



# Empires at War: A Chronological Encyclopedia (3 Vol Set)

By Richard A. Gabriel

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For more than 5,000 years, massive empires have met on the battlefield to determine the future course of world history. Ranging from Sumer, the world's first imperial state, to the fall of the Byzantine Empire, this comprehensive three-volume set, which includes both Western and non-Western empires, details the military capabilities of these empires, including the armies, soldiers, technologies, and commanders that powered the imperial juggernaut. From the Near East to Asia, from Western Europe to the New World, these empires spawned every major social institution on which modern society is based, including the first use of total war. With more than 400 illustrations and maps, this set reveals the awesome and destructive power of these early forces, from the dawn of recorded history to the development of gunpowder.

**Volume I:** From the first clashes of the Sumerian Empire in 4000 B.C.E., to the destruction of the Persian Empire, volume one includes all the major imperial entities from Europe to Asia, including the Egyptians, the Hittites, the Israelites; China, India, Persia, and classical Greece. Students will find the historical context within which the empire emerged, an examination of the imperial army, including structure, weapons, tactics, logistics, and manner of warfare; a detailed analysis of at least one major battle; an analysis of the rival commanders; and a section on the lessons of war. Each volume contains more than 100 illustrations, maps, and figures that demonstrate manner of dress, weaponry, imperial location, and course of the battle. Every chapter contains suggestions for further reading.

**Volume II:** Until its destruction by the Romans in 146 B.C.E., Carthage was the primary naval empire of the Mediterranean world. The Norman victory at Hastings in 1066 C.E. was one of the most important events in the Medieval world and resulted in the creation of the modern state of Great Britain. Volume two covers vast territory from Imperial Rome to Korea, including chapters on the Huns, the Arabs, the Barbarians, the Vikings, and the Franks. Students will find the historical context within which the empire emerged, an examination of the imperial army, including structure, weapons, tactics, logistics, and manner of warfare; a detailed analysis of at least one major battle; an analysis of the rival commanders; and a section on the lessons of war. Each volume contains more

than 100 illustrations, maps, and figures that demonstrate manner of dress, weaponry, imperial location, and course of the battle. Every chapter contains suggestions for further reading. Volume III: Examining the major events of the Middle Ages, from Europe to the major empires of Asia and the Americas, volume three takes readers from the age of the Medieval knight to the fall of Constantinople in 1453 C.E. Western sections detail the Crusades and the Hundred Years War, while non-Western chapters cover the Japanese, the Mongols and the Ottomans in Asia and the American empires of the Aztecs, Incas, and Mayas. Students will find the historical context within which the empire emerged, an examination of the imperial army, including structure, weapons, tactics, logistics, and manner of warfare; a detailed analysis of at least one major battle; an analysis of the rival commanders; and a section on the lessons of war. Each volume contains more than 100 illustrations, maps, and figures that demonstrate manner of dress, weaponry, imperial location, and course of the battle. Every chapter contains suggestions for further reading.

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## **Editorial Review**

### **From [Booklist](#)**

This encyclopedia deals with the sometimes epic wars waged by empires from 4000 B.C.E to 1453 C.E. Chapter length ranges from around 13 to more than 60 pages, with the longest belonging to the Persian Empire's wars with Alexander the Great and the Carthaginian Empire's wars with Rome. Other chapters cover, for example, the Vikings, the Arab Conquest, and lesser-known empires such as the Mitanni. Gabriel, a former professor at the U.S. Army War College, has written other books on warfare for Greenwood, including *The Great Battles of Antiquity* (1994) and *The Military History of Ancient Israel* (1993).

The work begins with an introductory chapter that sets the stage and concludes with a chapter that summarizes the evolution from medieval to modern warfare. The 29 intervening chapters are in chronological order, by beginning date of the empire. Each chapter has sections on background, specific battles and armies, commanders, and "Lessons of War," encompassing strategy and tactics. Each chapter ends with a further reading list, but there is no comprehensive bibliography at the end of the work. Coverage is global and includes non-Western empires such as those of Japan and Korea. There is also a chapter dedicated to three empires from the Americas and their warfare: the Aztecs, the Incas, and the Mayas. Each volume contains more than 100 maps, illustrations, and figures, though some of the maps are small and somewhat difficult to read.

A glossary would have been helpful for some of the terms included. So would separate name and place indexes and perhaps a brief chronology or time line. Nonetheless, this is a very comprehensive work that delivers the content. Many reference works deal with battles of antiquity or with the great empires of the world, but this encyclopedia manages to combine these concepts with ease and makes for captivating reading. Recommended for anyone interested in the history of warfare and for undergraduate and large public libraries. *Susanna Eng*

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### **Review**

"Gabriel's ambitious encyclopedia examines the military aspects of empires at war from the ancient world through the late medieval period....Entries are written in highly readable, engaging style, clearly outlining how tactics and leadership styles were applied in particular battles. The most interesting component is the one-page summary after each entry outlining the tactical and strategic lessons of the battle. The length of entries may make this set more appropriate for a circulating collection, but a comprehensive index makes information easily accessible and therefore useful in reference. Recommended. General readers; undergraduates."-Choice

"[P]rovides an extensive examination of the military capabilities and activities of important military forces....[r]ecommended for students and researchers at the secondary and university level as well as general readers."-Reference & User Services Quarterly

"Few reference tools equal the depth of this title for either ancient or medieval warfare. The level of detail that Gabriel provides in his analyses would serve a military studies program. However, this set, which is accessible to the general reader, will be in demand in both academic and public libraries."-Lawrence Looks at Books

"[T]his is a very comprehensive work that delivers the content. Many reference works deal with battles of antiquity or with the great empires of the world, but this encyclopedia manages to combine these concepts with ease and makes for captivating reading. Recommended for anyone interested in the history of warfare and for undergraduate and large public libraries."-Booklist/Reference Books Bulletin

"Military history collections as well general history holdings will easily find a place for Richard A. Gabriel's weighty 3-volume reference Empires at War: for over 5,000 years empires have battled to determine the course of world history, and this encyclopedia survey details their military might, using a A-Z chronological approach to chart the first clashes of war to modern times."-MBR Internet Bookwatch

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"Empires at War offers a comprehensive treatment and discussion of the civilizations, battles, and leaders from ancient times. Gabriel draws upon a wealth of sources and writes a book that both general readers and researchers will find complete and readable. The book is full of useful illustrations and logically organized.

This source is a valuable addition to public, research, and academic libraries."-Karen S. Metz author, From Sumer to Rome: Military Capabilities of Ancient Armies

#### About the Author

RICHARD A. GABRIEL is former professor of Politics and History and Director of Advanced Courses in the Department of Strategy at the U.S. Army War College where he introduced the study of ancient military history to the curriculum. He is the author of 38 books including *Subotai the Valiant: Genghis Khan's Greatest General* (Praeger, 2004) and *The Military History of Ancient Israel* (Praeger, 2003). Currently he is retired and an adjunct professor of Humanities and Ethics at Daniel Webster College.

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