



THE CULTURAL PARAMETERS OF THE GRAECO-ROMAN WAR DISCOURSE

By Theo Vrijen

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This wide-ranging study seeks to identify the interchange of ideas on warfare in the world of Classical Greece and Rome.

What were the ideas that the ancient Greeks and Romans held about warfare? What do contemporary sources tell us about this? Is it possible to trace a development in the way of thinking about war in antiquity? These are the questions that are discussed (and answered) in this study. It combines a close reading of all the sources that we have - mostly written, like literary and historiographical, but also non-written, like art, monuments and coinage. The analysis of the discourse is accompanied by and contrasted with arguments raised by today's specialists in the field of warfare and culture of ancient Greece and Rome.

The study treats recurrent cultural themes like courage, fatherland, or victory within a chronological framework, for discourse features cannot be isolated from the context of their time. For each specific period – Greek, Hellenistic and the six parts of the long and diverse Roman time – conclusions are drawn. The remarkable developments in time that can be observed, especially in Rome, are brought together in the final chapter.

Theo Vrijen (1949) studied English Language and Literature in the Netherlands and American Literature in the United States. He taught translation courses at the Maastricht School of Translation before turning to a study of ancient history, and completed his Ph.D. at Vrije Universiteit Brussels (VUB) in June 2018.

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