

I reckon that Shakespeare was a bit of an insomniac. He's always banging on about sleep in his plays. But the Bard was right about recent events in Turkey, when he has the sleepless King Henry IV cry, 'uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.'

In the wake of his military's quashed coup, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is not the only world leader uneasy about his hold on power.

However Erdoğan seems safe enough for the moment. His call for the mosques and social media - which ironically he once tried to ban - to come to his rescue, proves that nowadays whoever controls social media, controls the mob. He was elected president in 2014 by over 50 percent with a voter turnout of 74% and is worshipped by his supporters on the streets. Post-coup there is little doubt that Erdogan is now master of his own AKP Rentamob.

There are three main reasons for this popularity: first, he is widely seen as a man of the common people; "Before Erdoğan the presidents didn't value people," said one AKP admirer waving a flag in Taksim Square. "But Erdoğan is one of us."

Second, he and his party, the AKP, are seen to care for the ordinary folk. According to Aslı Aydintaşbaşı, of the European Council for Foreign Relations, 'The entire AKP narrative is about the periphery taking control of the country from the elites who had been abusing state power, and [his supporters] see in Erdoğan the impersonation of that narrative.'

Then there is the question of religion, which has split Turkey for decades and got Erdogan imprisoned for ten months in 1998. Religion played a major part in the coup. Imams at the country's 80,000 mosques were directed: "By order of our president and the Diyanet [national religious directorate] to call on citizens to take to the streets in defence of democracy." This is the first time that modern Turkey's mosques have been used for political purposes. Afterwards the Turkish president gleefully called the coup "a gift from God".

Last, there's the power of money. Turkey and its people have unquestionably become better off under the AKP. Erdogan's government has transformed the country with ambitious infrastructure schemes, building roads, metro lines and bridges. Wages have gone up from a national average of \$2,000 in 2002 to nearly \$7,000 in 2015. Healthcare, transportation, care of the elderly and especially low inflation have all improved the lot of many ordinary Turks. These social investments have made a significant impact on people's lives. Erdogan is understandably popular with great swathes of Turkish society.

The question is what happens now? The obvious point is that Turkey is hopelessly split and divided as never before, between the half of the country that voted for the AKP and the other half that didn't. While nearly everyone opposed the recent coup attempt, Erdogan's vengeful purge is now widening the divisions in Turkish society even further. The split between those who idolise their president and those who now hate and fear him has never been deeper.

And many Turks have reason to be very scared. Erdogan's purge of those he sees as his political enemies has been both unforgiving and wide-ranging. Over 60,000 people have already been sacked, suspended or arrested in a nation-wide crackdown on journalists, soldiers, police, academics teachers and civil servants. Turkish Airlines has dismissed 221 employees and even 42 school children have been arrested. Amnesty International warns that detainees are being tortured, beaten, raped and denied food and water and that since the coup the government has blocked 20 websites, including those of six news outlets and two television channels.ÂÂ This is a dangerous over-reaction.

Erdogan has blamed the coup plot on U.S.-based Muslim cleric Fethullah Gulen, an ally-turned-foe whose network of millions of followers have for many years infiltrated the military, police, judiciary and parts of the state bureaucracy. Gulen and his shadowy network of schools and civil-society organizations (Hizmet) and the CIA are blamed as the forces behind the attempted military takeover. Gulen has already been charged with 'establishing a parallel state structure' and Hizmet classified as a terrorist organization like the Kurdish PKK. But the suspicion remains that Gülen is really a scapegoat to justify Erdoğan's attempt to silence or intimidate potential enemies.

"The coup attempt did a lot of damage to the democratic opposition in Turkey," said one human rights lawyer. "This could have been a chance for Turkey to overcome polarisation and

violence, to finally democratise the country. But instead it is used as a pretext for Erdoğan to galvanise power."

What is obvious is that much of the Purge seems to have been prepared in advance. "It looks at least as if something had been prepared," said the EU commissioner dealing with Turkey. 'The lists were available, which indicates they were ready to be used at a certain stage,'

However, Turkey's parliament has supported Erdoğan's crack down and enabled the government's declaration of a state of emergency. Erdoğan now rules by decree. Ominously, Turkey has also suspended membership of the European Convention on Human Rights. The rule of law is being curtailed.

However, the Purge is not unpopular with the faithful. "The state of emergency is a good thing and it's good that many people have been arrested and that the length of detentions has been extended," according to AKP demonstrator Harun Kalyancu. "If people lost their jobs they must be guilty."

He echoes President Erdoğan's unusual view of democracy. Erdoğan conflates any dissent with treachery. But the danger is that Ankara still faces major security concerns: the conflict with the PKK, Islamic State terrorist attacks and now the danger of the aftermath of the coup itself. Turkey's military will now be obsessed with endless investigations, and merely surviving as an institution. "The Turkish military is now a broken force and it will take years to heal," says the Atlantic Council. And that poses serious risks to Turkey's neighbours and allies.

Because, strategically, a divided Turkey is a worry for the West and for NATO. Turkey straddles the geographic and cultural divide between East and West. Turkey has the second-largest conventional forces in NATO, is NATO's eastern bastion of U.S. nuclear defence in Europe, and has 50 US B-61 nuclear bombs stockpiled at İncirlik USAF base near the Syrian border. Now Turkey's reliability as an ally is in question. İncirlik is even being suggested as a bargaining chip as Ankara threatens that ties with America could suffer unless Gulen is extradited to face the mercies of Erdoğan's justice. However, Washington insists that Turkey must provide solid

evidence - not just allegations - before any extradition.

The danger is that if US courts reject his request, Erdoğan will certainly blame Washington and even consider quitting NATO to look elsewhere. Ankara and Moscow were already building an alternative alliance before the coup, with Putin offering a lucrative sanctions-busting package of economic measures such as energy pipeline deals, trade, construction and boosting tourism.

As for the EU, if Turkey reintroduces capital punishment, Ankara's application is finished; and with it any deal to control the flow of refugees into Europe. The consequences for mass EU immigration are ominous.

The implications of the coup and its aftermath will therefore have wide-ranging and inevitable consequences. Turkey is at a crossroads. The new Turkey will be a very different place to the Turkey that applied to join the EU in 2004.

But, assassination attempts aside, Turkey's President can look past the failed coup to his life's dream: an autocratic one party, Islamic state, with himself enthroned as the new Atatürk, and take comfort from the words of Sir John Harrington, five hundred years ago: 'Treason doth never prosper: what's the reason? For if it prosper, none dare call it Treason.'

(c) John Hughes-Wilson. Reproduced by kind permission of the author