

Turkish Macedonia then and Now

History of the Ottoman Empire in Macedonia

- Thessaloniki was named after King Phillip I's daughter . (Mazower 2004:15.).
- The Ottomans captured the City of Thessaloniki in 1430.
- Under the Sultan's authority all subjects were owned by him, and his property. (Farah 1993:30.).
- The Ottoman pursued the development and improvement of the city making it "a centre of trade, learning, religious piety and administrative control (Mazower 2004:30.)
- Ottomans constructed a multitude of Mosques, Market places and communal sites. (Mazower 2004:32.).
- The Ottomans accepted Sephardic jews after their expulsion from Spain, the jews and Ottomans helped expand Thessaloniki's economy..
- Jews eventually oversaw economic commerce and the Ottoman Muslims as governors and tax collectors. (Mazower 2004:53.).
- After the failed siege of Vienna, the Ottoman empire's power gradually began to shrink, in the 19th-20th centuries nationalistic tensions between Bulgarians, Greeks and Ottomans in the empire. (Farah 1995:128.).
- Thessaloniki eventually removed from Ottoman hands after the 1st Balkan War .
- The white Tower was created to improve the defences of Thessaloniki. Building on existing Byzantine defences. (Goodwin 1993:106.).
- Ottomans modernised the city's defences in an attempt to prepare it for the Cannon siege tactics.



Vadari Fort/ Heptapyrgion

Figure 1:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/kyrsos/15340092321>

The effect of war on Ottoman Heritage sites in Thessaloniki

- During the 1st Balkan war and 1st world war multiple Byzantine and Ottoman heritage sites were damaged by bombs and battles fought across towns and cities in Macedonia.
- Throughout the rest of Macedonia as well as Thrace Ottoman sites were attacked by Nationalists who sought to overthrow Ottoman supremacy and status symbols. (Meskell 1998:32.).
- Western European Archaeologists would not take the risk to explore archaeology in Macedonia during the early 1900s because of the danger war and the ethnic tensions caused, they were more interested in Athens and Southern Greece. (Kotsakis 1998:48)

Ottoman Heritage sites in Thessaloniki and typical features of Ottoman Architecture

Sinan was a chief architect commissioned by the Sultans in the 1500s-1650s his architectural techniques were adopted. (Goodwin 1993:10.).

Minarets and Islamic style arches, combined with a Renaissance blend of Corinthian style columns dominate Ottoman Religious and civil buildings, inspiring views for tourists in Thessaloniki as the Ottoman sites are instantly recognisable from Byzantine sites . (Goodwin 1993:13-14.).

Ottoman Heritage attractions in Thessaloniki

- The White Tower, Designed so that the Ottomans could defend the city against cannon attack
- Pasa Hamami (Phoenix Baths) public baths built in Islamic style, arches, minarets and Domes
- Bedesten (Ottoman Market) Civil market place constructed by the Ottomans in Islamic style
- Alysseos Tower Tzinkiri Kule, adapted from Byzantine defences and bolstered with Ottoman defensive architecture
- Vadari Fort Used by the Ottomans as a major fortifications and used as a prison until 1905
- Bey Hamami (Paradise baths) Baths constructed for high class members of Ottoman society .



The White Tower

Figure 2: https://en.wikivoyage.org/wiki/Northern_Greece



Bey Hamami Ottoman Baths

Figure 3: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bey_Hamam#/media/File:20160516_147_thessaloniki.jpg

Argument Ottoman heritage VS byzantine heritage in Thessaloniki

- In Thessaloniki, there has been neglect of some Ottoman sites in favour of Byzantine sites.
- Excavations revealed that Ottoman Mosques had been adapted from previous Byzantine Churches. (Kotsakis 1998:47.).
- Kostas Kotsakis a Greek archaeologist argues that it is "Greeks themselves who saw an interest in archaeological excavations in Thessaloniki as European schools showed a relative lack of interest in Macedonian sites in the 1900s." (Kotakis 1998:47-48.).
- Byzantine excavations had a "purist" character, aiming at restoring the initial byzantine heritage of a monument". (Kotakis 1998:48.). Indicating that Greeks had shown preference on preserving byzantine heritage.
- Mehmet Ozdogan a Turkish scholar and archaeologist . Argues that in turkey byzantine heritage sites are well looked after and the Turkish government aim to preserve all heritage sites of importance to Anatolian history. (Ozdogan 1998:117.).
- Ozdogan acknowledges Turkey has on occasion participated in 'Selective Destruction' of Antiquities. . (Ozdogan 1998:118.).
- This may present part of the reason why neither Greeks or Turks are not enthusiastic about each other's heritage buildings. Therefore showing Favour for Byzantine sites in Thessaloniki.
- The current mayor of Thessaloniki vows in a newspaper to encourage the preservation of Ottoman sites .
- ""What we did was to make this history visible again. This history was hidden. It was hidden because the Greeks were misinformed about the Turks." (Mayor of Thessaloniki, Daily Sabah).
- Therefore Ottoman heritage was overlooked by archaeologists and Thessaloniki's Heritage promotion.
- The Change in attitudes towards Ottoman heritage sites demonstrated by the Mayor of Thessaloniki indicates that there will be better preservation of Ottoman sites in Thessaloniki, in turn helping promote all areas of Thessaloniki's heritage.

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Bedesten Ottoman Market Place

Figure 4:

<https://www.thecaravan.gr/bedesten/>