



The Romans

R.H. Barrow

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This is a short Treatise on the most distinctive features of Roman civilization from the founding of Rome until its decline as an empire. It discusses customs, politics, philosophy, religious attitudes and positive law that the Romans bequeathed to the world.

The Romans Details

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Author : R.H. Barrow

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From Reader Review The Romans for online ebook

Stephanie says

DNF

Jamey says

Racist jerk.

Ben says

Reading this book was like being lectured by a stern, unsmiling professor as he jumps from subject to subject within the Roman sphere, touching on history, religion, and culture more broadly. As a brief introduction to the ancient Romans, the book is passable; where the author lost me was in those places where he takes pains to absolve the Romans of any wrongdoing, of any wanton violence or territorial ambition. For Barrow, the Romans simply subdued turbulent tribes when they had no other choice, and then held onto the land so as to ensure peace, nothing more. Likewise in the field of literature, Barrow does a bit of whitewashing to make the Romans seem more self-sufficient and imaginative than they were; for example, when he claims that *The Aeneid* is "independent of Greek influence," he does so evidently ignoring the fact that the whole work is based on a Greek myth and copies many features of Greek epic poetry, down to the very meter of the verse. Hard to take that kind of thing seriously.

This is a quick read, and enjoyable enough for anyone already interested in Roman history (probably unreadable for anyone else), but for its patently skewed vision of the Romans and their place the wider Mediterranean world of 2,000 years ago, I could hardly recommend it.

Michael Moseley says

So many interesting facts about the Romans that make me want to read more about this subject. Rome was first recognised as beginning in 753 BC or with the expulsion of the Kings 510BC. PATRICIAN family with landed roots PLEBEIANS Fugitives from surrounding settlements, "council of plebs". TRIUNES of plebs elected by the council of plebs.

CATO "Greek oratory had nothing to say and many words with which to say it"

"A man should not think it slavery to live according to the constitution; he should think of it rather as his salvation" Aristotle

"A multitude of books distracts the mind; since you cannot read all the books you have, it is enough to have what you can read" Seneca

"In every good man God dwells, though we know not what God." Seneca

Roman stoicism is an attitude to life based on a few fundamental ideas, variously exposed. How am I to discover by intellectual process what is right? Neither trouble nor tribulation distresses the sage. He will depart this world with the consciousness that in independence of spirit he has borne alike its joys and sorrows

and that death holds no terrors. The criticism which the Christians make of the pagan though is that it regards man as sufficient of him self. That the world can be explained by the world. So much of this book I would like to use as a personal philosophy.

Mark Singer says

Poorly organized survey of ancient Rome. The author writes in a condescending tone and there is no bibliography.

Hugo Charles says

Un brevariario sobre la historia política y social de Roma y los romanos, sintetisa de forma muy digerible la larga historia de Roma, al ser escrito hace ya 70 años insiste mucho en los beneficios de la Roma Italica y cuando se expande se "vicia" con otras razas, perfecto para comprender un poco más en uno de las civilizaciones más importantes de la historia.

John somers says

7/20.

David says

Very readable and interesting, but rather light on details. Any book, of course, that tries to condense all of Roman culture (religion, history, art/architecture, daily life, literature) into 200 pages will necessarily touch only on the high points, but still, I learned very little that I didn't already know. (Then again, I am a Latin teacher.) This book would, however, be an excellent addition to a high school Latin 1 course.

May says

This book is a quick overview of Roman history. The problem is how do you jam that much history into 200 pages. Clearly not enough. I think the author would have done better to write a series about each period separately. It felt a little like running a race, even for an overview. It is even so quick that it's hard for the reader to feel like they really got any one or two take aways.

An alternatively manner to organize such a quick writing would be by themes of a period.

Ryan says

An excellent little history book that covers several aspects of Roman history (culture, philosophy, technology, socio-political). Catholics will benefit greatly from reading about the people who had such a tremendous impact on the development of the Church. This is readable but well-written and intelligent: a tough combination.

Andrea Hickman Walker says

This is an interesting introduction to Ancient Rome. It recognises that it cannot cover everything, but highlights the main points in the development and demise of the civilisation. It certainly whet my appetite for more. Unfortunately, while it admits that there were seamier, repellent aspects to Ancient Rome, it mostly glosses over them. I shall have to discover those somewhere else. This book was rather heavy on Roman law and Stoicism, the military and the Senate, but didn't really tell me very much about what life was like for the average Roman on a day-to-day basis through the years, both in the city itself and in the provinces. How did the Roman Catholic religion come to be seen as a different form of Christianity than that of Byzantium or Africa? There are so many questions that this book raises (intentionally or otherwise) that I will have to find more.

Audrey Saltarelli says

I thought it provided a good over view of roman history.
