



# The Roman Empire from Severus to Constantine

*Patricia Southern*

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The third century of the Roman Empire is a confused and sparsely documented period, punctuated by wars, victorious conquests and ignominious losses, and a recurring cycle of rebellions that saw several Emperors created and eliminated by the Roman armies. In AD 260 the Empire almost collapsed, and yet by the end of the third century the Roman world was brought back together and survived for another two hundred years. In this new edition of *The Roman Empire from Severus to Constantine*, Patricia Southern examines the anarchic era of the soldier Emperors that preceded the crisis of AD 260, and the reigns of underrated and sometimes maligned Emperors such as Gallienus, Probus and Aurelian, whose determination and hard work reunited and re-established the Empire. Their achievements laid the foundations for the absolutist, sacrosanct rule of Diocletian, honed to ruthless perfection by Constantine, whose reign transformed the pagan Empire into a Christian state.

The successes and failures of the rulers of the Roman world of the third century, and the role of the armies and the civilians, are re-assessed in this revised and expanded edition of *The Roman Empire from Severus to Constantine*, which incorporates the latest thinking of modern scholars and has been extended to cover the reign of Constantine and the foundations he laid on which the Christian empire was built. This is a crucial volume for students of this fascinating period in Roman history, and provides invaluable background for anyone interested in the "fall of Rome", the adoption of Christianity, and the establishment of the Byzantine Empire.

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