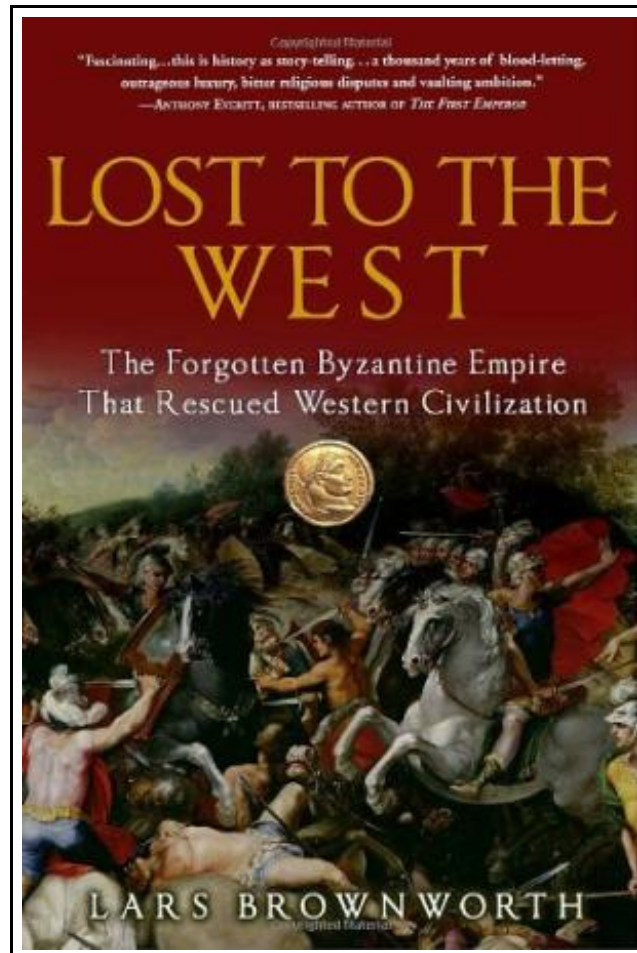


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Random House USA Inc. Paperback / softback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Lost to the West: The Forgotten Byzantine Empire That Rescued Western Civilization, Lars Brownworth, In AD 476 the Roman Empire fell-or rather, its western half did. Its eastern half, which would come to be known as the Byzantine Empire, would endure and often flourish for another eleven centuries. Though its capital would move to Constantinople, its citizens referred to themselves as Roman for the entire duration of the empire's existence. Indeed, so did its neighbors, allies, and enemies: When the Turkish Sultan Mehmet II conquered Constantinople in 1453, he took the title Caesar of Rome, placing himself in a direct line that led back to Augustus. For far too many otherwise historically savvy people today, the story of the Byzantine civilization is something of a void. Yet 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. When literacy all but vanished in the West, Byzantium made primary education available to both sexes. Students debated the merits of Plato and Aristotle and commonly committed the entirety of Homer's Iliad to memory. Streams of wealth flowed into Constantinople, making possible unprecedented wonders of art and architecture, from fabulous jeweled mosaics and other iconography to the great church known as the Hagia Sophia that was a vision of heaven on earth. The dome of the Great Palace stood nearly two hundred feet high and stretched over four acres, and the city's population was more than twenty times that of London's. From Constantine, who founded his eponymous city in the year 330, to Constantine XI, who valiantly fought the empire's final battle more than a thousand years later, the emperors who...

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