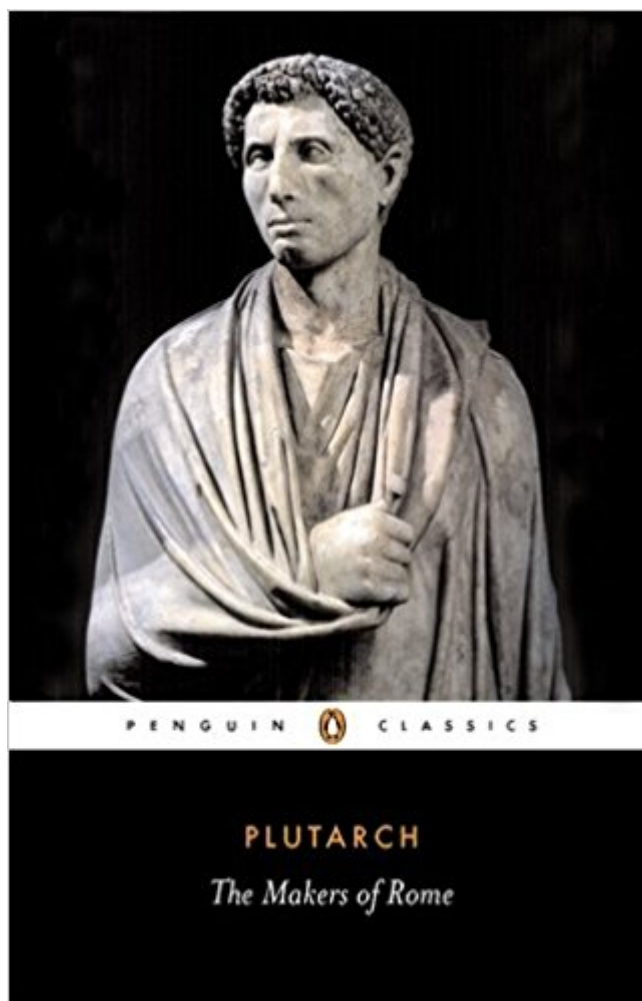


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The Makers Of Rome: Nine Lives (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

Nine biographies that illuminate the careers, personalities and military campaigns of some of Rome's greatest statesmen. The lives of the statesmen featured in this collection span the earliest days of the Republic to the establishment of the Empire. Selected from Plutarch's *Roman Lives*, they include prominent figures who achieved fame for their pivotal roles in Roman history, such as soldierly Marcellus, eloquent Cato and cautious Fabius. Here too are vivid portraits of ambitious, hot-tempered Coriolanus; objective, principled Brutus and open-hearted Mark Anthony, who would later be brought to life by Shakespeare. In recounting the lives of these great leaders, Plutarch also explores the problems of statecraft and power and illustrates the Roman people's genius for political compromise, which led to their mastery of the ancient world. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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Customer Reviews

Plutarch's life spanned the second half of the 1st century AD. He was highly educated in rhetoric and philosophy at Athens but his deep interest in religion led him to Delphi, where he was eventually

appointed a priesthood. He travelled, most crucially to Rome, where he lectured and made friends of considerable influence. He wrote and taught throughout his life. Ian Scott-Kilvert was the director of English Literature at the British Council and the editor of *Writers and their Works*. He has translated three other of Plutarch's works for the Penguin Classics. He died in 1989.

Despite knowing very little about the Roman republic before reading this book I found it very easy to understand roughly the various positions and terms, and it's all very easy to read and both interesting and entertaining. It's pretty clear that Plutarch didn't let facts get in the way of a good story (especially in the case of Mark Antony) but there are plenty of footnotes throughout the book and an appendix specifically related to the historical facts of the life of Mark Antony. It's left me keen to read more of Plutarch's *Lives*. One warning though, the Kindle edition of this book is just appallingly edited. It's full of OCR and formatting errors and doesn't appear to have been so much as proofread, so I'd recommend a print version. Also, I don't know why it's called "Makers of Rome", the title doesn't fit at all.

As it often seems is the case in Kindle editions, there are a lot of spelling mistakes. Sometimes the mistakes are minor and only require a brief pause from the reader to determine what the correct word is. At other times there are only one or two letters in the word that actually belong there and the reader will need to source the passage elsewhere for it to make sense. When writing this review I opened to page 135 and within the 4 preceding pages, I was easily able to find 3 examples. They were 'coidd' instead of 'could' on page 135, 'hps' instead of 'lips' on page 133, and 'prompdy' instead of 'promptly' on page 131. Spelling mistakes amongst a text that already has so many scarcely used words only succeeds to compound the difficulties a reader may have during study. I have since found a store to buy the print edition, new, for a dollar less. The apparent lack of effort given to proof reading Kindle editions of books before publication is certainly giving me cause to consider print editions in future. This is despite the convenience of digital downloads. I expect more from a publisher who has, what I would expect, are reduced costs in production. Penguin Classics will most likely not be on my digital downloads list in the near future.

Plutarch delves into the leaders in Greece and Rome in the Classical period, and he shows great insight and a firm moral compass. This book includes a good introduction to Plutarch and includes very readable translations of many of his most important essays. Shakespeare lovers will find Plutarch's analysis of Coriolanus, Brutus, and Mark Antony fascinating when compared to

Shakespeare's treatment of them. While Shakespeare followed Plutarch closely in most cases, he also alters characters and historic fact in some cases for dramatic effect. Reading both authors is very useful. I recommend this book highly!

Roman history is interesting and reading the sources is great. The editing of this edition was surprisingly poor making you guess at common words to get the sense of the sentence.

Few ancient biographers and historians have had the impact on our understanding of the ancient world that Plutarch has had. The scope and breadth of his work was astounding. His works spanned almost all of Classical history and provide a great deal of what we know about both ancient Greece and Rome. This book is a collection of biographies of important figures in Roman history, such as Julius Caesar, Mark Anthony, and the like. The work provides a great deal of insight into the general structure of Roman society and politics, as well as a number of other cultural matters. Furthermore I found the translation to be readable and accessible, though not exactly lively. Compared to some of his works on Greek history, however, this work provides a lot less insight into the sort of resources Plutarch had at his disposal as a biographer and historian. This book should be read by anyone studying Roman history.

Numerous typographical and punctuation errors detract from this version. Buy the printed version or find another electronic version.

As a mother of a "tween" and teacher of Western Civ to jr. high aged kids, I think this should be required reading for all public schools. It is the perfect material for asking normative questions. Who cares what we are today; ask them what we *ought* to be!!

Used it for a college class. Very enjoyable.

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