



## Summary :

Immediately after Attalus III of Pergamon died and his kingdom was bequeathed to Rome, Aristonicus, possibly an illegitimate son of King Eumenes II, was proclaimed King of Pergamon and adopted the dynastic name Eumenes. The Revolt of Aristonicus against Rome lasted from 133 until 129 BC and involved most of the cities of Asia Minor. It resulted in the defeat of Aristonicus and was considered to have a national or social character.

## Date

133-129 BC

## Geographical Location

Asia Minor

## 1. Introduction

The evaluation of the events connected with the Revolt of [Aristonicus](#) and its suppression by the Romans is particularly difficult because of the piecemeal and often contradictory character of historical sources, which are openly pro-Roman. Epigraphic evidence is much more informative, as it reports the extent of operations, which concerned almost the entire Asia Minor.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The Death of Attalus III and the Outbreak of the Revolt

Towards the end of the spring or in early summer of 133 BC [Attalus III](#), the King of [Pergamon](#) (139-133 BC), son of [Eumenes II](#) (197-145 BC) and successor of his uncle [Attalus II](#) (145-139 BC), died unexpectedly at the age of 33; he was childless.<sup>2</sup> According to his will, his kingdom was bequeathed to Rome,<sup>3</sup> with the exception of Pergamon and, obviously, most Asia Minor cities, which were liberated.<sup>4</sup> Immediately after the death of Attalus III, Aristonicus, possibly an illegitimate son of King Eumenes II and a concubine from Ephesus, was proclaimed King of Pergamon and adopted the dynastic name Eumenes.<sup>5</sup> It remains unknown whether Aristonicus was actually a member, even an illegitimate one, of the royal family or just an usurper of the throne, as there are historical sources reporting both possibilities.<sup>6</sup>

## 3. Military and Diplomatic Successes and Failures of Aristonicus in the First Year of the Revolt (133-132 BC)

Aristonicus was not in Pergamon. According to the available information about Attalus III and the murders of his relatives and other aristocrats from Pergamon, he must have been exiled to some safe place.<sup>7</sup> Because of the fact that the Thracians were his main allies, the supposition that he started from Thrace to assume the throne seems quite reliable.<sup>8</sup> He was proclaimed king in the small town Leukai, on the outskirts of [Smyrna](#). More successes followed, such as the capture of Myndus, [Colophon](#) and Samos, while he possibly controlled [Cyme](#) as well. Aristonicus must have attempted to capture Pergamon, but obviously failed.<sup>9</sup> The city authorities had taken strong measures against the capture of the city; they had awarded the title of the citizen to mercenaries and sojourners, the title of the sojourner to freedmen and slaves and confiscated the property of those who had left the city and befriended Aristonicus.<sup>10</sup>

One of the first incidents of the revolt was the naval battle between the fleets of Aristonicus and Ephesus off the coast of Cyme.<sup>11</sup> The usurper was defeated and made to flee inland after he had evacuated the recently occupied cities.<sup>12</sup> These events must have taken place in the first of the five years of the revolt, between the summer and the autumn of 133 BC.

Aristonicus returned to the coast after he had gathered a field army of slaves and poor, which he called Heliopolitae (Sun-citizens), and started to besiege the Greek cities of Asia Minor coasts with considerable success for the two following years. He occupied



[Thyateira](#), Apollonis and [Stratonicea](#) in Caria or Stratonicea on Kaikos. Apart from Leukai and possibly Cyme, [Phocaea](#) was on his side. According to epigraphic evidence, several cities, such as Sestos in the Thracian Peninsula, [Cyzicus](#) in the Propontis, Smyrna in Ionia, [Elaea](#) (harbour and seaport of Pergamon and anchorage of the royal fleet of the Attalids) and Bargylia in Caria must have been besieged by Aristonicus and their Thracian allies. With the possible exception of Elaea, the sieges did not have the outcome Aristonicus desired.<sup>13</sup>

In the early 132 BC the revolt was fully spread. [Strabo](#) did not exceed when, on evaluating the situation, he said that almost the entire subsequent province of Asia was involved in the war. It is obvious that this must be connected with the oratorical phrase used by [Sulla](#) during the congress of Ephesus in 85 BC, when he accused the Greeks of initially joining Aristonicus before abandoning him and allying with Rome, when he had already been defeated.<sup>14</sup> The king had lots of supporters, strong fortresses and a newly built fleet (which occupied Samos) after the defeat in Cyme.<sup>15</sup> He had occupied territories beyond the kingdom he claimed, as he controlled large parts of [Ionia](#). His strategy aimed at controlling even regions belonging to the kingdom before the [Peace of Apamea](#) (188 BC), such as Smyrna, Colophon and possibly Cyme.<sup>16</sup> He even threatened the coastal cities of Thrace and the Aegean islands.

According to Strabo and several epigraphs, numerous cities reacted to the progression of the king. Among these cities were certainly [Ephesus](#), Pergamon and [Halicarnassus](#), which were interested in maintaining their autonomy.<sup>17</sup> The Greeks of Asia formed a front together with the king of Bithynia [Nicomedes II Epiphanes](#) and the king of Cappadocia [Ariarathes V](#), and tried to react.

#### 4. The Reaction of Rome and the Captivity of Aristonicus (131-129 BC)

The news about the death of Attalus III and his will arrived in Rome in the early summer of 133 BC during the political crisis the city was suffering because of the conflict between the Senate and tribune Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, the canvasser of the agrarian reforms, who was killed shortly later. A citizen of Pergamon called Eudemos brought the will to Rome so that it could be validated and the freedom of Pergamon be confirmed. He also carried a part of the treasure of the deceased king. Tiberius Gracchus immediately realised that the possible acceptance of the will could help the financing of his agrarian reforms.<sup>18</sup> So, he required that the will be accepted by the people of Rome, thus going over the Senate's head.

The unsettled conditions that followed and led to the murder of the tribune prevented the Romans from dealing with the matter immediately and seriously. Finally, the Senate, undoubtedly under the pressure of several Greek cities, which sent ambassadors appealing for help, accepted the will in 132 BC<sup>19</sup> and without delay sent five senators (legati), who must have had military duties as well, as they participated in operations along with the Greeks.<sup>20</sup> At the head of the senators was the assassin of Tiberius Gracchus, Poplius Scipio Nasica, who died shortly later and was buried in Pergamon.<sup>21</sup> Before that, the counsellor of Tiberius Gracchus, the stoic philosopher Blossius of Cyme, had abandoned dangerous Rome and fled to Aristonicus.<sup>22</sup>

In the summer of 132 BC the four remaining ambassadors returned to Rome. The reaction of the Senate was instant and very strong: the consul of 132 BC Poplius Popilius Laena imposed the resolution that defined the actions of generals in Asia Minor, which became the region where the two consuls, Poplius Licinius Crassus Mucianus and Lucius Valerius Flaccus, who were separately claiming it, would carry out their operations.<sup>23</sup> Finally, Licinius Crassus was sent at the head of a large number of veterans, who landed at Asia Minor without problems.<sup>24</sup> Despite the initial success, which made Aristonicus evacuate Thyateira and take cover in Apollonis, the Roman consul, who was interested mainly in snatching and carrying the royal treasure of the [Attalids](#), was ambushed and killed by the Thracian allies of Aristonicus. The incident must have taken place somewhere between Elaea and Myrina in [Aeolis](#), possibly during the retreat to Pergamon. The King of Cappadocia Ariarathes V died there as well.<sup>25</sup> M. Perperna, consul in 130 BC, hastened to go to the province and completed spectacularly the operations: Aristonicus was restricted to Stratonicea in Caria or Stratonicea on Kaikos,<sup>26</sup> was besieged and arrested, after the defenders of the city had previously run out of all their provisions. The victor was not fortunate to rejoice at his triumph because shortly later he fell sick and died in Asia.

#### 5. The End of the Revolt (129-127 BC)



In 129 BC the Senate sent consul Manlius Acilius at the head of a committee of ten ambassadors to organise the province of Asia. However, the operations continued inland, where the supporters of Aristonicus fought to their death. The ambassador Quintus Caepio campaigned against [Lydia](#) and western [Caria](#) and Manlius went to Mysia Abaeitis, while battles were given in eastern Caria as well. Finally, Manlius, between road works and battles, managed to trounce the last pouches of resistance (even by poisoning the water of the wells), before he triumphantly returned to Rome in 126 BC.<sup>27</sup>

According to sources, there are three versions of Aristonicus' end, although they do not contradict with each other. Strabo says that he died in prison, Orosius reports that he was strangled in the prison of Rome, while Velleius Paterculus claims that he was dragged by the chariot of Manlius Acilius in Tullianum and died, thus participating in the triumph of the Roman consul.<sup>28</sup>

## 6. Coins Minted by Aristonicus

Numismatic sources and their interpretation by modern research offer a clear picture of the activities of Aristonicus during his brief majesty.<sup>29</sup> It seems that the court of the usurper always changed sides, depending on the developments in the war. The first coins date from the second year of his kingdom and come from the mint of Thyateira (132 BC), while the two following years the coins came from Apollonis and the fifth and last year they came from Stratonicea in Caria or Stratonicea on Kaikos.<sup>30</sup> It is believed that in the first year of his reign no coins were minted.<sup>31</sup>

## 7. The Character of the Revolt: National War or Social Insurrection

The social character of the revolt was hotly disputed by historians. The earliest research undeniably accepted the truly radical character of the Revolt of Aristonicus.<sup>32</sup> Diodorus Siculus refers to these events immediately after the account of the great revolt of the slaves in Sicily (139-132 AD).<sup>33</sup> The enlistment of the slaves and the poor on the side of Aristonicus, the promise to found Heliopolis and the presence of the stoic philosopher Blossius of Cyme on his side were considered parts of a specific social program that aimed openly to overthrow the status quo.<sup>34</sup> The historical circumstances of the period<sup>35</sup> as well as the explosive social conditions of the economic crisis and the wide imposition of slavery in Asia Minor inland triggered the dramatic prevalence of the revolt.<sup>36</sup> It is very likely that the reaction against the Romans, who mainly used the slaves in production, took the form of a radical message about the emancipation of slaves.<sup>37</sup>

This widely spread opinion on the events was doubted relatively recently by a series of studies that display mainly the 'nationalistic' and dynastic character of the deeds of Aristonicus, considering that whatever the radical social message, at the best of times it was a secondary point of the revolt and at the worst of times a declaration of Aristonicus' despair, when he had already lost most of his hopes to ascend to the throne.<sup>38</sup> The traditional character of the Macedonian veterans of the Attalids is particularly stressed, as their ancestors had settled mainly in Asia after the kingdom was dissolved in 166 BC. It was these veterans who supported Aristonicus and helped the kingdom survive.<sup>39</sup> Some scholars also believe that a part of the Attalid aristocracy and possibly a considerable number of the capital's citizens obeyed the dynastic law, which proves that the supporters of Aristonicus came from various social classes.<sup>40</sup>

Those who consider the radical message of Aristonicus a desperate action before his defeat have to reverse the sequence of the events reported by Strabo. They have to date the naval battle of Cyme in 132 or 131 BC and exalt it to a decisive turning point in the course of the war. However, this is not the case in either Strabo or any other source.<sup>41</sup>

Right from the start Aristonicus incited an extensive insurrection, which coincided with a general social commotion in Asia Minor, and managed to voice a series of social demands coming from different social groups: the slaves, the poor, the Macedonians and other Attalid veterans, who maintained their dynastic ideology, parts of the aristocracy of Pergamon, anti-Roman elements, such as the citizens of Phocaea,<sup>42</sup> and, of course, a large part of the native populations that were able to realise that Rome would aggravate their situation. The governors of the Greek cities lacked this discernment and, as a result, they reacted to Aristonicus, charmed by the vague and chancy slogan of defending their independence and freedom against Rome.<sup>43</sup>



1. The main source of information about the revolt is Strabo's passage (14.1.38), who was based on Posidonius' work. The rest of the written sources, which are very laconic were collected by Cardinali, G., "La morte di Attalo III e la rivolta di Aristonico", *Saggi di Storia antica ed Archeologia offerti a G. Beloch* (Roma 1910), p. 275-276. Eighteen inscriptions related to the revolt, were found in Pergamon, Metropolis of Ionia, Elaia, Kyzicos, Claros, Priene, Bargyia, Bargasa, Hallicarnassus, Mythimna of Mytilene, Delos, and Cassope in Epirus. See Brun, P., "Les cités grecques et la guerre: l'exemple de la guerre d'Aristonico", in Couvenches, J.-C. – Fernoux, H.-L. (ed.), *Les cités grecques et la guerre en Asie Mineure à l'époque hellénistique, Actes de la journée d'études de Lyon, 10 octobre 2003* (Tours 2004), p. 44-52. Jones, C., "Events surrounding the bequest of Pergamon to Rome and the Revolt of Aristonico: new inscriptions from Metropolis", *JRA* 17 (2004), p. 470-474 (inscription from Metropolis). The famous decree of Pergamon in honour of Diodorus Paspasus (*JGRR* IV, ap. 292) has been related to the period after the first Mithridatic War (83 BC) and is irrelevant to Aristonico's revolt. See Jones, C.P., "Diodoros Paspasus and the Nikephoria of Pergamon", *Chiron* 4 (1974), p. 183-205 and "Diodoros Paspasus Revisited", *Chiron* 30 (2000), p. 1-14. The earlier date (129 BC) was supported by Musti, D., "I Nikephoria e il mondo panellenico di Pergamo", *RFIC* 126 (1998), p. 5-40, followed also by Bussi, S., "La monetazione di Aristonico", *RIN* 98 (1997), p. 110.
2. Strabo 14.1.38. For the date see Cardinali, G., "La morte di Attalo III e la rivolta di Aristonico", *Saggi di Storia antica ed Archeologia offerti a G. Beloch* (Roma 1910), p. 285 and Gruen, E., *The Hellenistic World and The Coming of Rome* (Berkeley 1984), p. 595, footnote 100, with whom most scholars agree. A different view is suggested by Sherwin-White, A.N., *Roman Foreign Policy in the East, 168 B.C. to A.D. 1* (London 1984), p. 83, note 97, who dates the death of the king in September 134 AD and Carcopino, J., *Autour des Gracques*<sup>2</sup> (Paris 1967), p. 34-38, who prefers a date towards the end of summer 133 AD, after the assassination of Tiberius Gracchus.
3. The written sources, mainly the latin writers, refer directly to the king's will, which is not mentioned in the epigraphic testimonies. See App., Mith. 62. Sulla refers to the will in front of the cities' representatives in Ephesus: Titus Livius, *Periochae* 58-59. Florus 1.35. Velleius Paterculus, *Hist. Rom.* II.4. Justin., *Hist. Univ.* XXXVII.4. The will's authenticity was rejected later by Mithradates VI, king of Pontus (Sallustius, *Historiae* IV.69 M). See Raditsa, L., "The Historical Context of Mithradates' Description of the Status of Asia in Sallust's Letter of Mithradates", *Helikon* 9-10 (1969-1970), p. 689-694. According to Will, E., *Histoire politique du monde hellénistique*<sup>2</sup> I (Paris 1984), p. 418, the king must have drawn up his will in the beginning of his reign, in an attempt to save his kingdom from Aristonico's possession: Frankfort-Liebmann, T., "Valeur juridique et signification politique des testaments faits par les rois hellénistiques en faveur des romains", *RIDA* 13 (1966), p. 73-94 and Carrata-Thomas, F., *La rivolta di Aristonico e le origini della provincia d'Asia* (Turin 1968), p. 30-35.
4. *OGIS* 338, with an analysis by Delplace, C., "Le contenu social et économique du soulèvement d'Aristonico: opposition entre riches et pauvres?", *Athenaeum* 56 (1978), p. 21-28, where the information about the city's liberation is given. Regarding the other cities of Asia Minor, the provision for the liberation is deduced by Titus Livius' Epitome (Titus Livius, *Periochae* 58), as well as their vigorous resistance against Aristonico: Vavrinek, V., *La révolte d'Aristonico* (Praha 1957), p. 55. Kallet-Marx, R., *From Hegemony to Empire. The Development of the Roman Imperium in the East from 148 to 62 B.C.* (Berkeley 1995), p. 101. According to Bernhard, R., *Polis und römische Herrschaft in der späten republik (149-31 v. Chr.)* (Berlin 1985), p. 285-294, there is no evidence, which proves that according to the will all the cities were liberated. Equally thoughtful are Hansen, E. V., *The Attalids of Pergamon*<sup>2</sup> (Ithaca 1971), p. 149, and Brun, P., "Les cités grecques et la guerre: l'exemple de la guerre d'Aristonico", in Couvenches, J.-Chr. – Fernoux, H.-L. (ed.), *Les cités grecques et la guerre en Asie Mineure à l'époque hellénistique, Actes de la journée d'études de Lyon, 10 octobre 2003* (Tours 2004), p. 27, who refer only to Pergamon's freedom. See however the case of Ephesus, where the year 133 BC inaugurates a new era: Rigsby, K., "The Era of the Province of Asia", *Phoenix* 33 (1979), p. 39-47 and especially Adams, J.P., "Aristonico and Cistophoroi", *Historia* 29 (1980), p. 311-314. He quotes the possibility that the declaration of the cities' liberation was made by the Roman Senate, in an effort of the Romans to gain allies in the first stages of the war: Jones, C., "Events surrounding the bequest of Pergamon to Rome and the Revolt of Aristonico: new inscriptions from Metropolis", *JRA* 17 (2004), p. 483.
5. This conclusion is based on the numismatic evidence, a detailed account of which follows (see footnote 28). Some of the scholars think that the revolt begun while Attalus III was still alive: Hopp, J., *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der letzten Attaliden* (München 1977), p. 121-125. This claim cannot be based on Strabo's quotation (14.1.38), where it is reported that the declaration of Aristonico as a king took place after Attalus' III death. Moreover, M. Sartre adds, rather exaggerating, that the declaration of Aristonico as a king took place the day of Attalus' III death, see M. Sartre *L'Anatolie hellénistique de l'Égée au Caucase* (Paris 2003), p. 209,
6. It is recognised that he had royal blood by Florus 1.35. Orosius, *Hist.* V.10.1. Justin., *Hist. Univ.* XXXVII.4. Sallustius, *Historiae* IV.69 M. Eutropius IV.20. Strabo, 14.1.38, Titus Livius, *Periochae* 58-59, remaining neutral, while Plutarch (Vit. Flam. 21.10) quotes that he was a son of a musician and a singer. Embezzler of the throne is regarded by Velleius Paterculus, *Hist. Rom.* II.4. Diod. Sic. 35.2.26 reports that he contests for a kingdom, which did not belong to him.
7. Diod. Sic. 34.3.
8. Aristonico in Thrace: Potter, D.S., "Where Did Aristonico's Revolt Begin?", *ZPE* 74 (1988), p. 293-295. Jones, C., "Events surrounding the bequest



of Pergamon to Rome and the Revolt of Aristonicos: new inscriptions from Metropolis”, *JRA* 17 (2004), p. 484. Kallet-Marx, R., had a different view, see Kallet-Marx, R., *From Hegemony to Empire. The Development of the Roman Imperium in the East from 148 to 62 B.C.* (Berkeley 1995), p. 99, footnote. 11.

9. This is concluded by the epigramme in honour of Athena, which was published by Hiller von Gaertigen, F., *Historische griechische Epigramme* (Bonn 1926), no. 111, where there is a reference to the arrival of the numerous Aristonicus’ army. Pergamon was probably not under Aristonicus control at the end of 133 BC, when the famous decree *OGIS* 338 was issued. Respectively, the city was free in 132 BC, when P. Scipion Nasica, one of the five Roman legati, died and was buried there: *IGR* IV, 1681. It is also correctly emphasized by V. Vavrinek, the fact that Aristonicus did not had the royal Attalid treasure, which was taken by the Romans in 131 BC. Vavrinek, V., “Aristonicus of Pergamum: Pretender to the Throne or Leader of a Slave Revolt?”, *Eirene* 13 (1975), p. 118, see footnote. 25.

10. *OGIS* 338. See Vavrinek, V., *La révolte d’Aristonicos* (Praha 1957), p. 16-20. Rigsby’s effort to attribute this decree to another city and to date it after the war is not convincing see Rigsby, K., “Provincia Asia”, *TAPhA* 118 (1988), p. 130-131.

11. According to Rostovtseff, M.I., *Histoire économique et sociale du monde hellénistique* (Paris 1989, French translation of the original work: *The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, Oxford 1941), p. 570 and 1138, footnote. 79 and Jones, C., “Events surrounding the bequest of Pergamon to Rome and the Revolt of Aristonicos: new inscriptions from Metropolis”, *JRA* 17 (2004), p. 484, Ephesus’ navy did not consist an independent naval force of the city, but was probably part of the royal Attalid navy.

12. Brun, P., “Les cités grecques et la guerre: l’exemple de la guerre d’Aristonicos”, in Couvenches, J.-C. – Fernoux, H.-L. (ed.), *Les cités grecques et la guerre en Asie Mineure à l’époque hellénistique, Actes de la journée d’études de Lyon, 10 octobre 2003* (Tours 2004), p. 28-29.

13. See Quotation A. For the possible capture of Elaia see Robert, L., *Documents d’Asie Mineure* (Paris 1987), p. 477-484.

14. Strabo 14.1.38· App., Mith. 62.

15. Coarelli, F., “Aristonico”, in Virgilio, B. (ed.), *Studi Ellenistici XVI* (2005), p. 217-218.

16. Kallet-Marx, R., *From Hegemony to Empire. The Development of the Roman Imperium in the East from 148 to 62 B.C.* (Berkeley 1995), p. 102.

17. Ephesus resisted at the beginning of the war: Strabo 14.1.38. Pergamon see above footnote 9. Smyrna was threatened, but escaped from danger and allied with the Romans. Halicarnassus also supported the Romans: see the inscription commented by Migeotte, L., *Les souscriptions publiques en Grèce ancienne* (Paris 1992), no. 78.

18. Plut. Ti. Gracch. 14.2· Titus Livius, *Periochae* 58.

19. This date is undoubtedly based on an copy of Senatus Consultum Popillianum (de Pergamensis), which was found in Pergamon: *OGIS* 435. There the consul of the year 132 BC is recorded, that is Poplius Popilius Laenas, according to a new reading of the document by Wörrle, M., “Pergamon um 133 v. Chr.”, *Chiron* 30 (2000), p. 566-568. A fragmentary copy of the same edict, may have been included in the inscription (*OGIS* 436): see Drew-Bear, T., “Three Senatus Consulta concerning the Province of Asia”, *Historia* 21 (1972), p. 75-87.

20. The military duties of the legati are emphasized by Jones, C., “Events surrounding the bequest of Pergamon to Rome and the Revolt of Aristonicos: new inscriptions from Metropolis”, *JRA* 17 (2004), p. 482 and 484, based on an inscription from Metropolis. There is a possibility that the legati were accompanied by military forces from the Province of Macedonia. The governor of Macedonia, M. Cosconius might have participated in the hostilities, since he is honoured in an inscription from Erythrae: Engelmann, H. – Merkelbach, R., *Die Inschriften von Erythrai und Klazomenai*, I. 1-200 (*IK* 1, Bonn 1972), no. 48. See also Schleussner, B., «Die Gesandtschaftsreise P. Scipio Nasicas im Jahr 133/2 v.Chr. und die Provinzialisierung des Königreichs Pergamon», *Chiron* 6 (1976), p. 106. On the contrary, o Kallet-Marx, R., *From Hegemony to Empire. The Development of the Roman Imperium in the East from 148 to 62 B.C.* (Berkeley 1995), p. 106-107 and Mileta, C., “Eumenes III und die Sklaven. Neue Überlegungen zum Charakter des Aristonikosaufstandes”, *Klio* 80 (1998), p. 58-59, underline the strict diplomatic character of the expedition.

21. On the tomb of Scipio see inscription *IGR* IV 1681 and Schleussner, B., “Die Gesandtschaftsreise P. Scipio Nasicas im Jahr 133/2 v.Chr. und die Provinzialisierung des Königreichs Pergamon”, *Chiron* 6 (1976), p. 97-111· Tuchelt, K., “Das Grabmal des Scipio Nasica in Pergamon”, *IstMitt* 29 (1979), p. 309-319. The legati might have departed from Rome already in 133 BC (before the acceptance of the will) and they remained in Asia until May of 132 BC: Jones, C., “Events surrounding the bequest of Pergamon to Rome and the Revolt of Aristonicos: new inscriptions from Metropolis”, *JRA* 17 (2004), p. 482.



22. Plut., *Vit. Ti. Gracch*, 20.4.
23. Cic., *Phil.* 11.18. Βλ. Kallet-Marx, R., *From Hegemony to Empire. The Development of the Roman Imperium in the East from 148 to 62 B.C.* (Berkeley 1995), p. 107.
24. According to historic and epigraphic evidence, the navy consisted of Greek ships: naval force was sent by Halicarnassus [Migeotte, L., *Les souscriptions publiques en Grèce ancienne* (Paris 1992), ap. 78] and possible Byzantium (Tacitus, *Annales* XII.62).
25. The death of the roman consul consisted a very important incident and was reported by many ancient sources, see Frontinus, *Stratagemata* 4.5.16- Gell. I.13.11- Justin., *Hist. Univ.* 37.1.2- Strabo 14.1.38- Orosius V.10.3- Valerius Maximus III.2.12. Crassus was buried in Smyrna: Eutropius IV.20. The consul's interest in the royal treasure is mainly noticed by Justin., *Hist. Univ.* 36.4.8. According to Coarelli, F., "Aristonico", in Virgilio, B. (ed.), *Studi Ellenistici XVI* (2005), p. 215, this disagreeable incident was interpreted as a hostile propaganda against the Gracchae, since the roman consul was their ally.
26. The scholars initially thought that it is about Stratonicea on Kaikos, see Niese, B., *Geschichte des griechischen und makedonischen Staaten III* (Gotha 1903), p. 369- *RE 2* (1893), column 964, see entry "Aristonikos" (F. Wilcken)- Broughton, T.R.S., "Stratonicea and Aristonicus", *CPh* 29 (1934), p. 252-254- Magie, D., *Roman Rule in Asia Minor I* (Princeton 1950), p. 153, footnote 21 and Hansen, E. V., *The Attalids of Pergamon*<sup>2</sup> (Ithaca 1971), p. 147. An opposite view supporting Stratonicea in Caria was suggested by Foucart, P., *La formation de la province romaine d'Asie* (Paris 1903), p. 297-339- Chapot, V., *La province préconsulaire d'Asie* (Paris 1904), p. 81 and Cardinali, G., "La morte di Attalo III e la rivolta di Aristonico", *Saggi di Storia antica ed Archeologia offerti a G. Beloch* (Roma 1910), p. 309, footnote 2. L. Robert was convinced that Aristonicus was restricted to Stratonicea on Kaikos (Robert, L., *Villes d'Asie Mineure*<sup>2</sup> (Paris 1962), p. 261-268), based on the numismatic evidence presented by Robinson, E.G., "Cistophori in the name of King Eumenes", *NC 6<sup>e</sup> série XIV* (1954), p. 1-8. Since then this view was accepted. However, recently F. Coarelli based on the fact that many of the war operations took place in Caria, claimed again that it concerns Stratonicea in Caria see Coarelli, F., "Aristonico", in Virgilio, B. (επιμ.), *Studi Ellenistici XVI* (2005), p. 227-229.
27. For the succession of the war operations after Aristonicus' arrest see Sherwin-White, A.N., "Roman Involvement in Anatolia 167-88 B.C.", *JRS* 77 (1977), p. 62-75 and Briant, P. – Brun, P. – Varinlioglu, E., "Une inscription inédite de Carie et la guerre d'Aristonico", in Bresson, A. – Descat, R. (ed.), *Les cités d'Asie Mineure occidentale au II<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Bordeaux 2001), p. 241-259. Poisoning the water of the wells: Florus 1.35.7.
28. Strabo 14.1.38- Velleius Paterculus 2.4.1. This last version is rejected by Magie, D., *Roman Rule in Asia Minor II* (Princeton 1950), p. 1042, note 25. An inscription from Cassope of Epirus honours a group of mercenaries, who accompanied Aristonicus captive in Rome: Merkelbach, R., "Epirotische Hilfstruppen im Krieg der Römer gegen Aristonico", *ZPE* 87 (1991), p. 132.
29. E.G. Robinson was the first, who recognized Aristonicus' coinage in cistophoric coins bearing the name of Eumenes see Robinson, E.G., "Cistophori in the name of King Eumenes", *NC 6<sup>e</sup> série XIV* (1954), p. 1-8. See also Kleiner, F.S. – Noe, P., *The Early Cistophoric Coinage* (Numismatic Studies 14, New York 1977), p. 103-106, pl. XXXVIII- Kampman, M., "Aristonico à Thyatire", *RN 6<sup>e</sup> série XX* (1978), 38-42- Adams, J.P., "Aristonico and Cistophori", *Historia* 29 (1980), p. 302-314- Sanchez-Léon, M.L., "Aristonico: basileus Eumenes III", *Hispania Antiqua* 87 (1986), p. 135-157- Bussi, S., "La monetazione di Aristonico", *RIN* 98 (1997), p. 107-122.
30. A series of coins, which bear the signs BA / ΣΥ / ΑΡ, were dated by Franke, P.R., *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum Sammlung von Aulock* 14 (Berlin 1967), no. 6670 and Kraay, C.M., *Greek Coins and History* (London 1969), p. 7 to the first year of Aristonicus' activity, before he received the dynastic name Eumenes, when his mint was in Thyateira. This view was rejected by D. Kienast, "Ein Silbermünze aus der Zeit des Aristonikokrieges", *Historia* 25 (1977), p. 250-252, and Adams, J.P., "Aristonico and Cistophori", *Historia* 29 (1980), p. 304-308, both based on convincing arguments
31. Bussi, S., "La monetazione di Aristonico", *RIN* 98 (1997), p. 122. According to this theory, the first year of Aristonicus' reign lasted only for a short period, since the beginning of the year according to Attalid calendar was in October. [Samuel, A.E., *Greek and Roman Chronology* (München 1972), p. 125-127 and 174-176]. A different view is presented, by Kampman, M., "Aristonico à Thyatire", *RN 6<sup>e</sup> série XX* (1978), p. 38-42 and Sanchez Léon, M.L., "Aristonico: basileus Eumenes III", *Hispania Antiqua* 87 (1986), p. 135-157, who believe that Aristonicus' coinage began in the first year of his reign at Thyateira. This suggestion however is opposed to Strabo's quotation, according to which the capture of Thyateira took place in a later phase of the revolt.
32. See mainly Wilcken, F., "Aristonico", in *RE II* (1896), columns 962-964- Rostovtseff, M.I., *Histoire économique et sociale du monde hellénistique* (Paris 1989, trans. *The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, Oxford 1941), p. 569-574- Vavrinek, V., *La révolte d'Aristonico* (Praha 1957)- Vogt, J., *Ancient Slavery and the Ideal of Man* (Oxford 1974), p. 69-73 and 93-102- Mossé, C., "Les utopies égalitaires à l'époque hellénistique", *RH* 241 (1969), p. 297-308- Hansen, E. V., *The Attalids of Pergamon*<sup>2</sup> (Ithaca 1971) p. 150- Delplace, C., "Le contenu social et économique du soulèvement d'Aristonico: opposition entre riches et pauvres?", *Athenaeum* 56 (1978), p. 20-53- Basile, M., "Le città greche di Aristonico", *Seia* 2 (1985), p. 104-116.



33. Diod. Sic. 34-35.2.26. Bücher, K., *Die Aufstände der unfreien Arbeiter 143-129 v. Chr.* (Frankfurt-am Main 1874) was the first scholar, who classified Aristonicus' revolt together with the slaves' wars, which shattered Sicily and Italy during the first half of the 2nd century BC. It is worth noting, Brun's comment (Brun, P., "Les cités grecques et la guerre: l'exemple de la guerre d'Aristonicos", in Couvenches, J.-C. – Fernoux, H.-L. (ed.), *Les cités grecques et la guerre en Asie Mineure à l'époque hellénistique, Actes de la journée d'études de Lyon, 10 octobre 2003* (Tours 2004), p. 31), regarding the absence of any reference to the slaves on the Roman written sources. On the contrary, there is an account on a "war of Asia" between a certain king and Rome.
34. Tarns' view (Tarn, W.W., "Alexander the Great and the Unity of Mankind", *Proceedings of the British Academy* 19 (1933), p. 141-166), according to which, Aristonicus and his supporters were inspired by the utopian travel narrative of the philosopher Iambulus, regarding the city of equality, Heliopolis, has been rejected: see Bömer, F., *Untersuchungen über die Religion der Sklaven in Griechenland und Rom, Teil III: Die wichtigsten Kulte der griechischen Welt* (Mainz 1961), p. 396 ff and Finley, M.I. – Finley, M., "Utopianism Ancient and Modern", in *The Use and Abuse of History* (London 1975), p. 178-192. The connection between the sun and the social justice exists in the eastern religions as well as in the Greek philosophical theories. See generally Mossé, C., "Les utopies égalitaires à l'époque hellénistique", *RH* 241 (1969), p. 297-308 and *Η Τυραννία στην Αρχαία Ελλάδα* (Αθήνα 1989), p. 205-213: «Aristonicus, or the tyrant of Helios ο Αριστόνικος ή ο τύραννος του Ηλίου». For the role of Blossius of Cyme see Dudley, D.R., "Blossius of Cumae", *JRS* 31 (1941), p. 94-99. On the contrary o Africa, Th.W., "Aristonicus, Blossius of Cume and the City of Sun", *International Review of Social History* 6 (1961), p. 110-124, thinks Blossius' presence a secondary issue. However Cizek, E., "L'esprit militant des Stoïciens et le premier état communiste de l'histoire", *Latomus* 65 (2006), p. 49-61, exaggerated by characterising Aristonicus and Blossius, the first communist of the history..
35. Slaves' revolt in Sicily, Delos and Athens, resistance against the Romans in Macedonia and the failure of the Seleucids to be reorganised.
36. Cardinali's view, that the slaves' revolt had begun in Pergamon before Attalus' death with Aristonicus in charge, is wrong. See Cardinali, G., "La morte di Attalo III e la rivolta di Aristonico", *Saggi di Storia antica ed Archeologia offerti a G. Beloch* (Roma 1910), p. 269-320,
37. An important detail on this account is a quotation in a degree from Claros, to a city of slaves in Colophon's area, which resisted to its capture by the Colophonians, long after the revolt's end: Robert, J. – Robert, L., *Claros I. Décrets hellénistiques* (Paris 1989), no. 1. This view was presented also by Paradiso, A., "La città degli sciavi", in *Forme di dipendenza nel mondo greco* (Bari 1991), p. 131-136 and Jordanov, S., "Doulopolis. Sur l'origine d'une image mythologique", *Dialogues d'Histoire Ancienne* 19 (1993), p. 173-190. The equation between the city of slaves and Aristonicus' supporters is rejected by Ferrary, J.-L., "Rome et les cités grecques d'Asie Mineure au IIe siècle", in Bresson, A. – Descat, R. (επιμ.), *Les cités d'Asie Mineure occidentale au IIe siècle* (Bordeaux 2001), p. 99.
38. Bömer, F., *Untersuchungen über die Religion der Sklaven in Griechenland und Rom, Teil III: Die wichtigsten Kulte der griechischen Welt* (Mainz 1961), p. 396 ff. Africa, T.W., "Aristonicus, Blossius oc Cume and the City of Sun", *International Review of Social History* 6 (1961), p. 110-124. Dumont, J.-C., "À propos d'Aristonicos", *Eirene* 5 (1966), p. 189-196 (who rejects the social character of this revolt). Carrata-Thomas, F., *La rivolta di Aristonico e le origini della provincia d'Asia* (Turin 1968). Rubinsohn, W.Z., "The Bellum Asiaticum. A Reconsideration", *Storia Antica. Istituto Lombardo* 107 (1973), p. 561-562. Will, E., *Histoire politique du monde hellénistique*<sup>2</sup> 1 (Paris 1984), p. 422-423. Rigsby, K., "Provincia Asia", *TAPhA* 118 (1988), p. 124-125. Kallet-Marx, R., *From Hegemony to Empire. The Development of the Roman Imperium in the East from 148 to 62 B.C.* (Berkeley 1995), p. 99-100 and Sartre, M., *L'Anatolie hellénistique de l'Égée au Caucase* (Paris 2003), p. 209-210. Similar views were earlier supported by Foucart, P., *La formation de la province romaine d'Asie* (Paris 1903), p. 297 ff., and o Magie, D., *Roman Rule in Asia Minor I* (Princeton 1950), p. 30 ff.
39. Collins, F., "The Macedonians and the Revolt of Aristonicus", *AncW* 3 (1980), p. 83-87. Sanchez-Leon, M.L., "Les colonies militaires de Lydie et la révolte d'Aristonicos", *Index* 20 (1992), p. 195-213. Ferrary, J.-L., "Rome et les cités grecques d'Asie Mineure au IIe siècle", i Bresson, A. – Descat, R. (ed.), *Les cités d'Asie Mineure occidentale au IIe siècle* (Bordeaux 2001), p. 94.
40. See the references of footnote 37.
41. This argument is correctly emphasized by Mileta, C., "Eumenes III und die Sklaven. Neue Überlegungen zum Charakter des Aristonikosaufstandes", *Klio* 80 (1998), p. 57-58 and Coarelli, F., "Aristonico", in Virgilio, B. (ed.), *Studi Ellenistici XVI* (2005), p. 220-221, who defend successfully the plausibility and the historical validity of Strabo's narration. Vogt, J., *Ancient Slavery and the Ideal of Man* (Oxford 1974), p. 98, footnote 18, noted that the verb «κατακεκλημένον» used by Strabo (14.1.38), as regards the Aristonicus' call to the meagres and slaves, describes an act of the past, implying that the social contest of the revolt existed already from the early phases, before the naval battle of Ephesus.
42. There is a possibility, that Phocaea joined Aristonicus, because of the hostility against Rome, since the city suffered by the cruel treatment of the Roman army in 190 BC, during the war with Antiochus: Titus Livius 32.1-14. Brun, P., "Les cités grecques et la guerre: l'exemple de la guerre d'Aristonicos", στο Couvenches, J.-Chr. – Fernoux, H.-L. (ed.), *Les cités grecques et la guerre en Asie Mineure à l'époque hellénistique, Actes de la journée d'études de Lyon, 10 octobre 2003* (Tours 2004), p. 42.



43. Greek cities' activity was mainly directed by political motives, as P. Brun proved , see Brun, P., "Les cités grecques et la guerre: l'exemple de la guerre d'Aristonicos", στο Couvenches, J.-C. – Fernoux, H.-L. (ed.), *Les cités grecques et la guerre en Asie Mineure à l'époque hellénistique, Actes de la journée d'études de Lyon, 10 octobre 2003* (Tours 2004), p. 40-44.

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	F. Daubner, Bellum Asiaticum. <a href="http://www.sehepunkte.de/2005/07/pdf/6239.pdf">http://www.sehepunkte.de/2005/07/pdf/6239.pdf</a>

#### Sources

Strabo 14.1.38.

#### Quotations

Strabo 14.1.38.

After Smyrna one comes to Leucaea, a small town, which after the death of Attalus Philometor was caused to revolt by Aristonicus, who was reputed to belong to the royal family and intended to usurp the kingdom. Now he was banished from Smyrna, after being defeated in a naval battle near the Cymaeae territory by the Ephesians, but he went up into the interior and quickly assembled a large number of resourceless people, and also of slaves, invited with a promise of freedom, whom he called Heliopolitae. Now he first fell upon Thyateira unexpectedly, and then got possession of Apollonia, and then set his efforts against other fortresses. But he did not last long; the cities immediately sent a large number of troops against him, and they were assisted by Nicomedes the Bithynian and by the kings of the Cappadocians. Then came five Roman ambassadors, and after that an army under Publius Crassus the consul, and after that Marcus Perpernas, who brought the war to an end, having captured Aristonicus alive and sent him to Rome. Now Aristonicus ended his life in prison; Perpernas died of disease; and Crassus, attacked by certain people in the neighborhood of Leucaea, fell in battle. And Manius Aquillius came over as consul with ten lieutenants and organized the province into the form of government that still now endures.

#### Chronological Table

Spring 133 BC: Attalus' III death.

Summer 133 BC: Aristonicus was proclaimed King of Pergamon in Leucaea. The information of Eumenes' will to the benefit of the



Romans reached Rome.

End of summer 133 BC: assassination of Tiberius Gracchus in Rome.

End of 133 BC: Aristonicus was defeated in Cyme.

132 BC: Success inland, call to the slaves and the lower classes. Conquest of Thyateira, Apollonis and other forts by Aristonicus. Alliance of the Greek cities, the kings of Bithynia, Cappadocia, and probably of Pamphlagonia, against Aristonicus. The five legati from Rome arrived in Asia Minor.

131 BC: The consul of this year, Poplius Licinius Crassus, arrived in Asia Minor accompanied by army. He was killed by the Cappadocian Ariarathes V, in operations between Elaia and Myrina

130 BC: Arrival of the consul Manlius Acilius. Aristonicus was arrested in Appollonis after a besiege. Mercenaries from Epirus participated in the force, which took Aristonicus to Rome. M. Perperna died and was buried in Pergamon.

129-127 BC: The consul Manlius Acilius organizes the province of Asia and managed to eliminate the last pouches of resistance in eastern and western Caria, Mysia Abaeitis and Lydia . Simultaneously he supervised the road works.

126 BC: Manlius Acilius triumphantly returned to Rome. Aristonicus was dragged by the chariot of Manlius Acilius, and then he was strangled in prison in Rome

## Chronological Table

*List A' : List of the cities, which participated in Aristonicus' revolt, according to written and epigraphic sources and nomismatic evidence:*

Halicarnassus : Migeotte, L., *Les souscriptions publiques en Grèce ancienne* (Paris 1992), no. 78 (fund raising for the hire of a boat, in order to help the Romans).

Apollonis: Strabo 14.1.38 (capture by Aristonicus). Cistophoric coins during the third and fourth year of the revolt: Robinson, E.G., "Cistophori in the name of King Eumenes", *NC 6<sup>e</sup> série XIV* (1954), p. 1-8.

Bargasa: Briant, P. – Brun, P. – Varinlioglu, E., "Une inscription inédite de Carie et la guerre d'Aristonicus", in Bresson, A. – Descat, R. (ed.), *Les cités d'Asie Mineure occidentale au IIe siècle* (Bordeaux 2001), p. 242.

Bargylia: Blümel, W., *Die Inschriften von Iasos*, 2, Nr. 219-640 (*IK 28.2*, Bonn 1985), no. 612-613 (threaten by hazzards and sent troops to help Manlius Acilius).

Byzantium: Tacitus, *Annales* II 62.2 (help from the governor of Macedonia Cosconius).

Gordos: *SEG 34* (1984), no. 1198 (participation to the war against Aristonicus).

Delos: *IG XI 4*, 713 (decree in honour of the five roman ambassadors who visited Delos in 132 BC).

Elaia: *IGRR IV*, 1692 (the city was in danger during the Aristonicus' revolt).

Ephesus: Strabo 14.1.38 (victory in a naval battle against Aristonicus).

Thyateira: Strabo 14.1.38 (capture by Aristonicus). Cistophoric coins (BA ΕΥ ΘΥΑ) during the second year of the revolt: Robinson, E.G., "Cistophori in the name of King Eumenes", *NC 6<sup>e</sup> série XIV* (1954), p. 1-8.



Cassope (Epirus): *SEG* 36 (1986), no. 555 (mercenaries from the city participated in a guard which accompanied Aristonicus to Rome).

Colophon: Florus 1.35 (conquest of Colophon by Aristonicus).

Claros: Robert, J. – Robert, L., *Claros I. Décrets hellénistiques* (Paris 1989), no. 1 (war operations of the Colophonians against the city of the slaves).

Cyzikos: *IGRR* IV, 134 (siege by Aristonicus, alliance with the Romans)

Cyme: Strabo 14.1.38 ( the place of the naval battle between the Ephesians and Aristonicus. The Ephesians won.).

Labranda: *Bulletin épigraphique* 1974, no. 166.

Leucae: Stabo 14.1.38 (declaration of Aristonicus' revolt ανακήρυξη της εξέγερσης του Αριστονίκου).

Lydia (eastern): *Bull. épigraphique* 1963, no. 220.

Maionia: *TAM* V 1, 528 (guard under the command of an aristocrat from Sardeis).

Mythemna: *IG* XII, Suppl. 116 (participation to the war of Asia supporting the Romans).

Metropolis: Engelmann, H. – Dreyer, B., *Die Inschriften von Metropolis I: Die Dekrete für Apollonios (IK 63, Bonn 2003)* (participation of men from the city supporting the Romans).

Myndos: Florus 1.35 (capture by Aristonicus).

Mylasa: Gellus I 13.11.

Mysia Abaitis: Blümel, W., *Die Inschriften von Iasos, 2*, Nr. 219-640 (*IK* 28.2, Bonn 1985), no. 613 (campaign of Manlius Acilius).

Pergamon: *OGIS* 338 (measures during urgent war situation), *OGIS* 435 ( copy of senatus consultum, according to which Rome accepts the will): Hiller von Gaertigen, F., *Historische griechische Epigramme* (Bonn 1926), no. 111 (dedication to Athena by one of the survivors from Aristonicus invasion).

Samos: Florus 1.35 (capture by Aristonicus).

Sistos: *OGIS* 339 (threats by the Thracians , alliance with the Romans).

Smyrna: Aelius Aristides Αίλιος Αριστειδης 19.11· Tacitus, *Annales* 4.55.1 (alliance with the Romans against Aristonicus).

Stratonikeia of Caria, or Stratonikeia on the Caicus: cistophoric coins bearing the inscription BA ΕΥ ΣΤΡΑ, dated to the fifth year of the revolt κατά το 5ο έτος της εξέγερσης: Robinson, E.G., "Cistophori in the name of King Eumenes", *NC* 6<sup>e</sup> série XIV (1954), p. 1-8.

Phocaea: Justin, *Hist. Univ.* XXXVIII 1 (ambassadors from Massalia convinced the Romans, that they should not destroy the city, although Phocaea was one of Aristonicus' allies).

*List B' : Types of cistophoric coins bearing the name of Eumenes III:*

Year of reign	Workshop	Ethnic	Inscription	Symbols
2	Thyateira	ΘΥΑ	BA ΕΥ Β	thunder,



				unbearded head
3	Apollonis	ΑΠΟΛ	BA EY Γ	thunder, Apollo or Dionysus'unbearded head or bearded head of Zeus or Asclepius
4	Apollonis	ΑΠΟΛ	BA EY Δ	thunder, unbearded head (Apollo or Dionysus) and bearded head of Zeus or Asclepius
4	Stratonikeia	ΣΤΡΑ	BA EY E	thunder, unbearded head (Apollo or Dionysus) and bearded head of Zeus or Asclepius