



Tyrant

Christian Cameron

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Introducing Kineas, Srayanka, and their world—a world that Alexander is busy conquering

A well-born Athenian cavalry officer, Kineas fought shoulder to shoulder with Alexander in his epic battles against the Persian hordes. But when he returns to his native city, he finds not glory but shame—and exile. With nothing to his name but his military skills, Kineas agrees to lead a band of veterans to the city of Olbia, where the Tyrant is offering good money to train the city's elite cavalry. But soon Kineas and his men find they have stumbled into a deadly maze of intrigue and conspiracy as the Tyrant plots to use them as pawns in increasingly complex power games between his own citizens and the dread military might of Macedon. Caught between his duty to the Tyrant, his loyalty to his men, and a forbidden love affair with a charismatic Scythian noblewoman, Kineas must call on all his Athenian guile, his flair on the battlefield, and even—he is convinced—the intervention of the gods, to survive. Includes a glossary.

Tyrant Details

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From Reader Review Tyrant for online ebook

José Miguel says

Christian Cameron sabe mezclar en su justa medida la información rigurosa sobre la época con la acción y aventura que hacen progresar a la historia y enganchar al lector. Nada especial que no encontremos en otras obras similares, una prosa sencilla, pero que cumple con el objetivo, unos personajes interesantes, que podrían estar más desarrollado pero que también llenan con suficiencia la novela, una historia clásica, sin muchas sorpresas y unas batallas muy bien descritas. Todo ello hace que entretenga y te den ganas de leer el resto de las obras de este ciclo.

Tirano: Entretenida

Nota: 6.5

Mr. Matt says

Kineas is an Athenian mercenary back from fighting with Alexander in Asia Minor and Persia. He is hired by the Tyrant of Olbia, a city on the Black Sea. On the surface it looks as if he is to train the city's cavalry to better defend against the Steppe nomads. Instead, Kineas and his companions find themselves webbed in a net of plots where their fate is poised on the edge as they cope with treachery in Olbia and an invasion of a Macedonian army.

This book started out too slowly for my taste. I think this is a trait of the author. I've read a number of his books and more than a few feel this way. Part of this, I think, is the author's dedication to immersion and authenticity. He wants his readers to experience the world of Alexander and the Greeks (or whatever he is writing about). When Kineas treks north out of the Greek lands, across Thrace, over the Danube, and finally makes it to Olbia, he wanted his reader to understand just what an epic trek that was. It was a long, arduous journey filled with danger - not a jaunt down the highway. I like the immersion, but it makes for a longer story - and it's very different from more action oriented historical fiction of Cornwell and Scarrow. It requires a bit more of a commitment from the reader.

The author also included a "what is it all for" moment in the book that I thought was well done. Kineas, Ajax, Philokles, and the other companions are seated around a fire after the younger Olbian's first blooding, and they discuss the meaning of the contest. It was a nice touch, and I don't think he was projecting today's morality on a pre-modern world. I suspect men (and women) of any era who face the horror of savage combat (and it was incredibly savage - hand-to-hand, face-to-face) wonder if it is worth it. It adds to the overall immersion.

Three and a half stars rounded down to three. I like the immersion and realism. The final battle was truly epic. I didn't really care for the mystic side of things - Kineas' dreams and Kam Bacqa (?). I don't want magic in my historical fiction. Mysticism, sure; magic, no. I thought the book crossed a line there. Also, the relationship with the Scythian woman seemed a bit unreal to me.

Stefan says

Tyrant was a surprisingly good historical novel about the ancient world, which was gripping and historically interesting. I have not read much historical fiction set in ancient Greece and so this novel was pleasantly different. The battle sequences were exciting, vivid, and interesting. The author did a good job at weaving tragedy, triumph, happiness, and friendship together with the interesting setting and well-developed characters. A excellent novel, and one that makes me look forward to reading the sequel.

Liviu says

Very entertaining novel set on the Black Sea cca 330 BC; it is less of a "blood and guts" novel than I expected though it has its fair share of battles, but it has intrigue, strange cultures, discussions on the nature and meaning of war and it reads very "classical", no real discordant (ie modern sensibility) notes that are encountered so often in historical fiction today.

Bought and started to read the sequel too and book 3 is an asap when it will be published; I plan to do a full review of the series in early 2010, but for now I have to say it is one of the superior novels in the sub-genre

Alexa Ayana says

Kineas adalah seorang kapten tentara bayaran. Dari luar dia tampak kasar, garang, dan punya mulut sadis. Tapi dia juga punya darah ningrat yang membuatnya cukup luwes menghadapi intrik halus. Satu hal yang membuatku tertarik pada kepribadiannya adalah kemampuannya "menyentuh" tiap manusia yang muncul dalam kehidupannya dan meraih kesetiaan mereka. Interaksi Kineas dan para anggota pasukannya selalu menarik untuk di simak. Interaksinya dengan wakilnya Niceas dan mata-mata Spartanya, caranya menghadapi budaknya yang memberontak Crax, sampai bagaimana dia bisa melihat potensi dan mengangkat derajat si gelandangan Ataelus.

Buku ini mungkin sebagian besar fiksi dengan background sejarah era 333SM. Tapi selain kompleksnya kepribadian hero utama buku ini, aku juga tertarik pada storyline yang mengalir dari petualangan militernya, strategi perang canggih yang Kineas tunjukan, intrik politik, sejarah klasik yang menjadi background kisah ini, dan tak lupa filosofi perang yang di sisipkan dengan cerdas. Adegan-adegan perang di sini sangat detail dan bisa di bayangkan secara nyata.

Aku kurang menyukai beberapa bagian mimpi mistis dan unsur shamanisme di sini. Sisi itu nampak bertolak belakang dengan sisi buku ini yang lebih realistik. Ada bibit romance yang menjanjikan di sini dengan seorang gadis kepala suku liar yang bak putri Amazon, Srayanka. Selain minor di atas, aku sangat menyukai buku ini. Kisah pertama dari seri ini sangat menjanjikan bila dirimu menyukai fiksi militer dengan latar belakang sejarah yang kental.

My rating :
Star : 4.5/5

Katherine ??? says

Kineas adalah prajurit yg hebat dari pasukan Alexander Yang Agung. Krn kecelakaan, dia mengundurkan diri dan menyeberang ke kota Olbia. Disana, Kineas direkrut utk melatih pasukan sang Tiran, penguasa kota tsb. Kineas sukses mengkonsolidasi kekuatan pasukannya dibantu oleh rekan-rekannya yg super cakap dan kompeten. Dan puncaknya Kineas berhasil menghabisi pasukan Makedonia yg dipimpin Zopryon.

Buku ini lumayan bagus dari sisi taktik dan strategi peperangannya. Kita terbawa dlm suasana peperangan pd zaman Hellenistik ini. Kota Olbia juga tampak seperti kota metropolis pd era tsb. Kesusastaan Illiad ataupun Saga Perang Troya, filsuf-filsuf ternama spt Sokrates, Plato dan Aristoteles tampak sangat berpengaruh di buku ini.

Sayangnya, gaya tutur bahasa dlm buku ini sangat puitis tingkat dewa. Banyak kalimat-kalimat terselubung sehingga nyaris saya tidak bisa *intertwine* dan hampir amnesia dgn nama-nama tokoh di buku ini. Suku-suku yg bertebaran di buku ini memang memberi warna tetapi juga menyebabkan kurang fokus utk menitikberatkan ceritanya. Begitu pula soal kasmarannya dgn Srayanka, wanita jagoan yg juga disukai oleh raja. Andai buku ini digambarkan lebih intens ttg jatuh bangunnya Kineas dlm membangun pasukan, pasti akan lebih realistis. Penggambaran yg saya tangkap, walau awalnya Kineas agak kesulitan, saya merasa perjuangan Kineas terlalu agak mulus (tidak ada pengkhianatan atau pemberontakan yg signifikan dlm pasukannya).

Saran saya, jika ingin mencoba buku ini, pastikan Anda menyukai gaya bahasa puitis ala Yunani Kuno ini. Catat baik-baik nama-nama tokoh (lumayan banyak nama tokoh2 si buku ini) dan suku-sukunya. Selamat membaca.

Fenella Miller says

I have just discovered Christian Cameron and can't believe I didn't know about him before this. Tyrant is superbly crafted, perfectly researched with well drawn characters that I really cared about. I read it in two evenings – it's the sort of book you just can't put down even when it's after midnight.

Beorn says

It's all the indication you need of your feelings on a book when you have to repeatedly convince yourself to cast your apathy aside and continue reading.

This is very much a soldiers book, or more specifically an *officers* book. By that, I mean it feels very much written by a former soldier for soldiers and anyone else will just have to toe the line.

Normally this approach can sometimes work, if the characterisation is rich enough to make you see each character as a real human being first and a soldier second, as in say Anthony Riches' books.

In this book however, and from what I've seen of Cameron's work, in his other books too, the emphasis is very much more on the structured regimental aspect of life, often at the cost of the human side.

It's this lack of depth to human side of the characterisation that leaves you apathetic to what happens to any of the characters.

Strangely, a number of the barbarians/slaves seem to talk either like Borat or like some strange Yosemite Sam style prospector....

Another way in which the potential of this book is stifled is the logistical side. The author has a seeming love of using obscure terms that you are just automatically assumed to know. The glossary only serves the bare minimum and doesn't cover the majority of the random terms the author smugly inserts every so often for no reason. On top of which there are no maps or information, beyond the authors note right at the end of the book, on the land in which the main story takes place. In a book where the location & geography are fairly important and there is a key siege at the hub of the story, this is a sad oversight.

I've heard numerous positive things around this series and author from various other lovers of historical fiction, but frankly, his other books will have to seriously up their game for me to try again.

Ben Kane says

I bought this book when it came out in 2008. It's the story of my life that I buy more books than I can read, and it languished in the 'To Be Read' pile for 4 years. More and more people began to tell me how good an author Cameron was, however, so I tackled it in the summer of 2012. I was astonished by how good it was, and devoured it in 3 or 4 days. To say that it's well written is an understatement of the greatest kind.

Cameron is a reenactor, and has therefore spent many an hour, and day, wearing and using the kit of a Greek soldier of the 4th century BC. He's also spent considerable time learning ancient Greek, and reading all the sources that he can lay his hands on. Boy, does it show. Kineas, the main character, reeks of authenticity. So too do the people he encounters: his friends and enemies, and the world that they all inhabit.

Rarely have I been so transported to another place, another world. I lived with Kineas and his comrades for every moment that I read this book. I could not wait to buy the sequel, and over the last 12 months, I have read three of the four others in the series. It's a benefit of not having read them as they were published, I suppose, but I will be sorry to come to the end of *Tyrant: Destroyer Of Cities*. At least I will have the *Long War* series to read then, however!

If you haven't read any of Cameron's books, I suggest that you start now. He stands head and shoulders above most authors out there, and is now one of my favourite writers. If I could award this book more than five stars, I would.

Ruth says

c2008:FWFTB: heroism, Persia, cavalry, mercenaries, Scythian. Extraordinarily well written battle scenes. I felt, at times, that I was watching a movie rather than reading a book. Some really stirring passages and characters and Kineas is now a firm favourite. But, where was a map and a glossary, when I needed it? Not only has this book whetted my appetite for the next one in the series but I have been spurred on to do some further investigation on the period and places of the era (ie 333BC). Even better, Mr Cameron has a connection to Iowa City **Go Hawks** Loved it and highly recommended to the normal crew. FCN: Kineas, Ataelus, Ajax, Philokles, Diodorus. *"Kineas had his breast and back plate fastened, his helmet locked and the hinged cheek pieces down, and was trying to get control of his charger, who was not having any of it."*

Sonic says

Kineas, Ajax, Crax, Diodorus, and Niceas left their kingdom in Athens because they thought that someone from another kingdom poisoned their king. When they arrived they found out who might have poisoned their king. When the kingdom found out that they were from there kingdom who was their enemy. So they were chased out of the kingdom and went to the other kingdom. They headed through the mountains to the man who poisoned their king. It was getting dark so they camped out on a cliff. While sleeping Kineas was screaming in his sleep which almost gave away their position. They found the killer of their king in their own kingdom. It's been about three weeks since they got vengeance for their king. Now they have a new king and everything is back to normal. The kingdom is having more parties than they used to. The new king asked Kineas to go around and put together an army. Kineas wondered way but did not argue. Once they got their army together they had to fight the Persians. The battle was gruesome and intense. After the battle the kingdom was a disaster but the people still partied. Kineas finally found the love of his dreams. Everyone else went on with their life.

Kevin says

I'm a sucker for ancient history, especially around the Mediterranean, so yeah. The author seems to have done some solid research on the Greeks and neighboring cultures of that time, and it shows. I'm a total fanboy for the Greeks but the depiction of the 'barbarian' nomadic tribes was just as interesting and cool, especially the role of women like Srayanka and of shamanic beliefs. Oh yeah, and it was a solid story that held my attention. I think I read all three books of the trilogy one after the other.

Lucinda says

Bloodthirsty, atmospheric and impressive I was astonished by how spectacular Tyrant was.

Christian Cameron's series begins with book one Tyrant, about a well-born officer of the Athenian cavalry called Kineas. Kineas fought shoulder to shoulder with Alexander in his epic battles against the Persian hordes, but when he returns to his native city he soon finds not glory but ignominy. All veterans of the Boy King's campaigns have been sent into exile. With nothing to his name but his military skills, Kineas has no choice but to become a mercenary and soon accepts a commission to soldier for the Tyrant of Olbia (a

wealthy city on the Black Sea). But when he reaches Olbia he finds that he and his tight-knit band of Athenians have stumbled into a deadly maze of intrigue and conspiracy, as the Tyrant plots to use them as a pawn in the increasingly complex power games between his own citizens; the so-called barbarians of the encroaching Scythian plains and the dread military might of Macedon. Caught between his duty to the Tyrant, his loyalty to his men and a forbidden love affair with a charismatic Scythian noblewoman, Kineas must call on all his Athenian guile and his flair on the battlefield, and even - he is convinced - the intervention of the gods, to survive.

Kineas of Athens is a character based loosely on Plutarch's Phocion, with some input from G.T. Griffith's comments on Leosthenes of Athens that makes him so realistic and believable. Raised like any gentleman in Athens, Kineas learned to farm and to ride from a young age, took part in athletics, hunted rabbits with his father's friends, failed to qualify for the Olympics as a boxer, and studied at the Academy first under Plato himself (until 347 BC) and then under his nephew Speusippus. Another main character is Srayanka (Cruel Hands) who is based loosely on a number of artistic and literary depictions of Scythian women in contact with Greek society, most particularly with the character of Medea in Euripides play of that name. She is a war leader and a priestess, two roles that could be combined in Scythian society, and whatever her sexuality, she has chosen to remain a warrior.

This book has to be one of the most thrilling, intensely gripping and exciting reads of its genre, that totally shocked me from the moment that I opened the first page. With the noticable cover leaving me feeling slightly unsure of whether to read this or not, I tentively took the bold step of reading a few pages and never looked back! I lost myself within a bloodthirsty saga full of social hierarchy, intrigues and plotting, epic battle scenes and just a vivid look of what it would have been like at that time. I love Rome and stories that encompass all the might and magnificence of the time, with Christian Cameron as an author at the very top of my list, next to other great writers such as Conn Iggulden or Steven Saylor. I was just so overwhelmed and impressed by this tale that really did think (from reading the blurb and observing the cover) was not for me, so to be proved so wrong and my judgement poor was a treat and a delight. It was about fighting and honor, loyalty and bravery with such remarkable and interesting characters as to make the plot even more intriguing, as you are sent back in time to one of the greatest ages within history. I loved Kineas and his struggle to overcome all the setbacks and difficulties that came his way, whilst remaining loyal to those he trusted and true to those individuals he loved. I am now a huge fan and aficionado of Christian Cameron and very much look forward to reading the other three installments within this magnificent and mighty series, which I urge you to read. It is AMAZING!

Katrin says

This story started interesting and was so throughout. There was not always fighting but still it kept you glued to the book. I liked the characters very much. The thing that I didn't like was in the second part of the book when there I almost too much tactical stuff. I get tired of that quickly and in the end it annoyed me a bit. The story otherwise is very thrilling. I didn't know about the greek mercenaries and how even war heroes were exiled. This was entertaining enough but could have been better even.

Jerome says

This book took me a really long time to get into. It wasn't until about half-way that I really started liking it. Up to that point it was OK; I kept reading more because of the subject matter of a time period that really interests me. In the end, I stuck to it until the end and I'm glad I did. So, I liked it but not enough to give it more than 3 stars.
