



# You Win or You Die: The Ancient World of Game of Thrones

By Ayelet Haimson Lushkov

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If the Middle Ages form the present-day backdrop to the continents of Westeros and Essos, then antiquity is their resonant past. The Known World is haunted by the remnants of distant and powerful civilizations, without whose presence the novels of George R. R. Martin and the ever popular HBO show would lose much of their meaning and appeal.

In this essential sequel to Carolynne Larrington's *Winter is Coming: The Medieval World of Game of Thrones*, Ayelet Haimson Lushkov explores the echoes, from the Summer Islands to Storm's End, of a rich antique history. She discusses, for example, the convergence of ancient Rome and the reach, scope, and might of the Valyrian Freehold. She shows how the wanderings of Tyrion Lannister replay the journeys of Odysseus and Aeneas. She suggests that the War of the Five Kings resembles the War of the Four Emperors (68-69 AD). She also demonstrates just how the Wall and the Wildlings advancing on it connect with Hadrian's bulwark against fierce tribes of Picts. This book reveals the remarkable extent to which the entire Game of Thrones universe is animated by its ancient past.

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#### **About the Author**

Ayelet Haimson Lushkov is an Associate Professor of Classics at the University of Texas at Austin. She has wide interests in Roman history, literature and reception. Her previous books are *Magistracy and the Historiography in the Roman Republic* (2015) and *Reception and the Classics: An Interdisciplinary Approach to the Classical Tradition* (co-edited with W Brockliss, P Chaudhuri and K Wasdin, 2012). She has written on Game of Thrones for The Guardian.

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