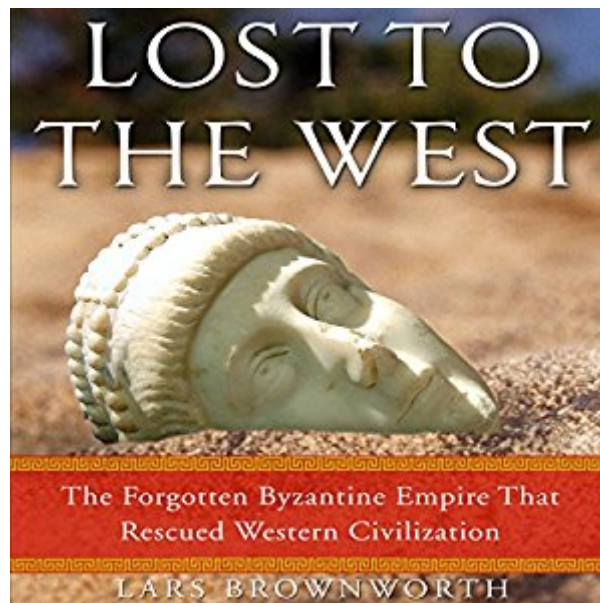




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Lost To The West: The Forgotten Byzantine Empire That Rescued Western Civilization



Synopsis

Filled with unforgettable stories of emperors, generals, and religious patriarchs, as well as fascinating glimpses into the life of the ordinary citizen, *Lost to the West* reveals how much we owe to the Byzantine Empire that was the equal of any in its achievements, appetites, and enduring legacy. For more than a millennium, Byzantium reigned as the glittering seat of Christian civilization. When Europe fell into the Dark Ages, Byzantium held fast against Muslim expansion, keeping Christianity alive. Streams of wealth flowed into Constantinople, making possible unprecedented wonders of art and architecture. And the emperors who ruled Byzantium enacted a saga of political intrigue and conquest as astonishing as anything in recorded history. *Lost to the West* is replete with stories of assassination, mass mutilation and execution, sexual scheming, ruthless grasping for power, and clashing armies that soaked battlefields with the blood of slain warriors numbering in the tens of thousands. From the Hardcover edition. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

While reading this book, there were times when I wanted to learn more about the cultural shifts, the changes in languages and art and philosophy and science of what is called the Byzantine Empire. I am not staying this isn't attended to, but it is glossed over a bit. Still, Brownworth offers a clear explication of the basic political and military struggles that go on during this period and he has a fine eye for the sensational aspects of this period, which I have to admit, I like reading about. Lots of great footnotes. I have read several books on the history of Rome by Anthony Everitt, but this is only

half of the story of the Roman Empire; the other half took place in Constantinople and I have a deeper appreciation and understanding for this now. When I hear people talk about how interesting Game of Thrones is, I can now counter with this idea; any three chapters in this book have more going on than all of the Game of Thrones. History is much more interesting than fiction.

A fast paced and well researched book about a fascinating subject almost never taught in schools these days. When Rome fell, we usually go right into the Dark Ages of Europe, but there was an Eastern half of the Roman Empire that kept on going strong for nearly another millennium. Brownworth covers a huge amount of time in a readable and always interesting fashion. One can tell there are details that the writer is skimming over, but this book manages to cover a complex and intricate subject in an enjoyable format. We encounter everything from plagues to iconoclasts to the tragic aftermath of the Crusades. The book is at its best dealing with the larger than life ruler Justinian and equally strong wife Theodora, who nearly reconquered the Roman Empire, faced down a brewing internal revolt and rewrote the Roman legal code along the way. It is a great story that got lost in the history books but is actually crucial to so much of modern history. Brownworth makes it a world well worth exploring and tells us why this forgotten empire is worth remembering.

The book illustrates the fascinating story of the Byzantine Empire, which existed for eleven centuries after the fall of the western Roman Empire. In fact, the author points out that the inhabitants referred to themselves as Roman for the entire duration of the empire's existence. The empire flourished with robust culture, advanced learning and strong military power, but the story of the Byzantine civilization is unknown, misunderstood or simply ignored by many people. Yet for more than a millennium, Byzantium reigned as the glittering seat of Christian civilization. The author points out that when Europe fell into the Dark Ages, Byzantium held fast against Muslim expansion, keeping Christianity alive. In addition, the emperors who ruled Byzantium enacted a saga of political intrigue and conquest as astonishing as anything in recorded history. The narrative is full of stories of assassination, mass mutilation and execution, sexual scheming, ruthless grasping for power, and bloody battles rivaling anything that Game of Thrones presents!! Reading this book I was especially impressed with the knowledge that the Byzantine Empire was a bulwark against the Arabs, Seljuk's and Ottomans, shielding the rest of Europe as it recovered from the devastation of the dark ages and slowly developed in powerful nations. The prose is simple and straightforward, augmented with excellent maps. Overall, a perceptive, insightful, and balanced book about an underappreciated very important part of history.

Long overdue. We have ignored "Byzantium" for centuries- focusing on the Crusaders and their Moslem opponents. (Could it be because those two groups won?) But for almost a thousand years, Constantinople WAS civilization west of India. Another reason we have studiously ignored it was probably due to the "Great Game" between Britain and Russia. Musn't give any credit to EASTERN Christianity, after all! But we can certainly bowdlerize the ancestors of those who are oil-rich today...At any rate, this should be required reading in our schools. It won't be. But at least you can purchase a copy!

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