

Erdogan thanks Der Spiegel for 'autocrats shaping the world' cover, manipulation or misunderstanding?

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Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan thanked German Der Spiegel for its latest issue cover that features him along with Donald Trump, Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping, as 'autocrats' who shape the world.

"The Germans have a magazine; it has featured four images on its front cover, one of them is my picture. It has called us 'the leaders shaping the world'. Alhamdulillah. As a son of this nation, we will continue this service until our last breath," Erdogan said during an election rally.

He distorted the Der Spiegel title, only referring to the part –the leaders shaping the world– however, the German magazine says, "I am the people living in the era of autocrats" ("Ich bin das volk das zeitafter der autokraten") with a satirical reference to the Turkish, Chinese, Russian and American leaders.

Pro-government Takvim newspaper also falsified the ironic cover of the German magazine, presenting it as a praiseworthy tribute to Erdogan, with a headline reading, "[Der Spiegel] did not feature Merkel but Erdogan on its cover page".

"Der Spiegel, Germany's influential magazine, has shown President Erdogan among four leaders of the new world order," the newspaper said.

Pro-government media often resort to absurd propaganda tactics, portraying Erdogan as a "national hero" who fights foreign powers that are "jealous of Turkey's rise as a big force" in the world. However, Erdogan and his AKP party have ruled the country for 16 years with the support of big powers such as the EU, the U.S. and NATO as Turkey hosts dozens of foreign military bases.