Salonica between East and West
1860 – 1912

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Introduction: The Fire

On the afternoon of August 18, 1917, a hot and sunny day, a strong wind was blowing across Salonica from the north, as it had been doing continuously for two or three days. Collinson Owen, a journalist serving with the British forces, was sitting down to tea when his Greek maid informed him that a cloud of smoke was billowing above the houses in the Turkish quarter. Fires were commonplace in Salonica; curious rather than alarmed, he went on to the roof from where he could see over the entire town. Looking through field glasses, he observed that over in the north-western corner of the Turkish quarter, on the hill above the port, the fire had set a considerable area alight and was being fanned towards him by the wind. The columns of smoke over the old town grew denser, and by dusk the roads and alleys leading down from the hill were packed with refugees fleeing the blaze, crossing the Rue Egnatia to the more open spaces of the lower town by the sea-front. Those soldiers who battled their way up through the crowds encountered a frantic throng of Turks, Donmehs, elderly Jews wearing fezzes, slippers and their long gabardine *intari*, their women wailing and shouting, clutching their children by the hand. British troops burst into a Turkish house in response to frantic knocking, and found that the master had fled, leaving his veiled wives locked inside their harem.

'It was an amazing and sad scene', wrote Collinson Owen, 'the wailing families, the crash of falling houses as the flames tore along, swept by the wind; and in the narrow streets a slow-moving mass of pack-donkeys, loaded carts, *hamals* carrying enormous loads; Greek boy scouts (who were doing excellent work); soldiers of all nations as yet unorganised to do anything definite; ancient wooden fire-engines that creaked pathetically as they spat out ineffectual trickles of water; and people carrying beds (hundreds of flock and feather beds), wardrobes, mirrors, pots and pans, sewing machines (every family made a desperate endeavour to save its sewing machine) and a general collection of ponderous

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Mark Mazower | Salonica between East and West 1860 – 1912 | pp. 104-127

rubbish.'

The refugees, as they made their way down to the sea and sat on the quay, would not be parted from their possessions. Soldiers, working continuously to transfer people to the British lighters, found that the only way the victims could be shifted was to throw their possessions onto the lighter – the owner of the goods then followed after them. By nightfall the blaze had spread into the lower town, and buildings were being blown up in a futile attempt to stem the course of the fire. Returning to his flat roof for the last time, Collinson Owen saw a sea of vivid red, out of which protruded the long, white needles of the minarets. Clouds of smoke, streaked with enormous tongues of flame, hung over the town. Towards midnight, the buildings fronting the sea caught fire, and within minutes the entire three-quarters of a mile of the front was one vast cliff of orange and white flame raining incandescent ash down onto the quay, setting ablaze cars, carts and several caiques which had to be hurriedly pushed off from the sea-wall where they were moored.

Thereafter the fire, albeit slowly, passed its peak. Some buildings were still burning two days later when the soldiers re-entered the town to inspect the devastation. Three quarters of the city had been destroyed: 'all the banks, all the business premises, all the hotels and practically all the shops, theatres and cinemas were reduced to ashes. Most of the churches fortunately escaped, but of the beautiful church of Demetrius, only the bare walls remain'.

The Jewish community, worst affected, had lost eighty oratories, most of the thirty-seven synagogues, all the libraries, schools and club buildings and most of their homes. Outside the city, camped in the plain beyond the western suburbs, and along the verges of the boulevard leading to the prosperous Calamaria district, were over seventy thousand refugees, miserably equipped to face the coming winter.

The fire of 1917 obliterated the pre-war town. Twenty years later, a new town had taken its place: its physical appearance and ethnic composition were so different from those of its predecessor as to make the latter seem a distant memory. It was easy for the inhabitants of the modern Greek city of 1937 to assume that the Turkish town of thirty years earlier had been an Oriental backwater, stifled by Hamidian absolutism, untouched by modernizing trends from Europe.

Such an impression, which most of the European visitors to the pre-war town might well have shared, would have been rather inaccurate. For at least half a century before the end of Turkish rule, the city had seen commerce with western Europe prosper, had imported western technology, and had been influenced by western doctrines and theories. Balkan and Levantine conditions and customs inevitably modified the fruits of these European influences. It is the way that some of these influences affected life in Salonica that I intend to describe.

1. The Routes of Commerce

Salonica is situated on the coastal edge of the Vardar plain, east of the river's swampy delta, on the last slopes of the hill country which fills most of the Chalcidice peninsula. Its commercial importance derived from its geographical position, for it lay on the crossroads of two major trading routes: west to east ran the Via Egnatia, the road used by the Romans, which connected Italy, via Durazzo and Edessa, with Macedonia and Constantinople. Northwards the valley of the Vardar opened up pathways into the hilly interior, making the city the main port serving the Macedonian hinterland and indeed the only noteworthy Mediterranean port for Balkan trade.

Around the middle of the nineteenth century, Salonica was in commercial decline. Neither the sizeable Jewish community, which had been largely responsible for the city's prosperity in the sixteenth century, nor the Greeks, whose merchants had succeeded in supplanting their Jewish rivals towards the end of the eighteenth, could escape the consequences of the economic stagnation that affected the Levant trade after the end of the Napoleonic wars. The city's population was smaller than it had been a century earlier: of its roughly sixty thousand inhabitants, about half were Muslims, one-third Jews, one-sixth Greeks, and the remainder other nationalities. Isolated from its hinterland, visited infrequently by European ships, the city, 'secure within its fortifications, which two large towers fix firmly to the beach, does not yet seem to have dared set foot outside its walls'. Only the dead were to be found beyond its ramparts, buried in the two extensive cemeteries which flanked the city.

As early as 1836, a small steamboat, the 'Levant' of 64 tons, had been sent by a British company in the hope of inaugurating a regular service to the port. Leon Sciaky, whose memoirs give a vivid account of the life of a Jewish bourgeois family later in the century, tells how his father as a young boy stood and watched the 'Levant's' arrival from the crowded parapet of the sea-wall. This was the traditional vantage point from which the inhabitants of the town could scan incoming vessels; if they feared that a ship was carrying cholera or the plague, they set up a chant of 'No lo vogliamo'. The language is Ladino, the Spanish vernacular of the Sefardi Jews, who lived at this time in the lower town behind the sea-wall.

The 'Levant's' visit was a failure; reports of plague in the city led plans for a regular service to be shelved. Apart from a second visit the following year, no British steamer called before 1855.

But other countries were more enterprising: the Austrians began a weekly steam-service between Salonica and Constantinople in 1840, later extending it down the east coast of Greece, and up into the Adriatic. In 1844, the Ottoman Steam Co. started a weekly run serving a string of smaller ports between Salonica and the Turkish capital. French companies, notably the Messageries Maritimes, included Salonica within their regular schedules from Marseilles from the early 1850s.

Within the space of thirty years, the advent of steam shipping transformed the nature of the maritime commerce of Salonica. As sail gave way to steam, Greek shipowners, who had owned the bulk of the shipping that entered the port in the 1830s, controlled less than one fifth of it by 1864. By then French and Austrian steamers dominated the traffic to and from the main European ports, limiting the Greek and Ottoman owners of sailing ships to the Aegean and the Black Sea.

The great increase in shipping activity at the port (between 1836 and 1869 the tonnage of shipping entering Salonica rose from 50,000 to 243,000 tons) highlighted by the 1860s several hindrances to smoother commercial relations with the outside world. Chief among these was the primitive state of the harbour. 'Le port n'est qu'une rade ouverte', wrote Ami Boué in 1853, having arrived in the town, most unusually at this early date, not by sea but by the land route from Kavalla. There was no proper harbour or quay. The seaward wall, which had been built to defend the town from pirates, still stood. Its demolition was a prerequisite for the construction of harbour facilities to cope with the new traffic. In 1866 the governor of the city, Sabri Pacha, finally succeeded in obtaining permission to knock it down. His plan for the modernization of the harbour envisaged using the rubble from the demolished walls as the basis for a quay and a breakwater; the quay was to be built on land reclaimed from the sea, on the western side of the town near the European quarter, the Francomahala. Sabri Pacha himself struck the first blow with a silver hammer, leaving the rest of the task to Jewish workmen.

Progress, unfortunately, was not straightforward, and construction of the new facilities was subject to protracted delays. The immediate outcome – unforeseen and undesired – of these operations, was that the private sewage collectors who cleaned out the city's cesspits were tempted by the newly available access to the sea, and took to dumping their loads by night into the water. For several years it was impossible to walk along the front for the stench, particularly in the summer months. The work itself dragged on for ten years, until a committee of local notables, chaired by a Greek, Alexander Constantinides Pacha, improved matters by supervising the completion of the sea-wall, as well as the filling up and drainage of the docks area.

Yet the harbour works remained the subject of numerous complaints right up to the Balkan Wars. Schemes to improve matters – widening and raising the quay, building new jetties – passed from one group of entrepreneurs to another, without bringing about any permanent amelioration: most ships were still obliged to lie at anchor off-shore and transfer their merchandise on and off small lighters. Goods were frequently damaged by rain or mishandling. One reads numerous complaints that even those vessels light enough to have moored directly against the quay were hindered from doing so by local lightermen, who were anxious to maintain their livelihood.

In this and other ways, the cost of shipping goods via Salonica gradually rose, making her less attractive than her main competitors, Trieste, Dedeagatch (present-day Alexandroupoli) and the Black Sea ports. 'The harbour has long been a source of discontent to Salonica's merchants', wrote the British consul in 1903, 'It was built at great expense, but is quite useless as a shelter. Its only result has been to increase dues and make vessels avoid the port as far as possible.'

In reality conditions were not quite as bad as this. Under French supervision, the jetties and quays were widened, and the railway lines were finally extended to the customs area by the docks. (Previously it had been necessary to cart goods over the half-mile of 'execrable and in winter almost impassable road' between the harbour and the Uskub line station.) This was undoubtedly some improvement, and the Serbian cattle trade in particular, stimulated both by this and by a tariff war with Austro-Hungary which closed off its northward supply route to central Europe, showed a marked increase.

The provision of shipping facilities did not, of course, exhaust the demands Salonica had to meet; her integration within the extensive network of European commerce was further effected by international telegraphic and rail linkages.

Of the two, it was the former which was the more rapidly achieved. By 1866, the town was in telegraphic communication with England by three routes: through Italy, via Valona and Otranto, through Austria, via Scutari and Dalmatia, and through Turkey, via Constantinople and the Danubian Principalities. It is symptomatic of the nature of modernization in the nineteenth-century Balkans that the same year, 1866, saw attempts to connect Salonica by carriage road with the inland town of Serres end in failure 'owing to want of funds to purchase necessary materials for building bridges, etc., and the incapacity of the Turkish engineer charged with the direction of the works, who actually managed to render the road from bad to almost impracticable'.

The striking contrast between the sophistication of Salonica's international connections, and her isolation from her own hinterland persisted well past the turn of the century. By then a submarine cable linked her by telegraph eastwards with all the major ports of the Levant, and southwards via Crete and Alexandria, with the Far East. The telegraph, however, was expensive, and for ordinary communications one used the mail. There was a variety of services to choose from: the official Ottoman post, which was subsidized and therefore cheaper, or its European rivals – of which the Austrian and French were especially popular – which had the important advantage that they were uncensored by the Ottoman authorities. As the century advanced, delivery times shortened: a letter travelling from Salonica to Paris might easily have taken a month in the early part of the century; in the 1860s this had been cut by the steamboats of the Messageries to about two weeks; and the rail connection to the central European network in 1888 cut it still further to sixty-three hours.

Which brings us to the railways, the *shimen defair* as it was known in Salonica. From 1871 foreign capital, mainly Austrian and German, financed a network of lines which spread outwards from Salonica across Macedonia; one line looping west across the Vardar plain before climbing the hills of western Macedonia towards Monastir, another tracing an even more circuitous path to the port of Dedeagatch and thence to Constantinople, the third, the most important, following the Vardar northwards to Uskub and eventually Serbia and Austro-Hungary. These developments aroused the hopes and dreams of local merchants and landowners: at last Macedonian markets would become more easily accessible, the Serbian trade would be diverted southwards, perhaps the India mail might even be wrested from Brindisi. The British consul predicted in 1883 that once the Uskub line had been linked to the Austrian railway system, then Salonica would become the most important centre of trade in the Levant.

Predictions such as this – and it represented the general view of the time – were destined to be proved false. One good indicator of the general economic situation is provided by the trade figures which show us that the combined value of imports and exports in the early 1880s stood at a figure not matched again till the very end of the century – for over a decade commerce stagnated. Railways were a mixed blessing in a variety of respects. First there was their undeniable tendency, as Sir

Charles Eliot noted on his Balkan peregrinations, to cause roads in their vicinity to decay. If local producers could not afford to travel by train, they were often worse off than before. European travellers ignorant of conditions in Macedonia would have been surprised at the slowness of the train, which took twelve hours to get from the Serbian frontier to Salonica, a distance of under two hundred miles. They would have remarked that the train only travelled that stretch by day, 'since by night the Porte cannot guarantee its safety'. They would have been shocked – indeed often were – by the 'obnoxious passport facilities' on arrival at the Turkish border, where customs officials would impound any printed matter, and send it on to the censors in Salonica or occasionally Constantinople. Little surprise that passenger traffic remained limited.

Goods traffic faced other difficulties: high tariff rates, as the French consul noted with dismay, discouraged many importers in the first few years after the connection with Serbia was established. Goods to Belgrade were carried more cheaply via Fiume, even after tariffs fell in 1891. Trade with Bulgaria increasingly went through Bourgas and Dedeagatch. The lack of co-ordination between port and railway authorities meant, for example, that projects to run the India mail via Salonica and Alexandria never came to fruition. The termini of the three railway lines were not merged under one roof until Salonica had come under Greek rule. It is true that Djavid Bey, the Finance Minister, had laid the first stone of a new 'Central Railway Station' in August, 1910, amid much fanfare. Yet by the time the first Balkan War began, there was still no sign, in the words of one observer, of 'the second stone coming to join the first'.

The spread of the railway network had one final consequence, which for the Macedonian economy may well have been the most profound of all. By increasing the speed of communications within the province, it made local producers more sensitive to price fluctuations in international markets: in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, as transatlantic wheat imports caused grain prices to fall, the effect was to expose local agriculture to this unfavourable trend. From this point of view, it was not the coming of the railways themselves that caused commercial difficulties; the railways merely exposed the fragile condition of the Macedonian economy.

2. Merchants: Teaching the Frankish Style

Lying to the west of the centre of Salonica, just within the walls, was the area known as 'Malta', where European traders had lodged since Byzantine times. Here one saw buildings which formed a striking contrast with the ramshackle dwellings elsewhere in the city. Boué wrote of '... houses made of stone, two storeys high, with glass windows and painted blinds ... the consulates of France, Spain, Austria, England and Russia are housed in even finer buildings, three storeys high. In some of them you might well imagine yourself in Europe.'

This was the quarter which, for most of the nineteenth century, housed those Greek and Jewish merchants whose commercial and cultural connections with Europe made them the natural instigators of 'Westernizing' trends throughout the town. Families like Rongotti, Prasakaki or Abbot, which arrived in 1788 speaking English, but within three generations were completely Hellenized or, in the Jewish community, Italian families like Allatini and Modiano, the so-called *geberim* (notables), formed a reformist class which had begun to challenge the religious leadership of their communities in the eighteenth century. Ostentatiously adopting Italian dress, complete with wig and goatee, the 'francos', as the Spanish Jews called the Italians, provoked rabbinical tracts fulminating against those who thought themselves too good for the traditional clothes.

Such families tended to maintain foreign citizenship, and sent their sons to be educated abroad; so Lazarus Allatini sent his son Moses (1800-1882) to study medicine at Pisa and Florence. It was the generation of Moses Allatini, described by one historian as 'le véritable régénerateur de la communauté juive salonicienne', which initiated the challenge of the lay bourgeoisie to the established authority of the religious leaders.

These struggles were most evident in the Greek and Jewish communities, where the administration of communal schools and finances became the object of bitter dispute. Under pressure from merchants, doctors and lawyers of liberal views, crucial changes were made at the top of the religious leadership: the conservative Ascher Covo was replaced as Chief Rabbi by Abraham Gattegno; the Metropolitan Callinicos was forced to leave the city, and was replaced by Gregorios Callides, a man rather more sympathetic to the 'democratic' faction. In the Greek community, the 'democrats', a loose-knit coalition of reformist landowners and merchants, tradesmen and artisans, succeeded in gaining the upper hand over the 'aristocrats' in the early 1880s, breaking the grip of the latter on the communal administration. The wealthy stratum of the Jewish bourgeoisie, centred around the Club des Intimes, persuaded Samuel Arditti, the Chief Rabbi in 1880, to implement the administrative reforms decreed some fifteen years earlier, by adopting a limited suffrage in communal elections. The revenues upon which the communities depended to meet the expenses of schools, churches, synagogues, seminaries, and above all, welfare provisions, were derived increasingly from income tax and benefactions. This gave a relatively small number of notables, in the Jewish case perhaps fifty out of fifteen thousand families, considerable power to influence communal affairs. The area which illustrates this best is education.

In the Jewish community, the struggle to supplement the Talmud Torah, the centre of religious instruction, with new schools which would offer a more secular education, lasted the best part of two generations. The chief *geberim* – the Modiano, Allatini, Perrara, Fernandez and Morpurgo families, closely inter-linked by marriage – pushed for the use of Italian and French books in the Talmud Torah from the 1840s, initially without much success. Unwilling to attempt a reform of the Talmud Torah directly, they decided to found a small institution, the Lipmann School, in 1858, to serve as a model. Run by a German rabbi, whom the teachers in the Talmud Torah regarded as a sacrilegious foreigner, the school closed down when he returned to Germany three years later. The setback proved only temporary. Ties with the West meant that local merchants required a growing number of their employees who were familiar with French and Italian, mathematics and geography. Private schools emerged to cater to this demand: a Frenchman, François Chevalier, founded a small private school, with instruction in French; Salomon Fernandez, Allatini's brother-in-law and former Consul of Tuscany, established an Italian school in 1862, with the financial support of the Italian government. The local committee of the Paris-based Alliance Israélite Universelle, the creation of those same 'franco' families mentioned above, succeeded in starting a school for boys in 1873, despite fierce opposition from the traditionalist group which surrounded Ascher Covo, the conservative Chief Rabbi; within ten years, members of the Alliance had managed to supervise the reform of the Talmud Torah, and through their control of the community's Commission de Finances, to expand the size and number of those schools which were organised on Western lines. By 1912 the Alliance was responsible for seven schools, with over four thousand pupils – or more than half the total number of children being educated in Jewish establishments. One consequence of this was that French came to replace Italian as the language of the commercial and professional class; only the Jewish 'aristocracy', which had initiated the movement for reform, continued to use Italian. The extent of the Alliance's achievement came as a surprise to visitors to the city. 'I was invited once to an annual gathering of the Israelite Alliance', wrote Collinson Owen, 'There were many hundreds of Jews there, male and female, and a great proportion of them were once removed only from the street porter class. But they rattled off French as if they had been born to it.'

Educational trends in Greek schools followed a rather different course. Revival after 1860 was prompted essentially by nationalistic concerns, and a number of schools were either founded or enlarged with the intention of countering the spread of Slavic languages in Macedonia. The clash between the church authorities and the bourgeois reformers, assisted by the Greek consulate, arose in this context over the question of what part the schools should play in the campaign against the 'Macedo-Slavs'. There was less dispute over the curriculum which, despite the efforts of Margaritis Dimitsas in the 1870s, remained dominated by literature and philology. Victor Bérard, a French author and Homeric scholar who visited the city in 1896, was not impressed by teaching methods. He commented on the contrast between the Greek schools, housed in imposing but needlessly grandiose classrooms, where the syllabus was exclusively classical, and the smaller Bulgarian gymnasium, housed in an old wooden building in the centre of the town, which offered courses in science, geography and modern languages. The Bulgarian professors, he continued pointedly, based their lessons on the methods and results of European science.

Within the Turkish community too, the dissemination of secular learning was slowly felt, though here perhaps the weight of religious orthodoxy lay more heavily than it did elsewhere. With no substantial maritime or mercantile class to form the nucleus of protest, it was left to disaffected army officers or civil servants to attempt reform. Their task was not easy. Midhat Pacha – a reforming governor of the city, later strangled to death on the orders of Abdul Hamid – had made a start by founding the 'Ecole des Arts et Métiers', where fifty orphans were trained in various crafts. Here too *Selanik*, the official Turkish newspaper of the province, was printed. A pioneering effort, it could nevertheless hardly have been a forcing-house for trained technicians in a society where the authorities expropriated electric batteries from physics classes, on the grounds that they were subversive to the public order. At the other public Turkish school, the Imperial Lycée – 'tout à fait un lycée à la française', as its deputy director hopefully described it, the syllabus was exclusively literary, six years being devoted to learning Arabic, Persian, Turkish, some French, Bulgarian and Greek.

Wealthy Turks who wanted to give their children a Western education, probably sent them instead to a small private school. One of Sciaky's classmates at the Petit Lycée Français in 1904 was a Turkish boy, whose father, a civil servant, had left Istanbul for the less intolerant atmosphere of Salonica. Sciaky expresses no surprise at having a Turkish classmate, which suggests that such arrangements were not uncommon.

One other group who must be mentioned in the context of education were the Donmehs. These people, about ten thousand around 1910, were descendants of the Jewish followers of Sabbetai Zevi, the 'False Messiah', who had converted to Islam in the seventeenth century. Mistrusted both by Turks and Jews, split among themselves into three hostile sects, they had managed to acquire an influence in Salonica out of all proportion to their numbers: a large number of merchants, particularly in the textile and tobacco trades, journalists and senior civil administrators, testified to the quality of their educational system. They possessed two well-run schools, where they learned French and German as well as Turkish, and had organised what were reputed to be the best-run welfare services of any community in the city.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century the adoption of European fashions and tastes proceeded apace, as commercial prosperity not only attracted a sizeable European expatriate community, but also led to a marked increase in the size of the local middle class: between 1890 and 1910 the number of wholesale merchants doubled, the number of lawyers rose from 5 to 38, doctors from 17 to 40. In the same period the number of insurance agents more than doubled, the number of firms importing so-called 'colonial foodstuffs' – mostly coffee and sugar – rose from 11 to 30. This burgeoning bourgeoisie demanded the trappings of European life. The import trade flourished: Manchester cottons and Rouen silks, beer from Austria, watches and jewellery from Switzerland, Italian pasta, wine and marble, worsteds and cutlery from Germany, French stationery and perfumes, drugs, billiard tables, cabinets and fancy upholstery. The British consul noted the growing demand for 'British-made shoes and boots, felt and straw hats, men's flannels, cotton and linen shirts and vests, handkerchiefs, ties, stockings and socks ...'. Imported utensils like the frying pans which 'were being commonly used for baking purposes in every Albanian, Bulgarian and Wallach home in the interior' flooded rapidly into Macedonia, often causing the decline of local artisanal industry. Other goods, often luxury items, had the opposite effect, stimulating new domestic enterprise; chairs provide an illustration of this. They remained prohibitively expensive, since they were imported ready-made from Marseilles and Trieste, and the freight costs were necessarily enormous, until the early 1880s, when some Greek and Maltese craftsmen started a factory in Salonica, and found that there was a ready market in the city itself, as well as inland.

The European trademarks of bourgeois success invaded even places of worship. When in 1905 an American scholar visited the synagogue which the Modianos, one of the wealthiest merchant families, attended, he noted that the festival candles were 'Europeanised by having donors' visiting cards neatly attached with silk ribbons'.

Above all, the growing enthusiasm for European fashions hit the eye most inescapably in matters of dress. It was not long before the 'francos' were imitated by the newly prosperous middle classes.

'Soft-hatted, his waistcoat unbuttoned below his garish cravat, trousers impeccably pressed, turned up at the bottom to reveal gaudy socks inside his polished shoes ... He affects a knowing exoticism, getting up with exquisite care, he strains laboriously to set himself above the vulgar herd, to appear at all costs chic, smart, the last word in fashion ...' Thus Nehama, doyen of the historians of Salonica, satirizes the European style so admired by the younger generation. A decade later, an English visitor noticed "the young women copying Athens and Paris in short skirts and high-heeled yellow boots". By the time of the First World War, the new fashion had permeated the lower strata of the social scale. Collinson Owen observed how even 'the Jewish hamals, or street porters, who carry huge loads on their back for a living; whose hands are knotted and beards matted, and whose backs are perpetually bent beneath the load of the lowest form of human labour, have sons who wear white collars and bowler hats, and work in banks and shops'.

Only among the poorer and elderly Jews, as well as the Turks, did the traditional dress retain its popularity. The ubiquitous red fez disappeared, but Muslim women continued to be veiled, whilst the Jewish women retained their long dark skirts, the bright silk apron and the fur-lined jacket, and still wore their hair long, braided and contained at the back in a strange casing of green silk. Old men too could be seen in their traditional long silk robes, slippers and curious black felt caps. Yet though these Biblical apparitions were what tourists invariably noticed first, we should perhaps look at them in a different perspective. Faced with a younger generation which had been raised on a social diet of Viennese operetta, buffet dances at the Association des Anciens Elèves de l'Alliance Israélite, apéritifs at the Café Olympos, billiards and films at the Hotel Colombo, it must have seemed to many of their elders that something had been lost.

'The old dress', wrote Nehama, 'has completely disappeared. The Greeks were the first to adopt the European style. The Jews were quick to follow their example.

The Donmehs and soon the Turks imitated the Jews ... Today, apart from the occasional Albanian in his fustanelle, and the hand-me-downs of some villager who has strayed into town, the quay at Salonica, with its cafés, hawkers, inns and cinemas, its passers-by rigged out in those dreadful bowler hats, is scarcely different from any European port in the western Mediterranean.'

3. Linguistic Fashions, Communal Disputes

In Salonica, according to many visitors there, one realized for the first time the real meaning of such words as 'cosmopolitan' and 'polyglot'; the capital of Macedonia, how could it have been otherwise? According to Nehama, Spanish was spoken in the poorer areas, French in good-quality shops and chic cafés, Greek, Turkish and Bulgarian by traders and merchants; boatmen swore in English and Italian, whilst porters preferred Turkish and Spanish. The young Jewish boy employed by Collinson Owen 'did his complicated business in Greek, Turkish, Jewish-Spanish and French, and made marked headway in English'. He was not exceptional.

To the unprepared tourist, this kaleidoscope of races was simply baffling: what could he understand of the interminable conflicts between *gatos* and *ratones*, Yacoubis and Cumosos, Greeks and Bulgars, Jews and Albanians? Yet if foreigners were bewildered as they arrived at the port and gazed along the row of cafés with their signs in half a dozen languages ('... no small surprise', wrote Bérard, 'to make out "Café de la Tour Eiffel" in bold Hebrew script'), political commentators observed the changing linguistic fashions of the town closely. The spread of one language, the demise of another, seemed to hold a clue as to the political fate of the region. Italian, which for much of the nineteenth century was the lingua franca of the Levant, gave way to French at the port, and persisted beyond the turn of the century only in the Italianized Ladino affected by the Jewish élite. The Italian Government tried to counter French influence by establishing an Italian commercial school, but this suffered the humiliation of having to add French to its curriculum in order to retain its pupils.

'De toutes les échelles du Levant, Salonique est peut-être la seule où, depuis dix ans, l'influence de notre langue ait grandi', noted one Frenchman with satisfaction. As far as the French were concerned, it was German, not Italian, whose influence they had to counter. The Kaiser himself, informed of the success of the Alliance Israélite, had encouraged the formation of a branch of the Hilfverein, the Alliance's German equivalent. The Deutscher Club was founded in 1887. Then a small school was established by the Austro-German railway company to train personnel.

The French had cause for alarm, for their share of trade at the port diminished considerably between the 1880s and 1914: the tonnage of French vessels using the port dropped from one-fourth to one-tenth of the total, whilst the Austro-Hungarian share rose from eleven to twenty percent, and the German share from virtually zero to ten percent. Yet, chiefly through the work of the Alliance, the use of French in the town continued to spread. 'Dans les banques, au cinéma, au théâtre, c'est le français qui est seul employé', observed a visitor on the eve of the First World War.

If the cultural struggles of the Great Powers contain more than an element of farce, there can be no doubt of the seriousness of similar disputes between the rival Balkan factions in the struggle for Macedonia. In the endless arguments over the ethnic composition of the province, linguistic criteria were of paramount importance in establishing the claims of one side against the other. The first major action of Athanasios Souliotis' 'Thessaloniki Organisation' against the Bulgarians, was to persuade Greek shopkeepers in the city to alter their shop signs, so that the Greek lettering was largest, whilst the Turkish and French slogans were placed in subsidiary positions. Greek was not usually placed first, and Souliotis thought the change would impress 'the Slavophones who came into the Macedonian capital from the villages'. One wonders what impact this would have made on a villager who was most probably illiterate, but the significant point is that Souliotis himself thought it worth making. He remarks that this change helped to 'Hellenize' the city.

Newspapers, obstructed by religious and civil censorship, began to flourish only late in the century, yet they soon became crucial instruments in the numerous intellectual and political disputes of the town. *Hermes*, the first Greek newspaper, whose appearance in the 1870s coincided with the community's educational revival, was an active supporter of the liberal 'democratic' faction during their battle for control of the communal administration. It was printed at the 'Macedonia' press, founded some years earlier by N. Baclamalis, and edited by S. Garbolas, one of the Thessalian family of printers who already had branches in Vienna and Athens. After the turn of the century, the paper was re-named *Pharos tis Macedonias*, and switched its attention from the factional struggle within the community to the nationalist Greek struggle against the Slavs.

Greek journalists founded a number of other papers, notably *Alitheia* (1903) and *Macedonia* (1911), both of which took a similarly nationalist line. Only one paper, *Embros* (which still survives), followed a more conciliatory policy, expressing measured approval of the Young Turk movement. In addition, Greek printers produced various periodicals in French, such as the *Revue Macedonienne*, described as a 'guide ethnographique', *Les Jours du Golfe Thermaique*, and didactic, commercial and scientific textbooks, literary texts and translations, and propaganda pamphlets, like the *Prophecies of Alexander the Great*, which were disseminated as part of the 'Macedonian Struggle'.

The innovative and bold outlook of many printers – in a small workshop printer and journalist were often the same man – tended to set them at the centre of intellectual controversy: Saadi Halevy, editor of the first regular Jewish newspaper, provides but one example (Garbolas and Abraham Benaroya, who founded the Socialist Federation, are others) of the printer who took an active part in political affairs. Both the Turkish authorities, and the leaders of their own communities often took a dim view of their trade. Juda Nehama, an intellectual who was closely allied with Moses Allatini in the campaign for educational reform, and who later organised the first Alliance schools, narrowly avoided execution when Hifzi Pacha, a Turkish governor in the 1860s, found him operating an unlicensed press. Halevy himself was brought before the Chief Rabbi in 1873 on a trumped-up charge and imprisoned for twelve days. As late as 1880 there existed a rabbinical council which had the power to close down workshops suspected of printing irreligious works. It is not surprising that Ladino periodicals had appeared in Smyrna and Constantinople, before Halevy brought out *La Epoca* in 1878. The descendant of an old family of printers, Halevy was backed by Allatini and the prosperous 'Club des Intimes' associated with him. *La Epoca* formed the mouthpiece of the liberal Jewish bourgeoisie until its demise in 1912. Its rivals, *El Avenir* and the periodical *Revista Popular*, represented the religious opposition; though they were founded by Jacob and Hafmoutcho Covo, leaders of the conservative rabbis, they soon reflected the views of a newer but allied tendency, the Zionist movement, which gained ground in the city after 1898, fiercely opposed to the assimilationist doctrines associated with the Alliance Israélite.

After the turn of the century, the number of presses multiplied. There were some fifteen newspapers, available in six languages. These now included three French-language papers – the bi-weekly *Journal de Salonique*, associated with *L'Epoca*, and the dailies *Le Progrés*, edited by Samuel Molho, and *L'Indépendant*, with its polemical editorials by Mentenoh Bessantchi and occasional pieces by 'Napulitan', the pseudonym of Albert Molho.

The nascent workers' movement, whose appearance underlines the growing social tensions in the city, also had its own newspaper. This was brought out by Abraham Benaroya, the movement's leader, who had deliberately trained himself as a printer in preparation for his work as a socialist. The vicissitudes that this paper endured illuminate the difficulties which socialism had to face in this polyglot city. In keeping with its programme of creating an united front of workers which would cut across existing ethnic boundaries, the Federation initially issued the journal in four languages, but was forced to discontinue production of the Greek and Turkish editions after several months because of the prohibitive cost; a little later on, publication was confined to a weekly Ladino version, *La Solidaridad Ovradera*. Edited from 1910 by the Alliance-educated Alberto Arditti, this journal, later renamed *Avanti*, reflected the predominance of Jewish workers in the Federation. Bulgarian socialists in the city produced two papers, including a daily, *Pravo*. The absence of any regular Greek socialist publication would seem to support one scholar's claim that 'until 1912 the Greek workers ... regarded the nationalist struggle against the Turks as a more vital cause than the development of a labour party in which they would have been outnumbered by Ladino-speaking Jews'.

Another expression of the cultural and ideological dominance of the bourgeoisie in their respective communities was the 'epidemic of clubs' that spread throughout the city. By the time of the First Balkan War, there were football and cycling clubs (though the latter were handicapped by the lack of good roads), literary and dramatic societies, religious and commercial clubs, even Greek and Jewish Scout packs.

The European diplomatic community had led the way, founding the Club de Salonique in 1873, to provide facilities 'for society and travellers': its membership was drawn from consular representatives, other notables of the European community, and Jews from the business elite. The reformist wing of bourgeois Jewry met under the auspices of the Club des Intimes, which by 1910 had come to represent the lay Jewish establishment whose hold over the poorer classes Benaroya and his associates aimed to break. Apart from the Chamber of Commerce (founded 1907) and clubs run by Europeans, such as the Deutscher Klub (1886), and the Sporting Club, most societies were tied fairly closely to ethnic groups.

The Bulgarian community was split politically between the nationalist 'Union of Constitutional Bulgarian Clubs' and the radical, anti-nationalist 'Popular Federation Party'. The Greek community, whose political activity tended to be carried on through the Consulate, or underground, supported a large number of cultural clubs, mostly dramatic or literary in purpose. The Jewish clubs ranged from Old Boy reunion societies, such as the 'Association des Anciens Elèves de l'Alliance Israélite' (1897), to the array of Zionist groups, over half a dozen by

1912.

What then of relations between the various communities of this multi-lingual town, which so many visitors regarded as a faction-ridden, Levantine Tower of Babel? Were they really always at daggers drawn with one another? To be sure, news of the episode in 1876 when the French and German consuls were lynched inside the Hamzabey mosque by a Turkish mob, or the shootings between Greeks and Bulgars on the streets of the city in the summer of 1907, or the 'Guadalquivir' incident of April, 1903, when Bulgarian anarchists blew up a French steamer, helped give the impression that Salonica was nothing more than a battleground for various fanatics. Burke's 'one maxim of extended empire – a wise and salutary neglect' seemed to have produced, in an increasingly secular age, an ideological vacuum which nationalist and particularist sentiments were quick to fill.

This was certainly the impression that the majority of Western visitors took with them when they left. One young French nurse, watching the fire of September, 1890, was moved to exclaim ' ... I think this is a very sad place – so much hatred and so many different languages'. Lucy Garnett, who spent several years in the city before writing her study of women in the Ottoman Empire, observed that hostility towards the Jews in particular was marked among the Christian communities.

Yet the fact that tradition and religion led to feelings – and conventional expressions – of antipathy between members of different ethnic groups, did not mean that relations between them were fundamentally unsettled. Insults could be a substitute for violence rather than a prelude to it. Garnett herself admits that the size of the Jewish population in Salonica gave them a security which they lacked elsewhere in the Ottoman lands. One need not accept at their face value Nehama's humanistic evocations of intellectual and social co-operation, nor Leon Sciaky's nostalgic boyhood memories; they do, however, suggest an underlying harmony in the day-to-day relations of the different communities. The bitterness between Greeks and Bulgarians did not rule out good relations with the Jews and the Turks. Indeed the intensity of the bitterness between the Greeks and the Bulgarians makes it something of a special case. And even there, one suspects that not everyone shared the fervent views of members of their respective consulates: according to Souliotis, the economic boycott against the Bulgarians only became widely observed after a Greek merchant who had defied it was killed.

Amongst the wealthier inhabitants, ethnic boundaries were frequently crossed: Greek and Jewish notables, for example, made benefactions to the other community, attended each other's weddings and funerals. Commerce too, whether in the provincial flour market, the Oun Kapan, or in the Quartier Franc, brought the different races together. As the city became more crowded we find Greeks living in the middle of the old Jewish quarter, Jewish merchants next door to Donmehs; the old divisions became blurred with new influxes of population.

Among the poor – the dockworkers and boot-blacks, the lemonade, yoghurt and *salep* sellers, knife-grinders and street-porters – where traditional customs and suspicions lingered longest, their anger usually only manifested itself in defence of their traditions. In 1873, when a mob of Jews nearly lynched their fellow-Jew Saadi Halevy, as in the Hamzabey mosque lynching of 1876, the defence of their religious beliefs, not any sort of racial enmity, was the mainspring of mob violence. Conservative in their practices and superstitions, the poorer inhabitants of the city would only have had limited dealings, outside work, with strangers from other communities.

It is difficult, at this distance from events, to attempt an accurate assessment of ethnic relations within the city. The reminiscences of partisans in the 'Macedonian Struggle' may fairly be suspected of exaggerating the degree of tension that existed. Likewise, it is likely that many Western visitors mistook conventional expressions of contempt for personal sentiment. There is no record of any serious outbreak of inter-community violence in the period with which we are concerned. Despite local rivalries, feuds and occasional bloodshed, the various races that inhabited Salonica seem to have managed to live together, conscious, yet for the most part tolerant, of their differences.

4. Altering the Urban Map

One poignant way to gauge how far Salonica was, at the beginning of this century, from being a Western city, is to look at the frequency of fires. Not merely small fires, like that described by Souliotis, when some illicitly stored paraffin ignited, gutting his shop; on that occasion a small crowd gathered, there was a little looting, but all remained under the control of the band of volunteer Jewish firemen. No, the ever-present danger was a fire spreading across the city, fanned by the Vardar wind, which could set a whole quarter ablaze.

The 1917 conflagration was the worst in a long history of such disasters. 'Le consul de France nous disait qu'il était toujours obligé d'arranger ses papiers les plus précieux avant d'aller à la campagne de crainte d'une incendie.' Thus wrote Boué in 1854. Forty years and three major fires later, an American scholar, hoping to leave with a few additions to his collection of Judaica, spent one day bookhunting, without success. The answer to his frequent enquiries was: 'We had books, but they were burnt'. It is not surprising that an unusual feature of the local Jewish Yom Kippur service was the insertion of a prayer against fire.

The main problem, of course, was the fact that so many houses were still made of wood. One scholar (E.L. Jones) has suggested that we think in terms of a brick frontier that advanced over a period of centuries south and eastwards from the seaboard of northern Europe. Certainly wooden building, and major fires, persisted late in the Ottoman Empire, involving frequent and expensive loss of fixed capital. Indeed there is evidence that over-crowding in Salonica in the second half of the nineteenth century made major fires more frequent than they had been a century earlier. Despite the remarkable growth of insurance companies in the city, the means of fire prevention remained primitive; even in 1917, local firemen possessed only hand-pumped machines.

Yet if fires brought destruction and suffering, they provided opportunities too. 'The fire has created the chance to build a new Salonica, a showpiece of business and commerce, commanding the foreigners' respect', wrote *The Comitadji* in 1917. Streets could be widened, older buildings replaced. After the great fire of 1890, which devastated much of the lower part of the town, the Greek quarter around the Hippodrome was completely rebuilt with streets of elegant buildings in the French style – 'avec une façade de marbre, des colonnes, des balcons et des perrons'. It was in the aftermath of that same fire that an enterprising mayor of Donmeh extraction, Hamdi Bey, introduced a major improvement in municipal services, by forming a tramway company with the backing of Belgian capitalists. Beginning in 1894, horse-drawn trams began to operate throughout the city, and we can gain an idea of the directions in which the city had expanded by tracing the routes that the trams followed.

From the White Tower, the eastern sea tower of the town, then still in use as a prison (and now, ironically, the symbol of Greek Macedonia itself), one line ran along the quay past the port, through the European quarter to the railway station. The other line followed the new Boulevard Hamidie along the line of the old city wall (this stretch had only been demolished five years earlier), past the modern villas and acacia trees, until it turned abruptly into the old city, traversing the length of the Rue Egnatia, before emerging by the Vardar Gate at the western end and terminating by the public gardens, the Bechtchinar. Eastwards, the two lines united at the White Tower, and ran along the southern shore of the bay on the long road which connected the city with Calamaria, the suburb of wealthy villas, to which affluent families of all religions had moved after 1880. This was ethnically the most mixed area of the whole town: next to the tram depot was the Villa Allatini, where Abdul Hamid was imprisoned in 1909; nearby were the Allatini flourmills, and the Villa Fernandez, which belonged to another prosperous Sephardic family. A little to the north were the homes of wealthy Greek families – Abbot, Zannas, Rongitti and Hadzilazaros – as well as villas belonging to Donmeh merchants and Turks. In addition, the majority of the several thousand Europeans resident in the city lived there. The rapid growth of this suburb reflected the desire of many prosperous families to flee the increasingly cramped conditions of the town. Malaria and cholera, both endemic in nineteenth century Salonica, may have been easier to avoid in the suburb. The streets too were probably safer at night than those of the old town, where Albanians, Circassians, and Jewish robbers known as *Cabadahis* enjoyed a particularly bad reputation. Yet beyond the walls there were dangers too. The winter of 1880, when the whole city was terrorised by reports of a band of fifty Circassian brigands in the vicinity, must have been especially alarming for the unprotected inhabitants of Calamaria. And only a few years before the First World War, an Englishman, resident in Salonica, was captured by brigands as he stepped off the tram and walked into his front garden. Yet such incidents did not discourage the perceptible drift towards the suburbs.

Calamaria, with its 'marble palaces, along the fashionable drive by the sea, screened by flowering acacias and garlanded with roses', was reserved for the wealthy. Salonica's other suburbs were less exclusive. To the west lay Bara, amidst the railway stations, the gas works and the new warehouses by the port. This area had been malarial swamp until it was drained in the 1870s; thereafter it had become known as the red-light district, a poor quarter of cheap shacks, taverns and inns housing rural visitors to the town. To its north lay the Turkish cemetery, to the west allotments, and along the seafront, the Bechtchinar gardens, laid out by Sabri Pacha. Ethnically, the Bara was dominated by Bulgarians and Jews, over fifteen thousand by 1914. But there was also a small community of Greek immigrants from Macedonia and Epiros, who would settle initially to represent their village or town in business dealings and commissions, before, if they were successful, moving on to establish permanent residence in the Greek quarters.

The other new area of settlement, to the east of the city, lay both geographically and socially between the Bara and Calamaria. Divided into the districts of Agia Triados and Transvaal (so-called because it was built during the Boer War), this quarter was largely Bulgarian, though it was depopulated after the turn of the century by the wave of emigration to Bulgaria itself, which was accelerated by the Greek boycott of Bulgarian tradesmen that the 'Thessaloniki Organization' coordinated in 1907.

Within the area enclosed by the city-walls, most of the roadways would, before 1900, have been unnamed, unpaved, tortuous and narrow. Finding one's way around was not easy; 'How useful the minarets are', commented one visitor, 'for guidebooks are not to be had at Salonica'. Even the best maps of the period confine themselves to naming a few major roads, following, no doubt, the practice of the inhabitants themselves, who identified areas of the city by nicknames or other strange appellations; '... there was *Utch Yomourta Mahalesi*, 'The Quarter of the Three Eggs', so-called because of a marble slab on the facade of an old house on which there were three spheres in bas relief; *A'l Fuego*, 'At the Fire', named thus because a fire in the nineties had destroyed most of the houses in the area; *Djade de Veinte*, 'The Avenue of Twenty', because it was twenty metres wide; and *Defterdar*, because the treasurer of the province had once lived in the neighbourhood'. In the Jewish quarter, the localities of various synagogues were known by sobriquets derived from puns or other odd associations: the Ashkenazi synagogue (otherwise known as 'Russia' or 'Moscow') was to be found in Cal de la Mosca; Calabria, in Cal de los Zinganos (evoking both the proximity of the gypsy quarter and the supposed dishonesty of rich members of this congregation); Poulia was known as 'Macarron' after the favoured food of its members; Chalom, attended by the saltmakers, was dubbed 'Chavdo' from the Aragonese dialect for 'insipid', and also 'Gamello', after the camels which were used to transport the salt from the salt-works.

Only in the late 1800s were the first efforts made to create a network of straight roads through the city. Sabri Pacha supervised construction of the road named after him, which led from the governor's residence, the Konak, to the quay; the Rue Midhat Pacha, running from the Konak eastwards to the city wall, was built by chain gangs of prisoners, organised by the newly-formed municipal council. In the 1880s, the quay and Istira, the grain market, were paved with stone, the Rue Egnatia was straightened, and the Boulevard Hamidie, running parallel with Sabri Pacha on the east of the city, was built along the line of the demolished south-eastern *muraille*. Thus by the time of the 1890 fire, the city was criss-crossed by a network of thoroughfares which thirty years earlier had not existed.

Yet one should not exaggerate: these roads, the most important in the town, long remained narrow and badly paved. *Djade de Veinte* was a rare road indeed.

Even the main street, Rue Egnatia, which divided the Turkish and Donmeh habitations from the Greek and Jewish quarters in the lower town, was barely thirty metres across, an undistinguished street lined with the small shops of greengrocers, blacksmiths and saddlers. Rue Sabri Pacha, the other chief thoroughfare, which crossed Egnatia and ran down the hill to the quay, was even narrower; just below its junction with Egnatia, a wooden canopy stretched overhead right across the street. The area bounded by these two roads and the quay was where the Greek and Jewish communities were concentrated: most of the city's synagogues and churches were clustered here, together with public bath-houses, and the old bazaars – the Bezesteni, and the Oun Kapan flour market. The latter, which served as a general market, was a still active example of the commercial practices of earlier centuries - set in a square surrounded by old buildings and dilapidated stalls, it was crowded with Vlach shepherds selling off lambs, villagers bringing in barrows of lime, sellers of 'tinware and earthenware, rice and lentils, live poultry and mutton, prints and calicos, sea urchins and squids', and above the sea of heads, the enormous baskets of the hamals, carrying the purchases of local householders.

Rue Sabri Pacha, which divided this area from the commercial quarter to the west, formed a striking contrast to the Oun Kapan. This street had become the modern retail centre of the city, where luxury imports were prominently displayed. 'Montres Omega, or, argent et métal', advertised Mallah Frères, at number 78. Further along were the military outfitters, boot-makers, confectioners, fur shops, stationers and money-changers. Lower down, the street widened to form a small piazza flanked by hotels and cafés, including, on the corner, the legendary Floca's.

The commercial quarter to the west has already been mentioned. The Turkish tanners who first occupied this area had long since moved away to make room for the Istira, the wheat market, which contained warehouses, and the offices of money-lenders and traders. These lay adjacent to the new port, and after 1867, when the south-western stretch of the walls was demolished, the carts bringing grain from outside could travel directly to this quarter without entering the city.

To the north of the Istira, on the other side of the Rue des Francs, lay the European quarter. This included the old French and newer German churches, as well as the Théâtre Français, the Deutsche Klub, and most of the banks and expensive hotels, bookshops and chemists. At the heart of this area was the Imperial Ottoman Bank, blown up by Bulgarian terrorists in April, 1903, and next to it, the renowned Hotel Colombo, recommended by Murray's Handbook as the best in the town.

Along the length of the sea-front, bounded by the port on the west, and the White Tower on the east, ran the quay – 'hotels and modern houses, warehouses and magazinos, in the uninteresting style of European civilization'. Buildings of three or four storeys such as the Splendid Palace Hotel, on whose roof the first British contingent ashore in 1915 set up a signal station, or the Hotels Olympos and d'Angleterre, which flanked the southern exit of Rue Sabri Pacha, were not uncommon along the front, though rare elsewhere in the city. They were, to visitors arriving by sea (as most did), the first indications of Salonica's commercial prosperity. And they had another function: hotel balconies overlooking a wide street provided an appropriate setting for orators and politicians – a setting not easily found in Salonica, and highly prized. Crowds gathered to hear the speeches made from the first floor of the Olympos Hotel in July, 1908, at the start of the Young Turk Revolution, and similar scenes were repeated on the quay during the arrival of Venizelos in 1916.

For many travellers, the quay typified all that was worst about the manner in which European trends had come to the city. Side by side with the hotels were the cafés, cabarets and music-halls, that constituted the night-life of the city – 'red frocks and shrill music, Turkish guitars, gypsy violins, Greek melodies and dirty French songs', noted Bérard on his arrival in 1896.

The electric trams, the new water system and the gas works seemed creditable but half-finished initiatives, which had only slightly affected the quality of life. According to Lucy Garnett '... some of the Salonica streets were often, in the summer, simply impassable, so poisonous was the atmosphere, owing to the accumulations of refuse of every description thrown into them from the neighbouring houses'. 'Fortified with a bottle of eau-de-Cologne and a revolver, I shall sally forth to inspect the Jewish and Turkish quarters of the town ...' wrote V.J. Seligman.

Which was preferable – the mundane modernity of the front, or the picturesque squalor that lay behind it? Most Western visitors seem to have been unable to make up their mind. The dilemma is apparent in an article written after the First World War by the Englishman H.G. Woods: '... with the exception of the comparatively new street, which ran along the quay and round the head of the bay, the city used to be dirty and squalid, and many of its thoroughfares were narrow and winding. Indeed, in spite of beautiful churches, bastioned walls and a Roman arch, one's outstanding pre-War impression was that the town constituted something isolated and different from anything else in Europe, and that it was a compromise between the materialistic and vulgar on one side, and the ancient and beautiful on the other".

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