

BOOK REVIEW

Ancient Warfare: Introducing Current Research, vol. 1. Ed. BY GEOFF LEE, HELÈNE WHITTAKER and GRAHAM WRIGHTSON. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2015. Pp. xvi + 361. Hardcover, \$90.00. ISBN 978-1-4438-7694-0.

This expensive volume is a publication resulting from the 2013 conference on Ancient Warfare held at Aberystwyth, Wales. As is common for such broad conferences the original papers were wide-ranging in their subjects, and the resulting chapters are widely dispersed topically. Such diversity in approaches, methodologies, and subjects is typical of current military history methodology, and the range was a positive outcome of Geoff Lee's efforts for the conference. However, that same breadth makes for a book that is difficult to categorize and where most readers will find only a chapter or two of interest, a problem exacerbated by the inconsistent quality of the discussions. One wonders if all the authors might have been better served by pursuing publication in an academic journal once their project was further along.

After Geoff Lee's Introduction, Helène Whittaker opens the volume with the assertion that warfare in Minoan Crete was "enmeshed with religious beliefs" (5), an assertion that remains unproven. Matthew Lloyd's chapter on killing swords offers little new information. Aimee Schofield's contribution is about efforts to build a catapult. Her chapter, an example of what is more properly called Experimental History since it is not in service of archaeology (a key aspect of experimental archaeology)¹ is highly technical. Nick Barley provides the first of several chapters drawing upon ancient manuals. He discusses Aeneas Tacticus' manual and small units. Graham Wrightson follows up in chapter five with a discussion of the usefulness of Asclepiodotus' manual. Chapter six is one of the best contributions to the volume as Borja Antela-Bernárdez examines Alexander's siege of Thebes and concludes Perdicas' actions at Thebes were part of a plan, not an im-

¹ James Mathieu, "Introduction," in *Experimental Archaeology: Replicating Past Objects, Behaviors, and Processes*, ed. James R. Mathieu, *BAR International Series*, vol. 1035. (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2002), 2; L.L. Brice and S. Catania, "A Pedagogical Trebuchet: A Case Study in Experimental History and History Teaching," *History Teacher* 46.1 (Nov. 2012): 68-70.

petuous maneuver. Then, in one of the weakest chapters in the volume, Konstantinos Lentakis demonstrates the weakness of analyzing ancient warfare through modern political science. He employs flawed understandings of insurgency, counterinsurgency, and civil war while trying to systemize hegemony in the fourth century. Stephen O'Connor examines the logistics of the Ten Thousand in chapter eight. Anna Buseo's useful treatment of the *hippika gymnasia*, cavalry training exercises, is next.

The editors seem to set up a break between the Greek chapters and the Roman chapters by putting the Celtic and naval chapters together, but most of this set of chapters is topically Greek too. Pérez-Rubio's chapter on 'Celtic' chariotry and cavalry suffers from over-generalization of disparate sources and an analysis in need of more work. Jefferey Emanuel's chapter on Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age transition and naval warfare leaves much to be desired since it presents nothing new. However, Matteo Zaccarini's chapter on Thucydides' treatment of *epibatai* in naval warfare, is most useful on this topic as it takes an interesting and original view to explaining who Thucydides seems to have thought the *epibatai* were and their roles on ship and in combat. The material needs more room than was available in this book, but Zaccarini makes a good start and offers an interesting way to think about this issue. Elena Franchi and Giorgia Proietti address commemoration of the dead by comparing Athens and Phocis while drawing upon Foucault, with mixed results. Susan Deacy and Fiona McHardy use the questionable concept of 'retaliatory warfare' to present a weak analysis of warfare and evolution based on the post-battle treatment of women in the epic poetry of the Trojan war. Julie Laskaris provides an interesting discussion of hemorrhage treatments, linking it back to doctors' experience treating post-partum hemorrhage.

Roman warfare dominates the last three chapters of the volume. Adam Anders provides an interesting and useful discussion of *auxilia* as light troops. Joanne Ball treats post-battle looting on Roman battle sites and battlefield archaeology in a chapter that offers some useful observations in need of testing. Hannah Cornwell in the final chapter discusses Roman attitudes to war and peace.

In addition to the uneven quality of the discussions there are a number of editorial gaffs in the volume, too numerous to catalog here. These should have been caught before publication. In terms of organization, the chapters can be grouped in various ways, none of which the editors employed. The press's need to keep the printing cost down led to omission of most illustrations and maps where they would have been helpful, except in chapter three, which has two images, and chapter eight's tiny map. The publisher's price for the volume is unreasonable.

While such diverse contributions demonstrate the breadth of military history, taken as a whole, readers will find this volume disappointing. There are some good discussions, but these are outnumbered by the mixed quality of the rest of the chapters. In the end, this volume serves as a reminder that not every conference should be published.

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