

The older book, *The Use and Abuse of History*, which is, in some ways, more technical and more specialized, contains twelve essays on «Myth, Memory and History»; «The Ancestral Constitution»; «Generalizations in Ancient History»; «The Historical Tradition: The *Contributi* of Arnaldo Momigliano»; «Archaeology and History»; «Anthropology and the Classics»; «The Ancient Greeks and Their Nation»; «The Problem of the Unity of Greek Law»; «The Alienability of Land in Ancient Greece»; «Sparta»; «Utopianism Ancient and Modern»; and «The Heritage of Isocrates». What these essays have in common is the place or uses of the past, not only in academic circles but also in past and present cultural life, and in the narrower field of politics and political argument. Some of the essays are programmatic and didactic; others are more substantive, and deal with particular institutions and societies. All can be read by the nonspecialist. The central theme is never lost sight of, namely, how do people think about their past and what difference does this make to them. In the process we have an investigation of how the Greeks understood the past (myth and history); how lawmakers used and abused history to justify their own actions; how each generation reinterprets the past; and how modern historians are influenced (sometimes quite badly) by their own preconceptions (misconceptions?).

There is really no need for an extended review of Finley's *Ancient History* and *The Use and Abuse of History*, which have been on classicists' shelves for a number of years. What is important is to remind readers of their reissuance in convenient, fairly inexpensive format, for students, scholars, and the general public alike, and Finley's legacy to all that «The past must be deconsecrated, freed from cult, and converted into a living past... a relevant past. High culture must be anchored again, in new ways, to the search for, and the preservation of, values of the present and for the future» (*The Use and Abuse of History*, p. 213).

Whether one agrees or not with Moses Finley's particular intellectual stance, what he has to say is always worth listening to and considering in any analysis of ancient Greek and/or Roman History.

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**Chester G. Starr**, *Past and Future in Ancient History*. Publications of the Association of Ancient Historians I. Lanham, MD., New York, and London: University Press of America, 1987. Pp.x+70. Paperback, \$ 7.25. Library Binding, \$16.25.

**Chester G. Starr**, *The Influence of Sea Power on Ancient History*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989. Pp. xii (unnumbered)+105. Hardcover, \$12.95.

Chester G. Starr, longtime professor of ancient history at the University of Michigan and prolific author of twenty-one books, many articles and reviews, continues to publish as Bentley Professor of History Emeritus, the founding president of the Association of Ancient Historians, and Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

At the 1985 annual meeting of the Association of Ancient Historians, it was decided to inaugurate a series of occasional publications, one of whose chief aims was to further the teaching of and research in Ancient History in the United States

and Canada. Chester Starr, as first president of the Association, was commissioned to write the premiere volume –presumably an overview of contemporary historical scholarship in Greek and Roman studies. This he has done in his own distinctive way.

Professor Starr in his Preface insists that he is not going to give us a bibliographical essay but a general survey of recent trends and possible future areas of investigation in all fields of ancient history. This he clearly does not do; he limits himself to ancient Greek and Roman history, where he does point out the explosive developments in archaeology, Marxism, anthropology, and technology that must now be taken into consideration by historians of Greece and Rome. The separate chapters on Greece, the Hellenistic Age, the Roman Republic, and the Roman Empire lead to a concluding chapter called «General» in which contemporary issues and their impact on ancient history are noted, issues such as women, slavery, imperialism, demographics, and economic systems. Starr generally does not agree with scholars with a comparative approach who would pair the study of ancient and modern societies and does not seem to believe in historical continuity from antiquity to the present (he disparages such works as P. Walcot's *Greek Peasants Ancient and Modern* [Manchester, 1971] and A. E. Samuel's *From Athens to Alexandria* [Louvain, 1983]). Some of his text is given over to a kind of selective historical outline of the periods he so teasingly surveys.

*The Influence of Sea Power on Ancient History* again centers on the Greeks and Romans, though the Phoenicians get some attention. The thesis is so simple and obvious that the book could have been a longish article: the downfall of the two principal seapowers of antiquity, Athens and Carthage, fell to landpowers, Sparta and Rome, respectively. Starr's *mikron biblion* serves as a corrective to Alfred Thayer Mann's 19th century classic, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*, that argued for the paramount power of naval superiority in peace and war. This does not negate the fact that Rome, which created and perfected a widely based naval structure itself, eventually collapsed before more powerful invasions by land. The book is filled with details from a number of ancient battles and other historical events.

Starr's main thesis is very well illustrated and repeatedly refers to Athens and Carthage:

«Both, however, were crushed by states powerful on land. True, Rome and Sparta had to go to sea and gain naval mastery over their opponents, but under the surface the strengths of organization and determination as perfected on land were decisive in their success. Finally, as we have seen, the Roman Empire produced the most conscious and widely based organization of naval strength to protect the prosperity of an age later hailed as the «most happy» in the history of the human race. The eventual deterioration of the navy was, even so, not the principal factor in the Decline and Fall» (p. 84).

As in his widely acclaimed *History of the Ancient World*, so too in these two small books, Chester Starr is able to present the historical facts and their analytical interpretation with great clarity and precision, if not startling provocation.

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