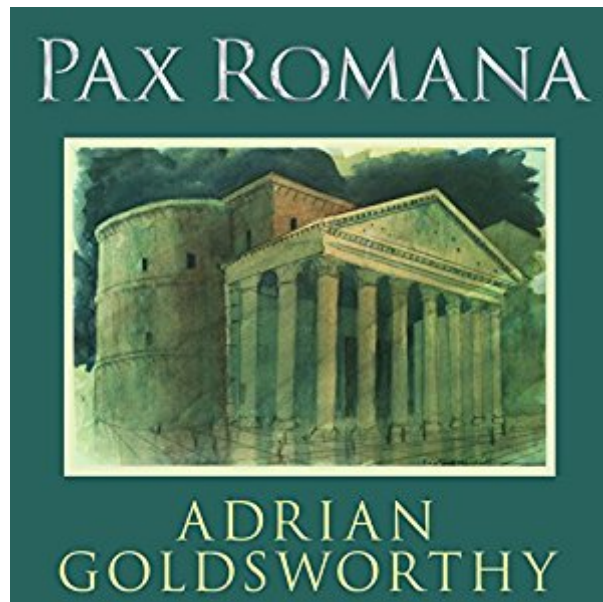


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Pax Romana: War, Peace, And Conquest In The Roman World



Synopsis

Best-selling author Adrian Goldsworthy turns his attention to the Pax Romana, the famous peace and prosperity brought by the Roman Empire at its height in the first and second centuries AD. Yet the Romans were conquerors, imperialists who took by force a vast empire stretching from the Euphrates to the Atlantic coast. Ruthless, Romans won peace not through coexistence but through dominance; millions died and were enslaved during the creation of their empire. Pax Romana examines how the Romans came to control so much of the world and asks whether traditionally favorable images of the Roman peace are true. Goldsworthy vividly recounts the rebellions of the conquered and examines why they broke out, why most failed, and how they became exceedingly rare. He reveals that hostility was just one reaction to the arrival of Rome and that from the outset, conquered peoples collaborated, formed alliances, and joined invaders, causing resistance movements to fade away.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Adrian Goldsworthy's new book, *Pax Romana*, is about the long period of Rome's republican and imperial imposition of its power on other peoples, both near and far from the Eternal City. As with his other books Goldsworthy steers a middle course of scholarship neither embracing the faddish and often ahistorical theories of foolish academics, nor stuck in the facile and unenlightened dicta of what has sometimes passed as proper historical study. *Pax Romana* looks at how Rome dealt with both defeated people and allies and how it enforced peace throughout its world. There were rebellions and wars fought against Rome, and Rome did not win every battle. But it won enough to be successful both at warfare and at the politics of domination.

Mostly, for a long period, these wars were on the periphery of the empire of the time, allowing those within its borders to flourish and prosper. To the Romans, *pax* did not mean the absence of war by itself as a positive good. There were always wars and fighting somewhere. Peace meant the ability of localities to thrive economically without war on their particular doorsteps. But the peace was not absolute; there were rebellions and resistance from time to time, more in some places than others. And there were crimes of violence; banditry, for example, was rife in Judea throughout the Roman period. An interesting aspect of the book is how local leaders dealt with the Romans. Goldsworthy shows that the advent of the Romans was but one factor among many in their calculations, whether these leaders accommodated Roman rule or fought against it. All politics is local, after all.

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