

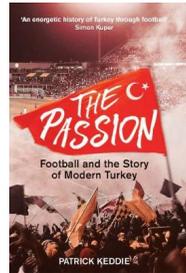
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The Passion: Football and the Story of Modern Turkey

Patrick Keddie

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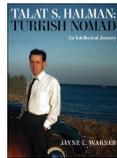
In 1981 a young semi-professional footballer - known as 'Imam Beckenbauer' for his piety and his dominant style of play - has his career cut short after a confrontation with Turkey's military junta. His name was Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and three decades later he is Turkey's most powerful ruler since Ataturk....'

Turkey is a nation obsessed with football. From the flares which cover the stadium with multi-coloured smoke and often bring play to a halt, to the 'conductors' - ultras who lead the 'walls of sound' at matches, Turkish football has always been an awesome spectacle. And yet, in this politically fraught country, caught between the Middle East and the West, football has also always been so much more. From the fan groups resisting the government in the streets and stands, to ambitious politicians embroiling clubs in Machiavellian shenanigans, football in Turkey is a site of power, anger, and resistance.

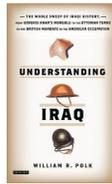
Journalist and football obsessive Patrick Keddie takes us on a wild journey through Turkey's role in the world's most popular game. He travels from the streets of Istanbul, where fans dodge tear gas and water cannons, to the plains of Anatolia, where women are fighting for their rights to wear shorts and play sports. He meets a gay referee facing death threats, Syrian footballers trying to piece together their shattered dreams, and Kurdish teams struggling to play football amid war. 'The Passion' also tells the story of the biggest match-fixing scandal in European football, and sketches its murky connections to the country's leadership. In doing so he lifts the lid on a rarely glimpsed side of modern Turkey.

Funny, touching and beautifully observed, this is the story of Turkey as we have never seen it before.

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