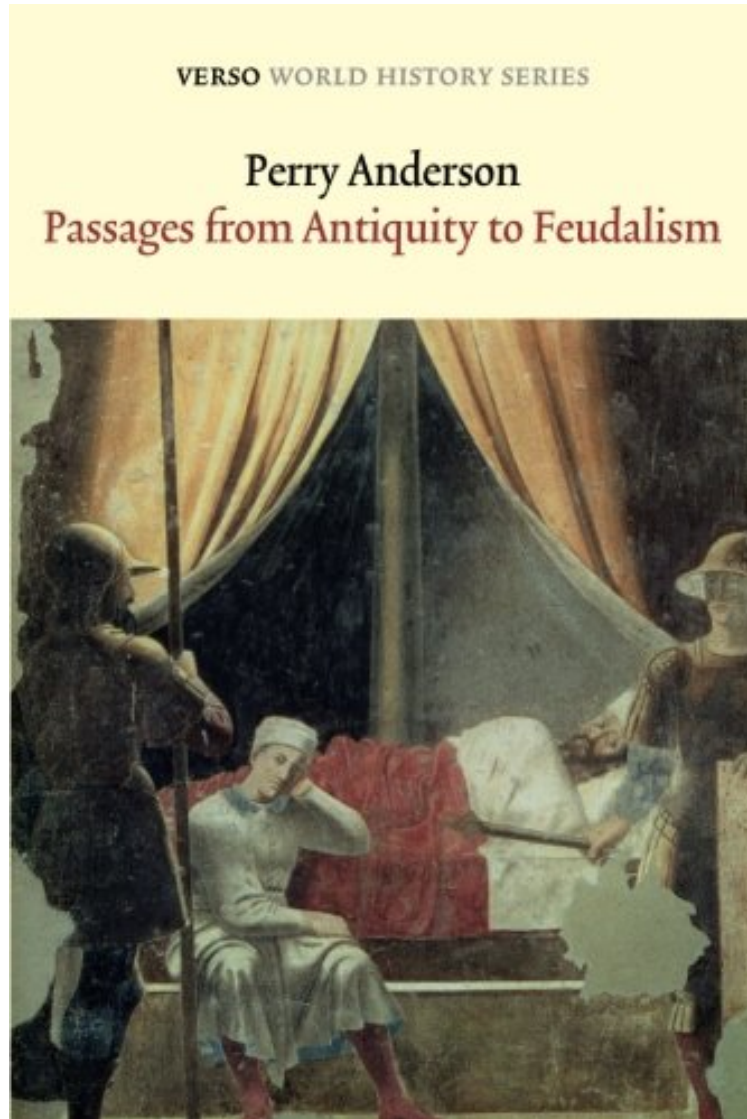


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Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism (Verso World History Series)

Perry Anderson

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Perry Anderson : Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism (Verso World History Series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism (Verso World History Series):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Coherent with his historical materialistic views, the author constructs ...By Ivan Mario BraunCoherent with his historical materialistic views, the author constructs a solid theory about the transition of the mode of production in the Greco-Roman (and especially the Roman) world to feudalism,

whose most typical form appeared (according to Anderson) in Western Europe. Paralleling this description, the author tries to explain why feudal structures evolved in Northern and Eastern Europe, as well as the Balkans differed from their Western European model. Although concise, the book is rich in bibliography and many of the referenced studies are briefly commented by the author. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Full of historical information and very easy to read. By Taimur Rahman Superb book. Full of historical information and very easy to read. 31 of 37 people found the following review helpful. Rethinking ethnocentric historical materialism. By Suckwoo Lee Perry Anderson is a leading editor of 'New Left Review' and well-known Marxist historian. This book is the first volume of a two part work. The second volume is 'Lineage of the Absolutist State' Those two volumes cover the whole history of pre-capitalist Western world from Greco-Roman antiquity to Absolutist monarchies. It's incredible how one research could cover that range of time. Moreover, he maintains his distinctive perspective throughout two volumes. His problem is the same one as Marx and Weber posed: the formation of capitalism. But Anderson's problem is somewhat narrower: why did the capitalism emerge in Europe rather than in more advanced China, India or Islamic world at that time? To answer the question, he traces back to Greco-Roman antiquity. His answer in the first volume is this: it's because the West was formulated through combining antiquity and feudalism. It doesn't seem distinctive at all. But he questioned in the line of Marxist tradition and his answer could have meaning only in that line. his terminology is different from traditional Marxist one. He recasts the conventional definition of antiquity and feudalism: he contends that the antiquity and the Western feudalism had idiosyncratic modes of production. For example, the slavery itself, which was the dominant mode of production in antiquity, could be common in that time. But outside Greco-Roman world, the slavery was not dominant mode of production. Moreover, the Western feudalism was formed through fusing totally different modes of production: a synthesis of Greco-Roman society and German society. So features of Western feudalism are restricted to its own context, not catholic ones. If we treat it as universal, Anderson argues, we can't explain why the capitalism merged only in the West. To prove his proposition, Anderson compares the different paths Western Europe and Eastern Europe followed. Furthermore, he redefines the relationship between superstructure and infrastructure. As Braudel maintained with his jargon, *longue duree*, Anderson asserts that components of superstructure, such as the state, religion, value, law, convention, also affect the mode of production.

Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism is a sustained exercise in historical sociology that shows how the slave-based societies of Ancient Greece and Rome eventually became the feudal societies of the Middle Ages. In the course of this study, Anderson vindicates and refines the explanatory power of historical materialism, while casting a fascinating light on the Ancient world, the Germanic invasions, nomadic society, and the different routes taken to feudalism in Northern, Mediterranean, Eastern and Western Europe. Through this work and its companion volume, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, Anderson presents a Marxist history of Western political development that takes readers from the first stirrings of political consciousness in the classical world to the rise of absolutist monarchies in Europe and the birth of the modern epoch.

A complex, beautifully interwoven account of Europe from the ancient Greeks to modern absolutist monarchies ... exhilarating. Guardian Quite splendid ... A powerful and lucid intelligence. Eric Hobsbawm, *New Statesman* The breathtaking range of conception and the architectural skill with which it has been executed make his work a formidable intellectual achievement. New York of Books About the Author Perry Anderson is the author of, among other books, *Spectrum*, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, *Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism*, *Considerations on Western Marxism*, *English Questions*, *The Origins of Postmodernity*, and *The New Old World*. He teaches history at UCLA and is on the editorial board of *New Left* .