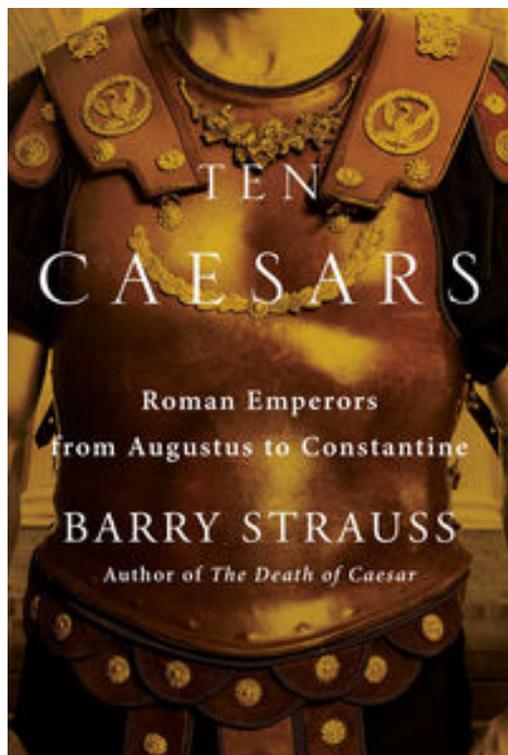


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Bestselling classical historian Barry Strauss tells the story of three and a half centuries of the Roman Empire through the lives of ten of the most important emperors, from Augustus to Constantine.

Barry Strauss's *Ten Caesars* is the story of the Roman Empire from rise to reinvention, from Augustus, who founded the empire, to Constantine, who made it Christian and moved the capital east to Constantinople.

During these centuries Rome gained in splendor and territory, then lost both. The empire reached from modern-day Britain to Iraq, and gradually emperors came not from the old families of the first century but from men born in the provinces, some of whom had never even seen Rome. By the fourth century, the time of Constantine, the Roman Empire had changed so dramatically in geography, ethnicity, religion, and culture that it would have been virtually unrecognizable to Augustus.

In the imperial era Roman women—mothers, wives, mistresses—had substantial influence over the emperors, and Strauss also profiles the most important among them, from Livia, Augustus's wife, to Helena, Constantine's mother. But even women in the imperial family faced limits and the emperors often forced them to marry or divorce for purely political reasons.

Rome's legacy remains today in so many ways, from language, law, and architecture to the seat of the Roman Catholic Church. Strauss examines this enduring heritage through the lives of the men who shaped it: Augustus, Tiberius, Nero, Vespasian, Trajan, Hadrian, Marcus Aurelius, Septimius Severus, Diocletian and Constantine. Over the ages, they learned to maintain the family business—the government of an empire—by adapting when necessary and always persevering no matter the cost. *Ten Caesars* is essential history as well as fascinating biography.

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