

## BOOK REVIEW

*Commemorating War and War Dead: Ancient and Modern*. Edited by MAURIZIO GIANGIULIO, ELENA FRANCHI and GIORGIA PROIETTI. Stuttgart, DE: Franz Steiner, 2019. Pp. 364. Paperback, €60.00. ISBN 978-3-515-12175-0.

This book, comprised of nineteen chapters plus a conclusion, looks at the many different ways that societies have commemorated and memorialized war and the war dead from Homer to the present. The first three chapters, by Maurizio Giangiulio, Elana Franchi and Giorgia Proietti, introduce the subject. Giangiulio surveys the literature from Halbach on, ultimately advocating for a social and cultural history of memory. Franchi looks at the various ways that wars have been commemorated and the trouble with our sources. Proietti notes the popularity of comparative research and cautions against universality in the experience of war. The next set of papers look at war and objects. Canevaro (Lilah Grace) examines the commemorative potential of objects and women in Homer's *Iliad*. Bergmann explores what happens to the dead after battle in the Greek world in the period leading up to the Persian Wars. Baitinger looks at mass burials, trophies and more in Archaic and Classical Greece. Roy surveys what Pausanias has to say about the war memorials found across Greece and the role of locals in shaping their traditions. Fehrlen-Weiss looks at the place of the Thirty Years War, until the two world wars the most destructive in Germany's history, in the German collective memory. The last paper of the section, Bellezza's, examines the ongoing conflict over commemoration of the past in post-Soviet Ukraine.

The second section focuses on the war dead and starts with Canevaro's (Mirko) chapter on the different ways that cultures have defined courage through the ages, though especially the Greek world, with some seeing it as neutral and others connecting it to honour and shame. Misisic explores the ways that the commemoration of fallen soldiers and the associated rituals associated with death helped foster close ties between soldiers and veterans and the wider community, with an especial emphasis on Poetovio in Pannonia. Birgfeld examines how differing social status had an impact on how individuals were commemorated, as did the audience of the varied commemorations in 18<sup>th</sup>-century

Germany. Mondini looks into what role death on the battlefield played in European war writing in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, particularly in Italy, and what role classical texts and motifs played in their content and form. In the third and final section on narratives of war, Konijnendijk discusses the impact of Sparta's reputation in their later success in war following from Thermopylae and the steps they took to cultivate this fear of Spartan military might. Franchi asks whether the memory of the origins of a people can be traced back to a conflict, and she focuses specifically on the Sacred Wars. Thorne looks at how republican Roman generals converted victories in war into political power, especially in the case of Caesar's victory over Pompey at Pharsalus, a challenging battle to commemorate. Albertoni investigates the apparent lack of commemorative monuments for Charlemagne, which he connects to the strong religious connotations of the king's/emperor's wars that left little room for commemorating the fallen. The final chapter, by Salvador, looks into the role the German veteran group called the Stahlhelm played in changing attitudes to Germany in the US and Europe in the wake of the Treaty of Versailles after World War I. The book closes with another chapter, this a concluding one, by Canevaro (Marko). He sees three issues with commemorations and the war dead: first, the permanence of memorials as a guarantee as the permanence of memory; second, the kind of commemoration imagined through war commemoration; and third, the deliberate manipulation of memory through war commemoration.

Nearly all of the papers stick quite closely to the theme of the collection, and even if some of the contributions are likely to be of greater interest to readers than others, in part because of the varied content, there is something in this book for anyone interested in war in the ancient world. Constraints of space preclude detailed discussion, but here is a very small selection comprising two of the more thought-provoking questions the contributions raise, at least for me. A few authors bring up Greek *tropaia*, the trophies erected after battle by the victor. While most accept that their location was determined by the location at which an army turned and fled, the chaos of Archaic and Classical Greek battle combined with the presumed participation of nearly all, if not all, of those present, makes pinpointing the precise spot difficult. How arbitrary, then, was the Greek decision about where to place them and how does this affect how we should understand how they were commemorated? Turning to literature, some authors bring up how battles were commemorated and the role of the audience in this. In the case of ancient historiography, we might expect oral accounts of a battle to differ markedly from written ones, especially if we focus on the stories of the lower-

ranking soldiers who participated. To what degree should we understand the literary accounts that we rely on so much to understand ancient battle as representing elite memories of how a battle did and should go, and how representative are they of Greek and Roman society/ies at large through the ages? On that note, are the topoi and the inter- and intratextual allusions to battles in other texts and other parts of a text that we find in ancient battle accounts simply vestiges of the ways that elites commemorated battle? These two sets of questions/observations, spurred by some of the chapters in this volume, are but a small sample of the rich material found therein.

All in all, this book includes several papers sure to promote further study on commemoration, the war dead and even greater reflection on the value of comparative study. Plus, the assorted chapters, though the first three in particular, include a wealth of bibliographic material that should be especially valuable for those looking to explore the topic in greater depth.

CONOR WHATELY

*University of Winnipeg, c.whately@uwinnipeg.ca*