

Hoplites The Classical Greek Battle Experience

Hoplites The Classical Greek Battle Experience hoplites the classical greek battle experience The hoplites of ancient Greece represent one of the most iconic and influential military formations in world history. Their battle experience, characterized by discipline, uniformity, and tactical innovation, played a crucial role in shaping Greek warfare and, ultimately, Western military traditions. Understanding the hoplite's role, equipment, tactics, and the broader context of their battles offers valuable insights into classical Greek society and warfare. This article explores the detailed experience of hoplite combat, from their training and armor to their strategic deployment on the battlefield.

--- Origins and Role of the Hoplite in Greek Warfare The Rise of the Hoplite The term "hoplite" derives from the Greek word "hoplon," meaning shield. These heavily armed infantrymen became prominent during the Archaic period (roughly 8th to 6th centuries BCE) as Greek city-states transitioned from localized skirmishes to more organized, large-scale battles. The hoplite emerged as a citizen-soldier, typically of the middle or upper classes, contributing to their sense of civic duty and pride. The Significance of the Hoplite System The hoplite phalanx revolutionized Greek warfare by emphasizing collective discipline and coordinated fighting rather than individual heroics. This formation fostered a sense of unity among Greek city-states, influencing political and social structures, such as the development of citizen militias and democratic participation.

--- The Equipment of a Classical Greek Hoplite Primary Armor and Weapons A typical hoplite's battle experience was heavily influenced by their equipment, which provided crucial protection and offensive capability:

- Helmet: Often made of bronze, with variants including Corinthian, Chalcidian, and Illyrian styles, designed to protect the head and face.
- Cuirass: Bronze or linethorax (layered linen armor), covering the torso.
- Greaves: Bronze shin guards protecting the lower legs.
- Shield (aspis or hoplon): Large, round, and convex, typically about 3 feet in diameter, used both defensively and offensively.
- Weapons:

 - Spear (dory): Usually around 7-9 feet long, used for thrusting.
 - Short sword (xiphos): For close combat if the spear was lost or in tight quarters.

2 Additional Gear - Clothing: Tunic and sometimes a cloak, depending on the weather.

- Belts and straps: To secure armor and weapons.

The heavy armor and weapons made the hoplite a formidable force, but also meant that battle required significant physical strength and endurance.

--- The Battle Formation: The Phalanx Structure and Deployment The core of the hoplite battle experience was the phalanx—a dense, rectangular formation of rows of hoplites standing shoulder to shoulder. Each soldier's shield protected not only himself but also his neighbor, emphasizing collective defense. Phalanx Characteristics:

- Typically 8-16 ranks deep.
- Each hoplite's left side was protected by the shield of the soldier on his

left, creating a wall of shields. - The front line engaged the enemy directly, while the ranks behind provided support and reinforcement. Tactical Principles - Width over depth: A wider formation was often preferable to intimidate and outflank opponents. - Moving in unison: Soldiers advanced or retreated as a single entity, maintaining formation discipline. - Spear thrusting: The primary offensive was a coordinated spear thrust toward the enemy. --- The Classical Greek Battle Experience Preparation and Training Hoplite training was rigorous, emphasizing discipline, physical fitness, and drills to maintain formation integrity. Young men trained from an early age, often participating in gymnasium exercises, weapons practice, and military drills. Key aspects of hoplite training: - Drilling in maintaining tight formations. - Practicing spear thrusts and shield maneuvers. - Building stamina and strength through physical exercises. - Learning battlefield commands and signals. Most hoplites fought as part of a citizen militia, with little specialized training compared to professional armies. The Onset of Battle When a conflict arose, hoplite armies would march to the battlefield, usually choosing terrain that favored their formation—flat plains or open fields. Preparation included: - Arranging ranks before the engagement. - Conducting last-minute drills or morale-boosting speeches. - Ensuring equipment was secure and in working order. 3 The Combat Experience Once engaged, hoplites faced a brutal, close-quarters confrontation, with the experience varying depending on the battle's context: - Initial Engagement: The front lines advanced steadily, with soldiers locked in a tense contest of spear thrusts and shield blocks. - Close Combat: As the phalanx pressed against the enemy, soldiers fought in tight formation, with many fighting at arm's length or attempting to break through enemy lines. - Shock and Momentum: Successful advances could cause the enemy's formation to falter, leading to disarray and rout. - Morale and Discipline: Maintaining order amidst chaos was vital; discipline often determined the outcome. The Role of the Hoplite's Individual Experience While the collective aspect was dominant, individual skill was essential. Experienced hoplites: - Anticipated enemy movements. - Used precise spear thrusts. - Managed shield defenses efficiently. - Participated in coordinated attacks and retreats. --- Strategies and Tactics in Classical Greek Battles Common Battle Strategies Greek armies relied heavily on the phalanx formation but adapted tactics based on terrain and enemy type: - Flanking Maneuvers: Using lighter troops or allied contingents to outflank opponents. - Use of Terrain: Choosing battle sites that favored the hoplite's strengths (e.g., narrow passes). - Combined Arms: Incorporating other units like light skirmishers and cavalry for support. Notable Battles and Their Tactics - Battle of Marathon (490 BCE): Athenians used the hoplite phalanx to repel the Persian invasion, leveraging the terrain. - Battle of Thermopylae (480 BCE): Spartans and their allies held a narrow pass, maximizing their defensive advantage. - Battle of Plataea (479 BCE): Greek hoplites coordinated with cavalry and light troops to decisively defeat the Persians. --- The Impact of the Hoplite Battle Experience Social and Political Consequences Participation in hoplite warfare fostered civic pride and contributed to the development of democracy in Athens. The reliance on citizen-soldiers meant that military service was intertwined with political rights. 4 Evolution of Greek Warfare

Over time, the limitations of the hoplite system led to the development of new tactics and the eventual rise of professional armies, but the hoplite's influence persisted in military culture and tactics. Legacy The hoplite's battle experience has left a lasting legacy, inspiring modern concepts of collective defense, discipline, and the importance of well-trained infantry. --- Conclusion The classical Greek hoplite battle experience was a defining feature of ancient warfare, emphasizing collective discipline, robust equipment, and tactical innovation. Their participation in the phalanx formation created a unique combat environment that valued coordination over individual prowess. Understanding the hoplite's role, their equipment, tactics, and the social implications of their service provides a comprehensive picture of how these citizen-soldiers shaped Greek history and military tradition. Their legacy endures as a symbol of civic duty, collective strength, and tactical ingenuity. QuestionAnswer What were hoplites in classical Greece? Hoplites were heavily armed Greek infantry soldiers who fought in close formation using shields, spears, and helmets during the classical period, forming the backbone of Greek armies. How did the phalanx formation enhance the battle experience for hoplites? The phalanx was a tight, rectangular formation that provided mutual protection and collective strength, requiring discipline and coordination, which made hoplites more effective in combat. What kind of armor and weapons did hoplites use during battles? Hoplites typically wore a bronze helmet, breastplate or cuirass, greaves, and carried a large round shield called an hoplon, along with a spear and short sword for close combat. What role did hoplites play in the classical Greek battle experience? Hoplites were central to Greek warfare, engaging in sustained, disciplined melee combat that emphasized unity and strategy, often determining the outcome of battles and conflicts. How did the training and discipline of hoplites influence their battlefield effectiveness? Hoplites underwent rigorous training to maintain formation and discipline, which allowed them to execute complex maneuvers and sustain cohesion during the chaos of battle. 5 What was the significance of the Battle of Marathon for hoplite warfare? The Battle of Marathon (490 BC) showcased the effectiveness of the hoplite phalanx against a larger Persian force, reinforcing the importance of disciplined infantry in Greek military success. In what ways did the classical Greek battle experience with hoplites influence later military tactics? The hoplite phalanx influenced later military formations and tactics, emphasizing discipline, combined arms, and unit cohesion, shaping the development of European and Western military strategies. Hoplites: The Classical Greek Battle Experience The image of the armored Greek soldier, standing resolute in the phalanx formation, has become emblematic of classical warfare. The term hoplites conjures a blend of disciplined martial prowess and the societal ideals of citizen-soldiers defending their polis. To grasp the core of the classical Greek battle experience, one must delve into the origins, equipment, tactics, and cultural significance of hoplites, as well as the realities they faced on the battlefield. This comprehensive exploration illuminates not only the military aspects but also the social and political fabric woven into the hoplite phenomenon. --- Origins and Evolution of the Hoplite The hoplite emerged as a defining figure in Greek warfare during the early Archaic period (circa

8th to 6th centuries BCE). Initially, Greek armies consisted of aristocratic cavalry and skirmishers, but as city-states grew more organized and militarized, the citizen-soldier—the hoplite—became central. Historical Development - Early Warfare: Before the rise of hoplite warfare, Greek warfare was characterized by individual combat and irregular tactics, often involving light armed troops. - Transition to Phalanx: Around the 7th century BCE, the need for more coordinated, collective fighting led to the development of the phalanx formation, with hoplites as its core. - Societal Shift: The hoplite class was largely composed of middle-class citizens who could afford their armor, reflecting a shift toward a more civic-oriented martial culture. Definition and Etymology The term hoplite derives from hoplon, the type of shield they carried—typically a large, round, wooden shield covered in bronze. The hoplite was not only a soldier but a social class, embodying the ideals of civic virtue and participation in the polis. --- The Equipment and Armament of the Hoplite A detailed understanding of hoplite equipment reveals much about the battle experience, Hoplites The Classical Greek Battle Experience 6 from the physical burden to the psychological impact. Primary Weapons and Armor - Hoplon (Shield): The large, round shield measured roughly 3 feet in diameter, weighing around 7-10 kg. It was made of wood covered with bronze or leather, providing essential protection and a psychological barrier. - Dory (Spear): The primary offensive weapon, approximately 2.5-3 meters long, used for thrusting. Its length allowed hoplites to fight in tight formation. - Xiphos or Kopis (Sidearms): Short swords used as secondary weapons, often for close combat if the spear was lost or broken. - Corinthian Helmet: Made of bronze, with a distinctive crest, offering head protection but potentially limiting peripheral vision. - Muscle Cuirass (Breastplate): Usually bronze or linen stiffened with bronze plates, offering vital torso protection. - Greaves: Bronze shin guards protecting the lower legs. - Leather or Bronze Belt: Secured armor pieces and sometimes used to carry additional equipment. Physical and Psychological Impacts of Equipment - The weight and bulk of armor could be physically taxing, especially during prolonged battles. - The imposing appearance of armor and shields contributed to the morale and intimidate opponents. - The uniformity of equipment reinforced the collective identity of the phalanx. --- The Battle Formation and Tactics The core of the classical Greek battle experience centered on the phalanx, a tightly packed, rectangular formation of hoplites. The Phalanx Formation - Consisted of rows of hoplites standing shoulder-to-shoulder, each with shield overlapping the neighbor's. - The typical formation was 8-16 ranks deep, depending on the size of the army and terrain. - The formation's front was deliberately dense, creating a wall of shields and spears. Combat Principles and Maneuvering - Line Engagement: The front line engaged the enemy with spear thrusts, while the deeper ranks provided reinforcement. - Spears and Shields: The primary focus was on thrusting with the spear, aiming for gaps or vulnerabilities. - Pushing and Holding: Maintaining cohesion was vital; breakage of the line often led to disarray. - Tactical Flexibility: While the phalanx was dominant on flat terrain, it was less effective in rugged or urban environments, prompting adaptations in tactics. Hoplites The Classical Greek Battle Experience 7 Common Battle Scenarios - Battles often involved

initial skirmishing or feints, followed by a direct clash of phalanxes. - The emphasis was on maintaining discipline and cohesion rather than individual heroics. - Breakthroughs were achieved through strategic weaknesses or superior numbers, not individual combat. --- The Battle Experience: From Combat to Culture The physical and emotional realities of hoplite warfare were profound, shaping the soldiers' identities and the collective consciousness of the Greek city-states. Physical Challenges - The weight of armor and weapons could be exhausting, especially in hot climates. - The intense proximity of combat fostered a high-stress environment, where discipline was crucial. - Injuries were common, and battlefield medical care was rudimentary. Psychological Aspects - The collective nature of the phalanx fostered camaraderie and a sense of shared purpose. - Hoplites were motivated by loyalty to their city-state, family, and civic pride. - Fear and adrenaline were constant companions, yet discipline often triumphed over chaos. Training and Discipline - Citizens trained regularly, with drills and mock battles. - Service was often a matter of civic duty rather than professional military career. - The concept of the *aretē* (excellence) was intertwined with martial prowess. --- The Social and Political Significance of the Hoplite Beyond the battlefield, hoplites played a key role in shaping Greek society. Hoplite Citizenship and Political Power - Service as a hoplite was a prerequisite for political participation in many city-states. - The collective martial effort fostered a sense of equality among citizen-soldiers, especially in Athens. - The rise of the hoplite class contributed to the development of democratic institutions. Impact on Greek Warfare and Society - The dominance of the hoplite phalanx influenced warfare tactics for centuries. - The Hoplites The Classical Greek Battle Experience 8 emphasis on citizen-soldier participation contrasted with later professional armies. - The culture of honor and civic virtue rooted in hoplite service persisted into the Classical period. --- Limitations and Challenges of Hoplite Warfare While iconic, the hoplite system was not without shortcomings. Vulnerabilities - The phalanx was less effective against irregular or highly mobile forces. - Terrain constraints limited deployment. - Heavy armor reduced mobility and could be detrimental in protracted campaigns. Transition and Decline - The rise of Macedonian and later Roman armies introduced more flexible tactics and lighter equipment. - The hoplite model persisted primarily in city-states with the resources and civic values to support it but gradually declined as professional armies became standard. --- Conclusion: The Lasting Legacy of the Hoplite Battle Experience The classical Greek hoplite embodies a unique confluence of military innovation, societal values, and civic identity. Their battle experience—marked by disciplined formation fighting, physical hardship, and collective sacrifice—defined Greek warfare for centuries and influenced military thinking well beyond antiquity. Understanding the hoplite not only illuminates the martial practices of ancient Greece but also reveals how warfare can shape social structures, political participation, and cultural ideals. Today, the image of the hoplite remains a powerful symbol of civic virtue and collective resilience, echoing through history as a testament to the enduring human spirit in the face of conflict. Ancient Greece, Phalanx formation, Greek warfare, Greek infantry, classical warfare, Spartan soldiers, hoplite armor, Greek city-states, battle tactics,

Greek military history

War and Violence in Ancient GreeceHoplitesThe Western Way of WarThe Cavalry of Classical GreeceGreat Battles of the Classical Greek WorldThe Armies of Classical GreeceAncient Greek Battle Speeches and a PalfreyClassical Greek TacticsHistorical Dictionary of Ancient Greek WarfareAncient Greeks at WarA Storm of SpearsBattles and Battlefields of Ancient GreeceTaming Ares: War, Interstate Law, and Humanitarian Discourse in Classical GreeceUnit Cohesion and Warfare in the Ancient WorldWarfare in Ancient GreeceAncient Greek War And WeaponsA Companion to Greek WarfareA History of Classical Greek LiteratureMilitary Leaders and Sacred Space in Classical Greek WarfareUnderstanding Greek Warfare Hans van Wees Victor Davis Hanson Victor Davis Hanson I. G. Spence Owen Rees Everett L. Wheeler W.K. Pritchett Roel Konijnendijk Iain Spence Simon Elliott Christopher Matthew C. Jacob Butera Emiliano J. Buis Joshua R. Hall Michael M. Sage Haydn Middleton Waldemar Heckel John Pentland Mahaffy Sonya Nevin Matthew A. Sears

War and Violence in Ancient Greece Hoplites The Western Way of War The Cavalry of Classical Greece Great Battles of the Classical Greek World The Armies of Classical Greece Ancient Greek Battle Speeches and a Palfrey Classical Greek Tactics Historical Dictionary of Ancient Greek Warfare Ancient Greeks at War A Storm of Spears Battles and Battlefields of Ancient Greece Taming Ares: War, Interstate Law, and Humanitarian Discourse in Classical Greece Unit Cohesion and Warfare in the Ancient World Warfare in Ancient Greece Ancient Greek War And Weapons A Companion to Greek Warfare A History of Classical Greek Literature Military Leaders and Sacred Space in Classical Greek Warfare Understanding Greek Warfare *Hans van Wees Victor Davis Hanson Victor Davis Hanson I. G. Spence Owen Rees Everett L. Wheeler W.K. Pritchett Roel Konijnendijk Iain Spence Simon Elliott Christopher Matthew C. Jacob Butera Emiliano J. Buis Joshua R. Hall Michael M. Sage Haydn Middleton Waldemar Heckel John Pentland Mahaffy Sonya Nevin Matthew A. Sears*

the study of greek warfare should involve much more than reconstructing the experience of combat or revisiting the great wars of the classical period here a distinguished cast of international scholars explores beyond the usual thematic and chronological boundaries ranging from the heroes of homer to the kings and cities of the hellenistic age the contributors set war in the context of other forms of greek violence private and public at every turn they challenge received ideas about the causes and conduct of war its development and its place in greek society and culture

incorporating research found in ancient literary iconographic epigraphic and archaeological sources this book explores the experiences of the soldiers who conducted battle on the small plains of ancient greece the volume which draws on the accumulated expertise of nine american and british scholars emphasizes the actual techniques of fighting and practical concerns as the use of commands music in warfare the use of dog tags and ritual on the battlefield

hanson thinks the ancient greeks deliberately made warfare physically and psychologically intolerable so that no one could stand it for long and wars could be fought and settled in a single afternoon

this book is the first to examine how classical greek cavalry actually operated on the battlefield it looks at the prime characteristics of greek cavalry including mobility protection armament training leadership flexibility and motivation up to now it has usually been assumed that ancient greek cavalry was subordinated to the infantry because it was less effective in battle this book challenges this assumption analysing the position of greek cavalry and especially the athenian arm not only on the battlefield but in society as a whole it concludes that like many modern societies greek states produced military arms which were moulded more by social and economic influences than by purely military considerations classical greek cavalry had a high combat potential but this was reduced by the attitudes of the rest of society towards the cavalry class the wealthiest and most aristocratic group in most states

this book presents a selection of eighteen land battles and sieges that span the classical greek period from the persian invasions to the eclipse of the traditional hoplite heavy infantry at the hands of the macedonians this of course is the golden age of the hoplite phalanx but owen rees is keen to cover all aspects of battle including mercenary armies and the rise of light infantry emphasising the variety and tactical developments across the period each battle is set in context with a brief background and then the battlefield and opposing forces are discussed before the narrative and analysis of the fighting is given and rounded off with consideration of the aftermath and strategic implications written in an accessible narrative tone a key feature of the book is the authors choice of battles which collectively challenge popularly held beliefs such as the invincibility of the spartans the text is well supported by dozens of tactical diagrams showing deployments and various phase of the battles

the origin of the western military tradition in greece 750 362 bc is fraught with controversies such as the date and nature of the phalanx the role of agricultural destruction and the existence of rules and ritualistic practices this volume collects papers significant for specific points in debates or theoretical value in shaping and critiquing controversial viewpoints an introduction offers a critical analysis of recent trends in ancient military history and provides a bibliographical essay contextualizing the papers within the framework of debates with a guide to further reading

this volume looks at battle speech in major greek historians as well as the pictorial representations of thermopylai

what determined the choices of the greeks on the battlefield were their tactics defined by unwritten moral rules or was all considered fair in war in classical greek tactics a cultural history roel konijnendijk re examines the literary evidence for the battle tactics and tactical thought of the greeks during the 5th and 4th centuries bc rejecting

the traditional image of limited ritualised battle konijnendijk sketches a world of brutally destructive engagements restricted only by the stubborn amateurism of the men who fought the resulting model of hoplite battle does away with most received wisdom about the nature of greek battle tactics and redefines the way they reflected the values of greek culture as a whole

this resource strategically traces greek warfare from 720 to 30 bc and its specific and extensive details the wars the troops the armor the military tactics and other factors either affecting or affected by the wars read how warfare evolved during the centuries in ancient greece from rudimentary non sophisticated strategies and weaponry to more complex arsenals and tactics includes entries on many aspects of war for which ancient greece is historically recognized as well as profiles of famous military and civilian leaders including alcibiades and alexander the great who were involved in the battles on both land and sea an extensive bibliography suggests further reading of interest no other general work on ancient greek warfare covers the entire period included in this volume

a detailed insightful survey of greek warfare with illustrations and many well informed and highly perceptive observations choice in this book historian and archaeologist simon elliott considers the different fighting styles of greek armies and discusses how greek battles unfolded covering every aspect of warfare in the ancient greek world from the beginnings of greek civilization to its assimilation into the ever expanding world of rome it begins with the onset of minoan culture on crete around 2000 bc then covers the arrival of the mycenaean civilization and the ensuing late bronze age collapse before moving on to dark age and archaic greece this sets the scene for the flowering of classical greek civilization as told through detailed narratives of the greek and persian wars the peloponnesian wars and the rise of thebes as a major power the book then moves on to macedonian domination under philip ii before focusing on the exploits of his son alexander the great the all conquering hero of the ancient world his legacy was the hellenistic world with its multiple never ending series of conflicts that took place over a huge territory ranging from italy in the west all the way to india in the east topics covered include the various wars of the successors the rise of the bactrian greek and indo greek kingdoms the wars between the antigonid macedonian seleucid and ptolemaic kingdoms and later the clash of cultures between the rising power of rome in the west and the hellenistic kingdoms in the long run the latter proved unable to match rome's insatiable desire for conquest in the eastern mediterranean and this together with the rise of parthia in the east ensured that one by one the hellenistic kingdoms and states fell the book ends with the destruction of corinth in 146 bc after the defeat by rome of the achaean league and concludes by considering the legacy of the ancient greeks in the roman world and subsequently a comprehensive survey smoothly written by an expert popularizer of ancient history a tour de force nymas review

a practical and thought provoking study of the ancient military tactic known as the phalanx the classic battle formation used in historic greek warfare the historian in ancient greece warfare was a fact of life with every city brandishing its own fighting force and the backbone of these classical greek armies was the phalanx of heavily armored spearmen or hoplites these were the soldiers that defied the might of persia at marathon thermopylae and plataea and more often than not fought each other in countless battles between the greek city states for centuries they were the dominant soldiers of the classical world in great demand as mercenaries throughout the mediterranean and middle east yet despite the battle descriptions left behind and copious evidence in greek art and archaeology there are still many aspects of hoplite warfare that are little understood or the subject of fierce academic debate christopher matthew s groundbreaking work combines rigorous analysis with the new disciplines of reconstructive archaeology reenactment and ballistic science he examines the equipment tactics and capabilities of the individual hoplites as well as how they used juggernaut masses of men and their long spears to such devastating effect this is an innovative reassessment of one of the most important early advancements in military tactics and indispensable reading for anyone interested in ancient warfare the new york military affairs symposium

this useful work will appeal to a wide audience from military buffs to historically minded tourists and their guides to students and scholars choice greece was the scene of some of the most evocative and decisive battles in the ancient world this volume brings together the ancient evidence and modern scholarship on twenty battlefields throughout greece it is a handy resource for visitors of every level of experience from the member of a guided tour to the veteran military historian the introductory chapter outlines some of the most pressing and interesting issues in the study of ancient greek battles and battlefields and offers a crash course on ancient warfare twenty lively chapters explore battlefields selected for both their historical importance and their inspiring sites in addition to accessible overviews of each battle this book provides all the information needed for an intellectually and aesthetically rewarding visit including transport and travel details museum overviews and further reading

in taming ares emiliano j buis examines the sources of classical greece to challenge both the state centeredness of mainstream international legal history and the omnipresence of war and excessive violence in ancient times making ample use of epigraphic as well as literary rhetorical and historiographical sources the book offers the first widespread account of the narrative foundations of the illegality of warfare in the classical hellenic world in a clear yet sophisticated manner buis convincingly proves that the traditionally neglected study of the performance of ancient greek poleis can contribute to a better historical understanding of those principles of international law underlying the practices and applicable rules on the use of force and the conduct of hostilities

this book explores unit cohesion in ancient armies and how this contributed to the making of war in the mediterranean world it takes a varied approach to the subject from looking at individual groups within larger armies to juxtaposing vertical and horizontal types of cohesion providing a more detailed understanding of how groups were kept together within the broader definition of unit cohesion this volume approaches more specific aspects of military cohesion in the ancient mediterranean world including how individual soldiers commit to one another how armies and units are maintained through hierarchy and the chain of command and social cohesion in which social activities and aspects of social power help bind an army or unit together examples from across the ancient mediterranean are explored in this volume from classical greece to late antiquity with topics such as how armies and units cohere during the sacking of cities roman standards as a focus of religious cohesion and how the multi ethnic mercenary armies of carthage cohered modern approaches to social cohesion are deployed throughout and these essays serve as an important complement to existing literature on unit cohesion more generally unit cohesion and warfare in the ancient world is of interest to students and scholars of ancient warfare military history and military studies as well as those working on the ancient mediterranean world more broadly

warfare in ancient greece assembles a wide range of source material and introduces the latest scholarship on the greek experience of war the author has carefully selected key texts many of them not previously available in english and provided them with comprehensive commentaries for the greek polis warfare was a more usual state of affairs than peace the documents assembled here recreate the social and historical framework in which ancient greek warfare took place over a period of more than a thousand years from the homeric age to alexander the great special attention is paid to the attitudes and feelings of the greeks towards defeated people and captured cities complete with notes index and bibliography warfare in ancient greece will provide students of ancient and military history with an unprecedented survey of relevant materials

history archaeological evidence and primary source material combine to vividly portray daily life in ancient greece each book examines a specific aspect of ancient life in depth allowing readers to make comparisons with their own lives

provides a broad and deep exploration of ancient greek and macedonian warfare a companion to greek warfare is an authoritative survey of all major areas in the field of greek and macedonian military history covering diverse operational economic social psychological and cultural aspects of ancient warfare bringing together essays by both international authorities and young scholars this edited volume exposes readers to alternative views and original interpretations in a host of old and new topics wide in scope the book presents thematically organized chapters that explore the nature of greek warfare military training discipline and organization the economics pathology

and psychology of war and depictions of war in greek art and literature entire chapters deal with neglected topics such as espionage propaganda war crimes emotional trauma the role of women in warfare greeks in foreign service and the armies and methods of the greeks and the macedonians opponents presenting a uniquely wide range of topics and contexts this volume features contributions from ancient historians and scholars including archaeologists naval historians and other specialists offers broad chronological and geographical coverage including the bronze age and early greek wars the persian wars the campaigns of alexander and the wars in sicily edited by internationally recognized experts in early greek prosopography warfare and military history macedonian warfare and military history greek law and customs and the history of scholarship in the field of greek warfare part of the acclaimed blackwell companions to the ancient world series a companion to greek warfare is an important resource for instructors students and scholars in all fields of ancient greek history particularly military history and the perfect addition to the library of any general reader with interest in ancient military history

the ancient greeks attributed great importance to the sacred during war and campaigning as demonstrated from their earliest texts among the first four lines of the iliad for example is a declaration that apollo began the feud between achilles and agamemnon and sent a plague upon the greek army because its leader agamemnon had mistreated apollo s priest in this first in depth study of the attitude of military commanders towards holy ground sonya nevin addresses the customs and conduct of these leaders in relation to sanctuaries precincts shrines temples and sacral objects focusing on a variety of greek kings and captains the author shows how military leaders were expected to react to the sacred sites of their foes she further explores how they were likely to respond and how their responses shaped the way such generals were viewed by their communities by their troops by their enemies and also by those like herodotus thucydides and xenophon who were writing their lives this is a groundbreaking study of the significance of the sacred in warfare and the wider culture of antiquity

understanding greek warfare offers a wide ranging survey of greek warfare from the mycenaeans through to the hellenistic kingdoms clashes with rome each chapter provides an overview of a particular theme and historical period and a detailed discussion of the relevant sources both ancient and modern this volume covers not only the development of equipment tactics strategy and the major wars of greek history the drums and trumpets it also examines the political social and cultural importance of warfare in each period each chapter outlines major scholarly debates such as the true nature of hoplite battle and whether alexander the great had a strategic vision beyond conquest and includes several short selections from the primary literary evidence readable yet scholarly this book is an ideal companion to courses on greek warfare and society and offers detailed suggestions for further reading and research understanding greek warfare will be a crucial resource for students of war in the ancient greek world

and of the ancient greeks in general

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