



Pompey's Campaign in Asia Minor

Summary :

The Asian campaign of Pompey took place in Asia Minor and the surrounding areas. It lasted from 66 to 62 B.C. and marks the final phase of the 3rd Mithridatic war. Pompey took over the command from Lucullus and, after finishing the campaign, proceeded to permanent settlement of Italians in the province.

Date

66-62 BC

Geographical Location

Asia Minor

1. The war with Mithridates VI

After defeating the [pirates](#), Pompey was in Cilicia (66 B.C.) when news came that the [Lex Manilia](#) had given him, instead of Lucullus, the command against [Mithridates VI](#). Mithridates' response to these news was to ask for a truce but the terms proposed by [Pompey](#) proved unacceptable. The king therefore withdrew into the interior of the kingdom of Pontus. He managed to escape a siege at Dasteira (Nikopolis/Purk) near the Euphrates, but was subsequently defeated at the Belgazi gorge. At this point Mithridates was deserted by his erstwhile ally [Tigranes the Great](#), king of Armenia and the Parthians too, who began negotiations with Pompey. He was obliged therefore to flee to Colchis. Pompey sent a force in pursuit but himself turned into [Armenia](#). He overthrew Tigranes but then restored him to his kingdom as a [friend and ally of Rome](#). The Romans then wintered (Dec. 66 B.C.) on the banks of the river Cynus where an attack by the neighbouring Albani was repulsed and they were obliged to submit. The nearby Iberians first made an insincere parley as a preliminary to an attack but they were anticipated by Pompey who defeated them in the spring of 65 B.C. near the river Pelorus and they too eventually came to terms. A Roman incursion into [Colchis](#) itself then followed but Mithridates continued to be elusive and Pompey, returning to deal with a rebellion in Albania, left the Roman fleet blockading the Black Sea ports. The [Albani](#) were dealt with in a battle at the river Abas. The rest of the year was devoted to stabilising relations with tribes of the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea. There were also negotiations with the Parthians who had had treaties with Rome since the time of Sulla but were now worried about Pompey's growing power and his attitude towards Armenia. Pompey now withdrew from Albania and spent the winter of 65-64 B.C. in lesser Armenia where he reduced a number of fortresses belonging to Mithridates.

2. Pompey's expedition and Mithridates' death

Early in 64 B.C. Pompey moved to Amisus where he began the process of making arrangements for the [administration of the east](#). From here he began to make his way towards Syria and Arabia where his legates had already been operating. He crossed the Halys river into Cappadocia. Then after a visit to Commagene and Cilicia, Pompey passed into Syria. At Antioch most of his time was consumed with administration. Moving on to Damascus he intervened in the Jewish civil war. Both protagonists, Aristoboklus and Hyrcinus presented themselves to him. The matter was not resolved however and Pompey laid siege to Aristobulus in Jerusalem. The fall of the city brought the war to an end. Before that, however, news had come that Mithridates, despairing of further resistance, had committed suicide. Pompey, hurried to Amisus to view the embalmed body and complete his administrative arrangements. Then, with the work finished, he returned to Rome in 62 B.C.¹



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1. App. *Mith.* 97-113. Dio 36.42-37.20. Plut. *Pomp.* 30-41. Jos. *AJ* 14.57-73.

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Webliography :

	Mithridates VI Eupator http://www.livius.org/mi-mn/mithridates/mithridates.htm
	The death and burial of Mithridates VI http://www.pontos.dk/publications/papers-presented-orally/oral-files/
	Third Mithridatic War http://www.unrv.com/roman-republic/third-mithridatic-war.php

Glossary :

	Albani, Albanians
Συμπληρώστε την περιγραφή στην γλώσσα μετάφρασης	
	lex Manilia
A law passed in Rome in 66 B.C., on the initiative of Gaius Manilius. The law mandated that Pompey took command of the war against Mithridates instead of Lucullus.	

Sources

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Chronological Table

66 B.C. The Lex Manilia gives Pompey the command against Mithridates VI. He expells Mithridates from Pontus, receives the surrender of Armenia and defeats the Iberians.

65 B.C. Pompey defeats the Albani. Involved in affairs of Armenia and Parthia.

64 B.C. Pompey advances into Syria.

63 B.C. He is involved in Jewish war, he captures Jerusalem. Mithridates dies.

62 B.C. Pompey returns to Rome.