



Medieval Maritime Warfare

By Charles D. Stanton

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Following the fall of Rome, the sea is increasingly the stage upon which the human struggle of western civilization is played out. In a world of few roads and great disorder, the sea is the medium on which power is projected and wealth sought. Yet this confused period in the history of maritime warfare has rarely been studied – it is little known and even less understood. Charles Stanton uses an innovative and involving approach to describe this fascinating but neglected facet of European medieval history. He depicts the development of maritime warfare from the end of the Roman Empire to the dawn of the Renaissance, detailing the wars waged in the Mediterranean by the Byzantines, Muslims, Normans, Crusaders, the Italian maritime republics, Angevins and Aragonese as well as those fought in northern waters by the Vikings, English, French and the Hanseatic League. This pioneering study will be compelling reading for everyone interested in medieval warfare and maritime history.

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Editorial Review

Review

...provides its readers with a solid education in the campaigns, broader political and technological trends, and strategic aims of the maritime powers of Medieval Europe, the Levant, and North Africa... Whether one's interest is in the technology of medieval naval warfare, the strategy and tactics of engagements and campaigns, or a study of the complex interaction between naval institutions and the societies that they served and preyed upon, Stanton has crafted a thoughtful work that should encourage more research and writing into the fascinating field of medieval maritime warfare. (*Naval Historical Foundation*)

a readable, very serious study of naval warfare in the wider European world from the age of Justinian to the Renaissance...Stanton effectively weaves together rather technical discussions of warship design, seafaring and the sailor's life, naval strategy and tactics, complex diplomacy, comments on people, commerce, cultures, all of which makes for a lot of history, not just maritime history. An excellent feature is that for some particularly important operations, Stanton follows his summary overview in his main text with deeper analysis in chapter annexes titled "Exemplary Engagement." Many of the events he covers, such as Byzantine-Muslim or Aragonese-Angevin wars are likely to be unfamiliar with English-speaking readers, which makes this a particular valuable book. (*Strategy Page*)

Back in the day, Dr. Daniel taught us that from the Battle of Actium in 31 B.C. to the Battle of Lepanto in 1571 there was no change in naval tactics. Well, there were changes, and Charles Stanton has sorted them out in an exceptionally clear and relatively not overwhelming way...full-color plates, most often of miniatures?a happy medium for print when your publisher goes to the expense of presenting them as well as they are done here. Because many are miniatures to begin with, detail isn't lost as a picture is reduced to fit on a page. And the color is excellent...The text refers to the sequential plates with absolute clarity, drawing attention primarily to key elements of the progress of maritime technology that would otherwise be invisible to those of us whose material culture is grounded in the age of sail. (*Robert Durwood Madison, The Nautilus*)

About the Author

Dr Charles D. Stanton is a former US naval officer and airline pilot who, after retirement, studied medieval Mediterranean history at Cambridge under David Abulafia. His particular focus is the Norman conquest of southern Italy and Sicily on which he has published several well-received articles in scholarly journals. His recent book, *Norman Naval Operations in the Mediterranean*, has also been highly praised.

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