

## *The Society of Ancient Military Historians*

**President: Prof. Jonathan P. Roth, Vice-President: Dr. Benjamin M. Sullivan, Secretary/Newsletter Editor: Dr. Ioannis Georganas, Book Reviews Editor: Prof. Lee L. Brice**

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### Message from the President

Living and working in California's Silicon Valley, I am often confronted with the idea that history, and especially ancient history, is irrelevant to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. One clear lesson of conflicts of the last decade is that technology, while important, is not as important as the age-old realities of war. As our membership well knows, the lessons learned from the study of ancient war are all too relevant to the increasingly dangerous world in which we live.

The Chinese military theorist Sunzi wrote "Know Yourself, Know Your Enemy. A Hundred Battles, A Hundred Victories." This is key to success is as true today as when he wrote it. Those of us who read the Greek and Roman military writers know that their view was essentially the same. There are lessons on the importance of understanding an enemy's culture in Herodotus, on factionalism and war in Thucydides, in politics and war in Polybius and in fighting religious fanaticism in Josephus.

Ancient warfare is not simply of interest to those in the Armed Forces. When democracies fight, it is necessary for all citizens to be as aware as possible. The ancients knew that the study of history was vital both to the military leaders and to the citizen body. This is something that is as relevant today as it was 2000 years ago. For some of us, the study of ancient war is our vocation, for

others our avocation. For all of us, it is a joy. What we learn and share, however, is not just a question of professional or amateur interest. We should all try to broaden public knowledge, especially with reference to contemporary military challenges. Knowledge is power, and today this is truer than ever.

*Jonathan P. Roth*  
President, Society of Ancient Military Historians

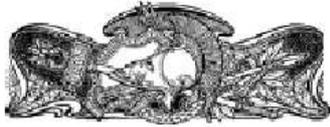
### Message from the Secretary

It is my pleasure to present the latest issue of *Res Militares*, which includes a very interesting comment by our President, Prof. Jonathan Roth, on the relevance of ancient warfare studies to today's political and military challenges, as well as five very informative book reviews.

I am also very happy to report that the number of members of our official Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/192741547422716/>) keeps growing; currently there are over 170 members! At the same time, feel free to follow us on Academia.edu: <https://arkaion-bellum.academia.edu/SocietyofAncientMilitaryHistorians>

As always, I am more than happy to receive any inquiries and feedback, as well as information about upcoming conferences, events, CFPs, books, and so forth.

*Ioannis Georganas*  
Secretary, Society of Ancient Military Historians



### **Books Available for Review**

#### ***Res Militares*, Society for Ancient Military Historians, Books Received, Fall 2014**

The following books have been received for review (those with an asterisk are already assigned to reviewers). Qualified volunteers should indicate their interest by sending a message to ll-brice@wiu.edu, with their last name and requested author in the subject line. They should state their qualifications (both in the sense of degrees held and in the sense of experience in the field concerned). Volunteers are expected to be familiar with the topics and will submit reviews of no greater than 800 words within 120 days. Graduate students are welcome to volunteer, but should contact their supervisor to ascertain that a review is appropriate.

\*Allison, Penelope M. *People and Spaces in Roman Military Bases*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Pp. 452; ISBN 9781107039360, \$120, hdbk.

\*Clark, Jessica. *Triumph in Defeat: Military Loss and the Roman Republic*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. xvii, 240. ISBN 9780199336548, \$74.00 hdbk.

Crawford, P. *The war of the Three Gods: Romans, Persians and the Rise of Islam*. Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword Military, 2014. Pp. xxii, 220; ISBN 9781848846128, \$25.00, hdbk.

Fields, Nic. *AD 69: Emperors, Armies & Anarchy*. Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword Military, 2014. Pp. xxii, 220; ISBN 9781781591888, \$34.95, hdbk.

Grainger, John D. *Roman Conquests: Egypt & Judea*. Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword Military, 2013. Pp. xvii, 206; ISBN 9781848848238, \$39.95, hdbk.

Grainger, John D. *The Rise of the Seleukid Empire (323-223 BC)*. Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword Military, 2014. Pp. xiii, 230; ISBN 9781783030538, \$34.95, hdbk.

\*Haynes, Ian. *Blood of the Provinces: The Roman Auxilia and the Making of Provincial Society from Augustus to the Severans*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp. 381; ISBN 9780199655342, \$150.

Mayor, Adrienne. *The Amazons: Lives and Legends of Warrior Women Across the Ancient World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014. Pp. 483; ISBN 9780691147208, \$29.95, hdbk.

Murray, William M. *The Age of Titans: The Rise and Fall of the Great Hellenistic Navies*. Oxford: OUP, 2012. Pp xxvii, 356, ISBN 9780195388640, 47.95, hdbk.

Nordling, John G.. *Religion and Resistance in Early Judaism, Greek readings in 1 Maccabees and Josephus*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing, 2011. 358 p., \$34.99, ISBN 9780758626677, hdbk.

\*Sarantis, Alexander and Neil Christie, eds. *War and Warfare in Late Antiquity: Current Perspectives*. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2013. Pp. xxv + viii, 1084. \$329.00, hdbk.

Silva, L. *Viriathus and the Lusitanian Resistance to Rome 155-139 BC*. Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword Military, 2013. Pp. 327, ISBN: 9781781591284, \$39.95.

Roberts, Mike and Bob Bennett. *The Spartan Supremacy (412-371 BC)*. Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword Military, 2014. Pp. xiv, 285; ISBN 9781848846142, \$39.95, hdbk.

Ruggiero, Paolo de. *Mark Antony: A Plain Blunt Man*. Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword Military, 2013. Pp. 295; ISBN 9781783462704, \$39.95, hdbk.

Rusch, Scott M. *Sparta at War: Strategy, Tactics, and Campaigns, (550-362 BC)*. London: Frontline Books, 2011. Pp. 242; ISBN 9781783030118, \$24.95, hdbk.

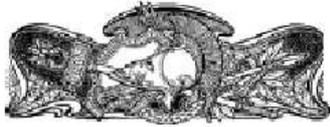
Sampson, Gareth C. *The Collapse of Rome: Marius, Sulla & the 1st Civil War (91-70BC)*. Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword Military, 2013. Pp. 284; ISBN 9781848843264, \$29.95.

Publishers interested in submitting books for review should send them to the book review editor: Lee L. Brice, History Dept. MG438, Western Illinois University, 1 University Cir., Macomb, IL 61455.

#### **SPECIAL OFFER**

Routledge are delighted to offer the members of the Society of Ancient Military Historians a 20% discount on all their History books when ordered through [Routledge.com](http://www.routledge.com). Please enter discount code **SAMH14** at the checkout to take advantage of your discount.\*

\*The discount is an online only and is valid until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014. Please visit <http://www.routledge.com/u/SAMH14/> to view the range of titles available from Routledge History.



### **Book Reviews**

**Lynda Telford, *Sulla. A Dictator Reconsidered*, Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword, 2014, ISBN 9781783030484, 289 pages, 39.95.**

Reviewed by Borja Antela-Bernardez,  
[Borja.Antela@uab.cat](mailto:Borja.Antela@uab.cat)

During the last few years, Penn & Sword has adopted interesting and welcomed editorial policies, trying to give a wide diffusion, within studies related to Military History, of questions and themes that until now had been the usual fieldwork of just scholars but not of a general audience. That is the case in Lynda Telford's *Sulla*.

In fact, in the role as a key historical character of his time of Sulla has usually been disregarded, as the scanty bibliography about him actually shows (especially if we compare it with that related to other characters of his time or importance). In this sense, Telford's book seems to have from the very beginning the goal of reclaiming a better understanding and wider attention to one who can be considered, without many doubts, the first leader in managing the Roman Republic in a way like the later Imperial format. Likewise, the main goal of Telford's *Sulla* is to present a biographical account in a traditional way, and oriented to readers who do not need to have previous knowledge about the individual or his historical age. Probably, this is also the best thing one can observe about the book. The author's attempt, as it seems, is to show the living person, like a kind of a modern Plutarch – the general, the politician or the cruel dictator (2). And that is what Telford offers: an easy and sometimes clear portrait of the different moments of Sulla's life, with the constant additions of the author's judgement, useful in a way as far as she uses them to compare Sulla with other characters of his age or close to that, like Marius or Caesar. Nevertheless, Telford's judgements usually justify Sulla's behaviour although most of the time this would mean a misunderstanding or a misinterpretation of the facts (with examples like the rough siege of Athens and its later looting, or even more, Sulla's responsibility for the proscriptions).

In this way, the book is readable, especially for those who are unfamiliar with the complex period of the first Civil War of the Late Roman Republic, and a careless reader can also consider it as well written. However, it fails to take into account for the perspectives and accounts both of the ancient sources and the specific modern bibliography. After all, Telford is not a scholar in ancient history, so the book is not a definitively accurate account

of what has been considered one of the more complex periods of the Roman Republic. In fact, beyond Sulla's biography and Telford questionable commentaries on it, not much remains. As far as the sources' treatment is critical, with vague references to them (nor even quotation of the concrete passages Telford uses to write her opinions – she does not quote the editions used by her in the bibliography), and no use of historical commentaries of the ancient authors, one may wonder from where the information used by Telford to elaborate her account came. The modern bibliography is also poor and lacking. It is surprising to note that not Badian's (1970) nor Hinard (1985) or even Carcopino (1931), to quote three great scholars who have treated the subject in length, are included in the bibliography. Surprising is, also, to note that, apart from Keaveney (2005), Beesley (1921), Lanzani (!) (1975) and Balsdon's classical paper in the *Journal of Roman Studies* about Sulla Felix (41, 1951, 1-10), the bibliographical references are almost all dedicated to general aspects of Roman Culture and History, but not actually to Sulla or the crisis of the Late Roman Republic (not to mention the use of the entries from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, instructive in themselves but avoidable for an author who seeks to write a full account of an historical period like that of Sulla). Finally, to quote fiction like that of McCullough or Holland's books side by side with the historical studies is, to me, an error and a clue of Telford concept of what an historical account would meant.

To sum up, the book has a clear value as a tool of interest to a general audience who has a chance to learn about the complex historical figure of Sulla with an easy and understandable account. And this is a great success of the book. Even the more or less accurate commentaries or reflections added by Telford can be of interest to the general audience. The expert reader or anyone who knows well the Roman Republic, however, may surely avoid spending time in reading what is not much more than Telford's personal judgement about an age she seems to know not as well as she needs to in writing a biography.

**Christopher Matthew and Matthew Trundle (eds), *Beyond the Gates of Fire: New Perspectives on the Battle of Thermopylae*. Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword Military, 2013. Pp. xii, 228; ISBN: 9781848847910, \$32.95.**

Reviewed by M. Iliakis, [miliakis@gmail.com](mailto:miliakis@gmail.com)

The present edited volume is a new contribution to the much discussed and debated topic of the Battle at Thermopylae during Xerxes' invasion of Greece. The



book addresses a wider audience, maintaining a scholarly form. The actual battle does not figure in all the chapters and those interested in straightforward military history might be disappointed.

In the opening paper Christopher Matthew offers a comprehensive narrative of the events leading to the battle at Thermopylae and a brief account of the battle itself. Matthew includes in his paper an analysis of Greek and Persian armament and their respective combat techniques. He also draws attention to the notorious absence of Persian cavalry at the battle of Marathon.

Matthew Trundle's first contribution to the volume is an exposition of the various historical traditions regarding Thermopylae and the Spartans' ultimate demise. According to Herodotus the Spartans were killed on a small hill by Persian arrows. For Diodorus they died on the course of a suicide mission in the Persian camp trying to kill Xerxes. Trundle also refers briefly to the commemoration of Thermopylae dead as well as other war casualties in other Greek conflicts. Commemoration of the battle at Thermopylae is a recurring topic of this volume as most of the articles deal with it partially in the very least.

George (Rip) Rapp's article on Thermopylae topography is perhaps the most interesting one from an academic scholarly perspective. Rapp argues convincingly that the area has changed considerably since 480 BCE and the battlefield is now invisible. Therefore, using modern topography at Thermopylae in order to reconstruct the battle is a moot point.

Matthew, in his second contribution, tackles the topic whether Thermopylae was a suicide mission or not. His argumentation against this assertion is fairly convincing and sensible. He is quite right to note that the Greek forces of Thermopylae and Artemisium combined were substantial (about 75,000 troops). Mathew also makes plausible arguments about Leonidas and his contingent holding a defensive blocking position even when they were acting as a rearguard for the retreating allied troops. However, two points need further consideration. Matthew's 300,000 – 400,000 figure for the Persian army, while a serious reduction from Herodotus' 1,700,000 (7.184 – 186), is still too high. The Seleucid Empire, which at its peak controlled the lion's share of the territory formerly belonging to the Achaemenids, never mobilized a six figure army in a single campaign. According to Polybius the Seleucid army numbered 68,000 men in the battle of Raphia (5.79) and 50,500 at the Daphne festival (30.39); according to Livy (37.37.9), Antiochus III the Great fielded 74,000 men at the battle in

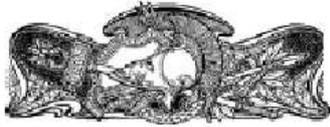
Magnesia (190 BCE). Matthew argues that the rations for the Persians mentioned by Herodotus were insufficient for the needs of a campaigning army causing hunger. Polybius (6.39.13) gives almost similar portions for the Roman army, which conquered most of the Mediterranean.

Amelia Brown in her article focuses on the commemoration of Thermopylae. She distinguishes three genres of the evidence: a) monuments erected in situ and epigrammes composed before Herodotus' *Histories*; b) literary sources (Herodotus and Diodorus); and c) later authors such as Cicero and Plutarch and the Spartan festival. Brown includes briefly in her discussion the battle's commemoration (or lack thereof) in Sparta and the battle's reception in antiquity.

Peter Gainsford discusses Homeric echoes in Herodotus' *Histories*. He lists numerous echoes ranging from the very obvious to the very vague. The cross-reference between Herodotus book 7 and Homer is very useful and well documented. Gainsford closes his article with a discussion on possible connections between Thermopylae and Troy. Peter Londey's paper focuses on other, less famous battles that were fought at Thermopylae in ancient and modern history. Drawing from E. Kase (Kase et al (eds.), *The Great Isthmus Route* (Dubuque, 1991), Londey notes that the Thermopylae pass is not the only route into central Greece from the Sperchios Valley. An alternative route exists, from the west of Heraklia Trachinia heading south towards Amphissa and from there to the Corinthian Gulf at Cirrha. However the route followed by the Persian army in 480 BCE is closer to the sea, a major logistical factor for an invading army, allowing supplies to be brought in by ships.

The volume closes with Trundle's second contribution, a discussion of the motif of 'glorious defeat' which rendered Thermopylae "the paradigm of a disaster that became a celebration of victory in defeat". Trundle offers numerous examples of the impact of the Thermopylae story on ancient Greeks and later western tradition. He focuses on the British media coverage of the battle of Orakau (March 1864), where the British army besieged and defeated 300 Maori warriors, women and children. Trundle notes that "the British saw themselves at a Thermopylae, but not as the defending Spartans at all". However, this identification did not affect the British officers and troops who completed their mission successfully. Trundle concludes with two American parallels, the siege of Alamo and Custer's defeat at The Little Big Horn.

**C. D. Gordon, *The Age of Attila: Fifth-Century Byzantium and the Barbarians*. Revised edition, with a**



**New Introduction and Notes by David S. Potter. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013. Pp. xx, 263. ISBN 9780472035786. \$24.95 (paperback).**

Reviewed by Kathryn Jasper, [kljaspe@ilstu.edu](mailto:kljaspe@ilstu.edu)

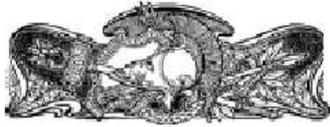
C.D. Gordon published his book on the tumultuous fifth century in 1960, making it one of the earliest monographs to treat the subject. As David Potter states in his introduction to the revised edition, Gordon wrote *The Age of Attila* long before the ground-breaking work of A.H.M. Jones and Peter Brown, among others. Gordon's book has long been mandatory reading for any scholar of the late Roman world, but David Potter's edition brings Gordon's text up-to-date in an expanded version that provides new notes discussing current scholarship, and a more extensive bibliography. Potter replaces Gordon's appendices with an appendix entitled "The Historians and Their Sources," which offers concise descriptions of the ancient authors – Olympiodorus, Priscus, Malchus, Candidus, and John of Antioch – and their works, as well as a concordance between the editions that Gordon cited and more recent editions.

Aside from this end matter, Potter retained most of the material in Gordon's original edition, with some minor changes to Gordon's translations (which are indicated in the notes). *The Age of Attila* remains a military and political history told primarily through Gordon's English translations of the aforementioned ancient authors' accounts, introduced by the author and peppered by his own assessments in a remarkably seamless narrative. The fifth century has received more attention of late, and rightly so. Contemporaries during this period observed great and irreversible changes in the Empire – civil wars and usurpers, the devastation of Barbarian invasions, and the permanent loss of the West. Gordon's monograph approaches the subject in six chapters, chronologically arranged, which document decline in the West beginning with the death of Theodosius I in 395.

Chapter 1, "Imperial Government," true to its title interprets the complexities of late Roman bureaucracy and shifts in policy and practice since Constantine, as well as the function and composition of the military in both East and West. In this chapter, Gordon sets up the infrastructure that Barbarian invasions will disrupt, while simultaneously documenting the sizeable presence of Germanic soldiers. Chapter 2, "The Dynasty of Theodosius I and the Barbarians in the West" presents a nuts-and-bolts narrative that would be useful to students new to the history of the four monarchs who reigned in the first half of the fifth century, and the political plotting of their generals. Chapter 3, "The Huns," stands as the

longest of the book and traces the mythical origins of these peoples in the minds of Romans to their subsequent rise to power under Attila, ending with their abrupt fall after the Battle of Nedeo in 454. Priscus' extraordinary account consumes most of the chapter, but the text does not entirely speak for itself. Gordon skillfully arranges Priscus' story to focus on responses to Hunnic incursions at the political center. Ultimately, Gordon reveals that Attila played an important role in the political maneuverings of the imperial retinue. Chapter 4, "The Vandals and the Collapse of the West" describes the Vandal invasion of North Africa and the effects of its loss on the West. Chapter 5, "The East, 450-491" begins with the death of Theodosius II in 457 as the book turns to the East and discusses the central question posed at the imperial court: "[W]hether the German supremacy at the Western court was to be duplicated in the East or not," (133). Gordon concentrates on rebellion and civil war in the East during the second half of the fifth century, with special emphasis paid to the reign of Zeno. Chapter 6, "The Ostrogoths," returns to the West and recounts the rise of Theodoric with an emphasis on battles with his rival, Theodoric Strabo. The chapter and the book end with some explanation as to why Gordon stops at the dawn of the sixth century. The author argues that whereas in the fifth century the West fell from Roman control completely, in the following century what remained of the Empire became wholly independent of foreign (and in particular, Barbarian) control.

The editor made no adjustments in response to the criticisms the book received when it was first published; some reviewers considered the absence of Jordannes, among other authors, a serious error. Jordannes now appears solely in the new notes. Gordon's book is also part of an older school of thought that gave more credit to Barbarian invasions for decline in the West than to civil war. Last, readers should be aware that among scholars of Late Antiquity its treatment of Germanic peoples is similarly dated. Walter Goffart rejected the term "Germanic" in the 1970s, a position he has reasserted most recently in his book *Barbarian Tides* (2006). Scholars today generally understand that these diverse peoples lacked a common culture, let alone a Germanic one. Nonetheless, *The Age of Attila* serves as more than a historiographical artifact. Potter's new notes bring the book into the twenty-first century by situating Gordon's text within modern scholarly debates and pointing readers to relevant scholarship. The notes also correct assumptions Gordon made before new evidence had come to light. Potter, for example, points out in the notes for Chapter 1 that we now have far more information about the origins of the Huns, and he explains how that new evidence affects Gordon's arguments.



Gordon's book would be enormously helpful to graduate students and teachers purely for the political narrative, and not least of all, as a source for lengthy English translations of the fifth-century documents. However, this reviewer advises that one not read this book without careful attention to the notes.

**Powell, Lindsay. *Eager for Glory: The Untold Story of Drusus the Elder, Conqueror of Germania*. 2nd ed. Forward by Graham Sumner. Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword, 2013. Pp. xxxvi, 234, ISBN: 9781783030033, \$24.95.**

Reviewed by Jonathan Martens, [jv-martens@wiu.edu](mailto:jv-martens@wiu.edu)

*Eager for Glory*, a biography of Drusus, one of Augustus' stepsons, is the kind of book one may read on a summer afternoon out on the porch. Rather light reading, without significant arguments to analyze, it is intended for buffs and hobbyists rather than a scholarly audience. The blurb on the back cover (incidentally, one from the magazine the author works for) says that it is worthy of "any ancient warfare fan." This is an accurate assessment. It is a readable work with ample maps and illustrations, but without much depth.

Lindsay Powell gives the volume a grand goal: to restore "the name and reputation of the young Roman hero for a new generation" (xxxiii). To this end, he organizes the life of Drusus into seven phases or chapters: the youth, the soldier, the builder, the explorer, the commander, the consul, and the hero (additionally, there is an introduction and conclusion, or "assessment" as Powell calls it). These follow chronologically: "the youth," covering his childhood; "the soldier," his early campaigns and so on, ending with "the hero," which discusses his legacy in Roman and succeeding cultures up to the present day.

The chapter titles, however, do not adequately describe the content of the chapters. For instance, Chapter Four, "Drusus the Explorer," does not describe exploration at all, but the pacification of Germanic tribes along the North Sea. Drusus was an explorer in the same sense that practically any invading or raiding force prior to the modern day were "explorers": entering into territory which is "unknown" in the sense of you don't have an intimate familiarity with it. The title of chapter five, "Drusus the Commander" can describe Drusus at just about any point from his twenty-second year until his death.

Powell uses a wide array of sources, both ancient and modern. He makes most extensive use of recent

archeological finds, but also uses coinage and art and the usual ancient writings. He uses these sources, but he is not critical of them. Powell does not appear to have questions about the content of ancient sources or the agendas of their authors. The text is devoid of ancient or modern historiographic discussion, and what analysis exists in the text comes at the very end of the book and pertains not to Drusus, but to Augustus and the legacy of Drusus (and his republicanism). Discussion of Drusus himself is limited to what little is found in surviving ancient texts, in which Drusus is but a minor character, with lengthy and often irrelevant digressions on tangentially archaeological finds, on geography, and on Roman and barbarian culture and military.

As a member of The Ermine Street Guard, Powell takes advantage of rather intimate knowledge of the practical side of the private soldiery in the ancient world. His understanding of life in the army in the time of Augustus allows him to write on it in a clear and concise way. Unfortunately, Powell does not seem to worry about the practical issues a commander must face. He only briefly discusses logistics, and ignores significant issues. In discussing Drusus' campaign in Raetia early in his career (which falls in Chapter Two), Powell mentions that a Roman army would carry 15 days of food and describes Roman carts and what they would carry (41). But he ignores any question of how the Romans could supply an army of perhaps 24,000 soldiers, plus camp followers, along goat tracks and in sparsely settled alpine valleys. Did they operate supply trains? Did they forage for dandelions? Similarly, in later chapters we are left to assume that logistic support for Drusus simply happened.

To its credit, you are never left wondering where something was or what an inscription looks like, *Eager for Glory* does have a considerable number of maps and illustrations. It also contains lists of terms, family tree charts, and a travel itinerary for a Drusus-themed holiday. As a short and fairly readable work, it would provide a Roman or ancient military buff with a quick read. Scholars will find little new or significant within its pages. It does thrust Drusus the Elder into a leading role in the historical narrative, but whether or not it restores Drusus' name and reputation is questionable considering that he was lionized by his family and Rome long after his death.

**Carey, Brian Todd, Joshua B. Allfree, John Cairns. *Warfare in the Ancient World*. Barnesdale, UK: Pen and Sword, 2013. Pp. vii, 184. ISBN 1781592632. \$19.95 (paperback).**

Reviewed by Frank S. Shaw, [fs-shaw@wiu.edu](mailto:fs-shaw@wiu.edu)



Finding a quality, stand-alone textbook for a course on ancient military history proved difficult for Brian Todd Carey in the late 1990s. Unfortunately, the same dilemma still faces instructors today. The textbook void motivated Carey, along with Joshua B. Allfree and John Cairns, to write *Warfare in the Ancient World* for use in undergraduate classrooms and military schools (vii). The authors followed this volume with another on medieval military history. Reprinted as a paperback by Pen and Sword in 2013, Carey's book is now more affordable for students, though not updated in content. Carey's book is written for students and amateur historians; while this monograph would be useful for undergrad classes, it could not stand alone in the textbook role. *Warfare in the Ancient World* has some glaring issues which would need to be addressed by incorporating other works into the course curriculum.

The book is not without utility. The incorporation of helpful maps in each chapter is one highlight. Carey enlisted the aid of two of his former students, Allfree and Cairns, to create the tactical and regional maps found throughout the text. These are quite well done, and in truth may surpass the usefulness of the volume itself. Carey also includes a glossary of military terms, a selected bibliography, an index, and a section of notes. This book discusses ancient military technology and battle tactics, almost exclusively. Beginning with the Sumerians and Egyptians, Carey follows the development of warfare throughout the ancient Near East, through the Greco-Roman eras and finally to the fall of Rome. In five chapters, and one hundred fifty pages, Carey takes readers on a whirlwind tour through over three thousand years of military history. Carey's discussion of such a wide swath of history in so little space raises a red flag. He seems to have sacrificed depth for breadth. Simply put, there is no room for background or historical context in a treatment this brief. Carey's most thorough chapters deal with Greek warfare, the hoplite, the phalanx and the poleis. Each of the five short chapters contains accounts of multiple battles, leaving no space for other information. This issue was pointed out by reviewers of the 2005 edition. It is unfortunate that the author and publisher did

not heed these sound criticisms and improve the later edition.

Perhaps due to the brevity of the volume, there is little discussion of the societies and cultures behind the battles covered. Carey tips his hat to culture in the introduction, but there is no follow-through later. Carey states, "it is my hope that this synthetic work will help [readers] better appreciate the sophisticated nature of pre-modern warfare and the importance of organized violence in shaping western civilization's history and culture"(9). However, there is almost no discussion of culture in the pages that follow. The term "culture" is neither found in the index nor the glossary of this self-described textbook.

Also, Carey espouse a particular, western-centric, orientalist idea of military history. This is perhaps the most problematic issue with the book. The authors' inflexible support of Hanson's thesis from *The Western Way of War* (1989) is emblematic of this issue. Carey weaves Hanson's ideas throughout his chapter on Greek warfare, but the overarching "western" versus "eastern" theme of Hanson's work is a major part of Carey's book as a whole. In a section of the last chapter entitled "Conclusion: The 'Western Way of War' and Decisive Battle," Carey reiterates his support of Hanson's thesis. With the reprinting of the book in 2013, one would have expected at least some acknowledgement of recent scholarship and shifts in approaches on this issue by either the author or the publisher. In *Battle, A History of Combat and Culture*, John A. Lynn blasted Hanson's thesis calling it "deeply flawed" (2003, xvii). Carey's book treads dangerously close to warranting the same criticism.

Brian Todd Carey and his colleagues was on a quest to find a great stand-alone textbook for teaching ancient military history. That quest led him to create, with the aid of Joshua B. Allfree and John Cairns, *Warfare in the Ancient World*. However, because of its numerous shortcomings this volume cannot be recommended as a textbook.

To have your event or news included in the next issue of *Res Militares*, please contact Dr. Ioannis Georganas: [i\\_georganas@yahoo.com](mailto:i_georganas@yahoo.com) with details. If you have any suggestions or feedback on this issue of *Res Militares*, please send it to Dr. Georganas.



**Membership Application Form for the Society of Ancient Military Historians (SAMH)**

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