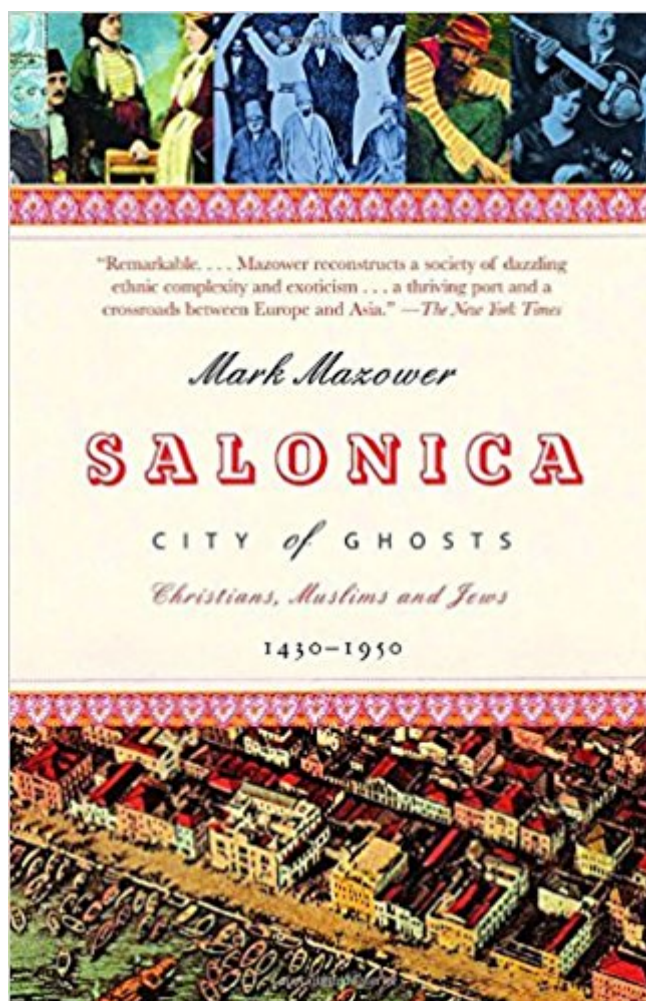


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# Salonica, City Of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims And Jews 1430-1950



## Synopsis

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.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

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. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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 Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is a rating of the book - not of the Kindle Edition. I felt the author was biased for some religions and against others. Just a feeling, nothing overt. That turned me off when I read the book. Interesting enough to make me want to learn more, but maybe from other authors. I agree with the two star reviews of this book on , except for the star rating. In spite of it's seeming bias, one does learn much about the history and cultures of Thessaloniki.

Mr. Mazower provides a very good discussion of the history of the City of Salonica. It is interesting to see how he covers the various religious and ethnic groups that resided in Salonica over the years. The book describes the interactions and relationships between the various groups. He also presents a good overview of the population changes in the early part of the 20th century and the affect of World War II.

An interesting and comprehensive history of a city that I have visited several times. I shall certainly revisit Thessaloniki after reading this book.

Great read for a great price. Highly recommend to anyone interested in learning about various cultures

Salonica is a history about one of the most important cities in the Balkans. Thessaloniki is also a city that has changed both culturally and fundamentally over the centuries.

Having lived in Thessaloniki myself 20 years ago, I recently returned and encountered the ghost of myself which was a door into the city's past that moved me tremendously. This book is an important accounting of a city that went through heart-wrenching changes in the last century.

sometimes becomes boring and confusing because get to much detail of the live and goes from one date to another. But is a good book if you are interested in learning the history of Salonika.

Salonika was an anachronism. Unlike most of Europe, where nations had been formed around a major city or a capital, and where ethnic and religious minorities had been absorbed, expelled, killed, or at least marginalized in some fashion, in Salonika different groups lived shoulder to shoulder for over 400 years. Mazower tells the story. First we get Greeks, then Turks, then after 1492 Spanish (and Portugese and Italian) Jews (speaking Ladino, Judeo-Spanish). The first half of the book describes the communities, daily lives, interactions. More communities developed. Sabbatai Zevi declared himself Messiah, won a following, converted to Islam, and his followers, well, followed him. "Donme" or "Apostates" (the descendants of these Jewish converts to Islam) remained a distinct part of Salonika's fabric. Albanians arrived. And eventually Bosnians and Bulgarians as well (there is dispute over whether they should be called Bulgarians or Macedonian Slavs). The first half of the book is jumpy. It is not organized chronologically. Primary document spellings are not followed by modern equivalents. There are insufficient maps. It makes for slow reading. But Mazower hit his stride around 1700. The history begins to flow chronologically. And he tells history as an engaging story. Modern is definitely his period. And the more modern, the better he gets. He includes details that would be easy to gloss over. The story is complex. Mazower makes it flow, and makes it clear, and makes it engaging. The book ends with two major chapters: the Nazi

extermination of almost the entire Jewish population of the city is told with great detail. The Greek Civil War seems to be strangely tacked on, with little detail, and little of Mazower's flair. But it hardly takes away from the book's overall strength.

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