



David J B Trim and Mark Charles Fissel, eds., *Amphibious Warfare, 1000-1700: Commerce, State Formation and European Expansion*. Leiden: Brill Academic, 2006. Pp. xxxv + 498. Maps. Illustrations. ISBN 90-04-13244-9. EUR 135; US \$182.

Perhaps inevitably, the immediate reaction to the term amphibious warfare is to think in terms of Gallipoli in 1915 or Normandy in 1944. Part of the Brill History of Warfare series, however, this volume aims to demonstrate the centrality of amphibious operations to the conduct of warfare in the mediaeval and early modern periods. It succeeds admirably in its task through a wide-ranging series of survey and more specialised essays presented in the context of a detailed introduction by the editors, which establishes the scope of the volume and defines the parameters for the contributions that follow. Indeed, the contextualisation of amphibious and riverine warfare in the introduction serves generally as a valuable comparative framework for all such operations over time. The editors also provide an equally thoughtful conclusion. The volume as a whole is supported by extensive bibliographies and the colour frontispiece and the 30 black and white illustrations make it an attractive production, albeit at the usually high cost of Brill publications. The fact that the illustrations are culled from archives and libraries in Britain, Denmark, France, Georgia, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden testifies in itself to the range of the volume and its contributors.

The survey essays comprise Matthew Bennett on amphibious operations in the mediaeval world; Louis Sicking on amphibious warfare in the Baltic from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries; Jan Glete on the Baltic from the sixteenth to the start of the eighteenth century; and David Trim's examination of estuarine, riverine and lacustrine warfare in the mediaeval and early modern periods. The remaining essays are more narrowly focussed on the experience of specific states or campaigns, Malyn Newitt covering the Portuguese in the East Indies from 1500-1520; John Guilmartin discussing the siege of Malta in 1565; the late R B Wernham looking at Elizabethan expeditions between 1585 and 1598; Mark Fissel investigating English operations between 1587 and 1656; Guy Rowlands looking at the French in the Mediterranean between 1664 and 1697; and John Stapleton exploring William III's amphibious strategy for the Nine Years War.

All contributions are uniformly interesting. Bennett, for example, demonstrates how well mediaeval armies could manage amphibious operations, while both Sicking and Glete are illuminating on the Baltic, not least the role of the Hansa. Newitt illustrates how relatively limited resources could be harnessed to achieve military effectiveness at a great distance from Europe while Guilmartin stresses the significance of the capability of the commander in amphibious operations with reference to both Habsburg and Ottoman efforts. Both Wernham, in his last published work, and Rowlands investigate the problems deriving from lack of resources in the case of England, and lack of interest in the case of France. Fissel shows that a high expectation of the benefits of amphibious capability were only finally realised under the Protectorate through the agency of Robert Blake, while Stapleton points to the significance of such a capacity as part of a well-rounded strategy.

The editors certainly prove their case that co-operation between land and naval forces was essential to the conduct of war between 1000 and 1700. Much commerce, after all, was essentially coastal or riverine given the state of transport infrastructure on land. Many amphibious operations, indeed, were partly commercial enterprises. It is also clear that the



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costly and complex nature of amphibious operations, to which all the contributors refer, played a significant role in that 'military revolution' that is usually characterised as part and parcel of the growth of the modern state. While not losing sight of the arguments made recently by Jeremy Black, John Lynn and others that a more 'global' perspective on military and naval history is required, the 'military revolution' presented here is very much that characterised by Geoffrey Parker as an essentially European achievement. The suggestion, however, that all seven centuries represent a period of 'transition' in amphibious warfare seems a little curious.

This is an important contribution to the historiography of the mediaeval and early modern military worlds with wider implications for military and naval historiography generally. It is also a very handsome production: a pity, though, about the exorbitant price.

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