

Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews 1430-1950

By Mark Mazower

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Salonica, located in northern Greece, was long a fascinating crossroads metropolis of different religions and ethnicities, where Egyptian merchants, Spanish Jews, Orthodox Greeks, Sufi dervishes, and Albanian brigands all rubbed shoulders. Tensions sometimes flared, but tolerance largely prevailed until the twentieth century when the Greek army marched in, Muslims were forced out, and the Nazis deported and killed the Jews. As the acclaimed historian Mark Mazower follows the city's inhabitants through plague, invasion, famine, and the disastrous twentieth century, he resurrects a fascinating and vanished world.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly
Starred Review. Situated on the Aegean where two mountain ranges meet, Salonica has a unique geographical location, which promoted the rich confluence of cultures that once characterized the city. Part travelogue, part history and part cultural study, this is a splendid tour of the fortunes and misfortunes of this Balkan city. Drawing on a wealth of archival documents, Mazower (*The Balkans*; *Dark Continent*) weaves a lavish tapestry illustrating the tangled history of Salonica, which began as a Hellenistic urban center in 315 B.C. and flourished through the Middle Ages as a Greek Orthodox city. In 1430, the Ottoman Empire commenced a rule that lasted until 1912. By the end of the 15th century, Salonica had a large influx of Jews who had fled persecution in Spain. Mazower eloquently points out that these "peoples of the Book" largely tolerated and learned from one another, even though rivalry sometimes erupted into street fights, civil wars and power struggles. A series of civil wars in the 19th century returned the city to the Greeks, and the fall of the Ottoman Empire after WWI turned Salonica into a European city. In addition, the impact of the work of 19th-century Christian missionaries, along with the Nazis' removal of Jews, left Salonica bereft of its rich religious pluralism and multiethnic heritage. Mazower's graceful, evocative prose, his deft attention to details and his empathetic presentation of all sides of the story add up to a magnificent tale of this unique city. 32 pages of illus., eight in color; 10 maps.
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From Booklist
The city of Thessaloniki, or Salonica, is a port city in northern Greece that apparently emerged as a polity under the reign of Phillip of Macadon in the fourth century B.C.E. In the Hellenistic and Roman eras, the city became a vibrant, cosmopolitan commercial center sitting astride the trade routes to Africa and Asia. Under the Byzantine Empire, the city was a center of humanistic learning and theological debate, coming under Ottoman control in 1430. Mazower's illuminating and surprising account focuses on the city from the commencement of Ottoman rule to the Nazi occupation. Despite the claims of Greek nationalists, Ottoman rule was relatively benign, as Jews, Christians, and Muslims lived, worked, and often prospered together. When the city reverted to Greek control in 1912, the consensus started to dissolve. Muslims left or were expelled, and resentment against Jews increased. Under the Nazis, Jews, perhaps, 20 percent of the population, were deported en masse to concentration camps. A vivid but ultimately tragic light shed on a vanished urban civilization. *Jay Freeman*
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Review
“Remarkable. . . . Mazower reconstructs a society of dazzling ethnic complexity and exoticism . . . .a thriving port and a crossroads between Europe and Asia.” *—The New York Times*

“An exhaustive, affectionate biography of the city, a deeply researched account that becomes a portrait of the singular, vanished cosmopolitanism of the Ottoman Empire.” *—The Baltimore Sun*

“A masterpiece. . . . A masterly synthesis of cultural, political, economic, intellectual, and social history. . . . A book to bring one to tears.” *—The Boston Globe*

“A history of a fascinating, turbulent city by one of the most distinguished historians of his generationÉMazower has provided a brilliant guide to Salonica’s rich past.”*—The New York Review of*

Books

“Timely, magnificent and sometimes unbearably poignant . . . Brings alive a lost world, one with much to teach contemporary Europe about the nature of identity and nationality.”—*The Nation*

“[A] tremendous book about a city unique not just in Europe, but in the entire history of humanity. . .What [Mazower] does to perfection is to express the historical meaning of Salonica down the generations, authenticating his story with a multitude of contemporary quotations, from the 15th to the 20th century, and scrupulously explaining it all out of his profound scholarly knowledge. ”—Jan Morris, *The Guardian*

"Mark Mazower's new book is a necessary masterpiece; necessary because it fills a gap, and a masterpiece because it fills that gap so well. It is written in bite-sized pieces that make the book a pleasure to read, and, since one cannot resist reading the next section, curiously moreish. It sustained me recently during a long trip to the US, continually delivering small pleasures whenever I had a moment in hand."-—Louis de Bernieres, *Times of London*

"Enthralling new history . . . In a brilliant chapter on popular culture in the interwar years, Mazower shows how the development of a modern urban culture -- in dance, music, art, literature and, most importantly, sex -- began to turn a city of exiles and refugees into a place that could be called home. . . Tragic, hopeful and beautifully written, *Salonica, City of Ghosts* shows how cities, as much as people, can be seduced by the prospect of escaping their own past and remaking themselves in ways unrecognizable to old friends." —Charles King, *Times Literary Supplement*

"[Mazower] sensitively analyses the internal debates and divisions which could be found within all the major communities." —Noel Malcolm, *Sunday Telegraph*

"Masterly . . . draws on many new sources: the diary of a Ukraninian refugee in the 1720s; consuls' despatches; the files of the Jewish Museum of Greece. This is a brilliant and timely reminder that cities have played as important a role as states in the lives of their inhabitants."—Philip Mansel, *The Spectator*

"A brilliant reconstruction of one of Europe's great meeting places between the three monotheistic faiths."—*The Economist*

"Mazower is a formidable historian. Two of his earlier books, *Inside Hitler's Greece* and *The Balkans: A Short History*, rank as definitive works. He has produced a majestic work: the biography of a city, complete with soul and ichor."—Moris Farhi, *The Independent*

"Salonica, City of Ghosts, is a wonderful evocation of the complex, glorious and tragic history of a city, with lessons both positive and negative for our present age. The author, as always, writes with compelling clarity and penetrating eye for detail. If the past is another country, the author allows us to travel there." —Anthony Daniels, "Books of the Year," *Sunday Telegraph*

"This exploration into the soul of a Balkan ciy is both evocative and profound, a masterful addition to Mazower's work." —Jad Adams, *BBC History* (Salonica was their book of the month for October.)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Victoria Schwan:

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The reason? Because this Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews 1430-1950 is an unordinary book that the inside of the book waiting for you to snap the idea but latter it will distress you with the secret the item inside. Reading this book close to it was fantastic author who all write the book in such incredible way makes the content within easier to understand, entertaining technique but still convey the meaning completely. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this any longer or you going to regret it. This amazing book will give you a lot of gains than the other book have such as help improving your skill and your critical thinking technique. So , still want to hesitate having that book? If I were you I will go to the reserve store hurriedly.

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