

Chapter 1 : A Coffin for Dimitrios by Eric Ambler

A Coffin for Dimitrios has 6, ratings and reviews. Bill said: When I first heard "ISIL" substituted for "ISIS," I thought "What the heck does the.

Until recently, the name Eric Ambler meant about as much to me as it probably did to most people. If Ian Fleming or Tom Clancy comes to mind when spy novels are mentioned, you are in for a big surprise when you enter Ambler territory, where the only dashing hero serving the national interest is likely to be taking his orders from the Kremlin. The hero and narrator of *A Coffin for Dimitrios* is Charles Latimer, a self-effacing British economics professor who has launched a new career as a spy novelist. While on vacation in Istanbul, he meets the ingratiating but sinister Colonel Haki at a party who is anxious to make the acquaintance of one of his favorite authors. After they have lunch the next day, Haki invites Latimer to his office where he poses the question: Haki describes him as "A dirty type, common, cowardly, scum. In a pattern that is repeated throughout his career, Dimitrios betrays his partner to the police and makes his getaway. His criminal career involves pimping, heroin peddling, assassination and spying for the highest bidder. From the outset, Latimer wants to know more about Makropolous. What had become of his money? What had he done with his life in between capers? What did his accomplices, who like Dhri Mohammad were betrayed one by one, think of him? Latimer tells himself, "If you could find those people and get the answers you would have the material for what would surely be the strangest of biographies. In the course of his travels, he makes the discovery that Dimitrios is not just a "dirty type" as Colonel Haki put it, but "a unit in a dying system. To escape a pogrom against Greeks in Izmir, Turkey in described by Ambler in chilling journalistic detail, Makropolous stows away on a ship destined for Greece where he would escape persecution as well as prosecution for the murder of the moneylender. Siantos also introduces Latimer to his next informant, a journalist named Marukakis employed by a French news agency in Sofia. But a caveat is attached to the recommendation: They were sitting in a restaurant, and now Siantos glanced round furtively and lowered his voice. I happen to know that he has. Latimer was prepared for nothing less horrible than leprosy. Communist tendencies," concluded Siantos in a whisper. Latimer raised his eyebrows. All the Communists I have ever met have been highly intelligent. It is dangerous to say such things, my friend. Marxist thought is forbidden in Greece. Recounted by a series of informants, some almost as sordid as Dimitrios himself, we learn that his criminal talents figure in a pivotal event in the rise of fascism. In President Stambulisky of Bulgaria fell victim to a rightwing terrorist plot. Although not as signal an event as the rise of Mussolini or Hitler, the overthrow of Stambulisky had all the earmarks of Balkan politics that can be seen on display in recent years. Dimitrios Makropolous not only enters the picture as a hired assassin; but as a bursar for the Eurasian Credit Trust advancing funds on their behalf for the overthrow of Stambulisky. Eventually, Makropolous ends up on the board of directors of this "respectable" institution that has its tentacles planted throughout Eastern Europe. The "dying system" that Makropolous exploited is unfortunately very much with us today. According to Eduardo Galeano: It acted as a vehicle for the disappearance of loot procured by the Cosa Nostra from contraband and abductions, and it was the dumping ground for dollars earmarked for the Polish unions fighting the communist regime. There are lots more like that in Europe. Its head office is in Paris but it operates in the Balkans. Amongst other things it finances the clandestine manufacture of heroin in Bulgaria for illicit export. His suppliers in Sofia would pack the drugs into a coffin that was destined for Paris, where the gang packaged and sold it on the retail market. It appeared that customs officials were reluctant to violate the sanctity of the dead. Makropolous eventually betrays Peters and the rest of the gang, just as he had betrayed Dhri Mohammad in Izmir. Yes, he had the money; but there was more than that to it. He dominated us because he knew precisely what he wanted and precisely how to get it with the least possible trouble and at the lowest possible cost. He knew how to find the people to work for him, too; and, when he had found them, he knew how to handle them. The two would track down and make copies of maps that revealed the location of mines in the contested Straits of Otranto. Just as importantly, the Yugoslav government could under no conditions discover that the maps had been purloined, otherwise they would simply shift the mines to a new location. In contrast to the dashing exploits of a James

Bond, who might have rappelled into a fortress guarded by Ninjas in order to steal the map, Grodek and Makropolous devise a plan that sounds much more consistent with the examples set by CIA or FBI agents who have agreed to spy for the Kremlin. They appeal to the greed and the venality of a government employee who has access to the maps. In a bravura passage that takes the form of a letter from Latimer to Marukakis, the seduction, extortion and eventual destruction of a lowly clerk named Bulic is described in chilling detail in chapter nine. Posing as a powerful German businessman trying to line up support for a bid from his company, Grodek wines and dines Bulic and his wife. Showering flattery and a small fortune on the couple, he eventually wins them over in an elaborate confidence game. Assuming that nothing more than simple graft is involved, Bulic convinces himself that nobody would be seriously harmed by a little favoritism on behalf of the gracious and generous Grodek. Makropolous enters the picture after the couple has been softened up. The ex-pimp and heroin smuggler represents himself as somebody even more powerful than Grodek, who is "enormously rich" and "believed to control as many as twenty-seven companies. Allesandro is an Italian agent himself. In just a matter of hours, Bulic has lost more money than he ever received from Grodek. He goes back the next night only to lose even more. Since Makropolous has vouched for them, they must repay their debt immediately. When Bulic pleads poverty, an alternative is put on the table: Gasping for breath and with pain and bleeding at the mouth, he was flung into a chair while Dimitrios explained coldly that the only risk he ran was in not doing what he was told. This was not a "bad apple," but the personification of the crisis of European society that has not been resolved to this date: They were no more than baroque abstractions. Good Business and Bad Business were the elements of the new theology. Dimitrios was not evil. He was logical and consistent; as logical and consistent in the European jungle as the poison gas called Lewisite and the shattered bodies of children killed in the bombardment of an open town.

Chapter 2 : a coffin for dimitrios | Download eBook pdf, epub, tuebl, mobi

A Coffin for Dimitrios, originally published in England in under the title of A Mask for Dimitrios, is considered his most classic work.

This is the 36th installment of our ongoing Friday blog series highlighting great but forgotten books. But one of his classic novels has taken on more meaning for me lately, what with the daily drumbeat of sour economic news: More than a quarter-century has passed since I first enjoyed *A Coffin for Dimitrios*. However, as I picked up my battered old copy and sat with it under my reading lamp, I marveled once again at how Ambler blended such well-delineated characters within his corkscrew of a plot, its subtext shocking us with its insight. The first thing I realized was how fresh and relevant the story seems today, focusing as it does on the dark side of human nature and reminding us that problems in the Balkans have been part of our history for generations. Finally, I understood why this novel has been so influential on both writers and filmmakers. Latimer meets Colonel Haki, a Turkish police official and fan of detective fiction, who wants the Englishman to write a novel in the future featuring a plot he has concocted. But his curiosity is piqued when Haki starts telling him more about the discovery of the body of underworld enforcer and master criminal Dimitrios Makropolous, washed up on a beach. Like the mythical Keyzer Soze from the film *The Usual Suspects*, Dimitrios was an international gangster, murderer, trafficker in women, spy, and assassin-for-hire, who hid behind different names and identities, operating for a shadowy banking group the Eurasian Credit Trust and carrying out the dark deeds required by his paymasters. However, Latimer must also remain wary of his researches. He was logical and consistent; as logical and consistent in the European jungle as the poison gas called Lewisite and the shattered bodies of children killed in the bombardment of an open town. As Charles Latimer pursues information about his subject, he encounters the sinister and obese Dane, Peters aka Petersen, a former partner of Dimitrios who was double-crossed and sent to prison. There is a chilling interlude when Peters sends Latimer to meet the retired spymaster, Grodek, who is spending his retirement in Switzerland. Via a series of letters, we learn how Dimitrios and Grodek entrapped a low-level government clerk named Bulic and his wife, who had sought financial and social advancement. Bulic was kicked in the abdomen and then as he bent forward retching, in the face, gasping for breath and with pain and bleeding in the mouth, he was flung into a chair while Dimitrios explained coldly that the only risk he ran was in not doing what he was told. The end of the journey for Latimer finds him agreeing to join Peters in another sting operation, this one meant to flush out Dimitrios from behind his mask. In a tense and anxiety-inducing climax, the British author and protagonist comes face to face with his quarry, only to realize that Dimitrios is actually the personification of the crises that Europe was facing in their era. A pivotal novel in the thriller fiction genre, and a remarkable work of existentialist literature, *A Coffin for Dimitrios* blends politics, espionage, banking, and the underworld together to show how all of those factors are essential to the foundations of modern society. No matter what situation we find ourselves in, the darkness in our nature is always visible. Posted by Ali Karim at 8:

Chapter 3 : A Coffin for Dimitrios by Eric Ambler | calendrierdelascience.com

The Mask of Dimitrios is a American film noir directed by Jean Negulesco and written by Frank Gruber, based on the novel of the same name written by Eric Ambler (in the United States, it was published as A Coffin for Dimitrios).

It is a statement of his habitual emotional attitude; the attitude which his desires need for their fulfilment and which his fears demand for their protection from prying eyes. He wears it like a devil mask; a device to evoke in others the emotions complementary to his own. If he is afraid, then he must be feared, if he desires, then he must be desired. Charles Latimer, professor at a university, and like many men of his profession also a writer of espionage thrillers, was on vacation in Istanbul when he received an invitation to view the body of a notorious criminal named Dimitrios. This brush with a real criminal starts Latimer on an odyssey to build a file on Dimitrios under the guise of research for a book, but the journey was more about satisfying his own curiosity about the man. Eric Ambler, a left leaning intellectual, fully expected the Soviet Union to be an ally of Britain and his books from this period have sympathetic Soviet block characters. This book was published in just before Germany declared war on Poland. Ambler wrote five stellar thrillers between and of which this is considered his masterpiece. He continued to write after that, but could not capture the spark of his earlier writing. The must read list: Uncommon Danger , US title: Eric Ambler the Godfather of the espionage thriller. Now Latimer is a bit of prig Latimer, I have read one of your books. There was about it an atmosphere of intolerance, of prejudice, of ferocious moral rectitude that I found quite unnerving. You are the only nation in the world that believes it has a monopoly of ordinary common sense. They were no more than baroque abstractions. Good Business and Bad Business were elements of the new theology. Dimitrios was not evil. He was logical and consistent; as logical and consistent in the European jungle as the poison gas called Lewisite and the shattered bodies of children killed in the bombardment of an open town. It remains faithful to the book except for the fact that the relationship between Peters and Latimer is much warmer. Latimer meets a man named Peters, but he could have been called X or Y or Z because his name is a chimera easily changed with just a swirl of the hand. They form an uneasy alliance. Latimer has his teeth firmly sunk in the story and even though he has reservations about his partner he has to see this through. Latimer wondered if he had ever before disliked anyone quite as much as he now disliked Mr. It was incredible that he should believe in this tawdry nonsense of his. Yet believe in it he obviously did. It was that belief which made the man so loathsome. If he had his tongue in his cheek he would have been a good joke. As it was he anything but a joke. His mind was divided too neatly. With one half he could peddle drugs and buy rentes and read Poems Erotiques, while with the other he could excrete a warm, sickly fluid to conceal his obscene soul. You could do nothing but dislike him. The looming menace of another war that would forever change the name of THE world war to the first world war was beginning to be realized. Governments had risen and fallen; men and women had worked, had starved, had made speeches, had fought, had been tortured, had died. Hope had come and gone, a fugitive in the scented bosom of illusion. Men had learned to sniff the heady dreamstuff of the soul and wait impassively while the lathes turned the guns for their destruction. For me the story started slow, but built nicely. I can tell this is the type of book that improves with each reading. The pacing once it gets going is nicely maintained. The characters are truly dangerous people and I began to wonder how Latimer was going to continue to ask impertinent questions without losing his nose or his life. Dimitrios is kept off screen ;and yet, his menacing apparition lurks in every paragraph. The grand finale is a pyrotechnical display of heroics, betrayal, and greed.

Chapter 4 : Swans Commentary: Eric Ambler's "A Coffin For Dimitrios," by Louis Proyect - lproy07

A Coffin for Dimitrios (Charles Latimer Series #1) by Eric Ambler The classic story of an ordinary man seemingly out of his depth, this is Ambler's most widely acclaimed novel, "one of the masterpieces of the genre" (*The New York Times Book Review*).

Peters, whom Dimitrios double-crossed and sent to jail. Peters reveals that Dimitrios is actually alive and convinces Latimer to help him blackmail the villain. The dangerous and witty Dimitrios, though, tracks his blackmailers down, and Latimer is lucky to escape the gun battle that kills both Peters and Dimitrios. While mystery writer Charles Latimer is traveling in Turkey, he learns, by chance, about a criminal named Dimitrios who has turned up dead in the Bosphorus River. Latimer tracks Dimitrios from his first known crime, murder and robbery in Smyrna during the Turkish holocaust against the Armenians, to his immigration to Greece as a refugee, to Sofia, where he was involved in an assassination attempt. In Sofia, Latimer discovers a man named Mr. Peters searching his room. Peters offers Latimer a chance to make a lot of money, but he does not elaborate. Dimitrios was head of a drug-smuggling ring in Paris, and Mr. Peters was one of the management. Dimitrios turned his cohorts over to the police and fled when he became addicted to heroin and needed a cure. Peters tells Latimer that Dimitrios is alive. The dead man was also involved in the drug ring and tried to blackmail Dimitrios. Dimitrios killed the blackmailer and faked his own death. Peters convinces Latimer to help him blackmail Dimitrios, although Latimer refuses to take any of the earnings. They successfully get , francs from Dimitrios, and Peters believes there is no way Dimitrios can track them down. Peters and Latimer are about to celebrate their victory over champagne before Latimer returns to England, when Dimitrios appears with a gun. Latimer gives Peters the gun and goes for the police, though Dimitrios warns him Peters will shoot him. Latimer barely gets out the door before he hears shots. Running back in, he finds both Latimer and Dimitrios dead. Latimer removes all traces of himself and leaves the bodies with the blackmail money. He heads back to his normal life. This section contains words approx.

Chapter 5 : The Mask of Dimitrios () - IMDb

A Coffin for Dimitrios is a novel of obsession, first of the protagonist, Charles Latimer, and finally of the reader. It is a novel of a search as Latimer travels around the eastern Mediterranean.

Classic pre-war mystery in Graham Greene style. PhilipKinsella Dec 22, Part old style spy novel, park caricature of one, part a portrait of Europe in the late thirties. I cringed every time when I saw a Bulgarian name, city or place mentioned they were awfully mangled but that might be the way they had been known to the English world back then And yet it was. An English economics wonk with a successful career as a mystery writer, a stiff upper lip and button-upped tight shirt to go with his button-upped tight moral code falls in with one of the most slimy, unctuous grifters to grace literature. Peters, a cherub of corruption with glowing false teeth. While on holiday in Turkey he meets a roguish member of the Turkish secret police, another delightful minor character. They drink coffee much coffee is drunk in this book , then Hakkis takes Latimer to the morgue to see the catch of the day, the body of Dimitrios which was found floating in the Bosphorus. The police accounts shot through with gaps and holes. Perhaps fetched a camel and sojourned to Ephesus. Spent a pensive hour at the home of Our Holy Mother. I certainly would not then decide as a lark to look into the life and death of a Greek-speaking Turkish super villain. Perhaps you remember the Levant and the Balkans was a murky quagmire of intrigue and death at that time. But, each to his own. I am glad he decides to because it makes for a fantastic story. With Latimer one globe trots about Southern Europe. One meets a colorful Marxist journalist who delivers my favorite line of the book, "Of course I was exaggerating. But it is agreeable sometimes to talk in primary colors even if you have to think in greys. Much of the books humor comes from this. He sets off to find out about him and finds himself involved in a real life spy novel and all is not what it seems. I enjoyed the style of writing and the nuances of a s spy story.

Chapter 6 : A Coffin for Dimitrios (Audiobook) by Eric Ambler | calendrierdelascience.com

This Eric Ambler classic espionage novel, whose protagonist is a mystery writer himself, was postmodern way back in

Life[edit] Ambler was born in London into a family of entertainers who ran a puppet show, with which he helped in his early years. Both parents also worked as music hall artists. However, his upbringing as an entertainer proved dominant and he soon moved to writing plays and other works. By the early s he was a copywriter at an advertising agency in London. After resigning he moved to Paris, where he met and married Louise Crombie, an American fashion correspondent. At that time, Ambler was politically a staunch anti-Fascist and like many others tended to regard the Soviet Union as the only real counterweight to fascist aggression " which was reflected in the fact that some of his early books include Soviet agents depicted positively and as sympathetic characters, the undoubted allies of the main protagonist. Like numerous like-minded people in different countries, Ambler was shocked and disillusioned by the Nazi-Soviet Pact of His post-war anti-Communist novel Judgment on Deltchev , based on the Stalinist purge-trials in Eastern Europe, caused him to be reviled by many former Communist Party and other progressive associates. He was commissioned into the Royal Artillery in He was soon reassigned to photographic units. He ended the war as a Lieutenant-Colonel and assistant director of the army film unit. After the war, he worked in the civilian film industry as a screenwriter, receiving an Academy Award nomination in for his work on the film The Cruel Sea , adapted from the novel by Nicholas Monsarrat. He did not resume writing under his own name until , entering the second of the two distinct periods in his writing. Five of his six early works are regarded as classic thrillers. He created the American detective TV series Checkmate. Ambler divorced Crombie in , marrying British-born film producer, screenwriter and longstanding right arm of Alfred and Alma Hitchcock, Joan Harrison the same year. The couple moved to Switzerland in and back to Britain 16 years later. Harrison died in in London. Ambler died in Owatonna Media sold these copyrights on to Coolabi Plc in , but retained a master licence in radio and audio rights. These rights are commercially licensed in the UK and abroad. He was also a successful screenwriter and lived in Los Angeles in his later years. Amongst other classic movies based on his work are Journey into Fear , starring Joseph Cotten , and an original screenplay, The October Man He wrote the screenplay for A Night to Remember about the sinking of the Titanic , along with many other screenplays, particularly those concerning stories and adventures at sea. He published his autobiography in , Here Lies Eric Ambler.

Chapter 7 : The Rap Sheet: The Book You Have to Read: "A Coffin for Dimitrios," by Eric Ambler

A Coffin for Dimitrios Summary & Study Guide Eric Ambler This Study Guide consists of approximately 42 pages of chapter summaries, quotes, character analysis, themes, and more - everything you need to sharpen your knowledge of A Coffin for Dimitrios.

Chapter 8 : The Mask of Dimitrios - Wikipedia

A Coffin for Dimitrios Quotes (showing of 15) "Yet, when these facts are seen side by side with other facts in the case, it is difficult not to become lost in superstitious awe. Their very absurdity seems to prohibit the use of the words 'chance' and 'coincidence.'"

Chapter 9 : Eric Ambler - Wikipedia

A pivotal novel in the thriller fiction genre, and a remarkable work of existentialist literature, A Coffin for Dimitrios blends politics, espionage, banking, and the underworld together to show how all of those factors are essential to the foundations of modern society. Unfortunately, society seems to require "enforcers" like Dimitrios.