



## The Cartoon History of the Universe II, Volumes 8-13: From the Springtime of China to the Fall of Rome (Pt.2)

By Larry Gonick

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Here's a new installment of the phenomenal bestseller that *Publishers Weekly* selected as one of the twelve graphic books of all time. Spanning ages and continents from Ancient India to Rome and China in A.D. 600, Volume II is hip, funny, and full of info.

B & W illustrations.

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### Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Continuing right where the first book left off, **The Cartoon History of the Universe II** once again combines Gonick's superb cartooning with the lessons of history. Find out what Lynn Johnston, creator of **For Better of Worse**, calls "a gift to those of us who love to laugh and who love to learn." Part II contains volumes 8 to 13, from the Springtime of China to the Fall of Rome (and India, too!).

From Publishers Weekly

Gonick has done it again with a diffuse but deep excavation into early civilizations from ancient China to the Germanic tribes. In some ways, Gonick asks a lot of American readership's occidental training by detailing every dynastic hotshot from the Orient. This also being a fertile time for the development of religious cults, Gonick spends much time on Christ (whom he insists on calling "Jeshua ben Joseph"), Confucius, (not, one might note, Lao Tsu or K'ung fu-tsze), Buddha and the like. Gonick's main focus is not to outline the contributions that allowed their teachings to survive the centuries, but rather to humanize them, and some come across as fanatical seekers simply looking for a following, a good meal, a wicked battle, a girlfriend or a shower. The artist's style is versatile and engaging, and his asides, puns and parenthetical references do much to keep the reader's attention throughout this tome, but that cannot entirely make up for the fact that some of this history is just plain dry. However, aficionados of cartoon blood, backstabbing, sex and history will love this volume, and might find a place for it near their encyclopedias.

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From [Booklist](#)

As Ray Olson noted in his review of the first seven volumes of this cartoon history, Gonick "consistently considers the status of women, lower-class people, and the losers of wars" in one of the "most amusing, provocative surveys of the planet's progress ever made." Typically, Gonick lays down a serious narrative line, then illustrates it with something boffo; he varies his shadings and panel sizes dramatically and often drops in a "footnote" that is a separate, related story. His first seven volumes began with a bang, the big one, and took the reader through the time of Alexander the Great. We pick up Alexander marching to India, where he makes an about-face, thus occasioning Gonick's treatise on India with witty portraits of Hinduism, Buddhism, and the Jain sect, followed by a history of China, concentrating on Confucius and various monarchs and occupying nearly half the book. Then Gonick flashes back, as it were, to the aftermath of Alexander, tracing Rome's rise and fall through 564 A.D., the end of Justinian's reign. The result, in both volumes, is simply a delightful way to be introduced to world history--relaxing and yet often provocative reading for adults but also an excellent primer for children and for poor readers. This new installment ought to circulate heavily and bring renewed demand for the first. *John Mort*

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**Bonnie Fernandez:**

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