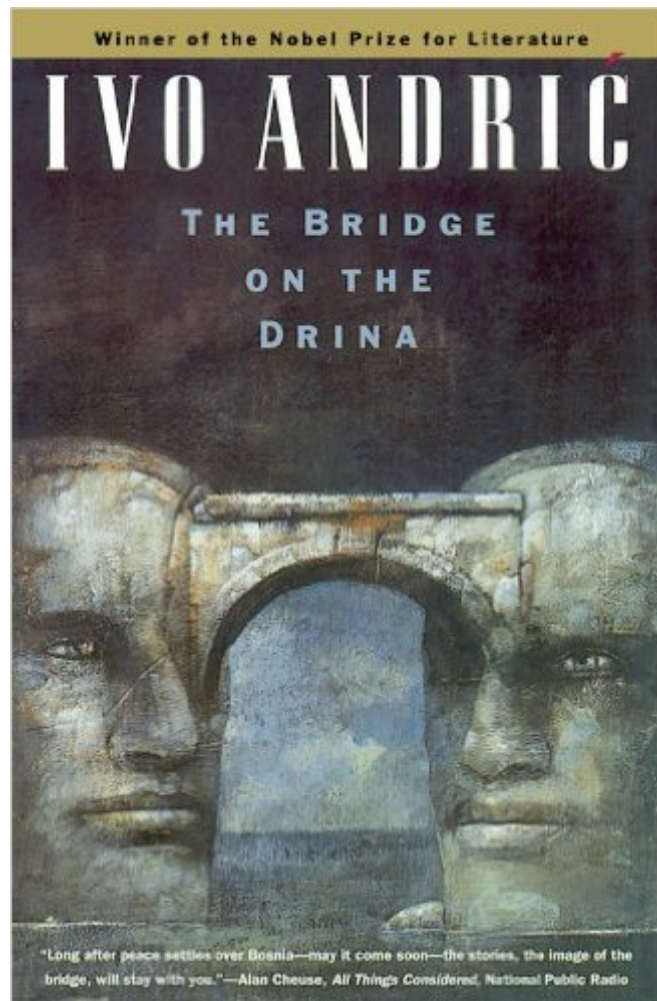


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The Bridge On The Drina (Phoenix Fiction)



Synopsis

The Bridge on the Drina is a vivid depiction of the suffering history has imposed upon the people of Bosnia from the late 16th century to the beginning of World War I. As we seek to make sense of the current nightmare in this region, this remarkable, timely book serves as a reliable guide to its people and history. "No better introduction to the study of Balkan and Ottoman history exists, nor do I know of any work of fiction that more persuasively introduces the reader to a civilization other than our own. It is an intellectual and emotional adventure to encounter the Ottoman world through Andric's pages in its grandiose beginning and at its tottering finale. It is, in short, a marvelous work, a masterpiece, and very much sui generis. . . . Andric's sensitive portrait of social change in distant Bosnia has revelatory force." "William H. McNeill, from the introduction" The dreadful events occurring in Sarajevo over the past several months turn my mind to a remarkable historical novel from the land we used to call Yugoslavia, Ivo Andric's The Bridge on the Drina." "John M. Mohan, Des Moines Sunday Register Born in Bosnia, Ivo Andric (1892-1975) was a distinguished diplomat and novelist. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1961. His books include The Damned Yard: And Other Stories, and The Days of the Consuls.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Readers who enjoyed "One Hundred Years of Solitude" will love this book, for while it is similar in feel to that masterpiece, it is broader in scope. Readers looking for insight into the labyrinth of Balkan history will find here a useful starting point. At heart, this is a book about civilization and its

changes. It pivots upon the contrast between the small parochial existence of the quiet Bosnian town where the bridge is the central and everlasting feature versus the wider world of Balkan politics where Ottoman Turkey, Orthodox Serbia, and Catholic Austria-Hungary wage a centuries-long battle for political domination. The book chronicles the bridge and the town for over three centuries. It is filled with memorable characters, soldiers, lovers, saloon-keepers, priests, and town leaders. There is the 19th-century schoolmaster who embodies the parochial village so perfectly. He is better-educated than most of the townspeople, but only slightly. This reputed wisdom gives him the arrogance to act as the town historian, a duty he fulfills by keeping a small notebook in which he fails to record historical events. Even the seminal affairs of 1878, when the region was transferred from the Ottomans to the Habsburgs, merits only a few lines in his notebook because he judges that these events are simply not terribly important. And that captures the essence of the book: events in the wider world are deemed unimportant in the village until they come, like the flood in the early pages, in a torrent of change and surprise. Thus does the town evolve, isolated from, yet thoroughly buffeted by, the great historical affairs of the centuries. In the end Pavle the merchant finds that this myopic approach has led him to ruin.

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