



On Government (Penguin Classics)

By Marcus Tullius Cicero

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"The creature you have to deal with, Romans, is not just a villainous crook"

Cicero (106-43BC) was a key figure in the Roman Republic and a witness to its dramatic collapse into a dictatorship. The seven works collected here expound his passionate belief in national harmony, fully demonstrating his formidable powers as an orator and writer. Delivered after the assassination of Julius Caesar when Mark Antony looked set to take over Rome, the *Philippics* are a brilliant attack on one-man rule that ultimately cost Cicero his life. In *Against Verres*, he argues for the impeachment of a corrupt provincial governor, yet Cicero's principles were tested in *For Murena* and *For Balbus* when he was forced to defend guilty men in order to maintain political stability. *On the State* and *On Laws* are treatises on the art of government, while the *Brutus* is masterly survey oratory, a Roman Statesman's most important skill.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

An accomplished poet, philosopher, rhetorician, and humorist, Marcus Tullius Cicero (106 BC- 43 BC) was also the greatest forensic orator Rome ever produced. To Cicero, service to the *res publica* (literally, "the public affair") was a Roman citizen's highest duty. At age 26 (in 80 BC), he successfully defended a man prosecuted unjustly by a crony of the bloodthirsty dictator Sulla. In 69 BC, he brought to order the corrupt Sicilian governor Verres. As consul in 63 BC, he put down the Catilinarian conspiracy; later, he was sent into exile for refusing to join the First Triumvirate. Late in life, he led the Senate's gallant but unsuccessful battle against Antony, for which he paid with his life on 7 December 43 BC.

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