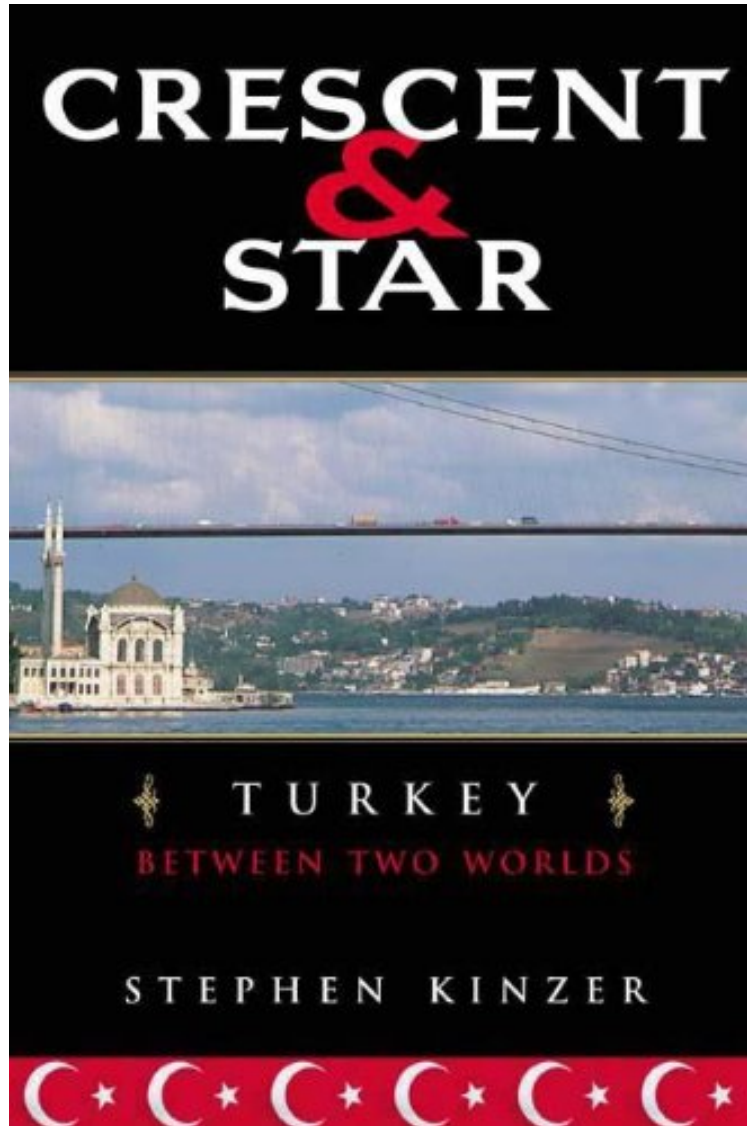


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## Crescent and Star: Turkey Between Two Worlds

*Von Stephen Kinzer*

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**Von Stephen Kinzer : Crescent and Star: Turkey Between Two Worlds** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Crescent and Star: Turkey Between Two Worlds:

Kurzbeschreibung"A sharp, spirited appreciation of where Turkey stands now, and where it may head." Carlin

Romano, The Philadelphia Inquirer

In the first edition of this widely praised book, Stephen Kinzer made the convincing claim that Turkey was the country to watch -- poised between Europe and Asia, between the glories of its Ottoman past and its hopes for a democratic future, between the dominance of its army and the needs of its civilian citizens, between its secular expectations and its Muslim traditions. In this newly revised edition of *Crescent and Star*, he adds much important new information on the many exciting transformations in Turkey's government and politics that have kept it in the headlines, and also shows how recent developments in both American and European policies (and not only the war in Iraq) have affected this unique and perplexing nation.

From Publishers Weekly

A passionate love for the Turkish people and an optimism that its ruling class can complete Turkey's transformation into a Western-style democracy mark Kinzer's reflections on a country that sits geographically and culturally at the crossroads between Europe and Asia. Kinzer, the former New York Times Istanbul bureau chief, gives a concise introduction to Turkey: Kemal Ataturk's post-WWI establishment of the modern secular Turkish state; the odd makeup of contemporary society, in which the military enforces Ataturk's reforms. In stylized but substantive prose, he devotes chapters to the problems he sees plaguing Turkish society: Islamic fundamentalism, frictions regarding the large Kurdish minority and the lack of democratic freedoms. Kinzer's commonsense, if naive, solution: the ruling military elite, which takes power when it feels Turkey is threatened, must follow the modernizing path of Ataturk whom Kinzer obviously admires a step further and increase human rights and press freedoms. Kinzer's journalistic eye serves him well as he goes beyond the political, vividly describing, for instance, the importance and allure of the narghile salon, where Turks smoke water pipes. Here, as elsewhere, Kinzer drops his journalist veneer and gets personal, explaining that he enjoys the salons in part "because the sensation of smoking a water pipe is so seductive and satisfying."

Readers who want a one-volume guide to this fascinating country need look no further. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

From Booklist

Akin to an exit interview with a country, Kinzer's book sums up his reportage for the New York Times from Turkey in the 1990s. He evocatively describes the customs of Turkish social life and also analyzes the paradoxes of its political system which, whatever its original justification in saving the country in the 1920s, no longer fits a more prosperous, more literate populace. Kinzer is, of course, talking about the nationalist, secularist legacy of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, preserved by the country's military, which regards it as a high-sacred duty. The problem with higher callings, as Kinzer never tires of recounting, is the lack of accountability: the government's security entities enjoy a "culture of impunity" that abets Turkey's poor image on the issue of human rights. Yet Kinzer recognizes that the military's influence, however much it inhibits democratization, stems from a real if obsessive fear of separatists and Islamicists. That paradox, and Turkey's options of facing either West or East, both geographically and figuratively, are ably presented by Kinzer's background on Turkey's contemporary scene. Gilbert Taylor

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