

Of Hats, Jackets, and Turkish Politics

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Sep 4, 2017

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Just as cabinet members once followed Ataturk's sartorial lead, AKP officials today robe themselves in the casual blue tartan suit favored by President Erdogan.

In an era of populism, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is at the helm. After coming to power as Turkey's prime minister in 2003, Erdogan became president in 2014. In April, he won a referendum to become an executive-style president, simultaneously assuming the offices of head of state and head of government.

As one of us explains in *The New Sultan* (<https://www.newsultan.info/>), Erdogan has become the most unassailable Turkish politician since Mustafa Kemal Ataturk founded the Turkish Republic in his own image as a secular, Western, and European state. He had a strong military mandate which he used to carry out reforms to Europeanize Turkey. As Turkey's simultaneous liberator, reformer, and founder, Ataturk has an inescapable pull over the Turkish citizenry, even over detractors such as Erdogan -- a politician who was groomed in Turkey's anti-secular political Islamist movement...

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