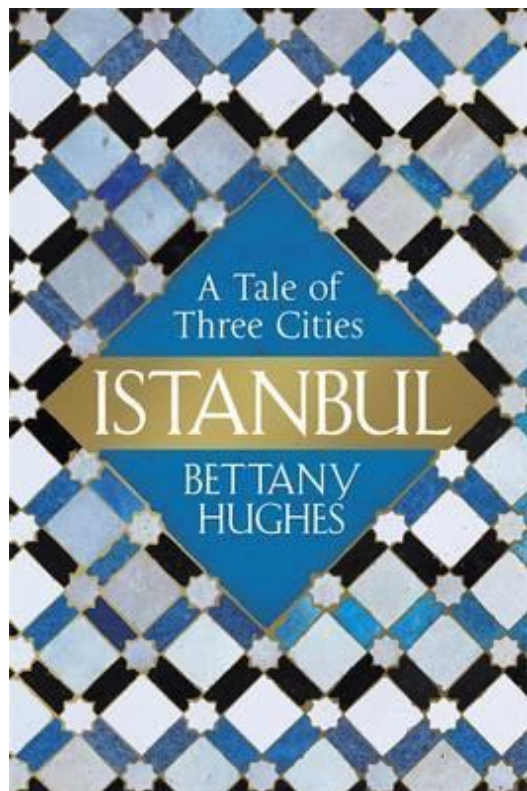


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Book info:

Author: *Bettany Hughes*

Format: *832 pages*

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Plot:

Istanbul has always been a place where stories and histories collide and crackle, where the idea is as potent as the historical fact. From the Qu'ran to Shakespeare, this city with three names - Byzantium, Constantinople, Istanbul - resonates as an idea and a place, and overflows its boundaries - real and imagined. Standing as the gateway between the East and West, it has served as the capital of the Roman, Byzantine, Latin and Ottoman Empires. For much of its history it was known simply as The City, but, as Bettany Hughes reveals, Istanbul is not just a city, but a story. In this epic new biography, Hughes takes us on a dazzling historical journey through the many incarnations of one of the world's greatest cities. As the longest-lived political entity in Europe, over the last 6,000 years Istanbul has absorbed a mosaic of micro-cities and cultures all gathering around the core. At the latest count archaeologists have measured forty-two human habitation layers. Phoenicians, Genoese, Venetians, Jews, Vikings, Azeris all called a patch of this earth their home. Based on meticulous research and new archaeological evidence, this captivating portrait of the momentous life of Istanbul is visceral, immediate and scholarly narrative history at its finest.

Additional Information:

About Bettany Hughes

Bettany Hughes is an award-winning historian, author and broadcaster. Her previous books (HELEN OF TROY: GODDESS, PRINCESS, WHORE and THE HEMLOCK CUP: SOCRATES, ATHENS AND THE SEARCH FOR THE GOOD LIFE) were published to great critical acclaim and worldwide success. Hughes has made a number of factual films and documentaries for the BBC, Channel 4, PBS, National Geographic, Discovery, The History Channel and ABC. She is a Research Fellow of King's College London and has been honoured with numerous awards including the Norton Medlicott Medal for History.
www.bettanyhughes.co.uk / @bettanyhughes

Review quote

This is historical narrative brimming with brio and incident. Hughes's portraits are written with a zesty flourish ... Istanbul is a visceral, pulsating city. In Bettany Hughes's life-filled and life-affirming history, steeped in romance and written with verve, it has found a sympathetic and engaging champion' -- Justin Marozzi GUARDIAN Bettany Hughes' Istanbul is built deliberately on what is passing as well as past. It is a story of numerous overlapping names, changes that often happened more slowly than the guidebooks tell us. Her subject is the city that was Byzantium for some 900 years, Christian Constantinople for another 1,000, Islamic Istanbul, then Istanbul - while also being New Rome, a Diamond Between Two Sapphires and The World's Desire...assiduous...passionate...there have been swirling tidal shifts around Istanbul since she began this book 10 years or so ago. She is celebrating citizenry of the world at a time when that idea is in retreat, damning the "otherness" that the west has bestowed upon the east when throughout the world there are more and more "others"...She is a wistful and impassioned cosmopolitan who has produced a challenging story for 2017. -- Peter Stothard FINANCIAL TIMES Her latest book, Istanbul: A Tale of Three Cities, is a particular stroke of genius...Over the years the city has had three names - Byzantium, Constantinople and Istanbul so in a vivid rattle she hurls Xerxes, Alcibiades, Constantine, Justinian, Theodora, Suleyman the Magnificent and a sometimes overwhelming cast of thousands before us...It is a story well worth

telling as the region continues to implode, the final or at least latest lashings out of the Ottoman Empire's collapse...The book is littered with historical echoes that...are impossible to ignore...there are wonderful anecdotes...She concludes with an encomium to Istanbul as a world city - literally, a cosmopolis - where faiths and ethnicities are brought together by learning or trade...not an original thought but one that in this particularly troubled moment, for bomb-hit Istanbul and the rest of us, bears repeating. -- Richard Spencer THE TIMES With a broadcaster's delight, Bettany Hughes...throws herself into the gargantuan task of capturing the history of a city that spans 3,000 years, and whose story has been woefully neglected compared with other great urban centres...Hughes reconstructs Byzantium, Constantinople and Istanbul as living, breathing landscapes...her scholarship is impressive...her enthusiasm radiates...Her subject...is irresistibly rich. The place known simply as "The City", Hughes notes, has long lived a "double life - as a real place and as a story"...The tale she tells of the metropolis at the crossroads of the Earth is textured, readable and often compelling. -- Louise Callaghan SUNDAY TIMES A magisterial new biography...Bettany Hughes transports the reader on a magic-carpet-like journey through 8,000 years of history...in a vivid narrative dotted with colourful characters and fascinating tangents...the quintessential historical overview of a city racing up the modern political agenda. -- Richard Turner THE LADY Fiery and magnificent new biography of Istanbul...Hughes does a fantastic job of cramming all this history into a fluid and engaging narrative. She also possesses a great turn of phrase, such as when she describes Hagia Sophia as seeming "to be suspended by a golden chain from heaven"...A gripping and erudite book. -- Stav Sherez CATHOLIC HERALD Award-winning historian Bettany Hughes pieces together the history of Istanbul in a riveting biography of a brilliant, bloodied city. -- Madeleine Keane SUNDAY INDEPENDENT (IRELAND) Ten years in the researching and writing, it's a glittering mosaic of a history, packing the stories of three cities - Byzantium, Constantinople and Istanbul - into one volume, from their earliest settlement in 6000BC, to the 20th Century. -- Caroline Sanderson THE BOOKSELLER

Review Text

This is historical narrative brimming with brio and incident. Hughes's portraits are written with a zesty flourish ... Istanbul is a visceral, pulsating city. In Bettany Hughes's life-filled and life-affirming history, steeped in romance and written with verve, it has found a sympathetic and engaging champion' Justin

Marozzi GUARDIAN