Lessons of the Ancients: Thinking About War in Early Modern England

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Abstract

Early modern English warfare has been harshly treated in twentieth-century historiography: while historians put out sweeping works touting, and debating, the grand military achievements of early modern Europe, England found itself berated for its apparent backwardness and inefficiency. However, recent trends not only in reconsidering the effectiveness and needs of early modern English warfare, but also in debating the extent of the Greco-Roman influence over early modern culture in general, warrant a re-examination of early modern English warfare altogether. Given the large number of works available at the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries on warfare in England, and the fact that most controversy concerning the “military revolution” relates to this period, this work focuses on military literature compiled at the end of the sixteenth century. Through examining nine different authors of different backgrounds, military experiences, educations, and opinions, it sets out to provide an answer to the question: What was the influence of the ancients on Early Modern English military thought? The answer it provides recognizes that ancient authority vied with modern continental practice and the unique circumstances and traditions of English warfare in shaping the ideas of these writers. Sixteenth-century England was neither backward nor inept in matters of military theory. Instead, the English were very aware of and engaged in the same military debates as their contemporaries on the continent. As were contemporary continental theorists, the English writers were respectful of ancient authority but also selective in their borrowings from antiquity. Most importantly, they demonstrated a strong sense
that English circumstances were in important respects unique. Given their particular circumstances, the result of their understanding of continental warfare was a theory and practice that was unique in its own right – an English Art of War.
Acknowledgments

The stories of our ancestors have always fascinated the minds and stimulated the enterprises of their inheritors. As a result, history is a crucial field of study for any contemporary student, and is therefore subject to the rigorous trials, analyses, and scrutinies that ensure its accuracy, or, in the least, its constant desire for progression. This has necessarily made the study of history a collaborative effort and I would be remiss in not mentioning those who helped me in my own study of history. I would first like to thank my Supervisor, Dr. Ian Germani, for guiding, and sometimes dragging, me through this process. His ability to inspire a more thorough pursuit of my topic has been invaluable. Under his guidance, I have really begun to understand what it means to be a student of history.

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Introduction

In 1988, Geoffrey Parker published *The Military Revolution, Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500 – 1800*, with the intention of building on the early modern military revolution thesis as put forward by Michael Roberts in 1956.¹ According to Parker, and other historians such as J.R. Hale, Gunther E. Rothenberg, and Frank Tallet whose interpretations align with Parker’s,² the three centuries from 1500 to 1800 employed a style of warfare unique enough to markedly differentiate them from the centuries before. In essence, Parker’s military revolution thesis called for three things: first, that there be a standing and professional army of citizen soldiers, disciplined and trained in the *new* art of war; second, that these soldiers be equipped and trained to effectively use new gunpowder technologies, and third; that new fortification construction technologies be adapted, specifically that of the *trace italienne* and its angled bastions.³ Also, Parker’s thesis notably identifies almost all Western European countries as being involved in the early modern revolution, save the British Isles and more specifically and more importantly to this work, England.

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³ Parker, *The Military Revolution*. 
On the occasions the English do appear in Parker’s seminal work, he is critical of them. Parker has harsh words specifically for early modern English attempts at fortification. Parker says, “The British Isles, then, were a zone where the transformation in fortification and siege craft was incomplete, gradual and relatively tardy.” Referring specifically to Henry VIII’s fortification surge in the late 1530’s and early 1540’s, Parker suggests that entrusting construction to native architects instead of European ones rendered the forts “outdated even before they were completed.”

Parker was responsible for sparking, to quote James Raymond, “a long historiographical tradition [which] sought to demonstrate the validity of such a damning assessment of English military prowess.”

More forgiving than Geoffrey Parker in his assessment of English military development is David Eltis in his work *The Military Revolution in Sixteenth Century Europe*. Eltis includes a chapter devoted to “English Military Development” and argues that, while the English were lackluster in many areas, they deserve more credit than they have received in military historiography. To Eltis, a study of English military literature in the sixteenth century shows that the English were indeed involved, at least on a theoretical level, in Parker’s military revolution. He believes that in order to keep on top of the changes in warfare, a country had to remain constantly engaged in

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4 Ibid., 32.
5 Ibid., 26.
warfare and this just was not the case for the English before 1585. Rather than arguing that the English were stagnant before 1585, though, Eltis says they compensated for their lack of experience with knowledge from translations of foreign works as well as from the experience of English soldiers of fortune who had served in continental armies. As does Parker, Eltis feels the English lacked most in the fields of siege craft and fortress construction and therefore relied especially heavily on foreign influence in these fields. He concludes his chapter by noting that, in accordance with his earlier hypothesis, it was not until the Anglo-Spanish Wars of the late sixteenth century that England experienced continuous warfare and that only then were they compelled to practice and implement the tactics and strategies they learnt from the continent.

Authors such as David Grummitt in “The Defence of Calais and the Development of Gunpowder Weaponry in England in the Late Fifteenth Century,” and James Raymond in Henry VIII’s Military Revolution: The Armies of Sixteenth-Century Britain and Europe, argue that England before 1585 was not so backwards militarily. In his article, Grummitt chronicles the artillery and siege manufacturing and implementation at Calais as England changed hands from the House of York to the House of Tudor and Henry VII. Grummitt argues that, by the end of the fifteenth century, Henry VII fit the

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8 Ibid., 99.
9 Ibid., 100;111;117;119.
10 Ibid., 115.
11 Ibid., 122.
three criteria that he considers to denote successful artillery production and usage in accordance with the proposed thesis of an early modern military revolution. The first point is that the potential for the use of gunpowder had been realized. This is evidenced by the increase in artillery manufacturing at sites such as Calais. Grummitt’s second point is that the King controlled the bulk of ordnance manufacturing himself. This is evidenced by Henry VII’s distrust of the Yorkist officials at Calais, and the subsequent drive to produce and exclusively use ordnance from the Tower of London in his campaigns. The final factor denoting a command of artillery manufacturing in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries as outlined by Grummitt was the use of firearms by the Crown to keep domestic peace which in turn would increase the royal authority. He cites skirmishes in 1489, 1490 and 1497 which resulted when Henry VII sent artillery out of the Tower (mostly) to aid his allies around the country. So, according to Grummitt, from the outset of Henry VII’s reign, The Tudor monarchs were actually quite active in the modernization of their armies.

James Raymond continues the defense of early Tudor England military affairs by attempting to fight back against the negative historiography on this subject. He argues that “military revolution” is the wrong term to use as revolution implies “a ‘violent change’ to the status quo, normally over a relatively short period.” Raymond presents a number of different interpretations by historians such as Gervase Phillips, Jeremy Black, M. Prestwich and R. I. Frost that take a post-modern approach to the military

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14 Ibid., 268.
15 Ibid., 269.
16 Ibid.
17 James Raymond, Henry VIII’s Military Revolution, 195.
Instead of revolution, these men use terms like “evolution,” “integration,” “adaptation,” and “continuity.” Using these renewed definitions, Raymond believes that Henrician England deserves to be included among the western European countries that were successfully adapting their military prowess in the sixteenth century. As evidence of this progress, Raymond points to the integration of continental weapons – the preference for pike and shot – with existing English weapons that were still proving useful in the field – the bow and bill. He also notes that Henry VIII desired, as had his father, an ordnance manufacturing industry that could meet the demands of a modernized army. Raymond points out that when the English developed the cast-iron ordnance in the 1540’s, they became leaders in ordnance manufacturing for the rest of the sixteenth century. Finally, in the fields of army levying and training, Raymond’s research showed that while Henry VIII certainly lagged behind the continent in some respects, he kept England from lagging behind in these areas. Henrician England, therefore, deserves recognition for the progress it made in the sixteenth century and, as Raymond points out, while it had its shortcomings, this

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20 Ibid., 185. Note: both the pike and shot and bow and bill combine a pole weapon, the pike and the bill, with a missile weapon, shot (a firearm) and the longbow.
21 Ibid., 183.
22 Ibid.
23 Ibid., 187 – 192.
was because it was in the middle of a transitional phase, just as was the rest of Western Europe.  

Raymond’s work is at the forefront of a scholarship willing to re-evaluate early modern English military history. Authors such as David Grummitt, John S. Nolan, James Raymond, Neil Younger, David R. Lawrence, Mark Charles Fissel, and Paul E. J. Hammer all continue to pursue research on early modern English military affairs with vigor and succeed at uncovering fresh evidence to show that England was not as far behind the continent as the previous historiography would have us believe. Furthermore, while England’s early modern military developments did not wholeheartedly replicate those of the continent, as Parker has argued, it is the trend of these early modern English advocates to ask: Why would it? They argue that England had specific needs and took on a policy of integration over replacement based on these needs. Raymond explains:

> The English adapted new technologies to work alongside the existing tactical and technical systems. The period witnessed the evolution of a distinct ‘English art of war’, informed by financial restrictions and the nature of the campaigns they were required to fight (in Europe and within the British Isles), and fully up-to-date with the latest European developments.

In other words, England had different needs and so its military developed in a different way. To say, however, that while the continent was undergoing such substantial

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24 Ibid., 190.


26 James Raymond, Henry VIII’s Military Revolution, 183.
change, England lay across the Channel, stagnant, underdeveloped and uneducated in military affairs, is inaccurate.

Another trend in historiography that needs to be addressed, and contributes directly to this work, is the question of ancient influence on early modern European warfare. Many historians have considered this topic and the result is an immense range of opinion on the subject ranging from those expressed in the works of Victor Davis Hanson to the views of Donald A. Neill. In *The Western Way of War* Victor Davis Hanson argues that the magnitude with which the ancients affected warfare has been so great that there has been very little change in the western art of war over the last 2,500 years. For Hanson, the philosophy of war even today began with the Greeks. Hanson explains in his work, *The Western Way of War*:

> For it is my belief that the Greeks’ stark way of battle left us with what is now a burdensome legacy in the West: a presumption that battle under any guise other than a no-nonsense, head-to-head confrontation between sober enemies is or should be unpalatable. The Greek way of war has developed in us a distaste for what we call the terrorist, guerrilla, or irregular who chooses to wage war differently, and is unwilling to die on the battlefield in order to kill his enemy.  

To summarize, Hanson asserts that the history of western war has been dominated by the rules laid down by the Greeks – this is the ideology that led modern military commanders to believe that there is no way to win a war other than to engage in head-to-head battle in pursuit of total and decisive victory. Hanson further explains that this style of war has proved very effective not only at winning battles, but also at confusing and intimidating any non-western European enemy the western combatants may have

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come up against. Hanson argues that this style of warfare continues to pervade western history and cites examples like the Crusades, the works and battles of Napoleon and his contemporary Jomini during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and in the twentieth-century battles at the Somme, Verdun, or Omaha Beach. Hanson even states that the American military today continues to adopt this style of warfare: “American armed forces in recent wars have sacrificed mobility, maneuver, grace...on the battlefield in exchange for the chance of stark, direct assault, of frontal attack against the main forces of the enemy.” According to Hanson, it is clear that the influence of classical Greek warfare has been so great as not only to ensure its use throughout western history, but also to see that it is still alive and well today.

Contrary to Hanson, in Donald A. Neill’s article, “Ancestral Voices: The Influence of the Ancients on the Military Thought of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,” Neill argues that the classical influence on early modern warfare is limited. Neill contemplates the idea that the early modern styles of warfare were directly inspired by the reading of ancient texts made available during the Renaissance, something he has

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28 Ibid., 9. To demonstrate the confusion of the Greek art of war on foreign armies, Hanson cites the horrified reaction of a Persian commander upon seeing the Greeks at war: “These Greeks are accustomed to wage their wars among each other in the most senseless way...For as soon as they declare war on each other, they seek out the fairest and most level ground, and then go down there and do battle on it. Consequently, even the winners leave with extreme losses; I need not mention the conquered, since they are annihilated.”

29 Ibid., 9; 14.

30 Ibid., 10.
defined as the “rebirth paradigm,” and is not convinced.\textsuperscript{31} He states in the conclusion of his aforementioned paper:

\ldots the “rebirth paradigm” is convincing only if one accepts the hypothesis of military revolution over that of military evolution. In light of the history of European conflict between the fall of the Roman Empire and the rise of the absolute monarchies, it would seem that the military developments of the Enlightenment were more the result of the normal course of military innovation and counter-innovation—in short, simple evolutionary adaptation—than to some sudden and thunderous change attributable to the rediscovery of the military genius of the ancients.\textsuperscript{32}

In short, when Neill asks what the role of antiquity in enlightenment warfare was, his answer is that there is only a superficial connection.\textsuperscript{33} What Neill presents and ultimately argues is that military advancements should be seen as a result of evolution and not of revolution.\textsuperscript{34} Therefore, Neill suggests that the military developments of the early modern period were driven by technology rather than by the rebirth of classical practices that accompanied the Renaissance. He further argues that the similarities between the tactics of the Greco-Roman armies and the early modern war makers did not exist because of reading ancient texts, but rather because, as Neill states, what worked for them simply works for us: “\ldots is it absurd to postulate that similarities between their operations and our own are due less to slavish plagiarism of their writings than to the fact that what worked for them, regardless of changes in military technology, by-and-large also works for us.”\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., 520.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 491.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 516.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 515.

Felix Gilbert argues that in reading the ancients, Machiavelli and many of his contemporaries found what would become staples of the military developments of early modern Europe: for example, they read about the use of conscripted native armies over bands of hired and less than loyal mercenaries,\footnote{Felix Gilbert, “Machiavelli: The Renaissance of the Art of War”, 19.} the importance of drill and discipline in the ranks of the armies,\footnote{Ibid., 25.} and the fact that to successfully conclude a war, one had to meet his enemy in face-to-face battle and oppose his will on the other to the point that the opposition’s ability to fight was stifled.\footnote{Ibid., 23.} One thing Gilbert notes that Machiavelli overlooked was the importance of gunpowder and artillery in modern strategy and tactics. It was Machiavelli’s belief that while the new artillery could
contribute to the defence of a country, the Roman way of war was offensive and firearms proved hardly effective in this field.\textsuperscript{40}

Webb’s \textit{Elizabethan Military Science} is of particular interest, as Webb devotes a chapter specifically to the English and the classics, “Elizabethan Military Literature: Its Classical Background.”\textsuperscript{41} The English, Webb notes, did not consider themselves experts on war unless their experience in the field was supplemented with readings and studies on the art of war.\textsuperscript{42} In Elizabethan times, to study anything meant, in large part, to consult the classics; in particular, Webb notes four translations that were consulted regularly by the English. First was Richard Morison’s 1539 translation of Sextus Julius Frontinus’ \textit{The Strategemes, Sleyghtes and Policies of Warre}; second Peter Whitehorne’s 1563 translation of Onosander’s \textit{Of the Generall Captaine and of His Office}; third Arthur Golding’s 1565 translation of Julius Caesar’s \textit{The Eyght Bookes of Caius Julius Caesar Conteyning His Martiall Expoytes in Gallia}, and finally John Sadler’s 1572 translation of Flavius Vegetius Renatus’ \textit{The Foure Bookes of Martiall Policye}.\textsuperscript{43} These works, and many like them, were read for very different purposes ranging from history lessons from Frontinus’ work to an actual attempt to extract practical information from Vegetius’ book.\textsuperscript{44} In these works, Webb argues, the English also found tactics that justified their own practices of war, as did soldiers on the continent.\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{41} Webb, \textit{Elizabethan Military Science}.
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., 5.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 6.
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid., 7 – 12.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., 16.
Jean-Pierre Bois states outright that the Renaissance saw the rebirth of classical ideas in the world of warfare just as it had in the arts. According to Bois, the reading of the ancients by the military thinkers of early modern Europe was done with the intent of finding “organic” lessons and not specifically tactical ones. However, as the new technologies of artillery, siege craft and fortification grew ever-prevalent on the battlefield, commanders became less and less willing to engage their opponents in outright battle, and war became bogged down. It was at this point, in the eighteenth century, that Europe’s military leaders began to read the ancients looking specifically for tactical advice in the hopes of solving their military immobility. According to Bois, it was this fresh take on ancient documents that enabled Europeans to solve the military impasse, effectively developing the “mixed order” tactics that relieved late eighteenth-century Europe of its stagnant battle practices.

Many authors have been involved in both the re-evaluation of early modern English military affairs and also the fascinating subject of the influence of antiquity on early modern European, and particularly English, military thought. While the details vary from work to work, one thing is certain: these authors have shown that from Henry VII to George II, the English were, contrary to earlier authorities, far from stagnant in matters of military affairs. The works of the authors listed in the preceding pages relate directly to the subject matter of this work. Some authors, such as Parker, Hale and Eltis, serve to paint a picture of the continental military developments in the

47 Ibid.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
early modern period. Others, such as Nolan, Raymond, and Grummitt, deal more specifically with English developments. All of these works are pertinent to the present study, which proposes to consider the influence of ancient example, contemporary continental practice, and native English experience on early modern English military thought.

The general study of the influence of the ancients is also alive and well today and therefore, in light of the re-evaluation of early modern English warfare, a re-evaluation of the classical influence on early modern English military thought is necessary. This thesis will therefore ask: Exactly what was the influence of classical thought on the theory of early modern English warfare? It will take a fresh look at this question by consulting secondary sources, many of which are mentioned above, but also by considering primary sources. The primary sources, and primary concern, of this work are almost exclusively late sixteenth and early seventeenth-century, save the curious case of Sir James Turner, whose *Pallas Armata* is published relatively late in 1683 and yet continues to tout the effectiveness of English traditions such as the longbow. The sources consulted are Thomas Digges’ *Stratioticas* (1579), Thomas Styward’s *The Pathwaie to Martiliall Discipline* (1582), Barnabe Rich’s *A Path-way to Military Practise* (1587), Sir John Smythe’s *Certain Discourses* (1590), Sir Roger Williams’ *A Breefe Discourse* (1590), Humfrey Barwick’s *A Breefe Discourse* (1592), Matthew Sutcliffe’s *The Practice, Proceedings, and Lawes of armes* (1593), a second work by Barnabe Rich, *The Fruites of Long Experience* (1604), Sir Clement Edmundes’ *Observations Upon Caesar’s Commentaries* (1609), and of course the aforementioned
James Turner’s *Pallas Armata* (1683). All of these men, save Thomas Digges, were practiced soldiers. Some spent the bulk of their time fighting in the wars on the continent while some others fought closer to home in Ireland. This mixture of experience provided a varied view on warfare, and, as a result, these sources are rich in criticisms and suggestions for their contemporary armies based not only on what was

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51 Humfrey Barwick, *A Breefe Discourse Concerning the force and effect of all manuall weapons of fire, and the disability of the Long Bowe or Archery, in respect of others of greater force now in use.* With sundrye probable reasons for the verifying thereof: the which I have doone of dutye towards my Soveraigne and Country, and for the better satisfaction of all such as are doubtfull of the same, (London: E. Allde for Richard Oliffe, 1592); Thomas Digges, *An arithmeticall militare treatise, named Stratificios compendiously teaching the science of nu[m]bers, as well in fractions as integers, and so much of the rules and aequations algebraical and arte of numbers cassical, as are requisite for the profession of a soldiour. Together with the moderne militare discipline, offices, lawes and dueties in every wel governed campe and armie to be obserued: long since att[e]mp[ted] by Leonard Digges Gentleman, augmented, digested, and lately finished, by Thomas Digges, his sonne*, (London, Printed by Henrie Bynneman, 1579); Clement Edmundes, *Observations Upon Caesar’s Commentaries*, (London: S.n., 1609); Barnabe Rich, *A Path-Way to Military Practice. Containinge Offices. Lawes, Disciplines, and orders to be observed in an Army, with sundrye Strategems very beneficial for young Gentlemen, or any other that is desirous to have knowledge in Martilll exercises. Whereunto is annexed a Kalender of the Imbattelinge of men* (London: John Charlewood, 1587); Barnabare Rich, *The Fruites of long Experience. A pleasing view for Peace. A Looking-Glasse for Warre. OR, Call it what you list. Discoursed betweene two Captaines*, (London: Thomas Creede, for Jeffrey Chorlton, and are to be solde at his shop, adjoyning to the great North doore of Powles, 1604); John Smythe, *Certain discourses, vvritten by Sir John Smythe, Knight: concerning the formes and effects of diuers sorts of weapons, and other verie important matters militarie, greattie mistaken by diuers of our men of warre in these daies; and chiefly, of the mosquet, the caliuer and the long-bow; as also, of the great sufficiencie, excellencie, and wonderful effects of archers: with many notable examples and other particularities, by him presented to the nobilitie of this realme, & publishe[d] for the benefite of this his native country of England*, (London: Printed by Richard Jones at the sign of the Rose and Crown near Holburne Bridge, 1590); Thomas Styward, *Ianuarij decimus. The pathwaie to martiall discipline. Now newly imprinted, and deuided into three bookes. Wherevnto is added the order and use of the Spaniards in their martial affaires: which copie was lately found in the fort in Ireland, where the Spaniards and Italians had fortifie[d] themselues. The first booke: entreateth of the offices from the highest to the lowest, with the lawes of the field, arming, mustering, and training of soldiours. The second boore: entreateth of sundrie proportions and training of caleueuers, and how to bring bowes to a great perfection of servise: also how to march with a campe royaill: with diuers tables annexed for the present making of your battells, as otherwise to know how many paces they require in their march & battels from 500. to 10000. The third booke: comprehendeth the very right order of the Spaniards, how to traine, march, and encampe, with diuers tables therein contained*, (Londini : Excudebat T. E. Impensis Milonis lenyngs, 1582); Matthew Sutcliffe, *The Practice, Proceedings, and Lawes of armes, described out of the doings of most valiant and expert Captaines, and confirmed both by ancient, and modere examples, and praeecedents*, (Imprinted at London by the Deputies of Christopher Barker Printer to the Queens most excellent Majestie, 1593); James Turner, *Pallas Armata, Military Essayes of the Ancient Grecian, Roman, and Modern Art of War*, (London: M. W. for Richard Chiswell at the Rose and Crown in S. Paul’s Church-yard, 1683); Sir Roger Williams, *A Briefe Discourse of Warre. Written by Sir Roger Williams Knight, With his opinion concerning some of the Martilll Discipline*, (London: Thomas Orwin, 1590).
happening on the continent, but also on what their authors gleaned from ancient sources.

**On the Continent**

The continent cannot be ignored in this study. In order to examine the military developments of England during the early modern period, it will be useful to look at those of the continent. The technological, tactical, logistical and strategic developments of the early modern European continent are well documented. However, whether or not these developments were radical enough to denote an early modern continental military revolution continues to be hotly debated. Though this is a very enthralling debate to follow, whether or not the continent underwent a military revolution is not of concern here. Rather, it will be more important to look specifically at the military developments that occurred on the European continent during the early modern period, as well as how these changes were understood and represented in the specialized military writing of the day.

Arguably the most significant development was the general adoption of gunpowder and firearms in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. According to Eltis, it was hand-held firearms and artillery that set the most significant developments in motion.\(^{52}\) Gunpowder weapons had existed before the sixteenth century but it was not until this time that they underwent enough development to enable them to be useful on the field.\(^{53}\) The overarching term for hand-held firearms in the early modern

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\(^{52}\) Eltis, *the Military Revolution*, 43.

period is the *arquebus*. Through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, three main types of arquebus came to prominence – the matchlock and musket in the sixteenth century and the flintlock in the seventeenth.\(^{54}\) Many innovations occurred during the life span of these three firearms including better methods of creating a spark to ignite the powder, curved stocks designed to rest against the shoulder instead of the breast bone, and the invention of pre-packaged cartridges that contained powder, wad, and shot.\(^{55}\) All of these worked together to improve the accuracy and loading times, and therefore the efficiency, of the arquebus in the early modern period.

Experience on the field showed that traditional pike formed an effective and complementary relationship with the new shot.\(^{56}\) Without pikemen, a phalanx of shot was extremely vulnerable to cavalry charge, and without their own arquebusiers a pike phalanx was extremely vulnerable to the fire of the arquebusiers.\(^{57}\) Furthermore, it would be a useless endeavour for a group of arquebus-wielding soldiers to attempt to close in on a pike phalanx, rendering their offensive capabilities moot.\(^{58}\) The answer then was to combine the two. Eltis quotes Robert Barret from his work *The Theorike and Practike of Modern Warres*:

> As the armed pike is the strength of the battell, so without question, is the shot the furie of the field: but the one without the other is weakened the better halfe of their strength. Therefore of necessitie (according to the course of the warres in these days) the one is to be coupled and matched with the other in such convenient proportion

\(^{54}\) Ibid., 22.
\(^{55}\) Ibid., 23.
\(^{56}\) Eltis, *the Military Revolution*, 44.
\(^{57}\) Ibid.
\(^{58}\) Ibid., 47.
that the advantage of the one may helpe the disadvantage of the other.\textsuperscript{59}

So, for the first time ever, combined operations of pike and shot had to work together in the field and this called for an amount of training previously unheard of in the early modern period. This new obsession with drill and discipline comprises the second major development in military operations on the early modern European continent.

The attempts to professionalize the European armies of the early modern period began with drill. As Eltis explains, these new combined formations were much more complicated and intricate than before and so the training needed to be adapted and more frequent.\textsuperscript{60} Two influential advocates for the new professionalization of armies were Maurice of Nassau, Prince of Orange, and Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden. Both of these men lived and operated during the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries and are remembered for attempting to break the military constraints of the seventeenth century in order to professionalize their armies. As Black points out, the goal was to create armies that had the battle-tested skills of the hired mercenaries of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries with the patriotism and therefore reliability of natives of the kingdom.\textsuperscript{61} While Gustavus Adolphus was more successful than Maurice of Nassau in recruiting citizen soldiers, both men continued, out of necessity, to employ mercenaries in their ranks.\textsuperscript{62}

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., 50.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid., 51.
\textsuperscript{61} Black, \textit{European Warfare}, 17.
The third aspect of warfare that underwent substantial development during the early modern period was also a result of the onset of artillery and firearms outlined at the beginning of this chapter. This was the construction of fortifications, and, in turn, the methods used to bring them down. The new style of warfare reliant on holding positions and strongholds of supplies meant that fortifications became an essential part of war, and the high walled forts of the medieval period could not take the power behind sixteenth-century artillery. The medieval deficiencies became increasingly obvious at the beginning of the Italian Wars of the sixteenth century. In 1494 Charles VIII of France invaded Italy, and, using the updated French royal artillery train, brought down the Italian medieval walls with ease. This aroused experimentation among Italian engineers and architects who looked not only to solve the defensive flaws of the old styles of fortress construction, but also aimed to increase the amount of counter fire the besieged could return. This new Italian design was called the trace italienne which would form the basis of fort construction in Europe into the nineteenth century. Fortress walls were shortened, thickened, and slanted, all in the name of either absorbing cannon shot or increasing the chance of a glancing blow. The walls were constructed of earth and rubble, the better to absorb artillery fire, and could be faced with brick, although wood and earth versions were quite successful and much

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64 Tallet, War and Society in Early Modern Europe, 34.
65 Ibid.
67 Tallet, War and Society in Early Modern Europe, 34.
cheaper to construct.\textsuperscript{68} One of the most important elements of the \textit{trace italienne}, however, was the introduction of the angle bastion. These strategically placed projections from the curtain of a fortification enabled the defender to fire on the flanks of the enemy and ensured that there was absolutely no part of the field that could not be brought under fire. Using all these facets of construction and innovation, the fortress construction of the early modern period ensured maximum efficiency of defense and also maximum ability to bring fire down upon the enemy attempting the siege.\textsuperscript{69}

As weapons technology, battlefield tactics, and siege fortifications became more complex, new literature was required to keep the armies of Europe abreast of new developments. The sixteenth century saw a new appreciation of military literature and began to see it as a requirement for any complete soldier and especially any competent officer. Eltis states that military literature reached “a flood” around the middle of the sixteenth century and continued to increase throughout the seventeenth.\textsuperscript{70} There were armchair theorists who wrote based solely on second-hand experience, what Tallet calls political philosophers, like Machiavelli and Justus Lipsius, who discussed military theory and practice and its effect on the governmental and social aspects of the non-military world, and of course there were retired or practising military men who wrote based on first-hand experience in war.\textsuperscript{71}

\textsuperscript{68} Eltis, \textit{the Military Revolution}, 79.
\textsuperscript{69} See Christopher Duffy’s \textit{Fire and Stone, the Science of Fortress Warfare 1660 – 1860} for a complex and comprehensive account of siege warfare and construction in the early modern period.
\textsuperscript{70} Eltis, \textit{War and Society in Early-Modern Europe}, 39.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid.
Machiavelli’s *The Art of War*, 1520, consists of a dialogue between a group of Florentine patricians and an Italian condottiere. While the narrator mentions there is a group of people present, the conversation is especially dominated by Cosimo Rucellai, an intelligent and curious man whom the narrator is particularly fond of, and Fabrizio Colonna, the condottiere himself. According to Fabrizio, Roman military practice represented the pinnacle of military achievement and should therefore be a standard to be upheld in the modern Italian armies. He cites Rome as an example of maintaining a citizen army and how it was recruited rather than conscripted, of the importance of veteran troops and the ages at which one could serve, of arming and armouring the infantry, of the importance of drill and discipline, of manoeuvres and troop organization, and even of defending and taking fortified towns. In many of the aspects of war that would become hotly debated and reformed within the next two centuries, Machiavelli consulted the ancients and seems to be at the start of a trend.

It is important to note, however, that while authors like Machiavelli attempted to breathe new life into classical, and especially Roman, ideals, they were not blinded to the reality of their own time. Their purpose in writing these works was not simply to imitate the Romans but to take what would be useful to them. Felix Gilbert explains in his work “Machiavelli: The Renaissance of the Art of War”:

> To a large extent his true principles of military warfare are attempts to show on the basis of ancient sources how the Romans conducted war. However, it ought always to be kept in mind that Machiavelli’s aim

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was not a historically correct reconstruction of facts. He wanted to deduce the laws and principles that stood behind the facts of Roman military history, and show their applicability to the present.... In his steady striving for discovering the general rule behind a particular event or an individual action, he penetrates to the basic issues of war and military order.  

Machiavelli himself agrees with Gilbert’s assertion, as is evidenced clearly in Book One of *The Art of War*. In response to Fabrizio’s comment that the Italians of the sixteenth century should yearn to imitate the hardened lifestyle of the ancients, Cosimo confronts Fabrizio, stating that living like a Spartan, for example, in the modern world would see one “accounted a beast rather than a man.” In Fabrizio’s response to this challenge, the reader understands that Fabrizio’s, and essentially Machiavelli’s, intentions are not to wholeheartedly imitate the practices of the ancients but rather to find some things worth applying to their contemporary world:

> But when I was talking about imitating the ancients in their austere manner of living, I did not mean to carry matters to such extremities as you seem to think, but to propose some other things of a more gentler and practicable nature, such as would be more suitable to the present times...and, if we consider the practice and institutions observed by the old Romans...we shall find many things worthy of imitation.

Whether it be the advantage of artillery or the disadvantage of drawn-out battles of maneuver, the reality of modern war still factored into their works. When asked if Fabrizio would arm his troops based on the Roman methods of old or the new German

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75 Gilbert, “Machiavelli,” 22.
77 Ibid.
methods utilizing pike and arquebus, Fabrizio replies: “half of my men would be armed with one and half with the other.”\(^{78}\)

By 1757, two hundred years after Machiavelli, and Marshal Maurice de Saxe’s *My Reveries Upon the Art of War*, this idea was firmly implanted. Saxe notes that even the Romans could not best early modern warfare in some aspects, such as firepower and fortress construction.\(^{79}\) He states that modern firepower “would silence that by platoons or ranks, and even if they were all Caesars I would defy them to hold for a quarter of an hour.”\(^{80}\) Thus, according to Saxe, even an entire platoon of Caesars, the most honored military commander of the early modern period, did not stand a chance against modern firepower on the battlefield.

The fact that Machiavelli, Saxe, and other military authors of the early modern period looked to the classical authors of the Greeks and Romans is easily evidenced with a look through any of the multiple texts they published during their lifetime. What is also true is that the early modern period underwent significant changes in warfare and that the men mentioned in this chapter all did their part to contribute to it. But it cannot be forgotten that these men did not simply abandon the new and adopt the old. On the battlefield, there was clearly an appreciation for the fact that new technologies such as gunpowder and fortress construction, were powerful tools that should not be ignored, and this is very clearly acknowledged in the literature as well. Early modern European continental military doctrine was a combination of new and old, taking the

\(^{78}\) Ibid., 51.


\(^{80}\) Ibid., 241.
best of what each had to offer and never forgetting the restraints that reality placed on it. The question now is whether the same thing can be said of their contemporaries across the Channel in the English Kingdom.

The English Art of War

As already mentioned, the antiquated historiography of early modern English warfare is characterized by criticism of England’s apparent backwardness, in both theory and practice, and in its inability to produce a military force resembling that of the continent. While it is true that in many aspects of the art of war, early modern England varied greatly from the practices of the continent, there are also many other areas in which the English and the continental views were aligned. It is important to remember that warfare is influenced by many elements outside of the control of kings and generals. Factors such as population, economy, and geography play a large part in determining the scale and style of military force that a country can muster. In all of these aspects, early modern England varied greatly from contemporary Europe. Therefore, what is traditionally regarded as military backwardness and ineptitude was actually a country attempting to employ the best that the new style of continental warfare had to offer within the scope of its own restricted means and unique needs; the result was an English policy of integration of old and new tactics, construction, and weaponry over pure imitation of the new continental models. This would come to define early modern English warfare throughout the period but nowhere was this better exemplified than during the sixteenth century and the reign of the Tudor monarchs.
When Henry VII took the throne in 1485, artillery was far from the dominant force on the battlefield in England or on the continent. Henry VII is battered in the historiography as someone who cared little for war and less for the proposals of modernization of the English forces.\textsuperscript{81} The truth, as David Grummit argues, is that Henry VII was quite interested in artillery and ordnance manufacturing. Prior to Henry VII’s reign, Calais, a block of territory located on the north-west shores of France but held intermittently by the English from the late medieval period until 1558, had been the chief producer of artillery and ordnance for the English armies. However, due to rumours of discontent in the still Yorkist offices of Calais in the first two decades of Henry VII’s rule, the King began to move artillery production from the Calais garrison in France to the Tower in London.\textsuperscript{82} By the mid-1490’s, English artillery production was firmly seated in the royal courts, effectively centralizing artillery production and distribution.\textsuperscript{83} Grummitt explains:

As early as June 1486 Thomas Roger, clerk of the king’s ships, purchased eight serpentines from Philip Loker, a smith from Southampton. By 1490 it appears that there was a flourishing gun-making industry at the Tower, employing foreign craftsmen but controlled by members of the royal household. For example, in Easter 1490 Sir Richard Guildford, the master of the ordnance, received £24 2s. 1d. for certain brass ‘bombards called Curtews, made by Moraunt Corbelyn at the Tower’.\textsuperscript{84}

In accordance with the requirements of military modernization on the continent, Henry VII brought ordnance manufacturing back home to English soil and ensured that the

\textsuperscript{82} Ibid., 268.
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid.
bulk of it took place under royal control.\textsuperscript{85} Further, in accordance with continental standards, by the end of the fifteenth century it is obvious that Henry VII realized the potential of gunpowder and artillery. He had larger stores of gunpowder weapons in the Tower than any of his subjects had on their own, and the artillery was used both abroad and to suppress domestic rebellions, as demonstrated at the Battle of Stoke in 1487 and Blackheath in 1497.\textsuperscript{86} As a result of his efforts, Henry VII was able to use gunpowder to increase the power of his royal government and this, argues Grummitt, was in direct imitation of his continental contemporaries.\textsuperscript{87}

When Henry VII passed the throne to his son Henry VIII in 1509, the English knowledge of artillery production and usage continued to increase. Grummitt tells us that, by 1509, there was already a successful gun founding industry in England, and that by 1513 a Venetian ambassador in England commented that English gun-makers worked “by day and night and on all festivals’ to make cannon.”\textsuperscript{88} While Henry VIII continued to foster native gun makers in the Tower, he also, like his father, showed a willingness to accept the lessons of the continent.\textsuperscript{89} He not only ordered gunpowder and artillery from the continent but further employed foreign craftsmen from Italy and the Low Countries in his own foundries.\textsuperscript{90} Though much of Henry VIII’s artillery and fortification developments were “largely reactive” to those on the continent, and

\textsuperscript{85} Ibid., 269.  
\textsuperscript{86} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{87} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{90} Fissel, \textit{English Warfare, 1511 – 1642}, 45.
therefore, as Grummitt points out, could be used as evidence to show that the English were behind the continent, it does not mean that the English firearms and artillery differed from the continent in their quality or usage. As a whole, Henry VIII and his father, Henry VII, both worked not only to increase the royal stores of artillery at the Tower in London, but also to bring in foreign craftsmen to modernize the English gunpowder industry. Fissel argues that, as a result of the efforts of the first two Tudor kings, by the time Edward VI took the throne in 1547 “no comparable gun-casting facility existed on the Continent until 1604.”

Though artillery and gunpowder weapons were finding an increasing importance in Tudor England during the sixteenth century, English military practitioners and theorists continued to maintain the usefulness of the longbow. This was unique to England and is often seen as detrimental to the development of Tudor warfare. As we will see, however, retention of the longbow actually fitted perfectly into the English model of integration over substitution. James Raymond explains:

The fact that Henry's armies in 1513 and 1523 were not filled with companies of arquebusiers, far from reflecting any uniquely English limitations, simply mirrored what was going on in Europe. Whilst the longbow remained very much central to the English tactical system, it is important not to over-emphasise English resistance to firearms. As the mid-century manuscripts show, the handgun was adopted, not to replace but, to complement the older weapon.

As Raymond explains, it was never the intention of Henry VIII to replace the bow with the arquebus, and the theorists of the time knew this. It does not mean, however, that

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the English were ignoring firearms completely. In fact, English theorists such as Thomas Audley understood and were writing on the importance of having both handheld firearms and artillery within the English ranks in order to keep up to date. And, as we have already seen, the usefulness of gunpowder was not lost on the first two Tudor monarchs as they attempted to increase their ordnance stores and modernize their manufacturing processes. In Henry VIII’s early campaigns, we also see his desire to include gunpowder weapons in his logistical calculations. In a manuscript detailing the logistics of Henry VIII’s 1513 campaign, an extensive list of ordnance can be seen, including: “Bombardes”, “Serpentynes”, “Fawcons”, one hundred arquebuses, one hundred handguns, and enough powder and shot to keep all these weapons active for eight days and nights. Therefore, it is clear that the early Tudors understood the growing role of firearms in a modern army.

However, the effectiveness of the longbow simply could not be denied, and Tudor England therefore remained unique in its use of varied missile weaponry. The longbow had seen the English through many crucial battles such as Halidon Hill in 1333, Poitiers in 1356 and Agincourt in 1415 and this ensured “a close association between the English and the longbow on the battlefield.” Even into the 1520’s when the Earl of Surrey led the English armies on a raiding campaign along the northern coast of France, longbows were used to great effect. What also could not be denied was the relative affordability, fast rate of fire, and sharp accuracy of the longbow in comparison to the

94 Ibid., 43, 26.  
95 Ibid., 45.  
96 Ibid.  
97 Ibid., 47.  
98 Ibid., 48.
early gunpowder weapons of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. A longbow in sixteenth century England was up to five times cheaper to make than was a hand gun at the time. Furthermore, a well-trained English archer could fire six arrows per minute at a range of one hundred and eighty to two hundred yards – albeit at this rate accuracy would dip fast. An early arquebusier, however, would take a minute to load and fire one shot at a range of eighty yards maximum. This advantage in accuracy and rate of fire, however, was a result of a lifetime of training and exercise and required a relatively strong man to achieve while firearms were relatively simple to operate. These factors, in combination with firearm improvements in the 1540’s and the introduction of plate armour at the end of the fifteenth century, ensured that the scales began to tip in favor of the arquebus. By the 1590’s Elizabeth I was taking the steps to ensure that her militias were equipped almost exclusively with pike and shot. Nevertheless, English armies in the sixteenth century demonstrated the uniquely English policy of integration when they attempted to include cutting-edge technology – gunpowder weaponry – with a weapon and system – the longbow – that they knew had worked in the past and continued to demonstrate effectiveness in the present. This does not prove that the English are either backwards or inept but rather that they understood wholeheartedly the new technologies and attempted to use them as was in their best interest.

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99 Ibid., 51.
100 Ibid.
101 Ibid.
102 Ibid.
103 Ibid., 48, 51.
Another area of military development where historians are quick to criticize the English is fortress construction. As discussed earlier, fortresses on the continent had to undergo major innovations in response to the power of the new artillery. Specifically, they adopted the different elements of the *trace italienne* and its angled bastions in order to combat the artillery threat. The Tudors would never come to implement the *trace italienne* completely but the question must be asked once again: Why would they? The first acknowledgement of a need for fortification modernization came from Henry VIII in 1539 when he set out a plan to update twenty-five different fortifications with aspects of the new military architecture.\(^{105}\) It is important to note that Henry VIII had a uniquely large amount of money to spend on these renovations as a result of the dissolutions of the Catholic monasteries.\(^{106}\) With England’s “natural moat,” as John S. Nolan refers to the English Channel, the foremost threat that the English faced came from opposing navies, and only secondly from their land forces. Henry VIII’s coastal forts therefore called for “height and firepower” in order to give the English lookout points and firing advantages over incoming ships.\(^{107}\) This of course meant that Henry VIII’s forts lacked the short, thick walls characteristic of the *trace italienne*. This, however, was not due to a lack of knowledge of the angled bastion styles of fortification. English engineers, such as John Rogers and Richard Lee, demonstrated their understanding of the new fortification at sites like Boulogne on the continent in

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\(^{105}\) Fissel, *English Warfare*, 37.
\(^{106}\) Ibid.
the early sixteenth century. On the continent, the geographic situation was such that the greatest threat came from land and not from sea – something new to the English – and so they were inclined to follow continental guidelines much better. However, these examples were not wholehearted representations of the angled bastions of the continent, and this was again due to practicality. At Boulogne, as back home in England, the English had to do the best with the resources they were given, and so integration once again won out. But, as Raymond points out, “it was a task they attacked with vigour and a good degree of success, demonstrating both knowledge and understanding to match that of their French adversaries.” In other words, in order to adapt different aspects of the trace italienne into their old medieval fortifications, the English engineers had to have an adept understanding of the features of the new fortifications themselves.

Fortification construction during the reign of Elizabeth I took on a very different style indeed. Elizabeth was left with a crippling debt from the continental wars of her father Henry VIII. Even Elizabeth’s two years with the highest returns from taxation, 1588 and 1601, combined were equal to only one third of the military spending of Henry VIII in 1544. Furthermore, Elizabeth’s revenues were devastatingly low in comparison to those of Henry VIII. During Henry’s war of 1544 – 1546, he could count on revenues totaling roughly £515,000 while Elizabeth’s Irish war was waged on

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109 Ibid.
revenues between £170,000 and £190,000.\textsuperscript{111} As mentioned before, Henry VIII had money from the dissolution of the Catholic monasteries, but he also had revenue from the continental outposts of Calais and Boulogne. By Elizabeth’s reign, the dissolution money was gone and she had neither Calais nor Boulogne in her possession. This meant not only that she was not seeing the revenues from these two outposts that her father did, but, more importantly, that the shores of England itself had become the new frontlines of battle.\textsuperscript{112} Unlike Henry, Elizabeth could not wage war on the continent during the summer months and retreat back safely to England in the winter with the garrison at Calais working as a buffer between England and the continent.\textsuperscript{113} So now, even without the revenues that her predecessors had enjoyed, Elizabeth was faced with the task of literally defending England’s shores.

The answer to this problem was not to build angled bastion fortifications all along the southern English coast, but rather to invest in the navy. And so Elizabeth committed her time and resources entirely to the latter. No contemporary European government spent as much on its navy as Elizabeth did, and the result was a new way to wage war.\textsuperscript{114} Due to the constraints on funds, Elizabethan military strategy remained primarily defensive and so her navy was designed to operate this way too. As Paul E.J. Hammer explains in his work, \textit{Elizabeth’s Wars: Wars, Government and Society in Tudor England, 1544 – 1604}, Elizabeth’s fleet was outfitted with lots of cannon and designed

\begin{footnotes}
\item[111] Ibid., 238.
\item[112] Ibid., 243.
\item[113] Ibid., 242 – 3.
\item[114] Ibid., 254.
\end{footnotes}
to out-manoeuvre the enemy.\textsuperscript{115} This way, Elizabeth’s ships could fight at a distance, in hopes of preserving her ships and saving her money. Elizabeth’s navy met the Spanish fleet in 1588 and successfully kept the Spanish Armada engaged and prevented Philip II from landing an army and threatening the domestic security of England. In this sense, the English navy effectively performed the duty typically demanded of fortifications on the continent.

Finally, concerning matters of military planning and organization, England during the early modern period continued to demonstrate its ability to integrate old and new as much as geography, economy, and demography would allow. The closest thing to the professional military class of the continent that the Tudor monarchs saw came in the form of the trained bands. The trained bands were an attempt by Elizabeth’s government to try to organize and train segments of the medieval county-based militias that already existed throughout England. In 1573, the Crown issued a decree that each county would train and equip the required number of soldiers from within its own ranks.\textsuperscript{116} These men could then be counted on to come together to fight for England in a time of need.\textsuperscript{117} Furthermore, Elizabeth’s intent was not just to use the trained bands as the main force at home, but also as a reserve pool for overseas service.\textsuperscript{118} While this was not the standing army seen on the continent in the late sixteenth century, it was England’s first attempt to turn the general levy into “a trained home army.”\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{116} Fissel, \textit{English Warfare}, 55.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{118} Nolan, \textit{The Militarization of the Elizabethan State}, 399.
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid.
With a recommitment to the trained bands initiative by both the crown and the counties in the early 1580’s also came a commitment to modernization. As far as weaponry is concerned, the English continued to progress and integrate more and more of the modern pike-and-shot tactics. The bow- and-bill trained soldiers of old were almost completely phased out of the trained bands by the 1590’s, and were replaced with men armed and trained with gunpowder weapons like the musket and caliver.\(^\text{120}\)

Furthermore, in 1602, Nolan tells us that the counties were encouraged to purchase the weaponry for their bands from centralized sources which, if fully achieved, would mean a level of standardization of equipment in the vein of the armies of the continent.\(^\text{121}\)

Efforts were made to ensure that each band received at least some experienced men to fill the officer class but, if officers need be pulled from the “local gentry,” efforts would be made to ensure that they had read and understood the contemporary military literature available to them.\(^\text{122}\)

Also by the middle of the 1590’s, the Crown had been successful, with some resistance from commanders of the old bands, in reorganizing the bands into smaller units of about one hundred and fifty men, in the vein of the Dutch reforms of Maurice of Nassau.\(^\text{123}\)

All in all, the trained bands of the late sixteenth century were transforming into the closest thing the Tudor government had ever seen to a professional army. Nolan draws a comparison between the trained bands and the “‘middle-class professionalism’ identified with the Dutch army,” speculating the only

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\(^{120}\) Nolan, *The Militarization of the Elizabethan State*, 400.
\(^{121}\) Ibid.
\(^{122}\) Ibid., 400 – 1.
\(^{123}\) Ibid., 402.
difference to be “that the Dutch forces were much more frequently exposed to combat.”

Neil Younger agrees with Nolan’s assessment of the trained bands in his article “If the Armada Had Landed: A Reappraisal of England’s Defences in 1588.” Here we find another early modern English military historian attempting to counter the criticisms of Geoffrey Parker. In his article, Younger notes Parker’s assertion that Elizabeth I’s preparations for the Anglo-Spanish wars of the 1580’s were inadequate and behind the times. Younger uses his article to defend the English against this assessment and, while he admits if the Armada had landed the shortage of weapons available to the English might not have held out long enough to repel the Spanish, he maintains that Elizabeth reacted to the best of her abilities to the Spanish invasion. Younger concludes in stating:

...the fact that the trained bands existed at all can be regarded as a success...the command structures set up by the council in the years prior to the Armada – the lieutenancies in each county and the militia structures under their aegis – worked well in the crisis...the scheme ensured that there was a clear chain of command to relay the council’s orders to the county trained bands’ captains and men. When called upon, the troops would...turn out with their weapons, under designated leaders whom they knew, and assemble at the rendezvous points in a reasonably orderly fashion...It has also been noted that the counties were well able to act on their own initiative, implementing the plans laid down in conjunction with military experts. Furthermore, it is significant that there appears to have been no protest around the issue of the militias leaving their own counties, even though the militias from, for example, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire marching to join the army to defend the queen’s person

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124 Ibid., 401.
126 Ibid., 328.
127 Ibid., 352.
must have been aware that they were leaving their homes undefended against any Spanish landing in the south-west.¹²⁸

This is a rather lengthy but necessary quote as it describes succinctly the achievements of the pinnacle of Tudor military preparedness and organization. Despite the fact that there are examples where the reality of the English military did not always match what was hoped for in the literature, as was the case in any early modern European army, Younger sees reason to praise the English. He sees the existence of the trained bands, the existence of the lieutenancies and systems of communication from the highest officer to lowest ranking soldier, and the fact that the bands from different counties were capable of working independently as well as cohesively for the Crown, suffering no ill will for potentially leaving their own county in danger, as sign-posts that by the beginning of the seventeenth century England was on par with continental military reform.

Just as on the continent, the sixteenth century saw many military developments in England. What shows again and again is that the Tudors had different needs and also different resources at their disposal than did men like Maurice of Nassau. Necessarily, therefore, their military developments were also different. The Tudor regime was characterized by a military standard that knew about and yearned for the military prowess of the continent but understood their own needs enough to adapt the old and the new accordingly.

Primary Source Analysis

¹²⁸ Ibid.
It is my intent now to examine ten different works from nine different authors, all of whom we will get to know quite well. In order to introduce them, it will be useful to artificially categorize them into three very broad categories: the staunch English traditionalists, the yearning continental sentimentalists, and the compromising authors who find themselves somewhere in the middle. In the traditionalist camp stands Sir John Smythe whose work was published in 1590. The continentalists consist of Sir Roger Williams, Humfrey Barwick, and one of Barnabe Rich’s works, *The Fruits of Long Experience*. These works were published in 1590, 1592, and 1604. Finally, those authors willing to concede a little from both camps include Thomas Digges, the only “armchair” theorist on this list (1579), Thomas Styward (1582), a second work by Barnabe Rich (1587), Matthew Sutcliffe (1593), Sir Clement Edmundes (1609), and Sir James Turner, who published his *Pallas Armata* comparatively late in 1683. These authors are some of the most prominent English military thinkers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They also figure prominently into both Webb’s *Elizabethan Military Science* and Eltis’ *The Military Revolution in Sixteenth-Century Europe*. The case of Barnabe Rich is used to denote the progression of the thought of one of our authors and, finally, Sir James Turner, to show that even in 1683 at least one English author continued to extoll traditional English practices. Many of these authors, especially those who cling to any English tradition at all, have been examined time and again in order to prove the backwardness of English warfare in the early modern period. However, they deserve re-examination in the light of the new interpretation of early modern English military developments by historians like Nolan, Hammer, Manning, and
Raymond. Now that historians understand the special circumstances of the English military situation: Does the literature look as inept? How exactly do they adapt the lessons of the continent and antiquity into their views? And do authors like Rich, Clement, and Digges demonstrate an awareness of their special circumstances?

Sir John Smythe does not completely dismiss continental practice but prefers to cling to English tradition. In Smythe’s case, the bone of contention is artillery. In 1590, Smythe published a work entitled *Certain discourses*. After a lengthy dedication to the nobility of England, Smythe opens with this remark:

> The strange opinions, so wonderfullie mistaken in these our daies in all matters Militarie, by divers of our chiefe men of charge and warre,...that have learned their greatest skill in matters of Armes, serving under the States, in the tumultuarie, licentious, and starving warres of the Low Countries, or peradventure some little in the civil warres of France, have moved me to take in hand this discourse, to discover their strange and erronious opinions Militarie, by them published to our Nobilitie and chiefe Magistrates.129

This is obviously a very scathing assessment of the lessons being learnt and brought back from English soldiers serving in the continental wars. And while Humfrey Barwick, as we shall see later, begins his *A Breefe Discourse* with a likewise scathing assessment of the nobility and their penchant for tradition, Sir John Smythe begins his work with a thirty-two page address to the nobility of England. And his actual discourse begins with a list of the things that confuse and vex him about this new style of warfare. He really

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129 Sir John Smythe, *Certain discourses, vvritten by Sir Iohn Smythe, Knight: concerning the formes and effects of diuers sorts of weapons, and other verie important matters militarie, greatlie mistaken by diuers of our men of warre in these daies; and chiefly, of the mosquet, the caliuer and the long-bow; as also, of the great sufficiencie, excellencie, and wonderful effects of archers: with many notable examples and other particularities, by him presented to the nobilitie of this realme, & published for the benefite of this his native countrie of England* (London: Printed by Richard Jones at the sign of the Rose and Crown near Holburne Bridge, 1590), 1.
does not understand the loss of the longbow and especially disagrees with the purported effectiveness of the calivers, another name for the arquebus, and the muskets.\textsuperscript{130} He does not like the replacement of traditional English terms with continental ones such as legar for the name of a camp, belegard for the name of a besieged town, and the use of the word colours instead of ensigns.\textsuperscript{131} And he is especially concerned with the new fashion of arms and armour in which men prefer to carry longer swords and wear much less armour than is typical of English tradition.\textsuperscript{132} All of this, Smythe feels, is a break from an ancient tradition. Thus many writers, such as Barwick, may write him off as an outdated traditionalist. However, while there is no denying Smythe’s allegiance to antiquity, he demonstrates his awareness of reality throughout Certain Discourses. For example, when discussing the merits of sconces in fortification, Smythe notes that these learned men of military matters should be aware that there “is a great difference betwixt the scituations and natures of the drie grounds of England, and those of Holland, Frizeland, and other such low and flat Countries”.\textsuperscript{133} He goes on to explain that the dirt in these countries is much wetter than the dirt in England, and therefore can be packed to make very effective sconces, whereas in England, to trust such devices for fortification would be disastrous.\textsuperscript{134} Along the same lines, Smythe also notes that because the countries of the continent share borders, they come into contact more often and so their soldiers are continually exercised and

\textsuperscript{130} Ibid., 2; 11.
\textsuperscript{131} Ibid., 3.
\textsuperscript{132} Ibid., 3 – 4.
\textsuperscript{133} Ibid., 13.
\textsuperscript{134} Ibid.
trained.\textsuperscript{135} England, however, is separated by the English Channel and so does not come to war as often as the continent. Smythe sees this as a great disadvantage stating that “upon the occasion of a warre,” England has to levy and train new troops, every time.\textsuperscript{136} Furthermore, unlike Barwick’s complete dismissal of the longbow, Smythe does not argue that the arquebus and the musket serve no purpose but rather that their use is very specific. He in fact is aware of some of the necessities of their use, noting that they work best behind natural cover on the field or under the protection of the pikemen standing behind them.\textsuperscript{137} Arquebusiers are also good, he says, in light skirmishes when they are broken down into wings and smaller squares.\textsuperscript{138} So while Smythe is accused of being too blinded by English tradition, I would argue that his awareness of continental warfare and English needs is ever present.

The two authors on the side of the continentalists are Sir Roger Williams and Humfrey Barwick, the latter of whom has already been mentioned in juxtaposition to Smythe. Humfrey Barwick is a good example of the continentalist tradition and is therefore a good place to start. Men such as Humfrey Barwick and his work, \textit{A Breefe Discourse Concerning the force and effect of all manuall weapons of fire, and the disability of the Long Bowe or Archery, in respect of others of greater force now in use}, serve to answer the proponents of English tradition, and the longbow especially. As one might be able to infer from the title of this work, Barwick is not in agreement with authors like Smythe on the usefulness of the bow. From reading \textit{A Breefe Discourse}, it

\textsuperscript{135} Ibid., 28.  
\textsuperscript{136} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{137} Ibid., 16 – 17.  
\textsuperscript{138} Ibid.
seems Barwick is completely indoctrinated in the continental art of warfare in the late sixteenth century. Given that this work only deals with the debate between the longbow and the arquebus, it is not entirely fair to say Barwick only likes the modern warfare of the continent, but it is his tendency to look to his contemporaries on the continent for validation that marks him as firmly in the continental faction. This is not surprising, however, as Barwick, according to his own accounts, spent a great deal of his military career fighting in the wars on the European continent.\(^{139}\)

The first thing Barwick wants his reader to know is that if the author of a text on military practice is not a practiced military man himself, then his work is not worth reading; even if the author is a nobleman, Barwick recommends against it. In fact, he says, some of these noble authors may even be the worst offenders of perpetuating incorrect military science. To prove this, he outlines a handful of scenarios where he indeed knew better than some of the high-ranking officers who had the pleasure of his company.\(^ {140}\) He recalls once on service at Leith in Scotland where a Sir William Pelham, Captain of the Pioneers, was tasked with entrenching the camp.\(^ {141}\) Barwick, knowing that Pelham had “neither served in Fraunce, nor with the Emperour,” offered Pelham advice on the situation.\(^ {142}\) And, according to Barwick, this advice was rejected on account of Pelham’s pride. The results were disastrous, and many good soldiers and

\(^{139}\) Humfrey Barwick, A Breefe Discourse Concerning the force and effect of all manuall weapons of fire, and the disability of the Long Bowe or Archery, in respect of others of greater force now in use. With sundrye probable reasons for the verifying thereof: the which I have doone of dutye towards my Soveraigne and Country, and for the better satissfaction of all such as are doubtfull of the same (London: E. Allde for Richard Oliffe, 1592), B2; 4; 12; 15.

\(^{140}\) Ibid., 4 – 5.

\(^{141}\) Ibid., 4.

\(^{142}\) Ibid.
officers were killed as a result of Pelham’s inadequate entrenchment.\textsuperscript{143} In another example of Barwick’s superior continental knowledge over that of his fellow Englishmen, Barwick disagrees with one Captain Brode on the question of how many shot can be fired in one hour.\textsuperscript{144} The Captain argues that a good arquebusier could fire no more than ten shot in an hour, while Barwick says forty.\textsuperscript{145} Barwick even offers to wager money on the situation; an offer which, the reader is told, Captain Brode refuses.\textsuperscript{146} Barwick concludes by saying: “And thus may we see, that Noble men by wrong information, of such as they do suppose shoulde knowe, may be abused.”\textsuperscript{147} The point that Barwick is attempting to make by the end of his third discourse is that you cannot trust noblemen who, solely because of their birth, are given military commands, since these men will hold more fervently to tradition than would someone like Barwick, who has seen the modern, continental battlefield, who has lived the positives, and who through experience can provide an informed comparison of the longbow and the arquebus.

Even in 1592, when this work was published, Barwick’s insistence on the effectiveness of firearms flew in the face of most of his contemporaries. Whereas men like Sir Edmundes Clement, Sir James Turner, and Sir John Smythe advocate that the longbow was the more damaging and “distracting” of the two weapons, Barwick could not disagree more. In his ninth discourse, Barwick tackles three accusations made by Smythe against the arquebus: first, that firearms take too long compared to the

\textsuperscript{143} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{144} Ibid., 5.
\textsuperscript{145} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{146} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{147} Ibid.
longbow to fire a volley shot; second, that firearms have a greater rate of misfire; and third, that arrows discomfit the enemy more. To answer the first, Barwick argues that it takes longer for a skilled archer to fully draw his bow than it does for a readied musket to be drawn to the musketeer’s shoulder. Furthermore, he sees no truth to the claim that a skilled archer can fire faster than a skilled musketeer – in fact, he sees quite the opposite, arguing that a skilled arquebusier can fire more bullets than a skilled archer, and a skilled musketeer is all the better. Concerning the second accusation, Barwick points out that archery is a very physically demanding skill to master and if an archer is not well rested, fed, and if his bow is not dry, then his misfires will greatly outnumber those of the arquebusier. His efficiency will be further hindered in a situation of imminent danger when the archer is likely to only half draw his bow in a panic. He also argues that concerning volley fire, at least arquebusiers and musketeers can count on their shot following a “certain level” while archers have to fire “but by gesse.” Concerning which is the more annoying weapon, Barwick says that if one considers death to be the most annoying end, then the answer is obvious as, according to Barwick, every skilled soldier knows that on the battlefield there are one hundred deaths by shot to every single kill made by an arrow. And what could be of greater annoyance to a soldier than death?

148 Ibid., 17.
149 Ibid.
150 Ibid.
151 Ibid., 18.
152 Ibid.
153 Ibid.
154 Ibid., 19.
In 1590, Sir Roger Williams, one of the men mentioned in Barwick’s *A Breefe Discourse*, published *A Briefe discourse of Warre, Written by Sir Roger Williams Knight, With his opinion concerning some parts of the Martaill Discipline*, with the typical humility that shows itself in the dedications of all these different treatises. Williams was a practicing soldier and, as did Barwick, spent a good deal of his service on the continent. Unique to Williams in this selection of sources is his reverence for the operations of the Spanish army. As did Barwick, however, Williams believed the primary weapon of the day to be the musket, titling his section on the musket, “To proove Musketiers the best small shot that ever were invented.”\(^{155}\) His further inclination to continental warfare is obvious through his fondness of the pike, the light target that can be discarded at a moment’s notice in order to free both hands for the musket, and even for the French halberds.\(^{156}\) His disinclination, however, for the traditional English weapons is also clear as he would wager five hundred musketeers more useful than fifteen hundred archers.\(^ {157}\) His aversion to the longbow is for all the same reasons as Barwick’s – it fires too slowly, it cannot pierce the armour of the day, and the elements take their toll on both the bow and the bowstring.\(^ {158}\)

It is useful to incorporate the case of Barnabe Rich here. While most of these authors published several treatises on the subject of warfare, Rich’s progression from the compromiser to the continentalist is well mapped by reading his *A Path-Way to Military Practise*, published in 1587, and his *The Fruites of Long Experience*, published in

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\(^{155}\) Sir Roger Williams, *A Breefe Discourse of Warre. Written by Sir Roger Williams Knight, With his opinion concerning some parts of the Martaill Discipline* (London: Thomas Orwin, 1590), 40.

\(^{156}\) Ibid., 44 – 45.

\(^{157}\) Ibid., 46.

\(^{158}\) Ibid., 46 – 47.
Barnabe Rich published *A Path-Way to Military Practice* in 1587 after, by his own account, twenty-four years of service in the English army.\(^{159}\) His military career began in 1562 when he soldiered under the command of the Earl of Warwick in Newhaven in East Sussex.\(^{160}\) As Webb points out, Rich’s long military career would see him serve under five different English monarchs until his death in 1617, making him one of the most practised English military writers in the sixteenth century.\(^{161}\) *A Path-Way to Military Practice* is one of five treatises published by Rich on military affairs and, as in many of his other works, Rich channels the classical trend in thought shared by many of his contemporaries. In his own words, it is Rich’s intention to relay “what I have either practised by experience, seen by example, or gathered by historie concerning Martiality, I have here set them downe, to the benefit of my countrie men that are not yet practised in so honourable an exercise.”\(^{162}\) From what he has either gathered from experience, seen by example, or read in history books, Rich compiles a wealth of military knowledge, dividing it into three sections: first, on the choosing and electing of military men at all ranks of service; second on stratagems useful for tricking your opponents (or your own men) in the field; and third, on formations to be used when taking one’s troops into battle. All three of these sections are full of references to antiquity and criticisms of the military practices of Rich’s own time.

\(^{159}\) Barnabe Rich, *A Path-Way to Military Practice*. Containinge Offices. Lawes, Disciplines, and orders to be observed in an Army, with sundry Strategems very beneficall for young Gentlemen, or any other that is desirous to have knowledge in Martiall exercises. Whereunto is annexed a Kalender of the Imbattelinge of men (London: John Charlewood, 1587), A,4.


\(^{161}\) Ibid., 38.

Rich begins *A Path-Way to Military Practice* with a note to the reader where he argues that while peace is preferable to war, in order to maintain peace, England must always be ready for war. 163 This is his first allusion to the war-minded Empires of Greece and Rome. Rich argues that the enemy is always watching and waiting from the borders of the commonwealth, and that unfortunately, peace has made the English lazy. 164 It is not enough to produce the instruments of war, but the English army must be well trained as well, “for what should you doo with armes, weapons, munitions and furnitures, when you have not men of experience to use them.” 165 Furthermore, Rich says that it is not just the borders that are under the protection of Elizabeth’s men at arms, but also the very fabric of English culture. He states that “Prince, Countrie, religion, lawe, justice, subjects and altogether are under the protection of armes.” 166 In other words, in order to preserve the English way of life, Rich argues that the English military must be armed and ready to go at all times. In order to prove this hypothesis, Rich looks straight to the ancients – to the Greeks and the Romans. He quotes the concerns of second-century BC Roman general Scipio Africanus over the idleness, riots, and outrage that would befall the Roman public if there was no Carthage to fight, 167 and mentions the merits of Philip of Macedon’s choice in his son Alexander the Great as Captain of his army. 168 These principles, and many more, are carried on throughout the

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163 Ibid., B.
164 Ibid., D,2.
165 Ibid., B,1.
166 Ibid., B.
167 Ibid., B,1.
168 Ibid., C,2.
pages of Rich’s work, always coming back to the words of the ancients to support his ideas.

In his first section, titled “Officers of the Field,” Rich details every member of the English army from the General down to the common soldier, insignia carrier, and drummer. A small section is devoted to each of these positions and Rich uses them to list the duties of each position, what characteristics one has to have to hold it, and how each incumbent is to be chosen. According to Rich, each position should be filled based on character and experience rather than on favors and names. Rich argues that, in doing so, the army would be comprised of good-standing men capable of discipline and winning wars. They must be generous men who are well trained and educated in the ways of war. Rich is appalled by the contemporary English practice of recruiting prisoners for service in the army, stating that in other countries, presumably those which Rich admires on the European continent, prisoners are indeed recruited into the army but as laborers who work in slave-like conditions.  

In summary, according to Rich a good soldier or officer in the English army must be of good standing, have a healthy reverence of God, and be well versed and trained in the use of his equipment, especially the gunners. Rich also believes that every man must subscribe to the highest standards of discipline, and in so doing must commit to remaining trained and exercised in his field. Rich turns to the ancients for support for his arguments, on matters of discipline especially, citing, for example, the Roman

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169 Ibid., G,3.
170 Ibid., G,4.
171 Ibid., F,2.
172 Ibid., G,4. – H.
disciplinary practice of decimation. In comparison to the Roman legions, Rich likens the contemporary English army camps to dens of deceit, treachery, and impiety. Feeling satisfied that he has aptly handled the officers of the field, Rich then moves on to his stratagems and formations.

Rich defines stratagems as plans and schemes used to deceive the enemy and, once again, bases this section on classical works. Rich explains the overall strategy to consider before taking men to battle:

The most renowned Emperour Augustus, gave these instructions for Captaines as followeth, that although a Prince were mighty, yet if he were wise, hee would never give battle, unless there were more apparent profit in the victory, then losse if the enemie should overcome. And the most approved Captaines helde this opinion, that it were not good to bringe theyr men to fight, except they had advantage or else brought to it by constraint.

In other words, Rich believes that all great generals, since the time of Augustus, have endeavoured to fight only if they have the advantage. If the advantage is not had, however, Rich offers a few different stratagems to either inspire one’s own soldiers, or trick the enemy into a disadvantageous position. He cites as an example Roman general Q. Fabius who, “knowing the Romaines to be of so liberal [and] honest nature, that by spiteful and contumelous dealing they would be soone moved, vered and greeved...” towards action if the Persians were to receive any leeway from the Romans, sent ambassadors to Carthage to negotiate a peace treaty that favored the enemy.

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173 Ibid., G,4. Decimation was a form of punishment for Roman legions that retreated or otherwise acted cowardly in the face of the enemy. The soldier’s names were drawn at random and every tenth name was called and the man executed.
174 Ibid., H.
175 Ibid.
heavily. According to Rich, the Romans were so appalled by this that the entire army was “stirred and incouraged” to fight. He also cites examples of Roman generals lying to their men about the intentions of the opposition should they be victorious, about starting rumors that the enemy captain has been killed to inspire the men, and the notable Fabian strategy of retreating to draw one’s enemy into a disadvantageous position.

In his formations, however, Rich breaks as far from the ancients as he ever will in *A Path-Way to Military Practice*. While he understands the advantages the ancients saw in such formations as the triangle, shear battalion, and saw battalion, he notes that these are no longer applicable today. Rich states that the manner of fighting has changed, essentially because of firearms, and so some of the formations and even the weaponry of the ancients is outdated. The formation Rich recommends is the just square. He states that “…the fight now onelie consisting in Shot and Pikes, there is no fourme of imbatteling to be preferred before the just square.” Not only does this formation better suit the weaponry being used on the field but, according to Rich, its advantages are threefold: first, that it is easy to organize men into a square; second, that a square is easy to break down into thin columns if a narrow pass is encountered; and third, that the just square is easily defensible against both horse and foot for it gives the enemy no weak point to attack. Having justified his promotion of the just

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176 Ibid., H. – H,2.  
177 Ibid.  
178 Ibid., H,3 – H, 4.  
179 Ibid., K. – K,2.  
180 Ibid., K, 2.  
181 Ibid., K,4.
square, Rich lists the square roots from one hundred to four thousand and the specificities of arranging men of these numbers into the battalions using the just square formation.

Rich’s work is typical of those emerging from continental Europe in the sixteenth century, demonstrating a real connection between English writers and continental theory. This connection developed for a number of reasons. First, by Rich’s own account, he spent a good deal of time fighting on the continent. As mentioned above, his first military experience came under the Earl of Warwick during Warwick’s 1562 campaign at Le Havre, which he refers to as Newhaven, on the north-western French coast.\(^{182}\) Webb tells us that Rich continued his military service as a captain and “officer of the field” in both Ireland and the Netherlands.\(^{183}\) Rich was serving in the same atmosphere that would soon produce the reforms of men like Maurice of Nassau and Gustavus Adolphus.

Above all, Rich meant to attack the English practice of warfare of his day. As outlined above, Rich characterizes his contemporary English army as having been made lazy from enjoying peace.\(^{184}\) He suggests that to live in a Roman camp while on campaign would mean to be surrounded with all manners of justice, duty, and honor while the English camps were filled with nothing but deceit, thievery, and injury.\(^{185}\) He makes recommendations for training, levying, and organizing troops based almost

\(^{182}\) Ibid., B.


\(^{185}\) Ibid., H.
entirely on the practices and procedures of antiquity. As Henry J. Webb states in his article, “Barnabe Riche: Sixteenth Century Military Critic,”

These books show Rich’s singleness of purpose during a long military and literary career. Uppermost in his mind during a period of thirty-two years was the desire to see England strong and mighty, able to withstand the onslaughts of an enemy which was secretly preparing for an invasion of the isle. By means of his books he doubtlessly hoped to hammer complacent minds into wakefulness, clear out corruption, and instigate the building of an efficient fighting force under the direction of properly chosen and trained officers. He was only one of many endeavouring to do the same thing, but his voice, if not the most eloquent, was the most authoritative...no other Elizabethan could claim a military record as long and as steady as his own.\(^\text{186}\)

While Webb is an older source, he is one of the only sources for the interpretation of the works of Barnabe Rich and his conclusions stand strong today. Rich endeavoured to educate the English and bring the English army up to the standards he held: standards which he presumably learnt from his experiences on the continent. His recommendations, however, were not as grounded in the reality of the English situation as those of future writers, such as James Turner, would be. Rich called for a professional, standing army comprised of native soldiers as was the trend beginning to emerge on the continent. At the same time that Rich was writing and publishing *A Path-Way to Military Practice*, Elizabeth was attempting to implement her trained bands, which was her best attempt at the professionalization seen on the continent. As discussed above, issues of economy, geography, and demography made the kind of professionalization Rich called for next to impossible.

However, as Webb points out, by the end of Rich’s long military and writing career, he was well aware of the shortcomings of the English armies, and of the extent to which imitating the ancients could help.\textsuperscript{187} His \textit{The Fruites of long Experience. A pleasing view for Peace. A Looking-Glasse for Warre. OR, Call it what you list. Discoursed betweene two Captaines}, is a clear homage to Machiavelli’s \textit{The Art of War}. The work is a discussion between Captain Skill, the embodiment of an experienced Captain, familiar with the military practices of the day, and Captain Pill, a less experienced Captain with his mind firmly stuck in the past. Or, as Rich calls them: “Captaine Pill in his humorous fit,” and “Captain Skill in his temperate judgement.”\textsuperscript{188} It consists mostly of Captain Pill asking questions of the wiser Captain Skill. Near the end, Captain Skill articulates the thesis of Rich and of many other like-minded authors of his day. He charts a short timeline from when men fought “tooth and naile” until more men armed and armoured themselves near his present day.\textsuperscript{189} He concludes:

\begin{quote}
Continuance of time brought in Long bowes, Crossbowes, Slings, Brakes, Darts, and such other like, and now of late we have changed them all for the Caliver and Musket. Those forms and proportions that were of use when they had no other incounter but with manuall and short weapons (and that the hope of victorie consisted in the vigor and strength of mens armes, and in his skill that could bring most handes to fight) would be now to little purpose, when the mightiest troupes and squadrons may be so discomfited with the furie of shotte, that they shal never be able to strike one stroke. We have therefore left those forms and battels that were then used, and have retained an order perfected by time, and bettered by Experience.\textsuperscript{190}
\end{quote}

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\textsuperscript{188} Barnabie Riche, \textit{The Fruites of long Experience. A pleasing view for Peace. A Looking-Glasse for Warre. OR, Call it what you list. Discoursed betweene two Captaines}, (London: Thomas Creede, for Jeffrey Chorlton, and are to be solde at his shop, adjoyning to the great North doore of Powles, 1604), 1.
\textsuperscript{189} Ibid., 68.
\textsuperscript{190} Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
This is one of the most telling statements in Rich’s works and, while he pays the utmost respect to the men of antiquity, especially the Romans, he understands that what has to be left behind, should be. Even Captain Pill remarks in response to Captain Skill’s outline of a well-ordered, modern regiment: “yet there be some not knowing this, that wil figure forth such forms of Battells, as (I think) were used in Alexanders time, and were fitter for the incounters of that age, then for the service of the time present.”

The third group of authors is undoubtedly the most dynamic. The author that demonstrates this “compromising” class most is Sir Cement Edmundes and his *Observations Upon Caesar’s Commentaries*, published in 1609. While the title of this work is rather short when compared to the fashion of the time, the work is an extremely extensive reading and meditation on Roman general and politician Gaius Julius Caesar’s *Commentaries*. Coming in at over five hundred and fifty pages, Edmundes is nothing if not thorough. Essentially, Edmundes’ intention is to simply present a passage from Caesar’s *Commentaries* and then provide the reader with his own interpretation on the text. Edmundes attempts to remain unbiased in most of his interpretation, often ending his analysis of a topic by stating that he will leave the subject now to those men more experienced than he. Edmundes is unapologetic in professing the superiority of the ancients, particularly the Romans, in most situations. Nevertheless, he does occasionally acknowledge the necessity to adapt the lessons of the ancients to the realities of the present day. In so doing, he is representative of the informed military writers of his time.

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191 Ibid., 67.
The first thing Edmundes wants his reader to know is not an unfamiliar lesson. He says that while practical experience on the battlefield is crucial for a complete soldier, so also is knowledge.\textsuperscript{192} A complete soldier should not only be well-read in the texts and tactics of the continental and ancient practices, but it seems almost more important to Edmundes that one be well-versed in their faults.\textsuperscript{193} Despite the early modern trend of classical appreciation, Edmundes feels he will meet opposition from those of his contemporaries who argue that while it is important to give the ancients their credit, in a “subtile” time such as theirs, there is no way or reason to imitate the Romans wholeheartedly.\textsuperscript{194} As one can imagine, Edmundes disagrees completely and argues that the ways of old “are more necessarily to be knowen, then any stratagems of subtler ages,” noting that “they often times hinder many malicious practices, and divelish devises, when evill is reproduced by the knowledge of good, and condemned by the authority of better ages.”\textsuperscript{195} But, according to Edmundes, ancient knowledge will not only keep evils away, but can also act as your own moral compass. For example, in order to justify leveling forests in Ireland to present easier ground for the British to wage war on, Edmundes looks to Caesar’s campaign with the Morini. In this campaign, the Roman troops indeed leveled sections of forest in order to present the even ground needed for the Roman Legions to execute their perfected style of war.\textsuperscript{196} Edmundes notes that this would be “thought monstrous in this age, or ridiculous to our men of war,” but wishes his readers to instead think of the discipline and hard work this task

\textsuperscript{193} Ibid., 3.
\textsuperscript{194} Ibid., 5.
\textsuperscript{195} Ibid., 5 – 6.
\textsuperscript{196} Ibid., 131.
required of the Romans; and to further recognize the valour that came in their victory, a
victory made possible by the clearing of trees.\textsuperscript{197} There are many other areas in which
Edmundes wishes his contemporaries to consider the practices of Julius Caesar, that
great Roman military master, including the discipline of troops, the effectiveness of
small squadrons over large armies, and the superiority of Roman encampments.\textsuperscript{198} But
for all of his love for the Romans, Edmundes was not blind to the necessities of war in
his own day.

Early in the first section of his work, Edmundes recounts Caesar’s success in
battle against the Helvetians in the first century B.C. and gives credit entirely to the fact
that Caesar happened to be situated on top of a hill, providing him the tactical
advantage.\textsuperscript{199} After his analysis, Edmundes wonders whether facing an army from the
top of a hill would be advantageous in the field today. If, he says, battles were decided
by sword and pike, then certainly this position is advantageous.\textsuperscript{200} But, he notes,
battles are settled more often in his day by arquebus and musket and, in such a case, he
would rather be at the bottom of the hill firing upwards so his shot stayed secure
against the powder and did not roll idly up the barrel.\textsuperscript{201} Edmundes breaks further from
Roman tradition when he takes a short break from his discourse and considers the
difference between a Macedonian phalanx and the Roman Legionnaires. He wonders
which of the two armies is better formed, armed and armoured, concluding,

\textsuperscript{197} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{198} Ibid., 69; 70; 89.
\textsuperscript{199} Ibid., 13 – 16.
\textsuperscript{200} Ibid., 16.
\textsuperscript{201} Ibid., 16.
unsurprisingly, in favour of the mobility of the Roman Legion.\(^{202}\) He concludes the Romans and their heavy shields and long spears the better army but cannot wholeheartedly recommend the style for his own day. He believes in the pike and the target, a shield, but notes that “the sayd manner of imbattailing is tyed to such dangerous circumstances of one time, one place, and one kind of fight.”\(^{203}\) In other words, the Roman, and especially the Greek, style of fighting is not so versatile – and it is a style that certainly is not employed in his day. Edmundes calls the ancient style of warfare “defensive” but recognizes his own as offensive.\(^{204}\) Therefore, the war where one’s enemy crashes against a wall of shields and pikes is not pertinent in, say, Ireland, where there are many bogs and woods to impede large armies.\(^{205}\) Edmundes still believes in arming soldiers with a shield, but he feels a light shield, being mobile but still providing some defense, is more advantageous to the needs of his own day.\(^{206}\) Edmundes is aware, then, that the circumstances of the field dictate the style of war fought, the weapons used, and the kinds of defense needed.

But Edmundes’ furthest point of contention is not so much with the ancients as with the popularity of continental warfare. Many English writers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries find it hard to resist the call of the longbow, and Edmundes is no exception. In the second section of his work, when the longbow is brought up, Edmundes cannot help but discuss it. In one of his most diplomatic statements yet, Edmundes tries to preface his comparison of shot and longbow with objectivity.

\(^{202}\) Ibid., 93 – 96.
\(^{203}\) Ibid., 96.
\(^{204}\) Ibid., 97.
\(^{205}\) Ibid., 96.
\(^{206}\) Ibid., 97.
However, the pride for the English longbow Edmundes must have been taught in his school days echoes through the whole statement:

I know it hath bene said, that now the times are altered, and the argebuse and musket are so generally received, and so such reputation in the course of our modern warres, that in comparison of them, bow-men are not worth naming. Wherein I will not go about to extenuate the use of either of these weapons, as knowing them to be both very serviceable upon fit and convenient occasions, not to take upon me to determine which of them is most effectuall in a day of service, but only deliver my conceit touching their effects, and leave it to the consideration of wise and discreeete Commaunders.\textsuperscript{207}

After his “objective” introduction to the two weapons, he briefly examines facets of each. He notes the crack of the arquebus is no less frightening than the loose of a bow and while he concedes that with either weapon, damage is only done if the target is hit, he argues the barbed arrowhead will cause more damage and occupy the victim longer than the smooth shot, where the victim might not even know he was hit until after the battle.\textsuperscript{208} Also, even if an arrow misses the target, the sight of it is enough to instill fear in men and horses alike and cause both to break line and therefore incite confusion.\textsuperscript{209}

That is all he intends to say of the longbow:

A weapon as auncient as the first and truest historie, and is of the number of such weapons as men use to fight with afarre off. The use whereof is too much neglected by the English at these times, considering the honour they have atchieved by it in former ages.\textsuperscript{210}

So, despite Edmundes’ proposed impartiality, his pride in Agincourt inspires him to still find a place in a modern army for the English longbow.

\textsuperscript{207} Ibid., 81.
\textsuperscript{208} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{209} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{210} Ibid.
Edmundes concludes his work with a brief description of the warfare of his own day. It is clear that the intention of Edmundes with his *Observation Upon Caesar’s Commentaries* is simply to provide a look at Caesar’s Commentaries and present, not compare, some of Caesar’s ideals along with some of his own present day. But Edmundes is not so obsessed with Caesar and the Romans that he would profess their teachings in the face of the realities of the day. While there are only three major examples of deviation from Roman and continental canon in his work, they are important and speak louder than the other five hundred pages of text. Through his contemplations on hill-side warfare, the pike and shield, and the bow versus the arquebus, Edmundes demonstrates an awareness that firearms dominate on the battlefield, and, more importantly, that no style of warfare, continental or ancient, should be followed if it does not suit the needs of the battlefield at hand.

Thomas Styward’s *The Pathwaie to Martiall Discipline*, published in 1582, is another one of those dense manuals of information in the same vein as Rich’s similarly-titled *A Path-Way to Military Practice*, published only five years later. It is a straightforward work that offers copious amounts of information on everything from officers’ duties, to the arming of the soldiers, to the benefits of a soldier’s family. Despite the amount of information he presents, only now and again does Styward let slip a little opinion. One such occasion shows his English colours when he notes: “These bands of archers being brought to service by the callevers, although that the callevers be counted to be of greater force then they be of, may kepe their place shooting altogither over the heads of the callevers, to the blemishing and very great anoie of the
When Styward briefly discusses the manner in which soldiers are to be armed and armoured, the reader sees that he is indeed very aware of the new pike and shot tactics, but also that he maintains the validity of the bow and bill. In fact, Styward reserves the bill, something outmoded even by most of his contemporary traditionalists, for “chosen Gentlemen of experience,” who only fight in the “heart of the bataille, usually called the slaughter of the field...who commonly doe not fight but in verie great extremetie.”

It is also evident that Styward is involved in the classical debate. He puts the Roman organization and the mobility of the smaller bands of the Roman Legion on a pedestal and declares this system to be superior to the Greek phalanx. In so doing, he is in general agreement with his contemporaries both in England and on the continent. He also looks to the ancients for validation of many of his own opinions. He cites the benevolence of Alexander the Great and the great Scipio in dealing with the wives and children of conquered kings, Octavian Augustus and Solon for the proper treatment of widowed and orphaned family members of soldiers killed in action, and,

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211 Thomas Styward, Januarij decimus. The pathwaie to martiall discipline. Now newly imprinted, and deuided into three bookees. Wherevnto is added the order and use of the Spaniards in their martiall affairs: which copie was lately found in the fort in Ireland, where the Spaniards and Italians had fortified themselues. The first booke: entreateth of the offices from the highest to the lowest, with the lawes of the field, arming, mustering, and training of souldiers. The second boore: entreateth of sundrie proportions and training of caleueuers, and how to bring bowes to a great perfection of seuerice: also how to march with a campe royall: with diviers tables annexed for the present making of your battells, as otherwise to know how many paces they require in their march & battells from 500. to 10000. The third booke: comprehendeth the very right order of the Spaniards, how to traine, march, and encampe, with diviers tables therein contained (Londini : Excudebat T. E. Impensis Milonis Ienyngs, 1582), 97.
212 Ibid., 44 – 5.
213 Ibid., 45.
214 Ibid., 107.
above all, the organization of the Roman Legion as the pinnacle of field formation.\textsuperscript{215}

Though on the surface Styward appears to possess no agenda concerning the usefulness of antiquity, his belief in the lessons of the ancients manages to shine through if not intentionally, then at least inadvertently. Styward’s appreciation of the bow and bill, pike and shot, and Roman formations makes him one of the most diverse authors in this paper.

In 1593, eleven years after Styward’s *The Pathwaie to Martill Discipline*, Matthew Sutcliffe published his *The Practice, Proceedings, and Lawes of armes*. Sutcliffe’s work is essentially a reiteration of the values projected by Edmundes and Styward. Let it suffice to quote Sutcliffe from his dedication to the Earl of Essex:

But (may some reply) what do the examples of the ancient Romanes, and Greekes, and their proceedings in wars cocerne us, whose practise, & stile in wars is so farre different? these men imagine by reason of the use of artillery lately invented, that the reasons and rules of armes are changed, and that the Romanes if they lived in our times, would be new to seeke. but they are much abused. for the generall rules are alwayes the same. there is, and always hathe beene but one order of providing, proceeding, marching, fighting, retiring, encamping, besieging, and defending of places. and I doe not thinke but if any could recall, or woulde practise the reasons, and rules which the ancient Romanes used, hee should greatly prevaille.\textsuperscript{216}

In an approach to warfare that would resemble the attempts of nineteenth-century French military theorists and general Jomini to reconcile universal principles of war, Sutcliffe is proposing that there are certain concrete rules of warfare that have been and always will be. Therefore, he concludes, to study the ancients would not be a

\textsuperscript{215} Ibid., 140; 162; 135.

\textsuperscript{216} Matthew Sutcliffe, *The Practice, Proceedings, and Lawes of armes, described out of the doings of most valiant and expert Captaines, and confirmed both by ancient, and moderne examples, and praecedents* (Imprinted at London by the Deputies of Christopher Barker Printer to the Queenes most excellent Majestie, 1593), 6.
waste of time but rather would reveal some of these principles still pertinent today. Demonstrating his awareness of modern and English tactics, Sutcliffe actually argues for an equal share of both fire arms and longbows. He says that while firearms have many different uses, they are most excellent in defense of a town.\textsuperscript{217} Where they fall short is in the open field but that is where he suggests the longbow can pick up the slack, stating that in a volley, “twelve arrows shall fall before one boulet.”\textsuperscript{218}

Interestingly, the only “armchair” theorist to be included in this work, Thomas Digges, can be considered in this third group. Digges’ work, \textit{An arithmeticall militare treatise, named Stratioticos}, is different from all the other works examined here and he, it seems, knows this fact very well. As we know, Thomas Digges, even by his own account, is not a practiced soldier but rather one of his contemporaries’ dreaded armchair theorists. He is obviously aware of the criticism this would bring his way as he justifies his writing right away in his preface to the readers. He says that he has been told that much of what he has to say was only “pretie devises” and that if he had actually seen any service (in this case on the seas) he would have seen all his “inventions” proven to be “meere toyes”.\textsuperscript{219} To quiet these naysayers, Digges says he spent a few weeks in military service on the seas and, through many experiments, “found, and those verie Masters, themselves could not but confesse, the Experience did

\textsuperscript{217} Ibid., 189.
\textsuperscript{218} Ibid., 190.
\textsuperscript{219} Thomas Digges, \textit{An arithmeticall militare treatise, named Stratioticos compendiously teaching the science of numerbers, as well in fractions as integers, and so much of the rules and aequations algebraical and arte of numbers cossical, as are requisite for the profession of a soldiour. Together with the moderne militare discipline, offices, lawes and dueties in every wel governed campe and armie to be obeserved: long since atte[m]pted by Leonard Digges Gentleman, augmented, digested, and lately finished, by Thomas Digges, his sonne}, (London: Printed by Henrie Bynneman, 1579), iii.
no lesse plainely discover the Errours of their Rules, than my Demonstrations.”

In other words, he feels that he has successfully proved not only to himself but to his contemporaries that his mathematical equations on military science could prove just as effective as actual experience at finding shortcomings in military practice. This is still a fairly large statement and so he concludes:

These things considered of the Founders of the most honourable Kingdomes and Monarchyes of the Worlde, did cause them by all means to embrace this Arte, and together with Artes Civill, to trayne theyr Subjects in this Science Militare, as hereafter more particularly I shall have cause to declare, having in this discourse no farther relied upon the Discipline of the Antiquitie, than by Reason, Example, and Authoritie of the most famous Generals and Souldyoures of thys Age in Christendome, I have founde necessarie to dissent from such brute customes as the Barbarous Gothes. &c. lefte us, and our delicious ydle ignoraunce hathe still nourished among us, embracing all such Moderne Ordinances and usances, as are not quite repugnante to all good Discipline, and by no means to be allowed or tolerated.  

Digges is saying that the “Founders of the most honourable Kingdomes and Monarchyes of the Worlde,” i.e. the ancients, understood the soldiers’ sacrifice of body and mind to preserve peace, honour their Prince, and love their God, and so trained their soldiers in “this Science Militare” – the archetypal classical military-dominated culture. Then he says he decided to look at the generals and soldiers of his own day and that upon doing so found it necessary to “dissent from such brute customes,” including the adoration of firearms, for the practices of antiquity.

Having sufficiently dealt with his critics, Digges is prepared to move on to his treatise. His first two books are primarily mathematical and arithmetical formulas,

\[\text{\cite{220 ibid., iv.}}\]
\[\text{\cite{221 ibid., a.i – a.ii}}\]
equations, and examples, but his third book is more important here. References to the discipline, arms, and armour of the Romans are scattered throughout this third book, including, on the first few pages alone, the use of the Roman shield and short sword, Roman discipline, and a good Roman distaste for excess.\textsuperscript{222} But perhaps the most telling aspect of this work is Digges’ inclusion of the Roman equivalent of the offices of his own day. To clarify, Digges, as did Rich and Styward, goes to painstaking lengths to include every office and officer from the common soldier, to the ensign bearer, to the muster masters. What Digges does, however, is end each section noting whether the office currently in question existed in the Roman Empire, how it operated if it did, and how it compared to the contemporary equivalent. This is very telling of Digges’ faith in the Romans and his belief that modern soldiers need always keep in mind the proper ways of the Romans. Furthermore, his chapter on generals is a multiple-page love-letter to the learned generals of antiquity, including Julius Caesar, Fabius Maximus, Octavian Augustus, Themistocles, and Sulla.\textsuperscript{223}

Despite his lack of experience in the field, however, Digges is still not simply content to recommend practice based on what he has learned from the ancients. This is evident in his advocacy of lessons learnt on the continent, including the usefulness of shot: “The shot, having their convenient lanes continually during the fight to discharge their peces, which shall make an incredible spoyle of the Enimie,”\textsuperscript{224} and the outdated style of ancient fortifications: “The force of Ordinance being suche, as the Fortification

\textsuperscript{222} Ibid., 81 – 83.
\textsuperscript{223} Ibid., 139.
\textsuperscript{224} Ibid., 103.
of Townes in these days is cleane contrarie to that of the Antiquitie, and Romane Praecedents therein can nothing pleasure us.” Digges’ appreciation of the old has been well demonstrated but is cemented by his appreciation of the shield and short sword to draw sufficient conclusion to battle: “But above all other for a day of Battel the old Romane Shield, and short sharp pointed Sword, which to execute in a throng of men exceedeth Halbert, blacke Bill, and all other.” Digges, then, is one of the best examples of this third group of military authors, as, despite his inactivity in the field, he produces works that are not only relevant to the developments of the continent, but that also speak to the incorporation of old and new that was so typical of the practiced military soldiers of his day.

Finally, the example of Sir James Turner and his *Pallas Armata, Military Essayes of the Ancient Grecian, Roman, and Modern Art of War*, published in 1683, must be included to demonstrate the pervasiveness of the arguments of this grouping of contemporaries. Turner’s *Pallas Armata* is a vast work covering all aspects of military life and culture in the three spheres mentioned in his title. As were most of our authors, Turner was a practicing soldier; in fact he refers to himself as a soldier of fortune, and, again like most of these authors, he believed the key to a complete soldier was knowledge. In Turner’s own words:

> Remember it is not your Native Courage and Valour (though that be an essential part)...that will serve your turn; it is knowledge in Martial affairs that you are to learn; and though the Art of War be a Practical one, yet the Theory is so needful, that without it you may be Common Souldiers good enough, but not good Commanders; you are to know

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225 Ibid., 117.
226 Ibid., 82.
more than you daily see; for it is a sign of a very mean Officer, when he tells you he likes not such a thing, because he never saw it before.\textsuperscript{227}

It is obvious Turner felt that, while soldiering was a very practical art, in order to be a complete soldier one had to be well-read on military theory as well as have attained some practical knowledge in the field. Furthermore, Turner knows the source to tap in order to find military knowledge – the ancients: “In it I give you few, or rather no rules of my own, I am not so vain; but I go very far back to search for them in all the remains of Antiquity.”\textsuperscript{228} Furthermore, Turner’s choice to include full books on the Grecian and Roman arts of war in his work in itself signifies his interest and respect for the military commanders of antiquity. However, Turner is not afraid to break away from the practices of old in order to incorporate the necessities of the modern battlefield.

Turner agrees with traditionalists and continentalists alike in his criticism of “Speculative Soulsiers.”\textsuperscript{229} He gives Machiavelli and Justus Lipsius as two examples of such men, both of whom are revered for their military works and for their respect of the ancients. While Turner brings up Machiavelli here and there to illustrate a point, he devotes an entire chapter of Book Three to Justus Lipsius and the problem of the speculative soldier. In some of the best-written paragraphs of his whole work, Turner describes the problem of being a speculative or a fickle soldier:

\begin{quote}
It is one of the Curses that follow’d Adam’s fall, and I think was inherent in him before his fall, that as he was not, so none of his Posterity can be content with his present condition. The longing
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{228} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{229} Ibid., 353.
desire we have to enjoy that we want, robs us of the content we may have of what we possess...But to come nearer our purpose, few Souldiers are satisfied with their own Countrey Militia; for if they have been abroad in the World, at their return home, they cry up the Arms, Art, and the Discipline of Foreigners; nor can they find any thing at home can please them. And though their occasions have never invited them to take a view of strange places, yet their Books afford them matter enough, to prefer those Arms, those Exercises, those Guards, those Figures of Battels, that Discipline of War they never saw, to all those they may daily see.  

In other words, despite being a soldier of fortune himself, Turner disagrees with men who go abroad to fight in foreign wars, and come home with a complete disregard for the military practices at home; worse still are those who, “though their occasions have never invited them to take a view of strange places,” critique the military practices of their own country based on what they are reading in books. So, while Turner has a healthy respect for foreign and ancient ideas of armament, strategy, tactics, and fortification construction, he is not so quick to disregard the practices of his own day.

Like the authors we have seen at the end of the sixteenth century, Turner includes vast amounts of information on strategy, tactics, and logistics, and he attempts to blend the lessons of antiquity with the reality of his present. More precisely, he takes what he can from the ancient and foreign models of warfare and, rather than blindly recommending them simply because they are either ancient or foreign, he incorporates them into the *Pallas Armata* only if they correspond with the realities and abilities of the English situation. This tendency is demonstrated in Turner’s writings on many aspects of war. For example, as was discussed at great length earlier, fortification construction was an important and hotly-debated subject both on the continent and in

\[230\] Ibid.
England. To this trend, Turner is no exception. Chapter twenty-five of Book Three of *Pallas Armata* is devoted entirely to all things fortification and it is here that Turner discusses the money, men, and materiel needed to properly defend a town. He concludes this chapter by asking whether all places to be garrisoned with men should be fortified “*a-la-Modern*, that is, according to the Modern Arts of Fortification” or “*a l’antique*, or the ancient manner.”

Turner’s answer to this question is a compromise on both styles of fortification construction. He argues that it is wrong to immediately dispel the works of old for the new trends on the continent. He states that in his experience, and that of other “judicious persons, who have observ’d the practice of our Modern Wars in *Europe* these sixty years by-past,,” it is the ancient fortifications which remained impregnable while “other places of great importance, fortified with all the new inventions of Art, have either suddenly been taken by force, or soon brought to surrender on Articles.”

So Turner recommends a little of both:

> I say...That a Town which hath a strong Stone Wall...with Towers at a convenient distance one from another, with dry and deep ditches; a good and firm Counterscarp, without any Out-works...this Town, defended by a resolute and indifferently well experienced Govenour, seconded by stout and valiant Souldiers and Burgesses , though not very numerous, may make as good and as long, if not a stouter and longer resistance, than a Town fortified *a-la-moderne*.

In other words, while Turner is a proponent of the high, towered walls of ancient and medieval fortifications, he does not completely neglect the ditches and counterscarps.
that were essential to the *trace italienne* and the angled bastions of the sixteenth century.

Being a good Englishman, Turner also takes a portion of chapter five of Book three, entitled “Of Offensive Arms or Weapons, used by the Infantry of Several Nations,” to make an argument for the reintroduction of the weapon so aggressively rallied for by Smythe and Edmundes, the longbow. As discussed earlier, bows had been almost entirely phased out of early modern European armies by the beginning of the seventeenth century and were replaced by firearms. Turner disagrees with this development, stating that “The Bow is now in *Europe* useless, and why I cannot tell, since it is certain enough, Arrows would do more mischief now, than formerly they did.”\(^{234}\) He bases his assertion on the fact that neither men nor horses employ the same armor today as they had when the bow was more in vogue, that arrows are very effective at spooking the horses on the field who will in turn further disrupt the organization of the rest of the troops, that an archer can maintain a much higher rate of fire than a musketeer, and finally that archers have an advantage over musketeers in volley fire, for archers deep in the ranks can fire upward over their leaders heads while musketeers have to fire one rank after another; and even this can only be achieved through complicated procedures that are seldom practiced.\(^{235}\) Turner then argues that as much as half, or at the very least a third, of any well-prepared army’s light-armored

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\(^{234}\) *Ibid.*

\(^{235}\) *Ibid.*
troops should be archers.\textsuperscript{236} These arguments are much in the same vein of Smythe and contrary to those of Barwick.

Turner does agree with both the ancients and the continentalists exclusively on many different subjects. Concerning armor, he sees no reason why the armies of his day were not armored from head to toe in the fashion of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Upon looking at examples of the amount of ground a Roman legion could cover in one day being so burdened by immense amounts of materiel, least of which was their armor, Turner states: “we must either blame our selves for not imitating them, or look upon most of their stories as pure Fables.”\textsuperscript{237} Concerning the levy of soldiers, Turner again recommends the practices of the ancient Greeks and Romans stating that the best army is comprised of native sons furthermore divided into infantry pulled from the countryside and cavalrymen who are of “an honest birth.”\textsuperscript{238} What we must realize, however, is that Turner is a man actively engaging in the debates over military theory and not simply reiterating what he either hears or reads from his contemporaries. Turner is the perfect embodiment of the English military theorist who runs the middle ground, praising neither the ancient nor the modern schools of war in their totality, but rather demonstrating an understanding of each, and further, showing how to incorporate successfully the military ideal easily attained on paper into the actual battlefield dominated by the constraints of reality.

\textsuperscript{236} Ibid., 174.  
\textsuperscript{237} Ibid., 168.  
\textsuperscript{238} Ibid., 166.
Conclusions

To group these authors into these three artificial categories is to ignore many of the subtleties that set them apart from one another. Nevertheless, grouping them in this way is helpful in addressing one of the fundamental questions this thesis set out to answer: Given the new appreciation by historians of the special circumstances of the English military situation, do English military theorists deserve their reputation for backwardness? As recently as 1995, David Eltis considered England’s lack of direct imitation of the continent as a sign that the English “lagged behind” the rest of Europe on military matters. However, as many historians have since argued, the English faced very different challenges to those of the continent. Simply because the English did not wholeheartedly adapt, for example, the trace italienne, does not mean they were incapable. In fact, their ability to understand the advantages and disadvantages of the modern art of fortification and further adapt it to their own geographical location and circumstances while on a highly restricted budget, something not shared by their contemporaries on the continent, showcases their firm grasp on continental military theory; or at the very least their involvement in contemporary debates.

A second question that has been addressed is how sixteenth- and seventeenth-century authors adapted the lessons of the continent and antiquity into their theoretical writings. Were they willing to accept lessons from both the continent and antiquity, and what exactly did they learn from either? All these writers, be they the staunch traditionalists, the modern-minded continentalists, or the moderate

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239 Eltis, The Military Revolution, 137.
progressives, drew upon the same fund of ancient and continental military theory. We see in a majority of these works, with the notable exception of the continentalists Humfrey Barwick, Sir Roger Williams, and Barnabe Rich by the end of his career, an acknowledgment of the superiority of the ancient – particularly Roman – art of war. This respect for the ancients was apparent in the call for ancient practices of daily training of regiments and for the exercise of troops through athletic exercises such as running, jumping, and wrestling.\textsuperscript{240} It is also evident in the advocacy of an army recruited from loyal subjects rather than from unfaithful mercenaries.\textsuperscript{241} From ordering troops into smaller regiments to the proper way to encamp an army, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century authors were quick to learn from antiquity.\textsuperscript{242} In many of these postulates, the English theorists shared the same opinions as the continental ones. On matters of training, exercising, arming, and organizing, the continental theorists too agreed that daily exercises and training of lightly armoured, loyal soldiers that could be organized into small, mobile units were best.

But the argument put forward by the proponents of an early modern “English way in warfare” would certainly be subject to challenge had English military writers simply copied the ancients and the continental theorists, showing no awareness of their own special circumstances. So, the final question we have asked is this: Did the English writers demonstrate an awareness of the distinctive features and necessities of warfare in the British isles? The unequivocal answer is: Yes, they did. The sixteenth- and

\textsuperscript{240} See for example: Turner, \textit{Pallas Armata}, 209.
\textsuperscript{241} Sutcliffe, \textit{The Practice, Proceedings, and Lawes of armes}, 70 – 71.
seventeenth-century English military writers did not blindly profess what they had gleaned from reading their history books and their contemporary continental works on military theory. Recall, for example, Sir Clement Edmundes who, while championing the Roman arms, armour, and organization as the most effective in history, noted that the defensive, heavily armed Roman style of warfare needed to be adapted to fit the battlefields of his day, and preferred instead to arm his men lightly to facilitate movement in the bogs and woods of Ireland. Or note Sir John Smythe, who rightly recognized the fault of putting the same amount of trust in a sconce made of dry English soil as one would in a sconce made of the easily packed, wet soil of the Low Countries. We need hardly mention the longbow which is advocated by half the authors in this paper. The affection for the longbow expressed by authors even as far into the seventeenth century as Turner, demonstrates active debate concerning what was considered useful on the continent as opposed to what was deemed useful at home in England. Whether or not these authors were right to tout the longbow as being every bit as effective as firearms is irrelevant – it is the fact that the English military theorists were always considering their own circumstances, and their own history (which showed a very effective longbow) that is important. Even amongst the continentalists, this mindset is evident. Consider Sir Roger Williams’ opinion that had the men of antiquity been aware of artillery and its devastating capabilities, they surely would have used it in the same manner as the modern practice of his own day.\footnote{Williams, \textit{A Briefe discourse of Warre}, 36 – 37.}
There is a wide spectrum of opinion among the early modern English theorists discussed in this paper, but together they demonstrate an English military culture that was very active and engaged in the debates of the continent. These works are useful in revealing to the modern day reader not only that England was aware of the kind of warfare and military developments taking place on the continent, but also that its military authors were calling for changes within the English system more or less on similar lines. And Rich, among others, demonstrated that a number of these innovations, attainable or not within the confines of sixteenth-century English reality, were inspired by, or completely derived from, the practices of the classical Greeks and Romans. After all, it was to the ancients that authors such as Smythe, Turner, and Edmundes went to prove and validate many of their theorems.

The final word is thus: there are lessons to be learned on military matters from antiquity and, in fact, in order to be considered a worthy soldier in early-modern England one had to be well versed with military literature right back to Greece and Rome. But the English writers were not so blind as to follow ancient practices without considering the necessities of their own time. The result was a running of the middle ground that was completely unique to early modern England: a mixture of the best the past had to offer with the best the present could teach, but filtered through the unique and very real geographic, economic, and demographic needs of early modern England. English military writers represented a wide spectrum of opinion which could be as dismissive of modern continental practice as it was of ancient precedent. This, however, only serves to illustrate the point made by authors such as Hammer,
Manning, Nolan, and Raymond: the English were very aware of and engaged in the same military debates as their contemporaries on the continent. Given their unique circumstances, however, the result was a theory and practice of warfare that was unique in its own right – an English Art of War.
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