



# Ancient Romans: Expanding the Classical Tradition (Oxford Profiles)

*Rosalie F. Baker, Charles F. Baker III*

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"As for life, it is a battle and a journey in a strange land."--Emperor Marcus Aurelius

Seeking to control an empire that spread throughout the Mediterranean world and beyond, the ancient Romans developed a distinctive culture in which they adapted many Greek ideas and styles but also created a wealth of new ones. The Roman heritage continues to affect our architecture, government, military, language, laws, and literature.

*Ancient Romans* chronicles the lives and accomplishments of Roman figures whose influence continues to be felt today. We read about Romans from all walks of life, from the rebel gladiator Spartacus to the poets, historians, and playwrights who documented Roman life, to the many emperors (and some of their wives) who governed the empire. In 46 essays, Rosalie and Charles Baker explore the lives of these fascinating personalities, from the most famous Romans to people who are usually overlooked, including:

- \* Juvenal, a master satirist who ridiculed Rome as a haven for crime, free spending, and other social evils
- \* Livia, wife of Rome's first emperor (Augustus), mother of Rome's second (Tiberius), and grandmother of Rome's fourth (Claudius)
- \* Mark Antony, the general and statesman whose life and romance with the Egyptian queen Cleopatra have been re-created throughout history by writers and actors
- \* Virgil, the poet who composed the *Aeneid*, the national epic of Rome
- \* Cicero, the statesman, lawyer, and orator
- \* Nero, who became emperor at age 16 and went on to rebuild Rome after a disastrous fire and to foster peace throughout his empire

The biographies span the years 396 B.C. to A.D. 410. Each includes a handy fact box that lists birth and death dates and the major accomplishments of each person profiled. In addition, abundant illustrations and specially commissioned maps, an appendix chronicling the lives of legendary heroes and heroines of early Rome, a table of Roman emperors and their reigns, a family tree that traces the Julian and Claudian families, a timeline, a glossary of Roman terms, an index of Romans by profession, and suggestions for further reading all add to the usefulness of this exceptional reference. With figures from fields as diverse as literature, politics, the military, and philosophy, *Ancient Romans* provides a comprehensive examination of the origins of modern civilization.

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