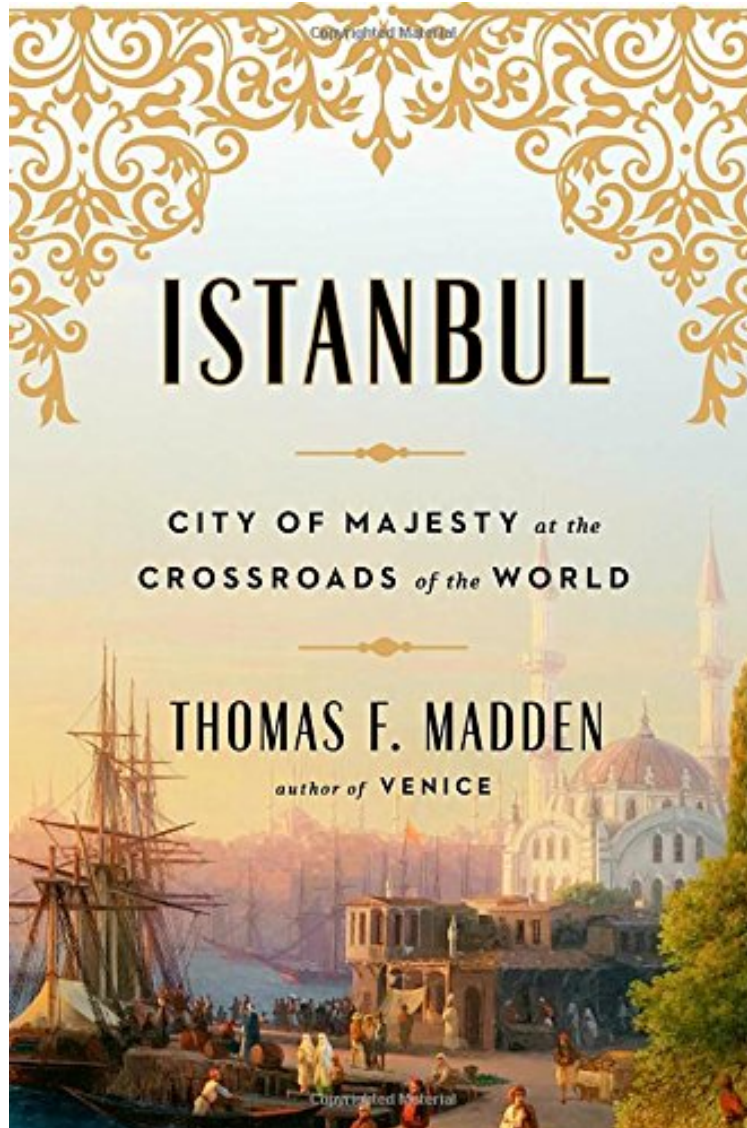


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Istanbul: City of Majesty at the Crossroads of the World

Thomas F. Madden

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#136530 in Books Thomas F Madden 2016-11-22 2016-11-22Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.30 x 1.25 x 6.30l, 1.51 #File Name: 0670016608400 pagesIstanbul City of Majesty at the Crossroads of the World | File size: 22.Mb

Thomas F. Madden : Istanbul: City of Majesty at the Crossroads of the World before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Istanbul: City of Majesty at the Crossroads of the World:

1 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Jeffrey A. Cauthengreat read12 of 14 people found the following review helpful. A highly readable general history. Could use more illustrations and maps, but informative

and up to date. By Lyndon Brecht I have a hard time deciding between 4 and 5 stars. I would guess most readers would give it 5 stars. My quibble with the book is that it gives little sense of what life was actually like, What did people eat? How long did they live? What work did they do? Where did fishermen fish? How was the city at dealing with sewage, garbage, noise and such? The book does address major themes such as the Nika riots, major disease outbreaks, the decay of the Janissaries, but I didn't find much sense of what living in the city was like. It also takes 250 pages to get to the Ottoman city--the chapters on Suleiman's city and "The Sultanate of Women" are quite good. The book does focus on the city, with the empires as background. The "majesty" in the title isn't brought out particularly well, and more photos and illustrations would help a lot. The ones actually in the book are rather good. The maps in the book are useful, but more maps of the region or the whole empire would be very helpful. So would an appendix listing the few dozen main characters (the book is not an endless parade of figures, like many histories are). Madden is particularly good on several aspects. I found several aspects of the book to be very informative and particularly interesting. His discussion of the re-directed Crusade that stormed the city in 1204 is the best I've ever read on the subject. His account of the Turkish conquest of the city in 1453 is nearly as good, and the last two chapters are very good, with one chapter centered on Mustafa Kemal, and the last on the current premier Erdogan once mayor of the city and born in the greater Istanbul area). This is a popular history, despite the author's impressive academic background. It's highly readable, overall. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. An engaging read for anyone with an interest in history. By Snap, Crackle and Pop. Because Istanbul really was at a crossroads of the world, many threads make up its history: Greece, Alexander, Rome, Europe, Venice and of course the Ottomans. So anyone with a general interest in history might find this interesting, given the variety of topics and the engaging way they are discussed. Istanbul also provides a somewhat different perspective on Greece, Rome and Europe - in effect, a view from outside. Curiously, there isn't as much as I might have expected about what it was like to live in Byzantium/Constantinople/Istanbul. That's understandable, as that could be another volume (or double the length of this one), and the sources are likely uneven.

One of Times 12 Books for the History Buffs on Your Holiday Gift List The first single-volume history of Istanbul in decades: a biography of the city at the center of civilizations past and present. For more than two millennia Istanbul has stood at the crossroads of the world, perched at the very tip of Europe, gazing across the shores of Asia. The history of this city--known as Byzantium, then Constantinople, now Istanbul--is at once glorious, outsized, and astounding. Founded by the Greeks, its location blessed it as a center for trade but also made it a target of every empire in history, from Alexander the Great and his Macedonian Empire to the Romans and later the Ottomans. At its most spectacular Emperor Constantine I re-founded the city as New Rome, the capital of the eastern Roman empire, and dramatically expanded the city, filling it with artistic treasures, and adorning the streets with opulent palaces. Around it all Constantine built new walls, truly impregnable, that preserved power, wealth, and withstood any aggressor--walls that still stand for tourists to visit. From its ancient past to the present, we meet the city through its ordinary citizens--the Jews, Muslims, Italians, Greeks, and Russians who used the famous baths and walked the bazaars--and the rulers who built it up and then destroyed it, including Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the man who christened the city "Istanbul" in 1930. Thomas F. Madden's entertaining narrative brings to life the city we see today, including the rich splendor of the churches and monasteries that spread throughout the city. Istanbul draws on a lifetime of study and the latest scholarship, transporting readers to a city of unparalleled importance and majesty that holds the key to understanding modern civilization. In the words of Napoleon Bonaparte, "If the Earth were a single state, Istanbul would be its capital."

Praise for Istanbul A wonderfully vivid and clear account . . . [Madden is] a skilled narrator, negotiating the twists and turns in the city's destiny. The Economist A natural teacher, Madden packs most of the city's past into a short, readable volume in which each era is brought alive by punchy anecdotes with vivid sketches of people and locations. The Economist's 1843 magazine Condensing Istanbul's history in a single volume is a daunting challenge; the book is a great success, and one with no lack of drama. . . . Even the careless reader will be much enlightened by the book, as good an introduction to Istanbul and its splendors as one could hope to have. National A major 'biography' of a city at the center of the world, Madden documents the history of the place that has been home to Greeks and Ottomans, Muslims and Jews, the ancient world and the society of the future. Time A comprehensive and illuminating account of this remarkable city . . . brought together into one enjoyable and clear narrative. There's a great deal to gain from reading this book. PopMatters Vivid . . . Madden's insights into Istanbul's religious and political history reminds us that world politics is rife with complex questions: Who came first? Who built enduring cities? Who survived? Who vanished? And where do we go from here? Booklist Astonishing . . . An illuminating journey through the history and culture of the metropolis that 'still towers over all other cities in Europe and the Middle East.' Kirkus s [A] fast-paced account of Europe's largest city . . . Madden succinctly captures the city's often key role in global political and religious history. Publishers Weekly No place has had a better claim than Istanbul to being the historical center of our planet capital to multiple empires, a focal point of Christianity and Islam, and now a global transport and commercial hub. Writing with verve and sympathy, Thomas F. Madden weaves scholarship, travel, and literature into a compelling

narrative of crushing loss and unexpected renewal. Charles King, author of *Midnight at the Pera Palace: The Birth of Modern Istanbul* There may be other cities as majestic and rich in history as Istanbul, but few have been blessed with such a chronicler. Istanbul takes us on a wild ride through a landscape populated by explorers, lascivious empresses, popes, crusaders, conquerors, and sultans. It's almost as much fun as actually visiting. Stephen Kinzer, author of *Crescent and Star: Turkey between two worlds* About the Author Thomas F. Madden is Professor of History and Director of the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies at Saint Louis University. He has written and lectured extensively on the ancient and medieval Mediterranean as well as the history of Christianity and Islam. Awards for his scholarship include the Medieval Academy of America's Haskins Medal and the Medieval Institute's Otto Grundler Prize. He is a Fellow of the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Medieval Academy of America. His books include *Venice: A New History* and *Istanbul: City of Majesty at the Crossroads of the World*.