CLASSICS LIBRARY · STORY MAP

Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans

Plutarch · *c. AD 100–120 · John Dryden and others, revised by Arthur Hugh Clough*

As geographers, Sosius, crowd into the edges of their maps parts of the world which they do not know about, adding notes in the margin that beyond this lies nothing but sandy deserts, unapproachable bogs, Scythian ice, or a frozen sea—so, in the writing of the Lives, Plutarch comes to Theseus and Romulus. Dryden and others, revised by Arthur Hugh Clough, Project Gutenberg #674. For grades 9–12. A vast book of parallel lives. One map cannot teach them all. Quote the Lives, not only a later summary.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

How should a school read this vast book of Parallel Lives as it opens—to Sosius, with the geographers' unknown edges, and then with Theseus set beside Romulus—without pretending one map taught the whole of Dryden and Clough?

"As geographers, Sosius, crowd into the edges of their maps parts of the world which they do not know about, adding notes"

Theseus, opening address to Sosius

This hosted file is the Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans, in the Dryden translation revised by Arthur Hugh Clough, Project Gutenberg #674. It is vast. Plutarch opens the first pair by speaking to Sosius: as geographers crowd into the edges of their maps parts of the world they do not know about, and note in the margin sandy deserts, unapproachable bogs, Scythian ice, or a frozen sea, so he comes, in the writing of early lives, to what is far off. Theseus seemed to him to resemble Romulus in many particulars. Teach that opening pair, for grades 9–12, and say honestly that one map cannot teach the whole book. Quote this English. Name Dryden and Clough. The Lives are parallels; do not flatten them into a later slogan only.

KEY CHARACTERS

Plutarch
Who writes the Parallel Lives, and opens the first pair by speaking to Sosius of the edges of maps

Sosius
The friend addressed at the opening of Theseus

Theseus, and Romulus
The first pair: a Greek founder set beside a Roman one, as he seemed to resemble him

John Dryden, and Arthur Hugh Clough
The English of this hosted book, and its reviser

HOW TO BEGIN THESE LIVES

> *"As geographers, Sosius, crowd into the edges of their maps parts of the world which they do not know about, adding notes"*
>
> Theseus, to Sosius

> *"Theseus seemed to me to resemble Romulus in many particulars. Both of"*
>
> Theseus and Romulus

Grades 9–12
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01

As Geographers, Sosius

THESEUS, OPENING

As geographers, Sosius, crowd into the edges of their maps parts of the world which they do not know about. The Lives begin with an address, and with a warning about the edges of knowledge.

- Keep "Sosius" and "edges of their maps."
- 9–12.
- Dryden, revised by Clough.
- Quote the Lives, not a later digest.

> *"As geographers, Sosius, crowd into the edges of their maps parts of the world which they do not know about, adding notes"*
>
> Theseus, opening address to Sosius

02

Deserts, Bogs, and Scythian Ice

THESEUS, OPENING

Adding notes in the margin that beyond this lies nothing but sandy deserts full of wild beasts, unapproachable bogs, Scythian ice, or a frozen sea. The unknown is named, not hidden.

- Keep "unapproachable bogs" and "Scythian ice."
- 9–12.
- The early lives stand in that margin, as he says.
- Quote this English.

> *"adding notes in the margin to the effect, that beyond this lies nothing but sandy deserts full of wild beasts, unapproachable bogs, Scythian ice, or a frozen sea, so, in"*
>
> Theseus, opening address to Sosius

03

Theseus, and Romulus

THE FIRST PAIR

Theseus seemed to me to resemble Romulus in many particulars. The book is already a comparison, not a single life only.

- Keep the first pair: Theseus and Romulus.
- 9–12.
- The later lives continue the method; this is the first.
- Do not pretend you have taught Lycurgus, Pericles, and the rest from this map.

> *"Theseus seemed to me to resemble Romulus in many particulars. Both of"*
>
> Theseus, the comparison with Romulus

04

Sprung from the Gods, as Men Said

THESEUS, THE COMPARISON

Both of them, born out of wedlock and of uncertain parentage, had the repute of being sprung from the gods. The first comparison begins with a report, not with a proof.

- Keep "repute of being sprung from the gods." Teach it as report, as he writes it.
- 9–12. Tact.
- Both warriors, he will say; quote that if you teach it.
- A parallel, not a later myth-handbook only.

> *"Both of them, born out of wedlock and of uncertain parentage, had the repute of being sprung from the gods."*
>
> Theseus, the comparison with Romulus

05

Dryden and Clough, a Vast Book

THE EDITION

Project Gutenberg #674 is the Dryden Lives, revised by Arthur Hugh Clough. Name both. The book is vast: many pairs, and a long file. For grades 9–12. Quote the Lives. One map cannot teach them all. Teach the opening pair, and the method of comparison, and send the class into the book.

- Name Dryden and Clough.
- Honesty about length.
- Not a later abridgment if you are in this complete file.
- Courage, law, and example, as particular lives, not as a slogan.

> *"As geographers, Sosius, crowd into the edges of their maps parts of the world which they do not know about, adding notes"*
>
> Theseus, opening address to Sosius

The edges of what can be known

Parallel lives, from the first pair

Theseus beside Romulus

A vast book, honestly scoped

Report, and example, in particular lives

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 9–12

1. The opening address to Sosius: geographers crowd unknown edges of their maps, and note deserts, bogs, Scythian ice, or a frozen sea.
2. The first pair is Theseus and Romulus. The book is parallels; keep the method.
3. Dryden, revised by Clough, PG #674, for grades 9–12. The file is vast; one map cannot teach all the lives.
4. Quote the Lives, not a later summary. Name both Dryden and Clough.

Quotations are verbatim from the John Dryden and others, revised by Arthur Hugh Clough, Project Gutenberg #674, the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/plutarch-lives/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.