

ROBERT BRUTON



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Robert is an American author and a former CIA case officer and was primarily assigned to Africa and the former Soviet Union. Robert has a BA in history from the University of St. Thomas and an MA in World History from Norwich University, where he completed his thesis entitled, "The Role of Climate Change in the decline of the Roman Empire." Robert lives in northern Virginia with his wife and six children.



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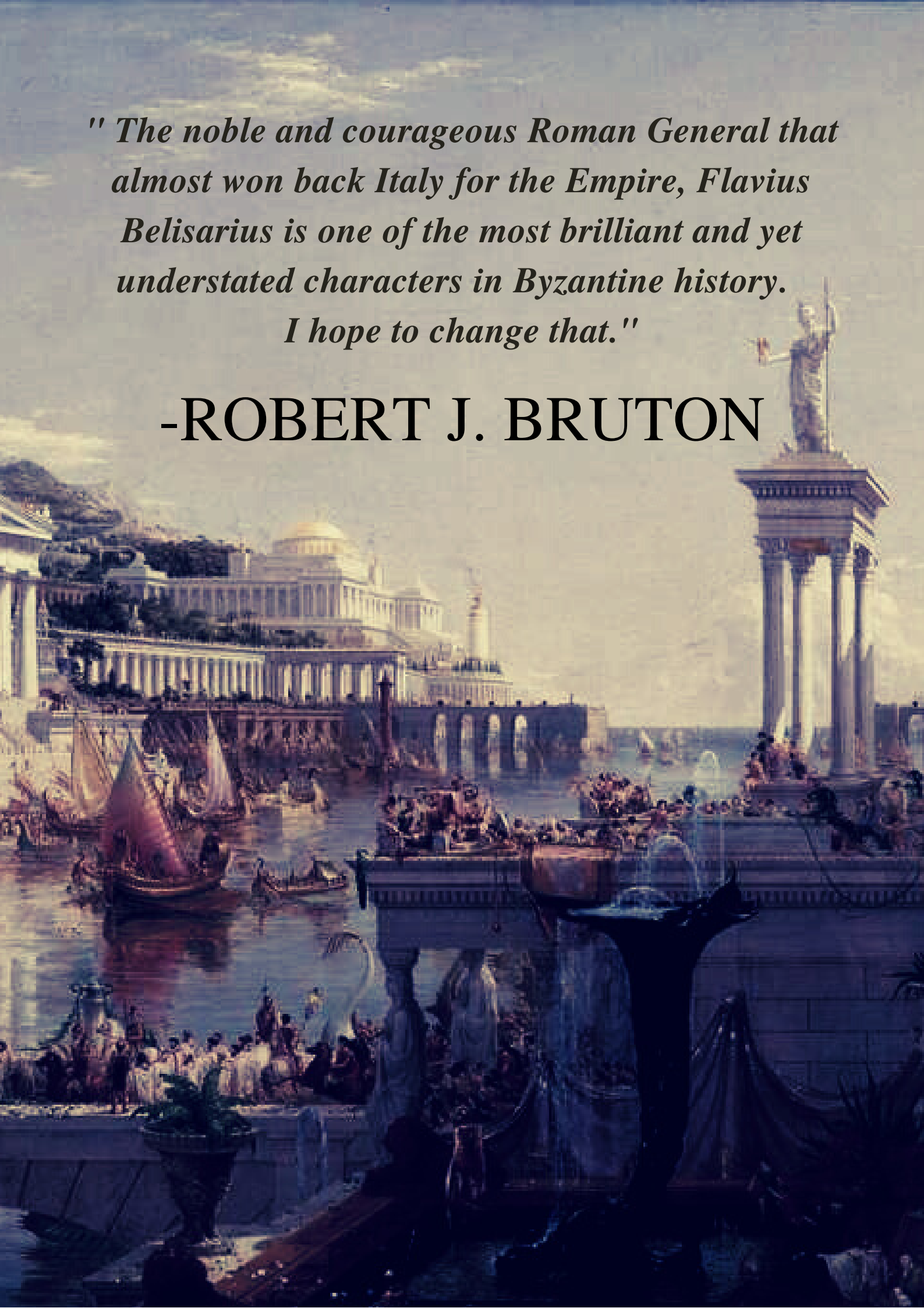
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" The noble and courageous Roman General that almost won back Italy for the Empire, Flavius Belisarius is one of the most brilliant and yet understated characters in Byzantine history. I hope to change that."

-ROBERT J. BRUTON



EMPIRE RESURGENT



"IT WAS AN
ABSOLUTELY
AMAZING AND EPIC
READ. WHAT A
TREAT!"

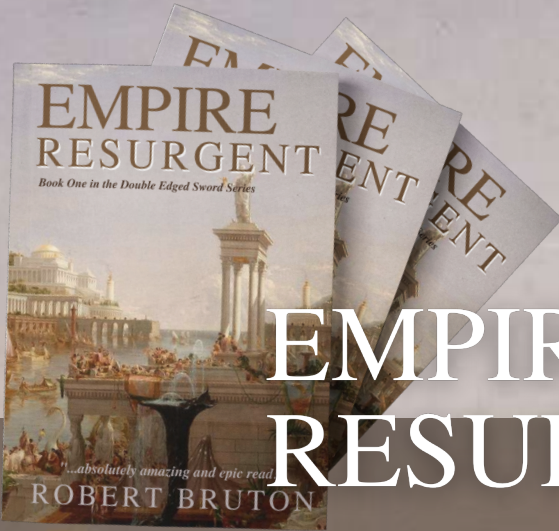


WRITTEN BY
HISTORIAN & INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

ROBERT BRUTON

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EDITOR)

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EMPIRE RESURGENT

It's 532 CE and while the Western Empire has collapsed, the East is thriving under the leadership of Emperor Justinian and his fierce and conniving wife, Theodora.

Belisarius boldly leads the Roman Empire in the East from victory to victory and garners the love of all those around him, or so he thinks. Everything he touches yields to him, except for his beautiful and wandering wife. After he is sent across the known world, from Carthage to Italy to Persia, Belisarius sees the world for what it is and has to come to grips with the reality that he doesn't like: his wife as a serial adulterer, and ruins of what was a majestic Empire. Used to victory, Belisarius must come to grips with his own helplessness. He is fearless in battle, but can he be fearless in love as well?

PURCHASING DETAILS

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Chapter One

The Challenge

They watched the ape-necked Persian giant emerge from the battle line riding a well-muscled chestnut horse. Impatiently, he moved back and forth along the Roman trench, just shy of the archers' range, taunting the Roman general, mocking his reluctance to accept the challenge of a duel.

"That Persian is at it again, General," Commander Pharas said to his old friend Flavius Belisarius. He gave Belisarius a grim but sympathetic look. Belisarius raised his eyebrows.

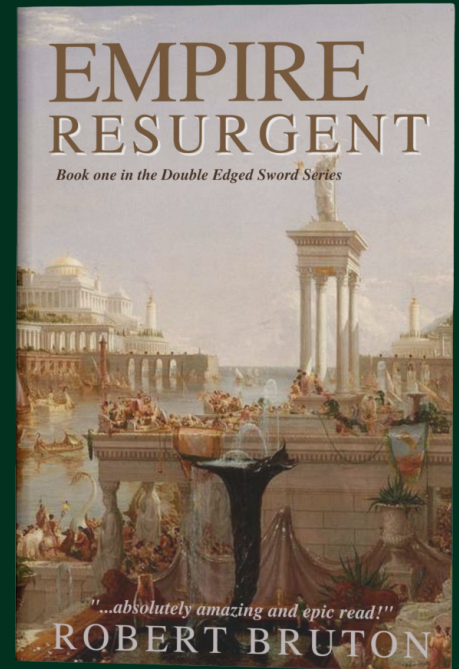
"What now?" He was no longer laughing at the daylong harangue.

"This time he says he is going to cleave your skull and drink your wine from it."

Belisarius sighed and shook his head. "What kind of woman raises a child to talk like that?" He knew that the leader of Persia's Ten-Thousand Immortals had every confidence his army would once again triumph over the Romans, as they had in every battle for the past century. He hunched over in his saddle as a feeling of nausea came over him. A voice in his head suggested he would rather be in the Persian's saddle than his own. He knew that his chances of winning either in individual combat or in battle were slim. He considered the short careers of the commanders before him who had either been killed on the battlefield or else had escaped, only to be disgraced or executed in Constantinople, a veritable graveyard for failed ambitions.

"When are the Persians going to attack, Pharas?"

excerpt



What are they waiting for?"

"They're waiting for you to make the first move."

"We tried that at the battle of Thannuris and ended up falling to pits. We're not doing that again."

"Agreed, but..."

"But what?" Belisarius interrupted before realizing that his impatience was worrying his staff around him. Keep calm and keep your fears to yourself. Three years on the Roman-Persian frontier had accomplished little more than a reduction of the size of his army. He looked around at his men. All eyes were on him, and they could not hide their apprehension as well as he could. "The men and horses have been standing in the hot sun all day," Pharas said coolly. "They're in no condition to fight now." Belisarius nodded his agreement.

The two men looked over the hot and dusty border between the Roman and Persian empires. The formidable fortress of Dara stood behind them, a mile back, protecting their rear. Between the army and Dara, a thousand white tents littered the ground where the Roman army slept at night. A few fires around their camp prepared their evening meal, and the pleasant aroma left Belisarius feeling hungry. On their left and right were hills, too steep and covered with scrub for cavalry to charge over them. In front of them, two miles off, stood an army twice their size. Over them was a sun so hot that his men could not touch their own armor without singeing their skin. Below them was the dry and dusty ground of Roman Mesopotamia, a productive land fed by mountains whose waters flowed slowly into the Euphrates River. A green and pleasant land, Belisarius thought; they were safe—for now. Pharas interrupted his thoughts.

"An absolutely amazing and epic read. I mean what a treat! I was glued to this book!"

- Sophia Petrou,
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"The author's exquisite descriptions and realistic impressions brings the reader on a thrilling journey back in time, in this true and daring telling of a story that is rarely highlighted in historical fiction."

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ROBERT BRUTON

*PUBLISHED HISTORICAL FICTION
AUTHOR & HISTORIAN*

ROBERT BRUTON is a published historical fiction novelist, and best well known for his three-book series, *The Double-Edged Sword*, set in the tumultuous era of Emperor Justinian. As a former CIA operative with a Masters's Degree in World History Robert draws from his experiences within political and military spheres of a professional career in the CIA.



SIGNATURE TOPICS

- ✓ The Justinian Plague, how it is similar to what we have faced in recent years.
- ✓ Climate Change Then & Now: Comparing Our Current situation with bizarre weather of the 6th century.
- ✓ The Role of Climate Change on the Decline of the Roman Empire
- ✓ Writing a Historical Fiction Novel: Process & Art

LET'S WORK TOGETHER!

If you'd like to schedule a speaking engagement for your public school, university or historical association, please contact me:

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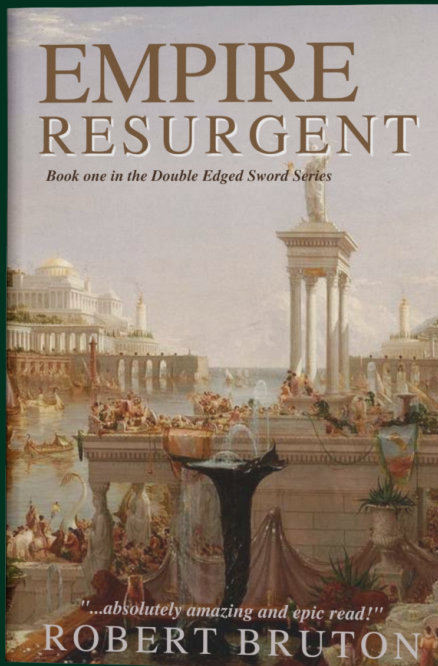
EMPIRE RESURGENT

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During the reign of emperor Justinian, a young rising star, General Belisarius, longs to see the Empire of old revived and believes it can be done through cunning, steel, and soldiers. He proves his worth again and again on the battlefield and gains the love of one of the most beautiful, and promiscuous women in the Empire, Antonina. Belisarius soon learns that war is simple, but managing his wife's wandering eye is another story.

Q&

A



Tell us a little bit about your book:

My book tells the fascinating story of General Flavius Belisarius, one of the great military strategists of the Roman world, and the challenges he faced in trying to reunite the lost Western Empire to the East. Those challenges include enemies with larger armies, climate change, bubonic plague, and a wife whom he adores but whose wandering eye becomes a distraction and source of shame.

What inspired you to write about this particular character and time in history?

Two things: first, the story of Belisarius and Antonina is one of the great love stories of the Roman era, and today, when adultery is often justification for immediate divorce, Belisarius's unconditional love for his wife offers an inspirational challenge. Second, when I finished my Master's thesis on the role of climate change in the decline of the Roman Empire, I wanted to find a way to show this story to people who are concerned about this issue in our times but wouldn't make it through the first chapter of a history book. This novel tells the personal story of the impact from a man whose life ambitions were ruined by cold summers and the world's first pandemic.

What is the most fascinating tidbit that you learned about the Byzantium way of life while you were researching your novel?

"The more societies change, the more they stay the same." I was struck by the fact that while 1500 years of progress separates us from the Romans, the modern world continues to struggle with the very same problems: imperial ambitions of revanchist powers, riots over perceived injustice and inequality, an inability to cope with the challenges of climate change, a pandemic that threatens to destroy our way of life, and an apocalyptic mindset that pervades every new trial.

What was the most difficult part to write in this book?

The most difficult part for me was turning my skill in writing intelligence reports that focuses mostly on objective realities into a skill where you get into the passions of your characters and tell the story from their subjective point of view.

Intelligence tries to see things as they are; novels see things through the lenses of people with blind spots and passions that throw an omniscient point of view out the window.

Who is your favourite character?

Belisarius is George Washington and Jesus all wrapped into one very complex character. He's a military genius who in two campaigns reconquered Roman lands that had been lost for a century but also a compassionate person who would do anything for his troops. He is an anti-Maximus (from *Gladiator*) who, when persecuted by a petty and jealous emperor, does not set out a course for revenge but accepts his fate with grace and inspiring humility.

What's next for you? Are there other books in the series?

I am working on another climate change thriller, but this one is told from the perspective of a Mayan girl in the sixth century whose happy life has been shattered by a volcanic explosion that covers her village in thick ash, destroys their crops, and triggers a megadrought and fires. The leaders decide that the only way to appease the angry weather gods is to use a "ritual technology" that involves human sacrifice. The parents of this young girl must protect her from the horror of what is to come by turning the process into a game.



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