the Roman world, which denies specifically Roman sympathies to the author, and with an assessment of the Greek city under Roman rule. These two studies display the same interest in competing cultures.

Part Two is entitled Rome and the East. It starts with a discussion of the trials of Jesus. Millar (M) analyses the discrepancies between the accounts in the gospels, denying the possibility of creating a digested version, and favouring the account of John. Even his preference is muted and provisional. There follows an examination of coloniae and their cultural integration in the Near East. M’s interest is in the process of founding Roman colonies or transforming existing native cities into colonies: here he attempts to assess the impact of Roman culture on developments in the East. Next he considers Latin epigraphy in an eastern context. M studies bilingual and trilingual documents from Palmyra with a view to comprehending the complex interrelationship between cultures there. He pleads for the importance of reading all these documents as a unified body of evidence which will enable us to understand the cultural interplay. He scrutinises the world of Zenobia and Aurelian and its cultural relations in an investigation of the resilience of local culture. This is an investigation of events in Roman Syria in the late 3rd century through the eyes of the Palmyran queen and a figure from Samosata, Paul. A study of the role of the so-called caravan cities probes the extent to which our picture of cities such as Palmyra and Petra as nodes in long distance trade may be valid. The rather incomplete evidence is reviewed very cautiously, and Palmyra alone is attributed secure definition as a ‘caravan city’. This section closes with an essay on the impact of Greco-Roman culture on the world of the East over a long time span: from Alexander to Shapur I.

The book concludes with a section headed ‘Jews and Others’. The first essay is a study of Porphyry which investigates elements of his biography to establish his identity and cultural orientation. Despite his birth at Tyre, M can find nothing oriental in his worldview, and points out his typically Hellenistic career pattern. In a related paper (a tribute to leading Jewish historian Menahem Stern who met his death at the hands of an Arab assassin) M provides a parallel study of Jewish and Arab identity. He explores ethnic identity in the Near East for the period between AD 325-450 through an investigation of language, religion and culture. A study of Dura-Europos in the Parthian period invites scholars to explore questions of identity and orientation from the rich archaeological evidence available. M shows how much is still to be done with this evidence. The last two chapters concern Jewish affairs. The penultimate chapter locates the Jews of the period AD 312-438 between paganism and Christianity in a wide-ranging study of the available evidence for relations between the three groups in the period after Constantine. Often the clearest insights into the topic come from the contemporary repressive legislation of the Christian emperors. The final essay in the collection examines the penetration of Christianity into the Jewish world. Here the topic is the Christian emperors, the Christian church and its interrelations with the Jews of the Diaspora between AD 379-450.

An epilogue by Millar himself, entitled ‘Re-drawing the Map?’, describes elements of M’s career trajectory, and discusses desirable modes of viewing the ancient world. Here he emphasizes the amount of detail which modern scholars can today bring to bear on historical problems without the effort that was required for previous generations, as a result of the technological revolution. For M, Islamic conquests in the Levant in the 7th century represent a reasonable terminal point for his conception of antiquity. His principal suggestion is that we are now in a position to counterbalance the dominant role of traditional ancient history with its focus on the Western half of the Mediterranean world. The book as a whole shows that M has already embarked on the process of redrawing the map.

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This is a book about the functioning of the Roman state in the relatively short period from the death of Julian in 363 to the death of Theodosius in 395. Since the work of A.H.M. Jones in 1964, there has been important progress in the interpretation and understanding of the working of the imperial apparatus, and Errington offers a careful reinterpretation of key sources to build his picture. In a nutshell, this work applies Fergus Millar’s model of a reactive central government to this late 4th century context.

It is, as Errington states, a small book, and demonstrates its thesis by a series of studies of key elements of government structure. He starts with changes at the top. Now that the Constantinian dynasty had come to an end, it was
replaced by military men who gradually moved from positions based on the loyalty of their troops to dynasty building. By 395 Theodosius had been able to establish the dynastic principle and enable his civilian sons to establish themselves as heirs to East and West respectively. This had been achieved by ensuring the smooth operation of the system of regional loyalty that maintained the day to day functioning of the empire, and the backbone of this system in this period was the active military presence of the emperor, a man who was prepared to travel and bolster his position in regional centres. There is a detailed analysis of how this worked in practice.

Caesars were instituted under the Constantinian dynasty, not always successfully (witness Gallus), to fill gaps created by the absence of the Augustus. Jovian, who succeeded Julian, had other military relatives to share his power with, but neither they nor he lived long enough to establish his dynasty. The army elected Valentinian and required him to elect as joint emperor his brother Valens, a decision influenced by dynastic thinking. There is an analysis of the contribution of Valens’ propagandist Themistius that is alert to ‘spin’, and both here and elsewhere the handling of the sources shows sensitivity and careful reading. Gratian was taken on as an Augustus in 368 when still a child of 8, another piece of dynasty building rather than military thinking. When Valentinian died in 375 the soldiery jockeyed for its own candidate in preference to Gratian who already had a coterie supporting him. The soldiers’ candidate was even younger – a four year old son of Valentinian by his second wife Justina. Some three years later Valens was killed at Adrianople (378), and Theodosius was inaugurated in the following year; he was the son of a leading general of Valentinian, another sign of the power of the military. Nevertheless he also had dynastic ambitions, realized in 395 with the succession of Arcadius and Honorius. He also on the way married Valentinian’s sister Gallia in 388. Errington (E) shows how these dynastic decisions meshed with pragmatism against the background of contemporary war and politics.

Another section deals with the security of the empire. In this period defence was the main priority. On the Rhine the focus was on the Alamanni until an accommodation was reached in 357. Other groups were dealt with as problems arose – a continuation of longstanding Roman policy. On the Danube, regulation of relations with the Goths was assigned to Valens in 364, and these remained stable until the Gothic wars of 376, which were probably a result of a miscalculation about the number of Goths wanting to settle in Roman territory. The result was the shattering Roman defeat at Adrianople in 378. In the aftermath the emphasis was on achieving peace and utilizing Gothic auxiliary troops, and in general on integration. In the East and in Africa the reactive model also seems to be a good fit.

Diocletian’s New Empire grouped provinces into regional administrative units, dioceses, in turn grouped into large and regionally based praetorian prefectures. Constantine’s sons had three such units, and this remained a useful structure. Even events as upsetting as Adrianople did not immediately alter the structure. The division of the empire between Valentinian and Valens in 364 set the conditions for change but it was not until the end of the reign of Theodosius that Illyricum was split between East and West. This encouraged the separate management of the Greek and Latin provinces of the empire. Turning to legislation E emphasizes the regional nature of laws passed down by the praetorian prefects, and argues that the formal structure of imperial pronouncements tends to conceal this. The independent legislative activity is seen as part of the developing separatism of East and West.

There are chapters on the declining role of Rome and the emerging role of Constantinople. The privileges Rome had long held did not alter the fact that Rome was by now politically diminished, but the Roman aristocracy still had some residual importance. The city was subject to laws and appointments (such as the praefectus urbi) from outside, but still had a symbolic significance in some quarters. In this period an issue was the restoration of the altar of Victoria to the Senate house, which had both political and religious ramifications. The emperors are shown by E as responding to political pressures rather than being doctrinally driven. Theodosius paid more attention to Rome than most of his immediate predecessors.

Constantinople had been created by Constantine but it was under Valens and Theodosius that its political significance came to fruition. It then subsequently functioned both as imperial residence and administrative centre. The Gothic war of 378 helped to consolidate its importance, and in 380 Theodosius set up his court there. The stages of its growth are documented and outlined in terms of larger imperial interests. Perhaps the most significant step on the way to its elevated status was the creation in 359 of the post of prefect of the city, and its ranking immediately below the praetorian prefecture, as at Rome. Recruitment for the Senate at Constantinople had an impact on the Western administration. Rome saw little of the emperor while the new capital went from strength to strength.

The final theme is religion and the state. Here the reaction of successors to the chaos created by Julian’s aggressive paganism is explored. E sees it as
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problem of defining the future role of emperor in religious affairs. Interest mostly centred on the nature of ‘the church’ which the emperors were to recognize. Was the Nicene formula to be accepted or Constantius’ ‘homoian’ compromise formula? Jovian tried to avoid conflict and appears to be the very model of a reactive emperor. E goes on in his analysis of the period to promote his thesis that the politics of reaction were far more important on this issue than the question of individual belief. His view is supported by the fact that in Themistius’ speech of welcome to Valens at Constantinople religion is not even mentioned. However, religion does become important for Valens and his successors, whose primary concerns, however, were with the secular interests of the state, and their actions are seen as pragmatic in the face of a complex religious dispute which had manifest political consequences. The image of Theodosius as ‘a very religious man and promoter of the catholic church’ (Marcellinus Comes) is therefore unsurprisingly cast in doubt. His support for the Nicene solution and his actions against the ‘homoians’ are seen as largely political decisions. There is an extensive review of Theodosius’ interaction with major religious players. No doubt some of his views will be disputed, but E lays out the evidence, as he sees it, clearly, and the whole book is essential reading for those interested in the 4th century.

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provides the context for discussion of land-battle during the Great Peloponnesian War, Alexander’s great victory at Issus is the backdrop for Macedonian developments, the Roman slaughter of Macedonians at Pydna the vehicle to discuss middle-Republican war-making and, at the last, the emperor Julian’s fateful campaign against the Persians in AD 363 closes the book and enables discussion of the Roman army in the fourth century.

For the Greeks the influence of Homer cannot be emphasised enough. The heroes of the Iliad provided role models for every soldier. Lendon (L) notes that Homer was a source of innovation as well as aspiration. Homeric warfare provided technical illustrations for the ways in which warfare might be waged. Even the anonymity of polis - hoplite warfare had Homeric undertones, as soldiers in the Iliad stood together crest on crest and shield on shield and strove for excellence (66-67; see Homer, Iliad 13.131-3, 16.215-7). It also provided lessons for would-be innovators. The introduction of greater numbers of light troops, in particular peltasts, rested, claims L, in part on Homer (96-97). The peltast fought in a more Iliadic fashion than the hoplite with his small shield, javelins and longer sword. Even more explicitly, later sources (Diodorus 16.3.2, perhaps following Polybius 18.29) thought Philip II drew Homeric inspiration for his new phalanx, in which men carried a two handed pike and smaller shield.

L posits that competition, whether personal or civic, and, in the case of the Roman army, between units (legion, maniple, cohort), was the cornerstone of Greek and Roman military achievement. Competition had its roots in the heroic world of Homer and the past. The ancients strove to be better in everything. Commanders competed with each other and their men competed for recognition. Awards for bravery, for being first, even for equipment were commonplace. Alexander the Great took this competitive spirit a step further. Each individual’s place in his unit and the unit’s deployment in the army identified reputation in a complex hierarchy founded on competition. Alexander was the paradigm competitor, first against his contemporaries, then against the heroes of the past and finally against himself. His successors followed his example, competing against the dead king, while at the same time competing against each other in stratagems of war as well as courage. This competitive environment found its way into the Roman world, first in the aristocratic struggles of the republic and finally in the attempts of the imperial elite to outdo the great men of the past. Alexander, the best example once again, provided the benchmark of achievement. Thus the Roman World influenced by the Greek renaissance of the second century AD created the emperor Julian’s desire to emulate the achievements of Alexander in conquering Persia.


Soldiers and Ghosts explores the reasons for change in Greek and Roman warfare over the whole period of antiquity from Homer’s early Greek Dark Ages to the latter days of the Roman Empire. Ambitious in scope, this book covers much ground. The primary theme running through the work is the influence of the heroic past on the developments of ancient warfare. Indeed, the shadow of Homer and epic hang heavy over the military adventures of every ancient soldier. In analysing the transformations of ancient warfare Lendon isolates several specific engagements which provide a focal point for his discussion of the wider context of warfare in the period under consideration. For example, and among others, the battle of Delium