

RES MILITARES

The Official Newsletter of the Society of Ancient Military Historians



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The Society of Ancient Military Historians

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Message from the Secretary

During these unprecedented and difficult times, it brings me great pleasure to be able to present the latest issue of *Res Militares*. The current issue features a very stimulating essay by our President, Prof. Jonathan Roth, as well as seven informative book reviews.

I would also like to draw your attention to our new Facebook page, which can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/ancmilhist/>. If you have not liked our page yet, please do!

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 (email: i_georganas@yahoo.com).

Happy reading and stay safe!

Ioannis Georganas

Message from the President

There is certainly a great deal of value in approaching the

past from new perspectives, but in my opinion the recent use by some of postmodern and critical theory is, to paraphrase the Emperor Hirohito, not necessarily to ancient military history's advantage. It seems that like the theories of Freud, long abandoned by the academic psychologists, the theoretical models based on Michel Foucault's rather bizarre view of ancient history continue to plow ahead, heedless of the fact that there is, if you will excuse the expression, very little there. Very often, what one finds is a political ideology masquerading as scholarship. I suggest we can still look to von Ranke for guidance in this regard.

For ancient military history, however, issue of postmodernism is less salient than a very real debate between what one might call the Culturalists and the Functionalists. One might see this as part of the broader, and politically charged, ideological division we see in contemporary America, and indeed the world, but in fact, this debate does not fit easily into this mold. Victor Davis Hanson's notion of a Western Way of War is also a firmly Culturalist one, and he is as or better known as a conservative than as a military history. Although not all of Culturalism's adherents would follow Antonio Gramsci's idea of Cultural Hegemony, this perspective sees culture as independent of, and often controlling, the functioning elements in a society, including of course, the

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use of weapons, the organizations of armies and what they call the "War of War".

It is difficult to find a satisfying term to define the critics of Culturalism. The term "Technological Determinists" is unnuanced and too narrow, as the critics argue in other terms, such as politics and organization. While term Functionalism has a technical sociological meaning, which is not the same as the sense that I mean it. Thomas Sowell writes in *Conquest and Cultures* that "Cultures...are the working machinery of everyday life" and Functionalism seems a good way of expressing this idea in one word. In arguing against necessarily accepting a Culturalist over a Functionalist view of military adoption, I don't want to imply that culture, aesthetics and ideology play no role. Certainly, they do. I only wish to emphasize that there are differing points of view about the relationship.

A specific dispute that seems to run along Culturalist/Functionalist lines is the one pitting the idea of Military Revolution against Military Evolution, and the underlying issues about the reasons for, and effect of, the adoption of new weapons and military organization, an argument very relevant to the study of the Roman Republican Army. Also salient is the debate over Roman imperialism, where we see the Culturalism of William Harris set against the Functionalism of Arthur Eckstein.

It is obvious that I am firmly in the Functionalist camp, but I am not writing to convince Culturalists, but rather to call for dialogue. There has been, in my view, think is an unfortunate trend for these two sides, each of which have much to contribute of talking past each other and forming two parallel scholarly "echo chambers". The basic assumptions behind each approach need to me made explicit and subjected to the critiques of the other side. We may study the ancient military, but we are historians, and as such, need to consider and debate, our theoretical framework.

Jonathan Roth

Books Available for Review, 2020

Res Militares, Society for Ancient Military Historians, Books Received, Spring 2020

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 (unless arranged by the editor) within 120 days. Graduate students are welcome to volunteer but should contact their supervisor to ascertain that a review is appropriate at this time in their studies.

*Armstrong, J. and M. Trundle (eds.) *Brill's Companion to Sieges in the Ancient Mediterranean*. Brill, 2019. Pp.347; ISBN: 9789004373617, e-book.

Barnett, G. *Emulating Alexander: How Alexander the Great's Legacy Fueled Rome's Wars with Persia*. Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword Military, 2017. pp. 232; ISBN: 9781526703002, hbk.

Bennett, Bob and Mike Roberts. *The Wars of Alexander's Successors 323-281 BC. Vol. II*. Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword Military, 2019. Pp. 202; ISBN:9781526760791, pbk.

Bishop, M.C. *Lucius Verus and the Roman Defence of the East*. Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword Military, 2018. pp.176; ISBN: 9781473847606, hbk.

*Brice, Lee L. (ed.) *New Approaches to Greek and Roman Warfare*. Wiley 2020. Pp. 193; ISBN 9781118273333, pbk.

Elliott, S. *Septimus Severus in Scotland: The Northern Campaigns of the First Hammer of the Scots*. Barnsley, UK: Greenhill Books, 2018. pp.208; ISBN: 9781784382049, hbk.

Frantantuono, L. *Caligula: An Unexpected General*.

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Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword Military, 2017. pp.240; ISBN: 9781526711205, hbk.

Grainger, John D. *Kings & Kingship in the Hellenistic World 350-30 B.C.* Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword Military, 2017. Pp. 262; ISBN: 9781473863750, hbk.

Grainger, John D. *Lieutenant General Sir Samuel Auchmuty 1756-1822: The Military Life on an American Loyalist and Imperial General.* Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword Military, 2018. Pp. 228; ISBN: 9781526730923; hbk.

Grainger, John D. *The Rise of the Seleukid Empire 323-223 BC.* Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword Military, 2018. Pp. 242; ISBN: 9781526743763, pbk.

Grainger, John D. *Ancient Dynasties: The Families That Ruled the Classical World Circa 1000 BC to AD 750.* Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword Military, 2019. Pp. 512; ISBN: 9781526746757, hbk.

Grainger, John D. *Antipater's Dynasty: Alexander the Great's Regent and his Successors.* Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword Military, 2019. pp. 271; ISBN: 9781526730886, hbk.

Heath, J.M. *Warfare in Neolithic Europe, An Archaeological and Anthropological Analysis.* Pen & Sword Military, 2017. pp.168; ISBN: 9781473879850, hbk.

Hughes, I. *Gaiseric: the Vandal who Destroyed Rome.* Pen & Sword Military, 2017. pp.304; ISBN: 9781781590188, hbk.

Hyden, M. *Gaius Marius: The Rise and Fall of Rome's Saviour.* Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword Military, 2017. pp.344; ISBN: 9781526702333, hbk.

*Kent, P.A. *A History of the Pyrrhic War.* Routledge, 2019. Pp.142; ISBN: 9781138543829.

Lange, C.H. *Triumphs in the Age of Civil War: The Late Republic and the Adaptability of Triumphal Tradition,* pbk ed. Bloomsbury, 2016. Pp. 333; ISBN: 9781350060579, pbk.

McHugh, J.S. *Emperor Alexander Severus: Rome's Age of Insurrection, AD222-235.* Pen & Sword Military, 2017. pp.352; ISBN: 9781473845817, hbk.

Nolan, R. *Julius Caesar's Invasion of Britain.* Barnsley, UK: Frontline Books, 2018. Pp. 145.

Roberts, M. *Hannibal's road. The Second Punic War in Italy 213-203 BC.* Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword Military, 2017. pp.288; ISBN 978147385595, hbk.

Sadler, J. and Rosie Serdiville. *Caesar's Greatest Victory. The Battle of Alesia, 52 BC.* Oxford: Casemate Publishers, 2016. Pp. vi, 210; ISBN 9781612004051, \$32.95, hdbk.

Sadler, J. and Rosie Serdiville. *Alexander the Great: Conqueror, Commander, King.* Oxford: Casemate Publishers, 2018. Pp. 160. ISBN: 9781612006819, pbk.

Syvanne, Ilkka. *Caracalla: A Military Biography.* Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword Military, 2017. pp.368 ISBN: 9781473895249, hbk.

Syvanne, Ilkka. *The Reign of Emperor Gallienus: The Apogee of Roman Cavalry.* Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword Military, 2019. Pp. 256; ISBN: 9781526745217, hbk.

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. E-books and announcements can be emailed directly to LL-Brice@WIU.EDU.

Book Reviews

Heather, Peter. *Rome Resurgent: War and Empire in the Age of Justinian.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. pp.408; \$29.95, ISBN: 9780199362745, hdbk.

Reviewed by Haggai Olshanetsky,
haggai1990@gmail.com



The author of this book had set for himself a goal to try to resolve the debate on whether Justinian's western campaigns overstretched the eastern Roman Empire and led to the military disasters of the seventh century. As can be seen from the central question, Heather points out that the term Byzantine Empire should not come into effect for the period in question. I completely agree with him, as the eastern Roman Empire ceased to exist only after the Arab invasion and the loss of key swathes of land in the Near East, where the remainder should rightly be called the Byzantine Empire.

The book's first two chapters are best described as a military-economic-political introduction to the Late Roman world, and the third one as an introduction to Justinian's rise to power. In these chapters, the full, rich experience of the author as both researcher and lecturer comes to the utmost effect. They are so well written, making them some of the best historical background chapters I have ever read. In them, the author is able to explain complicated affairs clearly and succinctly. The following chapter tackles the first few years of Justinian's reign and the question that is at the epicenter of the chapter: whether Justinian always wished to retake the west or whether his expeditions were opportunistic. As Heather neatly portrays, it seems that the expedition to the west was an act of a regime that desperately needed to assert its power and to prove its divine authority through military successes.

The fifth chapter depicts the Roman conquest of the Vandal Kingdom of North Africa. This chapter starts with a valuable introduction to the Vandals and their kingdom and continues with a good depiction of the conquest of their kingdom, based mostly on Procopius' description of the events. Heather claims (p. 146) that the Roman general Belisarius' victories were because the Vandals' army was a typically fifth century army while the Romans' army was an advanced sixth century one, holding a good balance between light and heavy cavalry and having a force of mounted archers. However, there is a problem with this argument, as mounted archers and all the other equipment and tactics used by the Romans were part of the Roman world already centuries before. The Roman army of the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries was not that different, and the Vandals successfully faced all

the tactics and equipment used by Belisarius' forces during the fifth century.

The following chapters depict the campaign to conquer Ostrogothic Italy, other aspects of Justinian rule, construction projects and so on. Chapter nine deals with the Berber insurgency in North Africa and is mostly based on Procopius' Wars. In these chapters, and those that came before them, the author brings examples from modern history from time to time, to use as a comparison for different points and issues in the book. This method is welcome as it is a rare sight in the academic sphere dealing with the ancient world. The Achilles heel is that some of the examples are from lesser known, contemporary British political events, which most of the readers would not be familiar with. Furthermore, in chapter ten, as in other places, Heather states that many in North Africa and Italy would have continued to live had Justinian not expanded to the west. By this, Heather ignores the fact that warfare and its casualties were an inherent part of the period. Moreover, he did not emphasize enough that many of the conquests, like Sicily and Spain, were concluded without bloodshed. Similarly, there is a lack of emphasis on the fighting manpower, as many of the conquests gained no less recruits than the ones lost in battles, since the Goths and Vandals were recruited and sent to form regiments on other frontiers, like the Persian one. There is also some disproportion in Heather's economic assessment: he values just those conquered territories which remained under Byzantine's control for centuries as they paid themselves back, while forgetting to emphasize the immediate vast booty looted from every conquered land.

The last chapter is probably the best of them all, as Heather brilliantly dissects both Justinian's reign and the centuries that followed in terms of Roman, Byzantine, Persian and Arab histories. He manages to prove that Justinian's conquests had nothing to do with the Arab success and the decline of the Empire in the seventh century.

In conclusion, this book tackles many essential and important issues regarding the Late Roman world, and especially Justinian's reign. The explanations and answers to many of the questions are provided in an innovative,

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interesting and eloquent manner. The book has many insights on the period and some of the best introductory chapters on Late Roman history in existence. The book is a worthy addition to any library and any person who is interested in Roman and Late Antique history.

Rees, Owen. *Great Naval Battles of the Ancient Greek World*. Yorkshire: Pen and Sword Military, 2018. Pp. 218: ISBN: 978-1473827301, hdbk.

Reviewed by Kristian L. Lorenzo,
klorenzo@themeadowsschool.org

For Owen Rees, “...modern commentary on Greek warfare often leaves this vital part (i.e. naval warfare) of the ancient Greek military ethos, and identity, on the sidelines, replaced by the more-glamorous land battles” (ix). Rees aims to rectify this regrettably true situation by bringing “the multitude of naval engagements, which pervade the ancient sources, into a broader modern awareness” (ix). Although this book is not truly groundbreaking Rees for the most part does achieve his aim with a well-written, approachable, and informative addition to the limited corpus of literature on ancient Greek naval warfare.

The book was created primarily for a general audience, but would also work well for high school students and undergraduates. With that in mind the five sections of the introduction include two dedicated solely to the trireme. The first covers the possible origin(s), evolutionary development, and internal arrangement of the rowers of this class of ship. The second discusses the scholarly contentious nature of the make-up of Greek trireme crews and how a city-state’s preferred naval tactics, such as swiftness, maneuverability, and ramming for the Athenians or closing fast, boarding, and on-deck fighting for the Corinthians could affect the number of on-board marines. The next section discusses naval tactics and focuses mostly on the diekplous, kyklos, and periplous, the three maneuvers most often, whether rightly or wrongly, associated with the Athenians. In the introduction’s final section, Rees discusses what constituted a Great Battle and that since such battles were rarely solitary affairs he has placed greater emphasis “on the context of the naval battle, and the strategic movements beforehand” (xvi). To help the general

audience a comprehensive glossary follows the introduction and a very useful select bibliography comes before the book’s index.

Four parts subdivided unequally into thirteen chapters comprise the main body of this book. These parts follow a straightforward chronology beginning with the Persian conflicts (499-479 BCE), followed by the Archidamian War (431-421 BCE), the Ionian War (413-404 BCE), and ending with the first decade of the fourth century BC, a decade Rees refers to as, Turning of the Tide. Part I covers the battles of Lade, Artemisium, and Salamis; Part II, Sybota, Corinthian Gulf, and Corcyra; Part III, Erineus, Syracuse’s Great Harbor, the Ionian Coast, Arginusae, and Aegospotami; Part IV, Catane and Cnidus. Notable and somewhat puzzling exclusions from this list are the Greek naval expeditions against the Persians after the 2nd Persian War and the important Battle of the Eurymedon River (466 BCE). Each great battle is covered in a single chapter at the beginning of which Rees informs his reader who his sources are. For example, Thucydides, Diodorus Siculus, and Plutarch provide the ancient source material for his account of the Battle of Sybota (433 BCE). Rees has subdivided each one of his thirteen chapters into four sections: Background; Forces; Battle; and Aftermath. This is an effective format as it emphasizes a holistic approach to examining each battle. Unfortunately, the ratio of narrative description to subjective analysis is weighted a little too heavily toward the former. More expansive assessment in each Aftermath section would have added to this book’s overall value. Strategically placed throughout the text are a good number of straightforward, but clear maps and diagrams to help the reader understand each battle. However, this reviewer would like to have seen even more maps and diagrams to further clarify, especially for the lay-reader, the timings and locations of individual battles in their respective campaigns.

Unfortunately, the book does include a few mistakes and one missing endnote. In discussions concerning the 2nd Persian War dates of 490 BCE and then 491 BCE are given for the campaigns of Mardonius and Xerxes, respectively. Chapter 12, which discusses the Battle of Catane in 396 BCE, is missing one of its endnotes (#16). Thankfully these errors are not indicative of the text and do not greatly detract from its overall value. Indeed,



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Rees's book would make a worthwhile addition to the collection of anyone with a healthy interest in the great naval battles of the ancient Greek world.

Delgado, James P. *War at Sea: A Shipwrecked History from Antiquity to the Cold War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. 465. ISBN: 9780190888015, hbk.

Reviewed by Stephen D. DeCasien, decasien@tamu.edu

From simplistic war canoes to nuclear-powered submarines, James P. Delgado's *War at Sea: A Shipwrecked History from Antiquity to the Twentieth Century* is an all-encompassing narrative of naval warfare and the shipwrecks that resulted from battles at sea. For those who want an introduction to maritime archaeology, shipwrecks, and naval warfare that is packaged together in readable prose, then this is a fitting work. Delgado successfully fulfills the purpose of his book, which is for the reader to, "come away with a better understanding not only of the times and cultures that produced these ships of war, but of the people who built, lived in, fought in, and died in these ships" (7).

In the introduction, Delgado makes it clear that his work is intended to be a review of what archaeologists have learned about lost warships. Each of the ten chapters are broken down chronologically and subdivided by geographical regions. The chapters have a similar pattern providing historical background, developments in naval tactics and weaponry, and archaeological evidence comprising mainly of shipwrecks and related finds, or lack thereof.

Chapter one covers the earliest types of warships and seafaring peoples in Africa, Asia, and Australia, and discusses the major seafaring powers of the ancient world: the Egyptians, Greeks, and Chinese. Delgado argues and provides evidence that the naval ram was the most important naval weapon of antiquity. The development of oared galleys and the lack of evidence for these types of vessels is also covered. The second chapter examines Roman sea power and casts the naval ram as a central piece of evidence for warfare during that period. Besides Rome, shipwreck evidence for Byzantine and Viking warships is presented.

The third chapter opens with the emergence of European naval powers after 1000 CE and the creation of major fleets that included warships like hulks and cogs. The Sung Navy, China's first maritime power, is discussed at length along with the Mongol expansion under Kublai Khan and the so-called "lost fleet" that employed the earliest naval "shells" and explosive ordnance. The rest of the chapter covers the introduction of gunpowder and its effect on naval warship development, as well as notable shipwrecks of the period such as *Mary Rose* and *Mars the Magnificent*.

Chapters four and five describe European naval expansion during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These sections discuss large "ships-of-the-line" with multiple gun decks and the standardization of shipbuilding techniques. A plethora of shipwrecks are examined such as *Vasa*, *Invincible*, *Nuestra Señora de las Mercedes*, *La Belle*, and *Sapphire*. The fifth chapter concludes with evidence for early American warships from the American Revolution to the War of 1812.

The primary focus of the sixth chapter is American and European naval power and shipwrecks in the nineteenth century. The chapter begins with the advent of steam-powered and metal armored warships with turrets and shell guns such as *USS Monitor* and *CSS Virginia* that fought in the Civil War. Delgado argues that these types of warships effectively ended the domination of wooden warships from the previous centuries. Chapter seven describes the period of naval expansion by the United States, Europe, and Japan that was characterized by ironclads and large battleships. At the end of the chapter, these warships are argued to be nearly obsolete due to the invention of submarines and effective torpedoes.

Chapters eight and nine describe the successful use of submarines and aircrafts in World Wars I and II. Delgado argues that combatants of both wars failed to understand the devastating effects of such weapons, which resulted in the excess number of shipwrecks now at the bottom of the sea. Delgado uses both chapters to explain the importance of new technology to the field of maritime archaeology such as remote sensing and ROVs which make finding and documenting shipwrecks easier. The final chapter discusses the emergence of the United States as the sole naval power after the collapse of the Soviet Union and



covers the invention of nuclear-powered submarines and ballistic missiles.

Overall, there is no dominant argument to Delgado's work as it serves as a survey of naval warfare and shipwrecks for a lay audience. One difficulty with the text is the vast amount of historical time and information that is discussed which causes some sections to be lacking while others greatly benefit from Delgado's own personal experience. The vastness of the work produces some historical generalizations and fallacies. One example is that Delgado presents the "heavy vs light fleet" narrative for Octavian's victory at the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE. This minor detail could be overlooked due to the targeted general audience. However, Delgado quotes and uses as his main source for the battle the very author, Dr. William M. Murray, who disproved this notion in the works mentioned in Delgado's bibliography.

Roisman, Joseph. *The Classical Art of Command: Eight Greek Generals Who Shaped the History of Warfare*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. Pp. 392. ISBN: 9780199985821, hdbk.

Reviewed by Paul Johstono, paul.johstono@us.af.mil

Joseph Roisman's *The Classical Art of Command* uses focused biographies of eight Greek generals to examine the nature of command in Classical Greece. Roisman is an accomplished ancient military historian, with previous books on aspects of the Athenian and Macedonian militaries. His chosen generals are Leonidas I and Lysander of Sparta, Themistocles, Pericles, and Demosthenes of Athens, Dionysios I of Syracuse, and Epaminondas and Pelopidas of Thebes. Their careers fit neatly within the heyday of the Classical Age, from about 490 to 362 BCE, and cover the most important city-states and wars of the age. There are many other important generals, but these are a sufficient, representative sample. Written in an accessible style, with minimalist footnotes, thirty-eight maps and illustrations, and a concise introduction to Classical Greek warfare (14-23), Roisman's book has the potential to reach a wide audience. At the same time, and despite the perennial popularity of ancient military history, Roisman's work also fills something of a gap. As he points out in his preface (xiii), few monographs have been written on military command in the Classical age. After considering

articles or chapters on command, like those by Wheeler (1991) and Moore (2007), and biographies of individual commanders, the gap is smaller than Roisman claims. Nonetheless his exploration offers a trove of material for further discussions of military command and classical warfare.

The subtitle, "eight Greek generals who shaped the history of warfare," is a good indicator of the nature and strength of the book. As a leader-focused military history, it is an engaging read. Roisman is a careful historian and he has written clear, insightful studies of eight Greek military careers. The chapters are in chronological order, and internally organized by chronology. Roisman's eight careers are also interesting for spanning land and naval combat, small unit (or "commando") tactics, whole army commands, siege warfare, and high-level strategic leadership. Roisman navigates numerous historiographic hurdles in each account while sticking to a smooth narrative. Non-academic readers may not particularly care about these debates, and academics may find his handling brusque in places, but Roisman deserves praise for succinct presentation of the debates and, in many cases, taking a clear side.

As a study of command, it lacks structure, but that may be Roisman's aim. There is no analytical framework, nor a common definition for command. Roisman's description of command emphasizes variability, and thus the value of versatility. Each chapter at some point considers several aspects of command, like each general's approach to establishing authority, use of intelligence, tactical abilities, and strategic sensibility. A strong thread carried throughout is the challenge of establishing authority, both in domestic politics and coalition armies. This aspect of command relates closely to Keegan's subject in *Mask of Command* (1988), and Roisman makes several good contributions on this subject, particularly because politics and military command overlapped so much for his generals. The conclusion, not the introduction, nods toward a model of Classical Command, comprising planning, management, tactics, and personality.

The area of command where Roisman makes his biggest contribution is personality. Each general's situations, goals, assets, and methods differed, and part of Roisman's argument is that the general-as-individual has explanatory power for their fortunes and the shaping of history. There



were perfunctory and obligatory acts all generals performed, but much rested on the general's personal tendencies, strengths, and weaknesses. Roisman suggests that personality is underappreciated in studies of ancient commanders. His discussion reads quite a bit like trait theory, with a flavor of Onasander and some Aristotelian excesses and deficiencies, melding elements novel and antiquarian. All of his generals exhibited, for example, courage, but he notes that some were unflappable, others mercurial, some daring, others cautious. Some vacillated between these as results of experience and context, but personality like age tends to limit flexibility. Roisman's discussion of traits also includes vision, open-mindedness, craftiness, charisma, discipline, situational awareness, opportunism, ambition, and adaptability. This variety rescues Roisman's argument about Classical command: despite many commonalities, each general developed his own "art of command."

In his conclusion Roisman argues against the steady professionalization of command during and after the Peloponnesian War. He does not offer a definition of professionalism but suggests an important component of it was specialization in one arena of warfare (341). That strikes me as insufficient. Not only do I wonder if the inclusion of some other commanders, like Iphicrates, might have changed the picture of command in the Late Classical era, it also seems difficult to evaluate change over time without a more comprehensive definition of professionalism.

In conclusion, *The Classical Art of Command* enters the surprising gap on command in Classical Greece, but without a cohesive model has not quite filled it. Roisman's work is a fine, flowing read that should entertain a popular audience while stimulating academics. His persistence in arguing particular positions on dozens of difficult interpretive questions is commendable: a reader should be convinced by some and moved to argue others, which in my view is precisely what this sort of book should do.

Farrokh, Kaveh. *The Armies of Ancient Persia: The Sassanians*. Barnsley, South Yorkshire, UK: Pen & Sword Military, 2017. Pp. 504; \$44.95, ISBN: 9781848848450.

Reviewed by Charles C. Kolb, CCKolb.13@gmail.com

Sassanian (British English spelling) studies have undergone a dramatic surge during the new millennium and new syntheses of Sassanian history (Daryae 2014, Rezakhani 2017, Sauer 2017, and Pourshariati 2018, etc.) have appeared focusing on the core of the empire located between the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf. However, even these newest histories have minimal content on the Sassanian army (Mid. Pers. Spāh) which defended this vast landmass with limited military resources. One of the most significant, recent historiographical developments has been the study and publication of articles, chapters, and a few monographs on aspects of military history with respect to Sassanian-Roman, Sassanian-Central Asian, and Sassanian-Arab military relations. Throughout most of the classical period, Persia was one of the great superpowers and formidable rival to the Roman Empire until Persia was overwhelmed by the Islamic conquests in the seventh century. The Sassanians by Kaveh Farrokh under review here is a sweeping, comprehensive compilation on major, minor, and new aspects of Sassanian militaria.

Western academics have recently been joined by a new generation of East European scholars and specialists from Iran. Farrokh makes their various, sometimes diverse, academic orientations clear. He has authored three volumes on the Sassanian military. In *The Sassanians*, he has assembled a superbly organized and well-documented magnum opus (nineteen chapters and eleven maps accompanied by endnotes, references, and a detailed index) that provides a scholarly treatise focusing on the period 224-652 CE. A recent volume by Syväne and Maksymiuk (2018) focuses only on third century militaria.

Farrokh correctly observes that legacies from the preceding Achaemenid and Parthian cultures are found in Sassanian sociopolitical and military history. Four geographical Spāhbed commands (North, East, West, and South) divided the region from the Euphrates to the Indus and Eurasian steppe to the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea. Sassanian military organization consisted of professionals (elite knights and heavy cavalry) and auxiliaries (foot archers, slingers, and light cavalry), and he describes military units, titles/ranks, and prestige corps, training, strategy, and tactics, close quarters combat, martial arts, types of equipment (weapons and armor), and even



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military music. The Savārān cavalry were the Spāh's primary offensive and defensive strike arm, and they developed advanced siege engines. A full chapter is devoted to archery and focuses on infantry and equestrian variants, types of bows and arrows, and the evolution of archery and equipment and tactics over five centuries. He also deals with lesser-known components of the army including the camel and elephant corps, and the frequently forgotten naval capabilities for transporting troops and foodstuffs, and engaging Arab maritime raiders.

Additional sections center on war planning, including the composition of the war council, offensive and defensive tactics and strategies, logistics (transport and foodstuffs, for both human and livestock), and the use of spies and fifth-columnists, and propaganda. Another chapter reviews offensive and defensive architecture incorporating discussions about fortifications, arsenals, ditches and traps, and walls--including the famous Gorgan Wall (155-200 km in length). Medical support, (including veterinarians for the horses), siege operations and equipment, together with catapults and chemical weapons, are detailed. Post-battle scenarios and diplomacy, military doctrine, and judicial system are also evidenced as are the treatments of non-combatants, civilians, and deserters, and repatriation of captives.

Chapter 12 focuses on Central Asian steppe nomads (337-629 CE), particularly the Kiderites and Hephthalites, and Sassanian contacts with the Tang dynasty Chinese. Notably, Chapter 16 reviews the demise of the Sassanian army because of their inability to maintain two-front warfare: the Romans (and later Romano-Byzantines) in the west and the Central Asian nomads from the northeast, and the rise of the Turko-Hephthalites. Reasons for the Sassanian fall include issues of command and control, declining morale, and defections of forced and unpaid auxiliaries, as well as the porous southwestern frontier with constant Arab encroachments and the Islamic invasions. Farrokh also covers post-Sassanian resistance against the Caliphate's attempts at cultural assimilation, the Central Asian Buddhist legacy, Zoroastrianism, and subsequent rebellions 750-837 CE; some Sassanians also settled in China. Savārān and non-Sassanian Iranian cavalry were recruited into Roman

service while the Arabs adopted Sassanian military theory and weaponry.

Historians focusing on ancient Persia have paid little attention to the complexities of the Sassanian army and Farrokh's compendium has admirably filled that void; he also suggests avenues for additional investigations. Historians, archaeologists, political scientists, and other readers will come away with a greater insight into Sassanian culture after reading this important book. Farrokh is to be congratulated for bringing such a wealth of material together into a single indispensable source.

Tritle, Lawrence A., and Jason W. Warren, eds. *The Many Faces of War*. Los Angeles, Tsehah Publishers, 2018. Pp. 412; \$39.95, ISBN: 9781941392188, hbk.

Reviewed by Walter E. Kretchik, we-kretchik@wiu.edu

The Many Faces of War consists of twenty-one academic and non-academic conference papers given at Loyola Marymount University in 2013. Edited by Loyola Marymount Professor Emeritus of History Lawrence A. Tritle and U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel Jason W. Warren, Ph.D., the papers represent a third symposium that follows two previous meetings held at the University of Calgary in 2009 and 2012.

Tritle and Warren's book reflects their belief that war is a phenomenon requiring a multifaceted approach to comprehend. The two scholars stress "consilience," a 1990s biologist's assertion that the human condition is best understood by using the natural and biological sciences to enrich the social sciences and the arts. To explore science for what it might suggest about understanding war and humanity, the third symposium organizers selected disparate academic and non-academic individuals to offer papers unconstrained by time (era), place, or topic. However, not all presenters were scientists. Represented fields included medicine, history, psychology, sociology, therapy, memory and recollection, art, and literature.

The book's papers are typical fare characteristic of academic forums in general; a collection embodying a mishmash of ideas and interpretations ranging from ancient times to the contemporary era. Organizationally

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the book's five parts resemble conference panels with each one preceded by a tone-setting "poetical interlude." Part I, "Body and Mind at War," contains papers on how war assists physicians to better understand the effect of combat upon the body and mind, use of science and historical examples to reexamine "shell-shock" and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and an author's personal experience when working with contemporary PTSD patients using various healing practices.

Part II, "Memory and the Literature of War," begins with an investigation into how human facial expressions described in ancient and modern war literature helps to better understand combat trauma past and present. The next essay juxtaposes American war stories with Iraqi writers to address the politics of literature concerning the Iraq War, 2003-2010. Memoirs as a way to illuminate trauma, identity, and masculinity comprise a third composition. A fourth paper details how comic books depicted combat stress from 1950-2011.

"Voices of War" constitutes Part III. This section commences with a manuscript detailing the personal struggles of U.S. Marine Corps veteran Manual Pina Babbitt before, during, and after military service. The next paper is a personal recollection of talks held between the author and five homeless veterans inside a Los Angeles, California, soup kitchen. The third essay explains how body ink serves as a living memorial for fallen comrades. In the fourth paper a U.S. Marine Corps lawyer describes his personal wartime experiences when advising a battalion headquarters in Afghanistan. The final manuscript reveals U.S. Army Sergeant Walter Hayes's encounter with racism in Raleigh, South Carolina, following his tour of duty in Vietnam.

Part IV, "The Sociology of War," starts with an investigation into youth and military service among the privileged inhabitants of ancient Greece and Rome. Next is an inquiry into the punishment of soldiers upon their returning home from the battlefield after committing the crime of rape during the era of Edward III. The third paper examines how women's captivity narratives from the Early Republic in America demonstrate female agency in shaping a national identity. That essay is followed by an investigation into how Israeli-occupied Palestinian political factions used soccer clubs and

matches to attract youth into their organizations before the first Intifada. The section ends with several South Sudanese oral history interviews where the interviewees describe their wartime experiences while living in post-war Sudan.

Part V, "Soldiers War," opens with a document addressing contemporary counterinsurgency operations lessons-learned gleaned from the examination of Roman military practices during the Republic era. That paper is followed by a comparative analysis of British empire-era preservation policies and U.S. attempts to crush jihadist forces in contemporary Afghanistan and Iraq. The next manuscript addresses French military decision-makers and their behavior and attitudes during modern colonial wars as viewed through the lenses of identity and strategy. This panel concludes with a critique of U.S. military doctrine and policy approaches following the Cold War.

The papers are academic audience oriented. Informed readers may find them of interest and intellectually stimulating. As with conference papers in general, skepticism of author conclusions is advised because most manuscripts are raw ideas or reports. The persuasive writers use archival sources while the rest either cherry-pick secondary publications or do not provide citations. The book's value is that it allows the authors to broadly convey their ideas and possibly stimulate dialogue. Still, over five years have passed since the 2013 conference transpired. The 2018 book's epilogue says nothing about the scientific community's success in enriching the work of non-scientist military studies scholars over that time. Without empirical evidence, it remains to be seen if a scientific "eureka moment" has even occurred at all.

Fratantuono, Lee. *Lucullus: The Life and Campaigns of a Roman Conqueror*. Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword Military, 2017. Pp. 188: ISBN 9781473883611

Reviewed by Juan Strisino, JStrisino@aol.com

The name Lucullus, perhaps, does not carry the same weight as Marius, Pompey or Caesar. Fratantuono's opinion is that Lucullus is "underappreciated" and "almost forgotten" (x). However, he has received notable scholarly attention. In ancient times, Plutarch wrote about his life and is the primary source. Extracts dedicated to



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Lucullus can be found in the works of Cicero, Appian, Eutropius, Dio Cassius, the *de viris Illustribus* and so on. In English, Arthur Keaveney's in depth and studious work, *Lucullus, A Life* appeared over 25 years ago (repr. 2009). This superseded van Ooteghem's, still useful, French study *Lucius Licinius Lucullus* (1959) and Giuseppe Antonelli's popular *Lucullo: La vera storia* (1989). In 2008, Manuel Tröster published, *Themes, Character and Politics in Plutarch's Life of Lucullus: The Construction of a Roman Aristocrat*, but as its title suggests, it concentrates on Plutarch's treatment of Lucullus. Keaveney's remains the standard work as Fratantuono acknowledges. But, Fratantuono does make a valid point: the aforementioned books are hard to come by and are aimed primarily at academics. His purpose, therefore, is, "...to make Lucullus more accessible to a wider audience of readers...and devotees of military history..." (ix). Emphasis is on the latter with the resolve too, to raise Lucullus' status.

The book has 7 chapters (each with sub-headed sections), 23 lavish photos, endnotes, a select bibliography and an index. Fratantuono starts and ends with a concise context setting overview of Lucullus' life. The readers are introduced to the sources; Lucullan gastronomy and currency; family connections (grandson of the similarly named consul of 151 BC and son to the prosecuted and exiled father, again of the same name); political and military associations and positions (through his mother's connections to the Metelli and his mentor, Sulla); plots and scandals (Vettius and Archias affairs and Bona Dea Scandal); his scholarly and cultural influences, and so on.

In the rest of the book, Fratantuono argues the case primarily for Lucullus being (a) one of the ablest commander/tacticians of his age and (b), albeit brief, being a conspicuous philosopher and supporter of the arts, thus making him, according to the author, one of the most significant (overlooked) figures of the late Roman Republic. From a military point of view, Lucullus, indeed played a major role in several confrontations on land and on sea and was one of those rare commanders of the period who was successful in both arenas. Having seen combat and distinction in the Social War of 91-88, he then went on to serve in the First Mithridatic War (89-85 BC) in which he won a succession of naval engagements in the Aegean. Lucullus' most noteworthy contribution came in

the Third Mithridatic War. Roman forces under his command invaded Pontus and Armenia. It was victories here under very difficult circumstances (he was hugely outnumbered), particularly at Tigranocerta (mod. Tigrankert, Armenia) in 69 BC, that augmented Rome's influence in the East and paved the way for future conquests.

Away from the military man, Lucullus had the time to indulge himself in the arts. As a young man, Lucullus occupied himself with Greek culture and was fluent in Greek. He wrote about the Social War (which has not survived) in Greek. He also embraced Greek philosophy. He perhaps knew Lucretius and was certainly acquainted with the poet Archias, and the philosopher Antiochus of Ascalon. He knew Cicero too. Indeed, the latter held Lucullus in such esteem, "summus vir...the highest man" (117) that book II of his *Academica* (an epistemological work) bears his name. Towards his retirement, Lucullus had become a recognised bibliophile and accumulated his own personal library, which was open to the public.

In light of this, why, according to Fratantuono, has Lucullus gone relatively unnoticed? The author puts forward reasons that range from a lack of demagogy, a requirement for his day, to contemporary historians being swayed by the military victories and political coalitions of more aspiring generals (Pompey and Caesar). These eclipsed Lucullus' own, thus, causing some historians (ancient and modern) to depreciate him. At the very least, his name should be on a par with his more illustrious contemporaries.

It is safe to say that the main premise of the book has been achieved: without getting bogged down in any specialist details, Fratantuono has written a decent story and made Lucullus a credible and accessible subject. Those who do wish to read more complete academic accounts should turn to the select bibliography and articles referenced in the endnotes. Possibly a few minor niggles: for the benefit of non-expert readers, better clarification of terms like Epicurean (123/4), a glossary of some Latin vocabularies, a list of ancient sources and a timeline would all have been useful. Nevertheless, this book is a good starting point for the life, and particularly, as the author's title says, the "Campaigns of a Roman Conqueror".

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