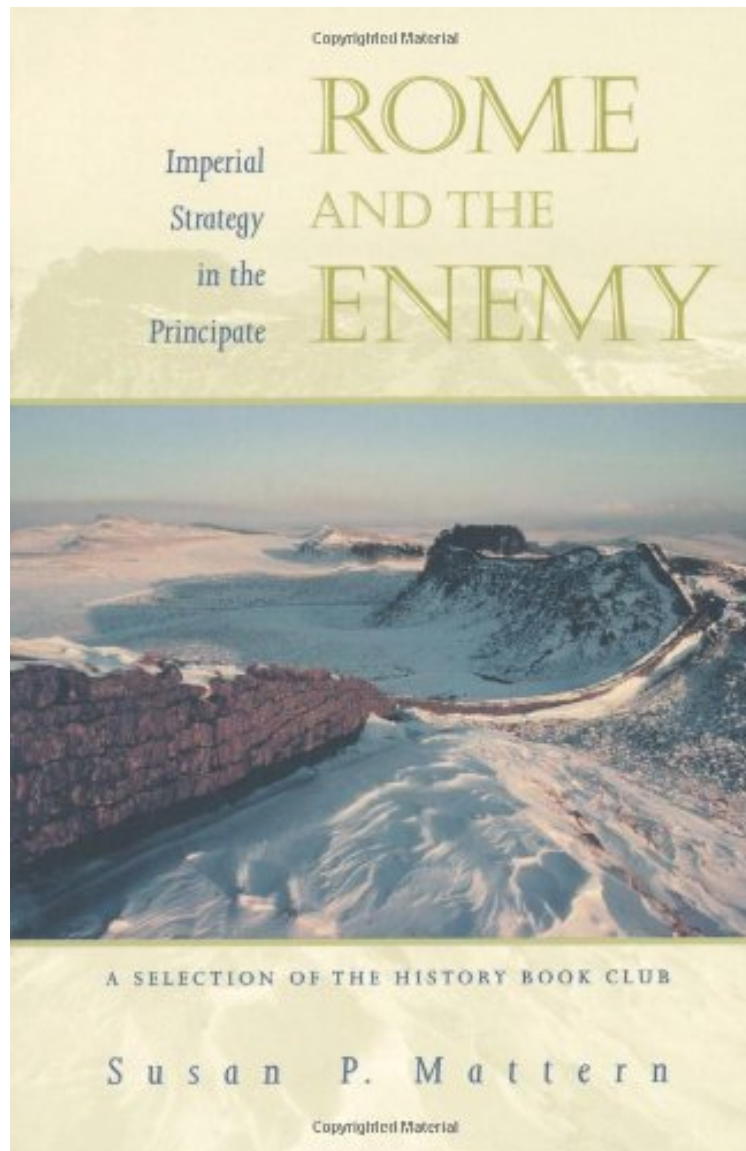


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Rome and the Enemy: Imperial Strategy in the Principate

Von Susan P. Mattern

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KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen2 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Peace Through TerrorVon R. A ForczykSusan Mattern, a professor at the University of Georgia, has written a well-researched analysis of how the Roman Empire's leaders made strategic decisions from 31 BC to 235 AD. Chapters

cover topics from the nature of the decision-making elite, the Roman image of the world around them, strategic limitations, economic resources, and strategic values. Although a bit dry and academic in tone, this work provides a valuable synthesis of the elements that enabled Roman leaders to formulate a strategic policy for the Empire. Roman policy, as Mattern hammers home repeatedly, was not based upon either deterrence or a search for defensible borders. Rather, Roman policy rested upon overawing both external and internal enemies with the ability of the Empire to inflict massive military punishment upon all transgressors. Rome made war to avenge injuries upon the empire in order to maintain the honor of that entity. Failure to avenge a Barbarian attack or to settle disputes with diplomacy was viewed by Roman leaders as not only a sign of weakness, but also an invitation to further enemy aggression. In order to maintain peace, Barbarian arrogance (i.e. disrespect for the power of Rome) had to be kept in line by smashing military defeats, followed by humiliating surrenders. The greater the arrogance of the enemy, the more severe the Roman revenge, ranging from mere defeat to total annihilation; as Mattern wrote, "if a tribe caused too much trouble, the Romans saw no moral or ethical argument against wiping it off the face of the earth". Nor was there a time limit - Roman retribution might not come for years or even decades, but their enemies had to be assured that it would come some day. Roman security rested far more on repeated demonstrations of military prowess and a willingness to pay any price to avenge insults to the Empire, than the size of the army or border defenses. Mattern has very useful chapters detailing the limitations of the Roman Army based on available manpower and the ability of the Empire to extract taxes. Interestingly, the Roman Army during this period amounted to only about 1% of the total population and the military budget is estimated to have been approximately 2.5% of the "Imperial GNP". These statistical points help Mattern to hammer home her points that Roman strategy, as such there was, aimed at achieving a psychological effect upon the enemy rather than achieving security through either quantitative or qualitative superiority. These chapters on the economic underpinnings of the Empire and strategic limitations make this book a valuable addition to any collection of Roman military history. Mattern also makes interesting points on the differences between how Romans made strategic decisions compared with current methods. Amazingly, maps and geographical information were not used in planning military operations. Nor were financial considerations of cost and gained measured; major military resources were devoted to hold onto Britain despite the poor economic resources of the island. Instead, Mattern convincingly claims that it all came down to maintaining the image of the Empire as able and willing to inflict assured retribution on aggressors. Peace for Roman was thus achieved by psychologically terrorizing all challengers into subject inactivity.

0 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. How the Gladiator defied an empire? Von Saadi Alkoutli After I saw Gladiator-the movie, I needed to know how the Romans used to think. How they made this empire last and expand. I was amazed to know that they picked their leaders with certain characteristics. This book talks about it and much more.

Kurzbeschreibung How did the Romans build and maintain one of the most powerful and stable empires in the history of the world? This illuminating book draws on the literature, especially the historiography, composed by the members of the elite who conducted Roman foreign affairs. From this evidence, Susan P. Mattern reevaluates the roots, motivations, and goals of Roman imperial foreign policy especially as that policy related to warfare. In a major reinterpretation of the sources, *Rome and the Enemy* shows that concepts of national honor, fierce competition for status, and revenge drove Roman foreign policy, and though different from the highly rationalizing strategies often attributed to the Romans, dictated patterns of response that remained consistent over centuries. Mattern reconstructs the world view of the Roman decision-makers, the emperors, and the elite from which they drew their advisers. She discusses Roman conceptions of geography, strategy, economics, and the influence of traditional Roman values on the conduct of military campaigns. She shows that these leaders were more strongly influenced by a traditional, stereotyped perception of the enemy and a drive to avenge insults to their national honor than by concepts of defensible borders. In fact, the desire to enforce an image of Roman power was a major policy goal behind many of their most brutal and aggressive campaigns. *Rome and the Enemy* provides a fascinating look into the Roman mind in addition to a compelling reexamination of Roman conceptions of warfare and national honor. The resulting picture creates a new understanding of Rome's long mastery of the Mediterranean world. Pressestimmen "The book is as well written as it is well informed, and historians who are interested in the nature of imperial power, in any period, will find it valuable." --David Potter, "Journal of Interdisciplinary History" Kurzbeschreibung How did the Romans build and maintain one of the most powerful and stable empires in the history of the world? This illuminating book draws on the literature, especially the historiography, composed by the members of the elite who conducted Roman foreign affairs. From this evidence, Susan P. Mattern reevaluates the roots, motivations, and goals of Roman imperial foreign policy especially as that policy related to warfare. In a major reinterpretation of the sources, *Rome and the Enemy* shows that concepts of national honor, fierce competition for status, and revenge drove Roman foreign policy, and though different from the highly rationalizing strategies often attributed to the Romans, dictated patterns of response that remained consistent over centuries. Mattern reconstructs the world view of the Roman decision-makers, the emperors,

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