

A b s t r a c t s

Comparative Toxicology Rule in Russia and Turkey

Fikret Adanir

The Ottoman and Russian Empires

A comparative analysis of their relationship

For centuries, the Russian Empire and the Ottoman Empire dominated vast areas of southern and south-eastern Europe. When territorial expansion turned small principalities into empires, the Ottoman Empire developed a pre-modern system of integration in the form of the Millet System through the issuing of rights and privileges to non-Islamic religious communities. The Russian Empire co-opted local elites, too, but it exerted stronger pressure for assimilation. The expansion of the Ottoman Empire to the northern shore of the Black Sea during the 15th century and the advance of the Grand Duchy of Moscow towards the south and east during the mid-16th century created the basis for competition between the two empires. From the second third of the 17th century onwards, Moscow and the High Porte waged an on-going war that lasted for 200 years in the south of what is now Ukraine and in the Caucasus. In the long term, the Ottoman Empire was the weaker one. This was not so much the result of a more backward social order, but had to do with the fact that as a Christian state, the Russian Empire was better positioned within the European power system.

Stefan Plaggenborg

Kemalism and Bolshevism

Unequal brothers and their historical legacy

After the end of the First World War, the Russian and Ottoman empires lay in ruins. Bolshevism and Kemalism were concepts for a radical new future. However, the ideals on which they were based differed considerably. Kemalism was oriented to middle-class Europe, at least on principle, while the Bolsheviks wanted to overcome the bourgeoisie with socialism and soviet-based democracy – and created a state ruled by terror. The Soviet model collapsed after 70 years, while Kemalism created the foundation for democracy, the progressive development of society and a cultural upswing in Turkey. Since the political and cultural counterrevolution in Turkey, the regimes in Moscow and Ankara have begun to resemble each other, however. Both are attempting to legitimise rule by invoking the past glories of empire, and the mechanisms they use to retain their hold on power are also similar.

Elisabeth Özdalga
Consonance or enforced conformity?
The state and religion in Russia and Turkey

In Russia and Turkey there is an unholy alliance between the laicistic state and the religious bodies. In Russia, the state is laicistic in theory, and the Orthodox church has retained a certain degree of autonomy. In reality, the state and church leaderships often speak with one voice, and the church has placed itself at the service of the authoritarian regime. However, in the multi-ethnic state of Russia, there is space for other religions. In Turkey, by contrast, the ruling AKP has taken over control of the Presidency for Religious Affairs, thus undermining the laicistic order. Since Turkey is neither a homogeneous nation state, nor a state in which the entire population is of the same denomination of Islam, the politicised religious authority is polarising society with its programme oriented to Sunni Turks.

Igor Torbakov
Twins and competitors
The limitations of the Russian-Turkish alliance

At first glance, Russia and Turkey resemble twins. They have an imperial heritage, the nation building process has not yet been completed, and modernisation has occurred through state mobilisation. Their relationship with Europe is also ambivalent. The authoritarian regimes appear to be ideal alliance partners. Yet in reality, this is far from true. Their current joint appearance belies the fact that they are pursuing different interests in their shared regional environment, where they have become competitors due to the ongoing imperialist nature of their strategic culture.

Andreas Heinemann-Grüder
The resources and limits of power
Personalistic regimes in Russia and Turkey

Personalistic politics frees politicians such as Putin and Erdoğan from the bother of having to negotiate decisions. This goes hand in hand with a lack of transparency in the selection of the political leadership, centralism and informal government. The regimes in Russia and Turkey have one weakness: the loyalty of voters who continue to support the regimes and of protégés in the business world and the state apparatus risks to erode when clientelistic benefits are no longer available. A potential crisis looms as a result of the charged relationship between the interests of the holders of power themselves, the privileged status of bureaucrats and oligarchs loyal to the regime and the orientation to social groups that support the regime.

Şener Aktürk
Unipolar versus multipolar
A comparison between Russia and Turkey

The political systems in Russia and Turkey have frequently been compared since the mid-2010s. This perspective is incorrect. Russia has a unipolar political system.

In the centre as in the regions, in economic relations as well as in the media, power has been almost entirely monopolised by the state. In Turkey, however, there is a competitive system in place. At least two camps compete in the political and societal arena on almost all levels. This fundamental difference is rooted in the history of the two states during the course of the 20th century.

Helge Blakkisrud, Zaur Gasimov
Tradition, nation and the evil West
Putin, Erdoğan and the legitimisation of their rule

Even authoritarian rule requires the support of those under its control. In order to secure their legitimacy, the political leaderships in Russia and Turkey are pursuing similar strategies. The Putin and Erdoğan regimes emphasise the greatness of their own nation, invoke their imperial past in the form of the Soviet Union and the Ottoman Empire, and underscore the importance of religion and allegedly “traditional values” for the identity of their citizens. At the same time, both stress the frontline position of their country against the West. The outward confrontation that results is intended to facilitate integration at home.

Roland Götz
Same but different
A statistical comparison between Russia and Turkey

Despite their differences in terms of their populations, geographical size and economic power, Russia and Turkey have several things in common. In both countries, nearly three-quarters of the population live in cities, the proportion of people living in poverty is almost the same. The scale of the shadow economy and the degree of corruption is slightly lower in Turkey. Russia’s domestic economy is growing more slowly than that of Turkey, although it has a higher level of macroeconomic stability due to foreign trade surpluses. While the potential workforce in Russia is likely to decline by five million by 2040, in Turkey, it will increase by nine million. As a result, Turkey will also achieve higher growth rates in the future, but is more prone to crises than Russia.

Fabian Burkhardt, Janis Kluge
The battle for property
State and business in Russia

Ownership rights in Russia have not been secured since the authoritarian regime in the country brought the judicial system under its control. Entrepreneurs have developed various strategies in order to avoid losing their property. During the 1990s, they voiced their interests through business associations, whereas during the 2000s, they sought protection through international commercial and arbitration courts. In recent years, the growing self-isolation of the country – exacerbated by Western sanctions – has made it increasingly difficult to pursue this avenue. Manifestations of loyalty and gestures of submission are now almost the only option left available.

Magdalena Kirchner

A precarious changing of the guard

The evolution of civilian-military relations in Turkey

Civilian-military relations in Turkey have changed dramatically. The army has lost its position as 'school of the nation' and as a state within the state. This is the result of the power policy machinations of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and of a specific international constellation. Following the mass protests of 2013 and the failed military coup in the summer of 2016, the AKP government increased civilian control over the military. The army was stripped of its autonomy and economic power base, and has now become an instrument of power of the President. However, this is by no means a changing of the guard to the benefit of the legislative authorities. The power of the army now lies in the hands of the President.

Alexander Golz

Putin as supreme commander

Civilian-military relations in Russia

Russia's army is considered to be a pure instrument of the state leadership. However, the situation is not as clear-cut. While in the Soviet Union, the army was subject to civilian control, under Gorbachev, the generals felt that they were being discredited and distanced themselves from politics. During the 1990s, the army played a very significant role in politics, but due to its deep mistrust towards politicians of all political persuasions it refrained – aside from October 1993 – from any involvement in the battle for power between the President and his opponents. Only Putin succeeded in again assigning to the army the subordinate role that it had held during the Soviet era. However, it would be wrong to assume that the army blindly follows the orders of the civilian state leadership. With the militarisation of society implemented by Putin in order to increase his legitimacy, inclination towards insubordinate reactions among the generals has also increased.

Maria Lipman

Control through co-optation

The Kremlin and the media

At first sight, Russia has a diverse media landscape. The television market has become a huge business. However, there is certainly no multiplicity of opinions. The media are controlled by the Kremlin. Its tools are no longer censorship and force, but the co-optation of the media owners, the most important of whom are close associates of Vladimir Putin. The television channels have become propaganda tools and a means for sedating the general public. The print media have become entirely irrelevant when it comes to forming public opinion and the political decision-making process. In the consolidated, authoritarian system, there is no longer any 'fourth power'. The media have lost their function as watchdog. However, islands of serious, independent and high-quality journalism still survive.

Levent Nehir “Empire of fear”

Media and press freedom in Turkey

Freedom of the press has never been guaranteed in Turkey. Restrictive laws have set strict boundaries. In addition, the army has repeatedly restricted the work of journalists and the media. Since the summer of 2016, the situation has worsened further. The government under Recep Tayyip Erdoğan used the attempted coup as an excuse to attack the media. Nearly 200 television stations, news agencies and newspapers were closed, while thousands of journalists were fired, accused of supporting a terror organisation or of “terror propaganda”, and prohibited from working in their profession. Hundreds of them were arrested, convicted of crimes or driven into exile. Critical, independent media have been eliminated. Today, the government directly or indirectly controls 90 percent of the media via the AKP. The conditions under which the press is currently operating in Turkey must be classified as being “not free”.

Dmitri Dubrovsky Between Skylla and Charybdis

The threat to academic freedom in Russia

Academic life in Russia is full of paradoxes. Although the Putin-led system sets itself clearly apart from the West, its values and procedures, the government is increasingly regulating teaching and research at universities and institutes according to neoliberal standards and principles, which have been adopted from the West. Market-based logic predominates. Russia’s leadership aims to drive forward the internationalisation of the universities and to raise the level of competitiveness of Russian research. At the same time, the authoritarian state is attempting to assert control over international contacts among academics. Several academics have been arrested as spies following dubious legal proceedings, while others have been stigmatised as ‘foreign agents’. Academic freedom is under threat from neoliberal practices and authoritarian rule alike.

Esra Arsan Dirty “cleansing”

Turkish science in a state of emergency

After the attempted coup in July 2016, the Turkish government imposed a state of emergency, which it used to conduct a broad “cleansing” operation of the universities. University leaders were replaced, and rectors who were not loyal to the AKP were dismissed. Thousands of professors, lecturers and academics were dismissed, forbidden from working, prosecuted, sent to prison or driven into exile. The current mood in Turkish universities is one of accommodation, fear and self-censorship. There are almost no signs of solidarity with staff who have been dismissed. There is no doubt that “academic autonomy and freedom of research” has now been consigned to the past.

Andreas Heinemann-Grüder
The end of the illusions
What to do next with Russia and Turkey?

With regard to its domestic and foreign policy, the Turkish regime is coming closer to the Russian authoritarian regime of control with its charismatic leadership, nationalistic populism, “securitization” of domestic policy and numerous repressions. The conflicts between Germany and the EU and Russia and Turkey are not a misunderstanding, but symptoms of a systemic conflict. In this country, society, the media and politics should stand up to Ankara’s and Moscow’s subversive activities. Western double moral standards are the most powerful argument used by Putin’s and Erdoğan’s supporters, while normative integrity in Europe is the necessary response.

Sabine Fischer, Günter Seufert
Failed transformation
The EU, Turkey and Russia

Russia and Turkey are the European Union’s most important neighbours. For a long time, the EU pursued the goal of promoting change in the politics, economies and societies of Turkey and Russia. The aim was to help turn the states into stable democracies and competitive market economies that were integrated into the global market and ositively disposed towards the EU. Turkey was given the status of an accession candidate, while Russia was regarded as a ‘strategic partner’. The goal of achieving domestic policy reforms and a foreign policy rapprochement with the EU has failed. This is due to domestic policy developments in Russia and Turkey and regional events, as well as errors in EU policy.

Caroline von Gall, Lisa Kujus
The catch-22 of human rights
Russia, Turkey, the Council of Europe and the ECHR

When they joined the Council of Europe, neither Turkey nor Russia were constitutional states. They were accepted in order to promote their passage to liberal constitutional statehood. This strategy has failed, however. Russia and Turkey are authoritarian states, the leaders of which call the goals of the Council of Europe – democracy, constitutional statehood and human rights – into question. The distance between the Council of Europe and the two states is growing. Following Russia’s annexation of Crimea, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe deprived the Russian delegation of its voting rights. While Turkey has reduced its level of contributions, Russia has ceased to pay them entirely. In Moscow and Ankara, some politicians are demanding a withdrawal from the Council of Europe and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. However, the people who would suffer most from a withdrawal or an exclusion would be the victims of human rights abuses in Russia and Turkey.

Zaur Gasimov

Fear and fascination

The changing image of Russia in Turkey

For a long time, the Ottoman and Turkish image of Russia was characterised by a fear of the “hereditary enemy” in the north. Anti-communist Muslims who fled to Turkey after the October Revolution emphasised the repressive and expansive nature of the Soviet Union. Turkish attitudes towards Russia and the Russians were extremely negative. The interest taken by Turkish intellectuals in Russian literature and culture helped to improve this image. The most recent rapprochement between Ankara and Moscow continues to influence attitudes towards Russia, and so do current developments in international politics, such as the war in Syria and the decision by Russia and Turkey to turn their backs on Europe and the USA. However, the sense of fear and suspicion still persists.

Vügar İmanbeyli

Limited prospects

Economic relations between Turkey and Russia

Economic relations between Turkey and Russia have improved since the early 2000s. The cornerstone of cooperation is the energy industry. The volume of trade is growing continuously. At the same time, however, the Turkish trade deficit is also increasing. The structure of bilateral trade and the relative technological backwardness of Russia and Turkey are limiting the further development of economic relations.

Sergei Markedonov

Competitive cooperation

Russia and Turkey in the Caucasus

In the Caucasus region, the interests of Turkey and Russia meet head to head. Occasionally, they are compatible. Both states are interested in stability for domestic policy reasons. Over three million people in Turkey have Caucasian roots. The North Caucasus, which belongs to Russia, is indissolubly bound up with the manifold conflicts raging in the South Caucasus. The region is of strategic importance to both states. In terms of energy and security policy and the ethnoterritorial conflicts in the South Caucasus, Russia and Turkey are pursuing opposing interests. However, in the process, both states have found a *modus vivendi* that can be described as “competitive cooperation” or “asymmetric interdependence”.

Irina Zvyagelskaya, Irina Svistunova
A fragile partnership
Russia, Turkey and the war in Syria

Russia and Turkey present themselves as partners and allies. Trade has increased and in Syria, where both countries are involved in the war, Russia and Turkey coordinate their actions. Moscow and Ankara are also united in their defensive stance when faced with criticism of the way domestic policy has unfolded in recent years. However, this should not obscure the fact that the alliance is fragile. Russia and Turkey are pursuing entirely different goals in Syria. Should these emerge as being incompatible, the two partners could quickly become enemies again.

Valery Dzutsati, Emil Aslan Souleimanov
Horrors without end
Russia in the Syrian war

Russia has been a participant in the war in Syria since 2015. On entering the war, the Kremlin was pursuing three goals: to stabilise the Assad regime, to deflect attention from its own war in eastern Ukraine, and to change the balance of power in Syria and in the Middle East to suit its own needs. Behind this was the hope that the West might lift sanctions against Russia in exchange for the right to have a say on the direction developments should take there. However, Russia has failed almost entirely to achieve these aims. While the Assad regime may control large swathes of the country in military terms, Russia's estrangement from the West runs deeper than ever. The Syrian war is unpopular at home, yet withdrawal from Syria is a difficult process. The Assad regime is politically unstable, and peace is a far-off prospect. Russia's partial allies, Iran and Turkey, are pursuing interests that conflict with its own. And Russia risks becoming caught up between the two fronts in the conflict between Israel and Iran.