

## GREEK WARFARE

ELLIOTT (S.) *Ancient Greeks at War. Warfare in the Classical World from Agamemnon to Alexander*. Pp. 288, colour ills, colour maps. Oxford and Philadelphia: Casemate, 2021. Cased, £30, US\$39.95. ISBN: 978-1-61200-998-8.

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As an introduction to warfare in the ancient Mediterranean, P. Connolly's venerable *Greece and Rome at War* (1981) has held a distinguished place since its publication. Now four decades later, with *Ancient Greeks at War* (along with *Romans at War* [2020], also published by Casemate) E. seems to seek to fill that same function, providing a well-illustrated primer on Greek warfare for the lay reader. Unfortunately, the present volume fails to match either the late Connolly's mastery of the subject or his clarity of delivery.

The work is divided into six chapters, along with a brief introduction and a conclusion. The first five chapters proceed chronologically, each providing a mix of political development, campaign history and battle narratives. The first chapter, 'Minoans, Mycenaean and the Sea Peoples', treats the Bronze Age, while the Archaic and the Classical periods (along with a brief discussion of the Greek Dark Ages) are fused together in the second chapter, 'Classical Greece'. Philip II and Alexander both enjoy a chapter to themselves, before the fifth chapter covering 'The Hellenistic Age and the Rise of Rome', which runs to the end of the Achaean War in 146 BCE. Each of these chapters save the first is studded with short inserts narrating particular famous battles.

The final chapter, 'The Military Systems of Classical and Hellenistic Greece', covers the equipment, organisation, command structure and fighting style of the Greek and Macedonian armies. This organisational structure may befuddle lay readers, who will only learn what a phalanx is or how a hoplite was armed many pages after the narratives of battles in which the hoplite phalanx played a crucial part. This organisation also leaves little space to discuss warfare beyond land battles; the development of siege and naval warfare from the Archaic to the end of the Hellenistic period together receive a bit less than three pages of coverage.

More concerning are the apparent errors and misrepresentations; a few examples may suffice. The *Iliad* is presented as an authoritative source on late Mycenaean tactics (p. 41), though the *communis opinio* is that a workable account of Bronze Age warfare cannot be salvaged from Homer. E. gives the Athenian contingent at Marathon as numbering 10,000 (p. 81), but most sources (Plut. *Mor.* 305b; Paus. 10.20.2; Nep. *Milt.* 5.1; cf. Just. *Epit.* 2.9) agree on a figure of 9,000. E. presents a baffling etymology of the word Argead as 'deriving via the Latin *Argīvus* from the Greek Ἀργεῖος' (p. 107) rather than from the Greek Ἀργεῖάδαι. The traditional view of the hoplite *othismos* is presented without comment (p. 250) along with the 'orthodox' date for emergence (p. 242); more recent work by H. van Wees (*Greek Warfare* [2004]), P. Krentz (*AHB* 8 [1994]; 'Hoplite Hell', in: *Men of Bronze* [2013]) and R. Konijnendijk (*Classical Greek Tactics* [2017]) do not appear either in the text or in the select bibliography.

Problems also extend to discussions of equipment. The Macedonian *sarisa* is described (p. 256) according to M. Andronikos's initial reconstruction (*BCH* 94 [1970]), now rejected by scholars (P. Connolly, *JRMES* 11 [2000]; N. Sekunda, *Acta Universitatis Lodzianensis* 23 [2001]). The phalangite's shield is presented as being universally described as a *pelte* and around 66cm in diameter, ignoring the considerable evidence that a somewhat

larger *aspis*, also with a shoulder-strap, remained in common use (K. Liampi, *Der makedonische Schild* [1998]).

The book is lavishly illustrated with many large colour images. These vary in quality and usefulness. Photographs of period weapons, armour and artwork are welcome, as are a number of Connolly's artistic reconstructions reproduced from *Greece and Rome at War* and new artwork by J. Shumate. The volume's eight large maps, each stretching over two pages, are clear and readable, as are the many smaller battle maps, although these sometimes show less detail in terms of army composition than one might expect. Some of the other image choices seem questionable; a set of frescos from the House of the Vettii in Pompeii are reproduced several times (pp. 11, 87, 125) to represent Greek triremes, despite both dating much later and also clearly showing only two banks of oars. Likewise, images of tabletop wargaming figurines are used to illustrate some panoplies, though these are at best difficult for readers to see, on account of their small size, and lack the detail of the artistic reconstructions.

After four decades an update to *Greece and Rome at War* is surely a *desideratum*, yet it is difficult to recommend this effort. E. does little to incorporate new research or archaeological finds, nor does he break new ground with his arguments. At the same time, the book's organisation and frequent digressions are likely to confuse lay readers, while the book's errors risk misleading them.

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## A HISTORY OF *ISONOMIA*

SCHUBERT (C.) *Isonomia. Entwicklung und Geschichte*. (Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 392.) Pp. viii + 329, b/w & colour ills, colour map. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2021. Cased, £100, €109.95, US\$126.99. ISBN: 978-3-11-071796-9.

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Long a footnote in the history of political thought, *isonomia* now receives an entire monograph. While most scholars take an Atheno-centric perspective, S. argues that only a far-ranging, diachronic survey of the evidence can help us grasp the concept. Accordingly, S. looks beyond the reforms of Cleisthenes in Athens, during which, according to M. Ostwald, *isonomia* first became a political slogan, to trace its fortunes from its earliest occurrence to late antiquity. Although, per the *TLG*, there are not more than a dozen occurrences before the first century CE, S. takes a magnifying glass to them and seeks to discern commonalities and differences, devoting attention not only to historiography but also to philosophy, medicine and inscriptions. S. shows that *isonomia* was a nuanced and subtle idea, but at its most basic it was a concept of political order ('Ordnungsbegriff', p. 11) that entailed equal participation by all the citizens in the community's political institutions. For S. this goes some way to explain why the embrace of *isonomia* so rarely, if ever, led to calls for *isomoiria*, equal distribution of property/wealth. *Isonomia* was firmly rooted in the political (in the sense of French '*le politique*'), having to do with a collective right to participation in the administration of the community and less with individuals' claims