

# Greek Fire, Poison Arrows and Scorpion Bombs



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With the news full of talk about bioterrorism and chemical weapons, Adrienne Mayor's exploration of the origins of biological and unethical warfare is an attention-grabber that follows through with fascinating illustrative episodes. A meticulously researched page-turner, Greek Fire, Poison Arrows & Scorpion Bombs draws extraordinary connections between the mythical worlds of Hercules and the Trojan War, the accounts of Herodotus and Thucydides, and modern warfare.

This is the first book to trace biological and chemical warfare to its ancient roots, and Mayor's thought-provoking findings are riveting. Drawing on sources ancient and modern, Mayor describes ancient recipes for arrow poisons, boobytraps rigged with plague, petroleum-based combustibles, choking gases, and the deployment of dangerous animals and venomous insects. She also explores the ambiguous moral implications inherent in this kind of warfare: Are these nefarious forms of warfare ingenious or cowardly? Admirable or reprehensible?

Science magazine called Mayor's The First Fossil Hunters "rich, spirited, and eminently readable" and Newsday praised her ability to "merge the fields of paleontology, archaeology, and classical literature." Greek Fire, Poison Arrows & Scorpion Bombs

finds similar success merging mythology with modern science and the ethics of warfare.

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