

Abstract

In several public appearances, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has claimed the legacy of Adnan Menderes, describing him as a martyr of democracy who was the first to oppose Kemalist rule in the country and vowed to complete his mission. The aim of this work is to verify how legitimate is this comparison of Erdoğan to the first freely elected prime minister of modern Turkey, Menderes, by means of a comparative analysis of both seemingly different regimes. At the same time, both regimes faced military coups, the legitimately elected DP government fell, and Menderes was executed, while Tayyip Erdoğan's regime fended off a coup attempt and further consolidated its power over the country. The secondary goal is to compare the causes of these military coups, what factors decided the different fate of the two politicians and to briefly evaluate the consequences. This diachronic comparison provides possible insights for understanding the preferences of the Turkish electorate and the specific dynamics of politics there.

In the introductory part, the theoretical framework is defined, in which key concepts are presented, which will be used in the subsequent comparative analysis. In the case of populism, democracy and the theory of authoritarian and hybrid regimes, these concepts are first introduced in general and then their relationship to Turkey is brought closer. The other presented concepts are primarily a specific Turkish phenomenon, specifically the ideology of Kemalism and the associated military "tutelage" of the Turkish armed forces and laicism, the last imagined concept is political Islam and the ideology of Millî Görüş. Other theoretical concepts, for example Erdoğanism, are introduced only in the relevant chapters of the comparison itself.

The comparison of the two regimes begins with a description of the formative years of the life of both politicians and the rise of their governments to power, serving to contextualize the topic. The comparison of already consolidated regimes is based on the premise that both politicians used populist agendas in contrast to the Kemalist ideology, in the individual chapters the concepts defined in the introduction in relation to the observed regimes are compared, namely right-wing populism in politics and economics, evaluation of the level and approach to democracy and inclusion of both governments in the typology of authoritarian or hybrid regimes. What follows is the relationship of the compared regimes with Kemalism and associated concepts of Turkish laicism and their attitude towards Islam and its politicization. In the last chapter, both military coups are compared and how the regimes dealt with the influence of the army.