hopkins, *Taxes and trade in the Roman Empire (200 B.C.–A.D. 400)*, JRS 1980, vol. 70, pp. 101–125.

<sup>54</sup> L. Migeotte, *L'emprunt public dans les cités grecques...*, p. 95, who concluded that the first loan dated back to the time of the Mithridatic War.

<sup>55</sup> L. Fezzi, *Osservazioni sul decreto di Gytheion in onore di Cloazii (IG V. 1, 1, N. 1146)*, "Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Classe di Lettere e Filosofia" 1998, vol. 3, pp. 327–337.

<sup>56</sup> F. Santangelo, *What did the Cloatii do for Gytheum? A note on Syll.<sup>3</sup> 748*, "Historia" 2009, vol. 58, pp. 363–365. The author proposes a slightly provocative theory about

When the Romans demanded money, the city of Gytheion had to incur a debt. The situation was different for the city of Messene, from which the Romans demanded almost 100,000 denars. The process which enabled the city to collect the sum is well known owing to the survival of two inscriptions. One of them contains a preliminary list of the amount which was successfully collected after a special tax was imposed on the inhabitants, and the second includes two honorific decrees for the secretary of the Messenian *synedrion*, Aristocles, who played a key role in the matter.<sup>57</sup> The texts tell us that, at a time difficult to pinpoint, the Romans demanded a large sum from the city, and they probably only set the amount. The decision on how to collect the sum was left to the Messenians, but a man (the praetor Vibius) was appointed to oversee the whole operation. The Messenians managed to convince the Romans that collecting such a huge sum would require imposing a special property tax (*eisphora*) on the inhabitants, which in turn meant that it was necessary to appraise the property of those who would have to pay the tax.<sup>58</sup> On the one hand, we have the impression that the Messenian authorities were playing for time, and on the other hand the Romans cannot have been in a great hurry, since they agreed to the solution proposed by Messene, even though they likely realised that it required time. The next steps were negotiated. We know that Aristocles managed to obtain many benefits for the city both by talking with the Romans visiting

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the city's economic situation. The fact that the borrowed sums were not large can, in his opinion, be explained by non-economic factors. The city may have needed the Cloatii to improve relations with Rome, strained by the support extended to Mithridates. This is an interesting hypothesis, but it cannot be verified. Ch. Le Roy, *Richesse et exploitation en Laconi au Ier siècle av. J.-C.*, "Ktema" 1978, vol. 3, pp. 261–266 believes that the Cloatii's euergetism was feigned.

<sup>57</sup> IG V. 1.1432–1433. See also F. Canali De Rossi, *Iscrizioni storiche ellenistiche* 3. *Decreti per ambasciatori greci al. Senato. Testo critico, traduzione e commento. Supplemento e indici*, Rome 2002, pp. 11–15. Still valuable is a long and detailed commentary published in 1914: Ad. Wilhelm, *Urkunden aus Messene*, JÖAJ 1914, vol. 17, pp. 1–120 = Ad. Wilhelm, *Kleine Schriften* II 1, pp. 467–586. P. J. Rhodes, D. M. Lewis, *The decrees of the Greek states*, Oxford 1997, pp. 85–86.

<sup>58</sup> The procedure of introducing a special tax is best known from Athens: R. Thomsen, *Eisphora. A study of direct taxation in ancient Athens*, Copenhagen 1964; M. R. Christ, *The evolution of the eisphora in classical Athens*, CQ 2007, vol. 57, pp. 53–69.

the city and by travelling to them several times (*IG V. 1.1432*, ll. 30–33). Most of those talks probably concerned the size of the contribution, which in the end amounted to 99,365 denars and 2 obols.<sup>59</sup> As we can see, when it was impossible to avoid a contribution, the Messenian authorities probably managed to negotiate a small reduction and choose the manner of collecting the necessary sum, which meant that they must have maintained a measure of autonomy.

The tax was imposed on all citizens of Messene, incomers and the Romans residing in the city, the *technitai* – i.e. Dionysian artists – as well as winners of Olympic Games. During the appraisal of the taxpayers' properties, not only their land but also the number of slaves, houses and cash they owned were taken into account. The valuation was conducted by special officials (*eklogeis*) and the amount of tax was determined on this basis. It was therefore a long and complicated process, which definitely took over a year (we know that two secretaries of the *synedrion* were in charge – apart from Aristocles, there was also Damon – *IG V. 1.1433*, l. 14 and 22). In the end, the tax amounted to 8 obols on a mina (which gave it the name *oktobolos eisphora*) – i.e. 1.33% of the value of the entire property.<sup>60</sup> The prolonged procedure made the Romans impatient. Vibius visited the city a few times, finally demanding that Aristocles submit a report. The secretary did so first before the members of the *synedrion*, and then before all of the taxpayers gathered in the theatre, where Vibius was present as well. Vibius' attendance was extraordinary, since presence at the assembly was reserved for the citizens. At the time when the report was submitted, 85% of the sum expected by the Romans had been collected – i.e. 83,575 denars. 15,797 denars, 5 obols and 9 chalci were still missing. In one of the decrees honouring Aristocles we read that the *synedrion* supported his wish to collect the necessary sum without resorting to loans (*IG V. 1.1432*, ll. 6–9). It is, therefore, possible that Vibius pressured the authorities of Messene not

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<sup>59</sup> It is worth remembering that in Gytheion the Cloatii brothers negotiated a reduction of Roman expectations a few times; it might have been similar in the case of Messene.

<sup>60</sup> L. Migeotte, *L'organisation de l'oktobolos eisphora de Messène*, in: *Le Péloponnèse d'Épaminondas à Hadrien. Colloque de Tours 6–7 octobre 2005*, ed. C. Grandjean, Paris–Bordeaux 2008, pp. 229–243; Ch. Doyen, *Pratiques comptables en Grèce hellénistique*, “Comptabilité. Revue d'histoire des comptabilités” 2014, vol. 6, pp. 42–53.

to wait for the late payers but to obtain the missing sum by other means. It cannot be ruled out that he even proposed an alternative way. In the end, the authorities of Messene did not give in to the pressure and Vibius had to make do with what had already been collected. It is worth adding that among those who were late paying the tax were some of the Romans residing in Messene.<sup>61</sup>

The manner in which the *oktobolos eisphora* was collected in Messene suggests that the city was in a good economic situation. Without too much trouble, it collected a rather large sum demanded by the Romans. The total value of the properties of all the taxed people was 1,242 talents. The city and entire Messenia must have been enjoying a quiet period, and agricultural production which determined the wealth of the region had not been disturbed in a significant manner prior to the taxation.<sup>62</sup> We do not know whether during the Roman civil wars there was any fighting on the territory of Messenia. There were no battles there during the Mithridatic War. We only know that between 83 and 81 BC a large monument was erected in the city, upon which statutes of Sulla, L. Licinius Murena and the legate Manlius Agrippa were placed. One of the possible reasons for honouring the Romans could have been the fact that they spared the city during the collection of funds or provisions for the Roman army.<sup>63</sup>

There is a consensus among historians that the contribution imposed on Messene was related to the Romans' preparations for a military expedition.

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<sup>61</sup> The Romans' properties were valued at just over 129 talents. Probably a large group of them were land owners who had *enktesis*: C. Grandjean, *Les Messéniens de 370/269 au Ier siècle de notre ère. Monnayages et Histoire*, Paris 2003, pp. 255–256. One of the mentioned Romans, Numerius, was the owner of the *Automeia* estate. It cannot be ruled out that he was a descendant of the Cloatii known from Gytheion: Ad. Wilhelm, *Urkunden...*, p. 63.

<sup>62</sup> L. Migeotte, *L'organisation...*, p. 240; C. Grandjean, op. cit., p. 254. On the economic situation of Messenia at the end of the Hellenistic Period and at the beginning of the Roman rule see P. Themelis, *The economy and society of Messenia under Roman rule*, in: *Roman Peloponnese III. Society, economy and culture under the Roman Empire: Continuity and innovation*, eds. A. D. Rizakis, Cl. Lepenioti, Athens 2010, pp. 89–110.

<sup>63</sup> M. Dohnicht, M. Heil, *Ein Legat Sullas in Messenien*, ZPE 2004, vol. 147, pp. 235–246; N. Luraghi, *The ancient Messenians. Constructions of ethnicity and memory*, Cambridge 2008, pp. 264–265.

The difficulty lies in the fact that we cannot precisely date the special tax collected in Messene. The discussion on the chronology in practice comes down to attempts to identify the two Romans present in the epigraphic documentation of the *eisphora*, the already mentioned praetor Vibius and the proconsul Memmius. Neither of them can be unequivocally identified with specific men bearing these names who held functions in Macedonia or Achaëa. In this situation, L. Migeotte proposed a wide chronological bracket, placing the event between 70 and 30 BC.<sup>64</sup> However, the fact that the appraisals of property value were given in the Greek monetary system and the amount of tax was given in denars, meaning that the collected money was exchanged into denars, suggests that the operation of collecting the special tax can be dated to the 40s or 30s BC, when the denar started to be more common in the Peloponnese and throughout Aegean Greece.<sup>65</sup> The best candidate for the Roman who forced Messene to pay the contribution seems to be Mark Antony. He controlled the Peloponnese and, as we saw earlier, he had imposed taxes on the local cities both during his preparations for the expedition against the Parthians and during the preparations for the war with Octavian.

A procedure different from Messene was used by Sparta, which also faced Roman financial demands. The city decided to announce *epidosis*, or a voluntary public collection targeted at the wealthiest citizens. The sum collected in this way was, however, smaller than the one expected by the Romans. On this occasion, they were most likely less flexible than in Messene's case and they demanded the whole amount, as the Spartan authorities were forced to borrow the missing sum from one Diotimos, who was probably a wealthy resident of the city.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> L. Migeotte, *La date de l'oktôbolos eisphora de Messène*, "Topoi" 1997, vol. 7, pp. 51–61, including an overview of all earlier dating attempts.

<sup>65</sup> C. Grandjean, op. cit., p. 252; Ch. Doyen, op. cit., p. 42, proposes the period of the second triumvirate, i.e. the years 43–31 BC.

<sup>66</sup> *IG V. 1.11*. This collection is dated approximately to the time of Marcus Antonius Creticus' activity on the Peloponnese: A. D. Rizakis, *Les cités péloponnésiennes entre l'époque hellénistique et l'Empire: le paysage économique et sociale*, in: *Recherches récentes sur le monde hellénistique. Actes du colloque international organisé à l'occasion du 60e anniversaire de Pierre Ducrey (Lausanne, 20–21 novembre 1998)*, eds. R. Frei-Stolba, K. Gex,

The case of Sicyon was also an interesting one. The city, due to problems with paying off its debts, had to sell some publicly owned pictures, which were then transported to Rome in 58 BC.<sup>67</sup> The circumstances of the city falling into debt are unknown, but there are clues that enable us to identify a possible creditor. In the letters exchanged in 61–59 BC by Cicero and Pomponius Atticus, the topic of a conflict between the latter and Sicyon appears a few times. It cannot be ruled out that the conflict was related to Atticus' inability to recover the money he had lent the city. The topic appears in the correspondence for the last time in 59 BC, and in the following year the sold pictures were brought to Rome. It therefore appears likely that the city, pressured by Atticus, decided to sell some public property.<sup>68</sup> It is worth adding that Cicero's correspondence includes even more information about the trouble his friends and clients had with recovering the money lent to Aegean Greek cities, but we know too few details to pinpoint the reasons for incurring those debts.<sup>69</sup>

In the context of the debts of Greek cities and the creditors' problems with debt recovery it is worth mentioning the *lex Clodia de provinciis consularibus* – an initiative of the tribune Publius Clodius, enacted in 58 BC. Under this law, L. Calpurnius Piso was appointed to administer Macedonia, but the province he was in charge of was expanded to include a few formally independent Greek states. One of them was Athens. It is surmised that this was aimed at giving the Roman creditors a legal instrument to pressure indebted Greek cities, which now could stand trial before a proconsul's court.<sup>70</sup> Regardless of Clodius' intentions, L. Calpurnius Piso led

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Bern 2001, p. 81; N. M. Kennell, *Spartans. A new history*, Oxford 2010, p. 183; P. Cartledge, A. Spawforth, op. cit., p. 96. The case of Tegeia is a different example of financial demands (*IG V. 2.20*), but the condition of the inscriptions prevents us from finding out the wider context.

<sup>67</sup> Plin. *Anc. Hist. Nat.* 35.127 (the pictures were taken to Rome during the aedileship of Marcus Aemilius Scaurus: T. R. S. Broughton, *The magistrates of the Roman Republic*, vol. 2, New York 1952, p. 195).

<sup>68</sup> L. Migeotte, *L'emprunt public dans les cités grecques...*, pp. 79–80 (no. 18).

<sup>69</sup> A. D. Rizakis, op. cit., pp. 83–84; L. Migeotte, *L'emprunt public dans les cités grecques...*, pp. 117–119.

<sup>70</sup> Ch. Habicht, op. cit., pp. 339–340.

various regions of Greece to ruin during his administration, which lasted until 55 BC, at least in Cicero's opinion.<sup>71</sup>

Forced by the Romans to find money, the Greeks did not have many options. Usually, they resorted to loans, special taxes, euergetes' generosity, sometimes to selling public property. Each of these methods meant taking the capital out of Greece.

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Armies of thousands of soldiers took part in the wars that rolled over Aegean Greece between 88 and 31 BC. The presence of thousands of troops resulted in a number of logistical problems and posed a challenge for the Greeks. Not all of the armies fighting on the territory of Greece had the ability to bring in supplies from other regions by sea. Some were forced to gather food and animal feed locally in Greece. This is illustrated well by Caesar's war with Pompey. As we know, after landing in Epirus in early 48 BC, Caesar was cut off by Pompey's fleet from access to the sea and from the main ports. In search of provisions, he had to first seize what was to be found in Epirus. The legates, whom he sent with small forces to Aetolia and Thessaly, in response to the embassies that had come from there with the promise to support him, were given orders to procure grains first of all.<sup>72</sup> The position of Caesar's army gradually improved as successive regions of Greece were captured. This does not change the fact that the topic of a shortage of grain and stories of what the soldiers replaced it with, is a very frequent one in Book III of his *Civil War*.<sup>73</sup>

The triumvirs cut off by Brutus and Cassius' fleet also faced problems with provisions. Initially, they took them from Thessaly, but its capacity was limited and the supplies brought in from there soon became insufficient. As a result, a legion was sent to Achaëa to gather anything they could find there. This shows how far it was sometimes necessary to travel to secure food.<sup>74</sup> Although we do not know the details, this was probably

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<sup>71</sup> Cic. *In Piso* 96: *Achaia exhausta, Thessalia vexata, laceratae Athenae*.

<sup>72</sup> Caes. *B. Civ.* 3.36.80–81.

<sup>73</sup> See e.g. Caes. *B. Civ.* 3.42, 47, 49.

<sup>74</sup> App. *B. Civ.* 4.100; 4.122; 4.108.

achieved by means of forceful requisitions. Some light on the manner in which Roman armies acquired foodstuffs is shed by Plutarch, in an anecdote concerning Mark Antony preparing for a clash with Octavian. Plutarch's great-grandfather Nicarchus used to mention "how all his fellow-citizens [of Chaeronea – M.N.P.] were compelled to carry on their shoulders a stipulated measure of wheat down to the sea at Anticyra, and how their pace was quickened by the whip; they had carried one load in this way, he said, the second was already measured out, and they were just about to set forth, when word was brought that Antony had been defeated, and this was the salvation of the city; for immediately the stewards and soldiers of Antony took to flight, and the citizens divided the grain among themselves".<sup>75</sup> As we can see, Antony, unlike Caesar or himself during the times of the Battle of Philippi, did not send off troops with the task of acquiring food, but ordered the local population to bring it to designated places, probably without paying for it. This solution was ruthless and did not take into account the actual position and capabilities of the local communities. It must have had dramatic consequences since, after the Battle of Actium, Octavian ordered the grain left over from the war to be distributed among the cities.<sup>76</sup> The confiscation of food by designated troops or the orders to supply it were very painful for the local people but at least it was organised. The actions of demoralised and undisciplined groups of soldiers were much more dangerous. We do not have information about such actions with reference to the Romans, but we do know that soldiers serving under Archelaus displayed such behaviour. More than in keeping discipline, they were interested in robbery and plunder, and they were even capable of marching for days from their camp in search of loot.<sup>77</sup> Food and animal feed were not the only products confiscated by the Romans. They needed men and animals for transportation. We know that during the siege of Athens Sulla confiscated 20,000 mules.<sup>78</sup> Seizing animals was even more painfully felt

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<sup>75</sup> Plut. *Ant.* 68.

<sup>76</sup> Plut. *Ant.* 68.

<sup>77</sup> Plut. *Sull.* 16.4.

<sup>78</sup> Plut. *Sull.* 12.2.



by the local populations than the confiscation of foodstuffs or feed, because the animals were part of a farmer's property.<sup>79</sup>

The confiscation of food etc. was not the only challenge faced by the Greek communities. The accommodation of soldiers in the cities, especially during the periods without fighting, was regarded as particularly burdensome. We know that some cities were ready to pay to avoid it.<sup>80</sup> Soldiers stationed in a city disrupted its normal functioning; they used their strength and position to force the local population to provide all sorts of services. The dangers entailed in soldiers staying in a city are well illustrated by Boeotian Chaeronea, where in the winter of 88/87 BC a Roman cohort was stationed. Its general became enamoured with a young member of the local elite. The boy was not interested in the Roman's advances and killed him, which led to riots in the city.<sup>81</sup> The presence of soldiers did not always lead to bloody conflicts, but it inevitably put the Greek hosts in the position of having to feed and supply the Roman visitors. A good example is the city of Epidaurus, where Marcus Antonius Creticus' soldiers were stationed in anticipation of the beginning of his expedition against Cretan pirates. Their presence caused grain supplies to run out. The city managed to extricate itself from the difficult situation only owing to the generosity of the *agoranomus* Euanthes, the same one who had managed to save the city from providing Antonius with soldiers.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> J. P. Roth, *The logistics of the Roman army at war (264 B.C.–A.D. 235)*, Leiden–Boston–Köln 1999, p. 168.

<sup>80</sup> This is mentioned by Cic. *Ad Att.* 26.6–7. On the topic of armies wintering in cities see G. Tibiletti, *Governatori romani in città provinciali*, "Istituto Lombardo di Scienze e Lettere. Rendiconti. Classe di Lettere e Scienze Morali e storiche" 1953, vol. 86, pp. 64–100; P. J. Roth, *op. cit.*, pp. 177–182.

<sup>81</sup> Plut. *Cim.* 1–2. A political interpretation of this event was proposed by C. S. Mackay, *Damon of Chaeronea: The loyalties of a Boeotian town during the first Mithridatic War*, "Klio" 2000, vol. 32, pp. 91–106; an attempt at a slightly more nuanced reading in: M. N. Pawlak, *O złych skutkach zimowania wojska w mieście – Damon, Lukullus i Plutarch z Cheronei (Cim. 1.1–3)*, "Klio. Czasopismo poświęcone dziejom Polski i powszechnym" 2021, vol. 60, pp. 23–55.

<sup>82</sup> *IG IV<sup>2</sup>* 65 and 66. Generally: T. Naco del Hoyo et al., *The impact of the Roman intervention in Greece and Asia Minor upon civilians (88–63 B.C.)*, in: *Transforming histor-*

It is also worth mentioning the destruction caused by military operations. In this respect, Sulla became the most infamous – for the siege of Athens and Piraeus, which lasted a few months, and then, after their conquest, owing to the damage inflicted upon them (see below). We should also remember that during the war against Mithridates’ army, cities such as Antedon, Larymna and Halai, and Eretria on Euboea were destroyed.<sup>83</sup> We know that at least in the case of Halai the inhabitants returned after the fighting had finished (Plut. *Sull.* 26.3). Archelaus’ undisciplined troops reportedly destroyed the city of Panopa and plundered Lebadeia.<sup>84</sup> During Caesar’s activity on the territory of Greece Magara was destroyed, which had stayed loyal to Pompey after the Battle of Pharsalos. In the end, it was captured following a brief period of resistance, as a result of treason, by the troops commanded by Quintus Calenus.<sup>85</sup> A few years later, in 45 BC to be precise, when Servius Sulpicius, the proconsul of Achaia representing Caesar (in 46–45 BC), mentioned his recent journey along the Saronic Gulf in one of his letters to Cicero, he listed Megara among the cities of which merely ruins remained.<sup>86</sup> Sometimes, the destruction followed from the very logic of conducting warfare. We know, for instance, that Pompey marching with his troops from Macedonia to Dyrrachium, destroyed bridges over rivers (and burnt the food he found as well) to obstruct and slow down Caesar’s march on Dyrrachium, which the latter wanted to capture along with its provisions.<sup>87</sup>

The mentioned cities, destroyed partially or completely, could not count on the same help that Athens received. We wrote earlier about the damage caused by Sulla’s soldiers at the beginning of the discussed period. There

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*ical landscapes in the ancient empires*, eds. B. Antela-Bernárdez, T. Ñaco del Hoyo, BAR Int. Ser. 1986, Oxford 2009, pp. 33–41 (in particular 34–38).

<sup>83</sup> Plut. *Sull.* 26.4. On the damage in Eretria see S. G. Schmidt, *Sullan debris from Eretria (Greece?)*, “*Rei Cretariae Romanae Fautores*” 2000, vol. 36, pp. 169–180.

<sup>84</sup> Plut. *Sull.* 16.4.

<sup>85</sup> Cass. Dio 42.14. 3; Plut. *Brut.* 6.2.

<sup>86</sup> Cic. *Ad Att.* 11.21.2. Apart from Megara, he also named Corinth, Aegina and Piraeus. Corinth was destroyed in 146 BC, while in the case of Aegina and Piraeus Sulpicius Rufus might have meant that the glory days of those cities were behind them.

<sup>87</sup> App. *B. Civ.* 2.55.

are many indications that, apart from very minor repairs right after the war ended, the first serious works did not begin for twenty years, and continued during Augustus' reign, with some buildings repaired only in the second century AD.<sup>88</sup> These works were not funded by the cities but by donations from benefactors. The first of those was Pompey, who in 62 BC stopped over in Athens on his return journey from the East. On this occasion he gifted twenty talents to the city for renovations. Some of this money may have been allocated to the reconstruction of Deigma in Piraeus.<sup>89</sup> In Pompey's footsteps followed beneficiaries of the reorganisation he had conducted in the East – i.e. rulers of small kingdoms situated on the outskirts of the *imperium Romanum*, who adopted the role that great Hellenistic rulers used to play in Athens, albeit on a much smaller scale.<sup>90</sup> One of them was Ariobarzanes II of Cappadocia, who sponsored the rebuilding of the Odeon.<sup>91</sup> Other benefactors were Ariobarzanes III of Cappadocia, Deiotarus of Galatia and Herod the Great of Judea. We also know that in 51 BC Athens was among the cities which were given money for building purposes by Caesar, who wanted to win over the gratitude and loyalty of provincial communities. Athens received 50 talents, which were to be spent on building a new agora. Two things are worth noting. Firstly, the sum matched the one gifted by Pompey a few years prior; incidentally, the latter reportedly felt concerned by Caesar's gesture. Secondly, the construction of a new agora was to stimulate the economy.<sup>92</sup> We do not know whether the work started immediately, but we know that it was not finished until Augustus' times and owing to his financial help.<sup>93</sup> The delay in the work was due to other Roman wars, in which Athens was entangled. However, it is also worth noting that Athens, which was the first victim of the Romans' brutality, also received significant help from them.

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<sup>88</sup> M. C. Hoff, op. cit., pp. 41–43 (it is possible that the only building repaired right after the siege was the Tholos).

<sup>89</sup> Plut., *Pomp.* 42.11.

<sup>90</sup> Ch. Habicht, op. cit., pp. 335–336.

<sup>91</sup> Vitruvius 5.9.1; *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 3427 and 3426.

<sup>92</sup> Suet., *Caes.* 28.1; Cic., *Ad Att.* 6.1.25.

<sup>93</sup> *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 3175. More on this topic in: M. Pawlak, *Herodes Attik. Sofista, dobroczyńca, tyran*, Toruń 2015, pp. 24–28.

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In the history of Aegean Greece, the first century BC was full of dramatic events. In the course of just over fifty years, four wars were fought on its territory, in which some Greek communities participated voluntarily and some forcibly. Thousands of soldiers moved across specific regions of Greece, in need of food, animal feed, firewood, timber for building siege engines, and money. As we have seen, Roman generals often collected all this locally, draining the cities of Greece of men, money and foodstuffs. In 1937, J. A. O. Larsen wrote: “if Greece was destroyed by wars, it was by the wars of the first century B.C., which in their terrible drain on the country and other parts of the Eastern Mediterranean area can almost be compared to the Hannibalic War in Italy”.<sup>94</sup> We can attempt to underplay the scale of this drainage, arguing that it was always local and never engulfed all of Aegean Greece.<sup>95</sup> This is without doubt a correct point. There were regions such as Thessaly, Boeotia, Attica, where war operations were conducted more frequently than in others. On the basis of literary sources, we might conclude that only Aetolia, Thessaly, Boeotia and Acarnania regularly supplied troops that fought under the orders of Roman generals. However, we know from epigraphic sources that this was not the case and that Roman generals demanded to be provided with troops even by small cities on the Peloponnese. It can therefore be concluded that all Greeks, to a different extent, were affected by the realities of war.

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<sup>94</sup> J. A. O. Larsen, *Roman Greece*, in: *An economic survey of Ancient Rome*, vol. 4, ed. T. Frank, Baltimore 1937, p. 422.

<sup>95</sup> S. E. Alcock, *Graecia capta. The landscapes of Roman Greece*, Cambridge 1993, p. 14.