

Introducing 'The President Erdogan Offensive Poetry Competition'

Douglas Murray writes in [long-held ambition](#) to bring Turkey fully into the EU. Yet here we are. Erdogan's rule now already extends to Europe.

At the end of last month, during a late-night comedy programme, a young German comedian called Jan Böhmermann included a poem that was rude about Erdogan. Incidentally the point of Mr Böhmermann's skit was to highlight the obscenity of Turkey already trying to censor satire in Germany.

What happened next happened in swift order. First of all the Turks complained to their German counterparts. Within a few days the programme had been pulled. A few more days and it was whitewashed out of existence altogether. In the meantime Mr Böhmermann himself was forced to go under police protection. The worst blow then came late last week when Chancellor Merkel allowed the prosecution of Mr Böhmermann to go ahead in Germany. Strangely enough, Chancellor Merkel is currently pretending that the trial of a German comedian in Germany for insulting a foreign despot is a liberal act. Don't we all understand, she asks, that the courts will decide? Well no – the very possibility of putting someone on trial for being rude about Erdogan is as illiberal or rather anti-liberal as these things come. It will be hardly more of a relief if he is found 'not guilty' than if he is found 'guilty'. The fact such a trial could even be contemplated demonstrates that Germany is becoming little more than a satrapy of Erdogan's.

Well I'm a free-born British man, and we don't live under

the blasphemy laws of such despots. So in honour of this fact I have spent the weekend writing rude limericks about Mr Erdogan. And I would hereby like to invite all readers to join me in a grand Erdogan limerick competition. That isn't to say that entries which come in the form of Iambic pentameters, or heroic couplets will be completely discounted. I think a work in the Homeric mode, for example, about the smallness of Erdogan's manhood could (if suitably disgusting) stand some chance of winning. But I recommend limericks because almost everything insulting that is worth saying can usually be included within the five lines of that beautiful and delicate form.

I have not been able to find a sponsor for the competition. So there aren't any prizes – except perhaps for our continuing freedom. If there is anyone out there who would seriously prefer a box of Ferrero Rocher, Turkish Delight or whatever then I don't want them to enter this competition anyway.

I would also like to stress that the aim of the competition is to be as filthy and insulting as possible about Recep Erdogan. Rhymes with some political point might be considered, but will inevitably take second-place to works which mull (for example) solely on President Erdogan's reputed fondness for goats or his notorious untrustworthiness in the vicinity of any public zoo.

The limerick that follows is my best shot so far. But I am happy to report that there are many available rhymes and sexual positions which are still in my jotting pad and remain unused. I should like to reiterate that limericks will be excluded from consideration from the top prize if they are (a) not obscene or (b) non-defamatory. I do not want to have to, Vizier-like, proclaim my own poem the winner. Anyhow, here's mine:

Recep Erdogan is the Turk'll

Never tire of rim-jobs from his circle

Yet his chief-est delight

(Now Khilafa's in sight)

Are the felchings he gets from Frau Merkel

Now purists will notice that I have committed two potential solecisms here. The first is to rhyme 'Turk'll' with 'circle'. It works when read out loud, but I agree that a purer version would require one to spell out 'Turk who'll'. Yet that, I think, would not quite catch the rhyme. Keen-eyed readers will also notice that I have had to use the Arabic 'Khilafa' over the more usual (in English) 'Caliphate'. Personally I think the former works better and adds a touch of exoticism to the work, but there will doubtless be critics who will claim that this use of a foreign word or archaism over its demotic equivalent is done purely in order to keep the fourth line metrical. I recognise this criticism and simply throw myself at the feet of metrical purists everywhere.

Anyway – see if you can do any better. Please submit all entries to theeditor@spectator.co.uk, under the heading 'The President Erdogan Offensive Poetry Competition'. The winning poem will be announced by 23 June. Because we may not be able to announce it after that point.

Update: A generous reader, who shares the Spectator's belief in the freedom of speech, is offering a £1000 prize for the best limerick. We've had some great entries so far, please keep them coming.