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## The Alexiad (Penguin Classics)

*Anna Komnene*

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#341330 in Books Komnene, Anna/ Sewter, E. R. A. (TRN)/ Frankopan, Peter (INT) 2009-09-29 2009-09-29 Original language: Ancient Greek PDF # 1 7.78 x 1.08 x 5.08l, .96 #File Name: 0140455272608 pages Penguin Books | File size: 62.Mb

**Anna Komnene : The Alexiad (Penguin Classics)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Alexiad (Penguin Classics):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The translator does and excellent job and Anna seems quite candid in her writing By L M Pistor The translator does and excellent job and Anna seems quite candid in her writing. 4 of 5

people found the following review helpful. Great History, Tough Read  
By Aaron Giddings I picked up this book after reading the Minimum Wage Historian's write-up of Anna Komnene in *Fearless: Powerful Women of History*. I'm really not sure what I was expecting. If you're a scholar or hugely interested in Byzantine history around the 11th century, then this is a good choice, full of battle facts and city locations. Otherwise, it's pretty slow reading. There are some bits that are interesting insights into the character and views of the author herself (which is rare and interesting, considering when she wrote her history) but unfortunately, most of the book is a very dry recitation of facts.  
5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. A heavy but fascinating read  
By Filip Stuer As 12-century Byzantine histories go, this is a heavy read with its repetitions and religious invocations. And yet it's also fascinating because this history written by Byzantine princess Anna Comnena (born in the purple, as she won't let you forget) provides a unique insight in the history of Byzantium seen from within. They felt they were the Roman Empire, and looked down on Western Europeans ('Franks') for their greed, duplicity and aggression, at best with 'noble savage' clichés that Europeans themselves have since been using for other groups. There are always wars going on, be it with the Turks, the Normans encroaching from Southern Italy or even the Crusaders. From this history, it transpires that many crusaders were just keen to conquer any territory, Byzantine or Saracene. I came away from this book with a deeper understanding of the various nuances of the word 'Byzantine': religiosity bordering on fanaticism, cruel palace intrigues (I lost count keeping track of how many people got their eyes gouged out when they fell out of favour) and shrewd double-timing diplomacy in a turbulent world.

A revised edition of a medieval masterpiece—the first narrative history written by a woman  
Written between 1143 and 1153 by the daughter of Byzantine Emperor Alexios I Komnenos, *The Alexiad* is one of the most popular and revealing primary sources in the vast canon of medieval literature. Princess Anna Komnene, eldest child of the imperial couple, reveals the inner workings of the court, profiles its many extraordinary personages, and offers a firsthand account of immensely significant events such as the First Crusade, as well as its impact on the relationship between eastern and western Christianity. A celebrated triumph of Byzantine letters, this is an unparalleled view of the glorious Constantinople and the medieval world.  
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About the Author  
E. R. A. Sewter was a well-known Byzantine scholar and the editor of *Greece and Rome*. His translation of *The Alexiad* of Anna Komnene is still published in Penguin Classics. He died in 1976.