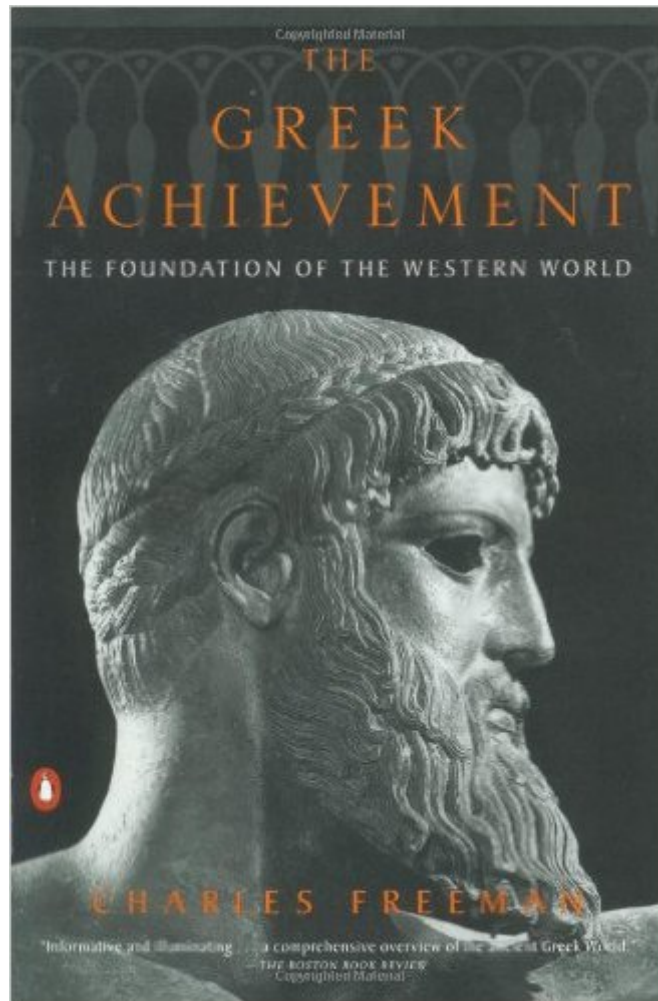


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The Greek Achievement: The Foundation Of The Western World



Synopsis

Charles Freeman's *The Greek Achievement* traces the entire course of ancient Greek history across thousands of years--from the Mycenaean and Minoan civilizations of the Bronze Age through the Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic, and Roman periods. This brilliant account celebrates the incredible range of Greek achievement: the architectural marvels of the Athenian Acropolis; the birth of drama and the timeless tragedies of Aeschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles; Homer's epics; the philosophical revolutions of Plato and Aristotle; and the conquests of Alexander the Great. Lavishly illustrated with photographs and maps, *The Greek Achievement* paints a sweeping panorama of the ancient Greeks' world and provides a rich, contemporary overview of their enduring contribution to world civilization.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Freeman's *The Greek Achievement* is a nice survey of the history of the Greek world from the Mycenaean to the Hellenistic periods. Although it concentrates heavily on the Athenian contribution to history, it does not stop with the end of the classical period as if nothing of importance had happened after the end of the Peloponnesian War. From notes by professional reviewers I had understood that Charles Freeman was a British professor, so I found most unusual his use of translations of Greek and Latin texts by other authors, even of quotes of translations quoted by other secondary sources (p. 189). This left me with a feeling that the author's credentials might be a little weak. He definitely offers little that is new with respect to the interpretation of historic events, art, architecture, etc, but he does offer insight into the history of the West's concept of Greek

achievement. I had already learned of the painted surfaces and crowded display of statuary that we now see as pristine white marble displayed with great care, individually in our museums world wide. What I hadn't quite understood was the degree to which the character of ancient Greek culture, even of the notion of "Greece" and "Greek," had been filtered through the prism of the 19th Century psyche, particularly those of scholar Robert Wood, art historian Johann Winckelmann, and financier and adventurer Heinrich Schliemann. For anyone wanting to find out about the overall events of the period this is a good place to start.

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