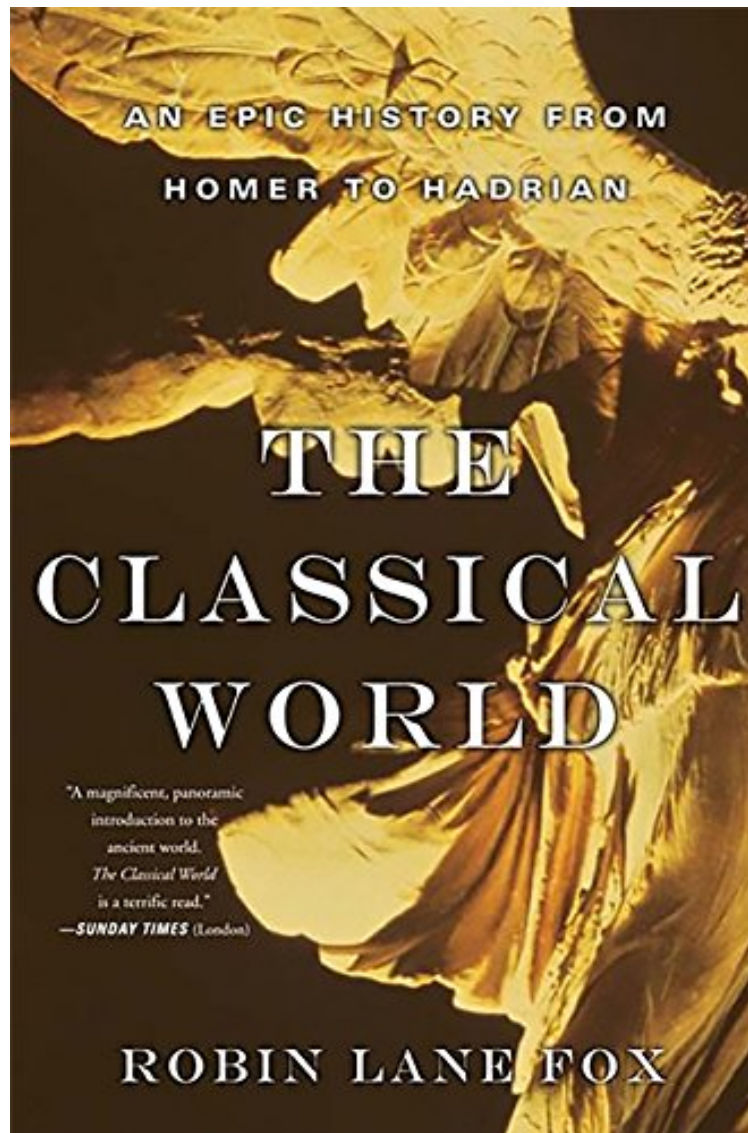


(Download pdf) The Classical World: An Epic History from Homer to Hadrian

## The Classical World: An Epic History from Homer to Hadrian

Robin Lane Fox

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#761060 in Books Robin Lane Fox 2008-04-08 2008-04-08Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.25 x 1.88 x 6.00l, 1.43 #File Name: 0465024971672 pagesThe Classical World An Epic History from Homer to Hadrian | File size: 35.Mb

**Robin Lane Fox : The Classical World: An Epic History from Homer to Hadrian** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Classical World: An Epic History from Homer to Hadrian:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. that is so easy to readBy alan fishmanI am reading it for the second time.....hard to find a single volume on this subject, that is so easy to read, flows, and does not get bogged down in

detail which nobody really remembers.....great read!<sup>2</sup> of 2 people found the following review helpful. For History FansBy Christian FiscoAn interesting and in depth look at ancient/classical history. There is a huge section on Roman history which I found absolutely fascinating!<sup>26</sup> of 28 people found the following review helpful. Sweeping history of the Classical WorldBy Steven PetersonRobin Lane Fox has authored a sweeping history of what he calls "The Classical World," from Homer's Greece to Hadrian's Roman Empire. While a work of such scope means that there cannot be great depth in discussing any point in that era; on the other hand, it provides a bird's eye view of issues, themes, and change over time. The author himself notes that (page xv): "It is a challenge to be asked to write a history of some none hundred years, especially when the evidence is so scattered and diverse, but it is a challenge which I have enjoyed."Some definitional issues. Lane defines "The Classical World" as (page 1) ". . .the world of the ancient Greeks and Romans, some forty lifetimes before our own but still able to challenge us by a humanity shared with ours." Fox ceases his narrative with the reign of the Roman Emperor Hadrian. Why? Lane says (page 2): ". . .'classical literature' ends in his reign. . . ." Even more important Page 2), ". . .is that Hadrian himself was the emperor with the most evident classicizing tastes."First, Fox focuses on three themes across this span of history--freedom, justice, and luxury. He believes that each of these--and the changes that occurred with time--can help explain the sweep of events.Second, he divides the time span into several eras, and treats each separately, although noting how the themes of freedom, justice, and luxury play out in each. "The Archaic Greek World" begins with Homer's Greece and concludes with the great Persian Wars. The next time period is what Fox refers to As "The Classical Greek World." This period runs from the rise of democratic Athens, the Peloponnesian War, Socrates, the rise of Philip of Macedon. The next phase is what he terms "Hellenistic Worlds," beginning with Alexander the Great's incredible success and the development of one of the world's largest empires. This frame runs until the final struggles between Carthage and Rome. Fox then moves on to a discussion of "The Roman Republic." Here, he considers the increase in luxury in Rome, the intrigues among Pompey, Julius Caesar, and Caesar's death. He follows this with a discussion "From Republic to Empire." The chapters in this segment include the rise of Octavian (to Augustus), his conflicts with Mark Antony, the Civil War against the assassins of Caesar, and so on. The last portion of the book, "An Imperial World," traces the post-Augustan period, concluding with Hadrian's rule.Under Hadrian, according to Fox (page 571): ". . .the two worlds of this book, the classical Greek and the Roman, came closely together. Hadrian's love of Greek culture is evident in his patronage, his favours for Greek cities (especially Athens) and his personal romantic life."In a history as large as this, one sacrifices depth for breadth. It is interesting to note Fox's rather dismissive treatment of Julius Caesar and Octavian/Augustus, as compared with more sympathetic treatments of each in the recent biographies by Goldsworthy and Everitt. Also, Everitt's biography of Cicero provides greater depth on that key figure in the period of time when the Republic was moving toward Empire. All in all, this is a well written book and worth looking at by those interested in this slice of history.

The classical civilizations of Greece and Rome once dominated the world, and they continue to fascinate and inspire us. Classical art and architecture, drama and epic, philosophy and politics-these are the foundations of Western civilization. In *The Classical World*, eminent classicist Robin Lane Fox brilliantly chronicles this vast sweep of history from Homer to the reign of Hadrian. From the Peloponnesian War through the creation of Athenian democracy, from the turbulent empire of Alexander the Great to the creation of the Roman Empire and the emergence of Christianity, Fox serves as our witty and trenchant guide. He introduces us to extraordinary heroes and horrific villains, great thinkers and blood-thirsty tyrants. Throughout this vivid tour of two of the greatest civilizations the world has ever known, we remain in the hands of a great master.

From Publishers WeeklyStarred . Framing this history of the classical world as he imagines the second-century Emperor Hadrian (who traveled the classical world and had a "classicizing mind") would have done, this scintillating survey seeks to understand Greek and Roman civilizations on their own terms. Oxford historian Fox (Alexander the Great) structures his study around the ancient concepts of freedom, justice and luxury, as they evolved from Homeric literature onward. The story arranges itself around two poles: democratic Athens, of which, for all its flaws, Fox is an unabashed partisan, and Rome, whose fatally unequal republic declined into the grotesque tyranny of the early empire. This intellectual framework provides an interpretive skeleton for a loosely structured, well-paced narrative history. (One disappointment, a major one for an "epic history," is Fox's sketchy, montage-like treatment of military campaigns.) Into the story the author weaves insightful passages on art, religion, technology, marriage and the prominent role of homosexuality in classical culture, along with set-piece profiles of statesmen and thinkers from Pericles to Plato to Pliny. Fox is a fluent, perceptive color commentator on the pageant of ancient history, while giving readers some idea of where the parade was headed. 71 bw illus.; 10 maps. (Oct.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From BooklistFox, the author of numerous works on classical civilization, is a masterful writer whose elegant but highly readable prose offers an evolving portrait of Greek and Roman culture over a period of roughly 900 years. Although he utilizes a broadly chronological approach, Fox goes well beyond the usual, dreary narrative of battles, dynastic changes, and political conflicts that often characterize

surveys of the period. Instead, Fox focuses on the gradual development and transformation of various cultural aspects of Greek and Roman societies, and he discusses in often fascinating detail topics that are normally given short shrift in general histories. For example, he provides an excellent analysis of the social and political conditions influencing the "overseas" Greek polities, in Sicily, southern Italy, and Ionia. He examines puzzling historical problems such as Hannibal's failure to win the support of Italian client peoples who unexpectedly remained loyal to Rome during the Second Punic War. This is an excellent work of scholarship and literature and will be a valuable addition to ancient-history collections. Jay Freeman Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "A more epic than any toga-clad celluloid effort to date.... [A] brilliant book, where soldiers, poets and orators fight for attention in a story that is never cluttered and always stimulating."