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Mary Beard ' s Confronting the Classics is an uneven jumble of essays and book reviews previously published in the Times Literary Supplement, the New York Review of Books and the London Review of Books. It has generated many favorable reviews in various media and been roundly praised by dozens of GR members.

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The book is divided into neat sections covering Ancient Greece, the early days of Rome, the emperors, your average Roman (including slaves) and classical reception (that 's the Asterix bit). So it 's easy to dip in and out of, but anyone who is a newcomer to Classics should beware.

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Synopsis. One of the world's leading historians provides a revolutionary tour of the Ancient World, dusting off the classics for the twenty-first century. Mary Beard, drawing on thirty years of teaching and writing about Greek and Roman history, provides a panoramic portrait of the classical world, a book in which we encounter not only Cleopatra and Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar and Hannibal, but also the common people—the millions of inhabitants of the Roman Empire, the slaves ...

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An internationally recognized historian presents a revealing tour of the ancient world, shedding new light on Greek and Roman history.

Mary Beard is one of the world's best-known classicists - a brilliant academic, with a rare gift for communicating with a wide audience both through her TV presenting and her books. In a series of sparkling essays, she explores our rich classical heritage - from Greek drama to Roman jokes, introducing some larger-than-life characters of classical history, such as Alexander the Great, Nero and Boudicca. She invites you into the places where Greeks and Romans lived and died, from the palace at Knossos to Cleopatra's Alexandria - and reveals the often hidden world of slaves. She takes a fresh look at both scholarly controversies and popular interpretations of the ancient world, from The Golden Bough to Asterix. The fruit of over thirty years in the world of classical scholarship, Confronting the Classics captures the world of antiquity and its modern significance with wit, verve and scholarly expertise.

A National Book Critics Circle Award finalist, this is “ the perfect introduction to classical studies, and deserves to become something of a standard work ” (Observer). Mary Beard, drawing on thirty years of teaching and writing about Greek and Roman history, provides a panoramic portrait of the classical world, a book in which we encounter not only Cleopatra and Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar and Hannibal, but also the common people—the millions of inhabitants of the Roman Empire, the slaves, soldiers, and women. How did they live? Where did they go if their marriage was in trouble or if they were broke? Or, perhaps just as important, how did they clean their teeth? Effortlessly combining the epic with the quotidian, Beard forces us along the way to reexamine so many of the assumptions we held as gospel—not the least of them the perception that the Emperor Caligula was bonkers or Nero a monster. With capacious wit and verve, Beard demonstrates that, far from being carved in marble, the classical world is still very much alive.

Her central themes are the classics, universities and teaching - and much else besides. In this second collection following on from the success of *It's a Don's Life*, Beard ponders whether Gaddafi's home is Roman or not, we share her 'terror of humiliation' as she enters 'hairdresser country' and follow her dilemma as she wanders through the quandary of illegible handwriting on examination papers and 'longing for the next dyslexic' - on whose paper the answers are typed, not handwritten. Praise for *It's a Don's Life* 'Delightful... it has the virtues of brevity, eclecticism and learning worn lightly... if they'd had Mary Beard on their side back then, the Romans would still have their empire' Daily Mail

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From prehistoric Mexico to modern Istanbul, Mary Beard looks beyond the familiar canon of Western imagery to explore the history of art, religion, and humanity. Conceived as a gorgeously illustrated accompaniment to “ How Do We Look ” and “ The Eye of Faith, ” the famed Civilisations shows on PBS, renowned classicist Mary Beard has created this elegant volume on how we have looked at art. Focusing in Part I on the Olmec heads of early Mesoamerica, the colossal statues of the pharaoh Amenhotep III, and the nudes of classical Greece, Beard explores the power, hierarchy, and gender politics of the art of the ancient world, and explains how it came to define the so-called civilized world. In Part II, Beard chronicles some of the most breathtaking religious imagery ever made—whether at Angkor Wat, Ravenna, Venice, or in the art of Jewish and Islamic calligraphers— to show how all religions, ancient and modern, have faced irreconcilable problems in trying to picture the divine. With this classic volume, Beard redefines the Western-and male-centric legacies of Ernst Gombrich and Kenneth Clark.

WINNER OF THE WOLFSON HISTORY PRIZE 2008 'The world's most controversial classicist debunks our movie-style myths about the Roman town with meticulous scholarship and propulsive energy' Laura Silverman, Daily Mail The ruins of Pompeii, buried by an explosion of Vesuvius in 79 CE, offer the best evidence we have of everyday life in the Roman empire. This remarkable book rises to the challenge of making sense of those remains, as well as exploding many myths: the very date of the eruption, probably a few months later than usually thought; or the hygiene of the baths which must have been hotbeds of germs; or the legendary number of brothels, most likely only one; or the massive death count, maybe less than ten per cent of the population. An extraordinary and involving portrait of an ancient town, its life and its continuing re-discovery, by Britain's favourite classicist.

Although Pompeii still does not give up its secrets quite as easily as it may seem, Mary Beard makes sense of the remains. From sex to politics, food to religion, slavery to literacy, she offers us the big picture of the inhabitants of the lost city.

Mary Beard's by now famous blog A Don's Life has been running on the TLS website for nearly three years. In it she has made her name as a wickedly subversive commentator on the world in which we live. Her central themes are the classics, universities and teaching -- and much else besides. What are academics for? Who was the first African Roman emperor? Looting -- ancient and modern. Are modern exams easier? Keep Lesbos for the lesbians. Did St Valentine exist? What made the Romans laugh? That is just a small taste of this selection (and some of the choicer responses) which will inform, occasionally provoke and cannot fail to entertain.

A radical reexamination of the most extraordinary of ancient ceremonies, this book explores the magnificence of the Roman Triumph--but also its darker side, as it prompted the Romans to question as well as celebrate military glory. This richly illustrated work is a testament to the profound importance of the triumph in Roman culture--and for monarchs and generals ever since.

“ Plutarch regularly shows that great leaders transcend their own purely material interests and petty, personal vanities. Noble ideals actually do matter, in government as in life. ” —Michael Dirda, Washington Post Pompey, Caesar, Cicero, Brutus, Antony: the names still resonate across thousands of years. Major figures in the civil wars that brutally ended the Roman republic, their lives pose a question that haunts us still: how to safeguard a republic from the flaws of its leaders. This reader ' s edition of Plutarch delivers a fresh translation of notable clarity, explanatory notes, and ample historical context in the Preface and Introduction.