



Dr. Ali Al-Bassam

Turks and the Reproducing of Deception

"Historical Drama"

History is a great repository in which nations and peoples preserve their immortal heritage and glories, and from which they learn morals and lessons. It is a prosperous repository of historical experiences, facts and events that can serve not only in simulating the lived reality, but even in looking ahead and building the future on strong historical foundations too. That broad repository can be used to pass political, religious and partisan ideas, visions and agendas by amplifying and articulating the historic event; and presenting it in a fake television or film broadcast that distorted historical truth, and in a manner that directly affects the perception of the recipient and they might think that what they saw was a self-evident historical fact, which is clearly true. That distorted image would be completed in the mind of the recipient, when it was combined with a good acting and quality of the television or film production that - as usual - affects directly the perception of the recipient; so that emotions and feelings would be flamed by dramatic scenes and action. They may interact with it away from the truth, the falsehood or the historical truth of the information. That emotional behavior is evaluated by filmmakers and film producers, as through it, they can estimate the success or failure of dramatic works, particularly historical ones.

In fact, Turkish drama has been fairly successful in making such films and series, which are following the spectacle-inducing Hollywood style that is exciting the audience. It has attracted a lot of audiences to some of its series, especially historical ones. Human beings are inherently bound by stories if they are emitted in combination with myths and fables that are not believable. For instance, the Turkish historical series "Resurrection of Ertgerl" and its sequel "Resurrection of Osman" that both of which have received a large amount of views. My role here, of course, is not to talk about them as a film expert or professional in art drama, but as a historian, who attempts to read the scene from a purely scientific point of view. It was observed that the series, from the beginning, that it tended to highlight the Turkish component as a nation distinguished by the overwhelming and indomitable superpower. Most episodes of the series continued to be contained and strongly featured with this trait. If so to speak, it is a sustainable feed to the mind of the recipient with the superiority of the Turkish component alone through the invincible hero, the "Superman", who challenges all the forces and encounters all difficulties in the vicinity of Asia Minor. In fact, we do not care about this matter, because it is the matter of the director, producer and author, as well as the media institution that sponsors such an approach.

In general, we care about that it is not acceptable to write and prepare a scenario and story for a series or a movie based on falsification of history and telling lies about it; for the favor of the success of the work or misleading the viewers indirectly, so that the history would be connected in their minds to the reality seen in the series. That, in our point of view, is a great disaster against history and its peoples. In addition to the other tragedy that is this dramatic work is based on the opinions of viewers; or on the future expectations of the series, as desired by the director, producer, or institution concerned. Accordingly, this multiplies the misinformation and falsification that have taken the history as its emblem. It is well known that historical sources when talked about the character of Ertgerl, the protagonist of the Turkish historical series, these historical sources, indicated that he was one of the notables of the seventh century Hijri / thirteenth century Gregorian, and that he moved with his tribe to escape from the Tatars to the Rum; where the Seljuk state known as the Seljuks of Rum. During their journey, his father, Suleiman, drowned in the Euphrates River, in the known incident in the town of Jaabar. Whether or not this story, which has been transmitted by Ottoman historians with all of its myths, is true. The period from the seventh century Hijri / thirteenth century Gregorian, that period, witnessed a significant influx of various ethnic elements into Anatolia. In fact, there are no reliable Ottoman historical sources regarding the origin or the history of the Ottoman people and their ruling dynasty during the eighth century Hijri / fourteenth century Gregorian, since the Ottomans had no written records of that period before the conquest of Constantinople. Furthermore, there are historians who question the authenticity of the Ottomans' affiliation with the Oghuz tribes, as well as that the story of these tribes and their leader as fabrications by some historians. In addition, that all of the myths associated with it are traced back to the ninth century Hijri / fifteenth century Gregorian. It is a very acceptable opinion of the historian Ahmed Abdel Rahim Mustafa, and that opinion was based on the diversity of migrations to the regions of the frontiers, that, in turn, formed a heterogeneous combination of ethnicities and languages. Here, we can say that what was originally based on an invalid is invalid, i. e. "fruit of the poisonous tree" doctrine.

The historical series "Resurrection of Ertgerl" tried to emphasize a significant point, which is that the Turkish component had the lead in spreading Islam in Constantinople and the territories around it, and that the Islam was spread there after the Ottoman conquest for it, in 857 AH / 1453 AD. This is actually a part of the falsification of history, as the Muslim Arabs, since the era of the Umayyad Caliphs, sent several military campaigns during the years of 61-54 AH / 680-674 AD and 99-98 AH / 718-717 AD, in order to conquer the city of Constantinople. The most important of these was the last campaign led by Commander Muslama bin Abdul Malik; as Muslims imposed a naval blockade around the city for a year. However, this campaign failed to fulfill its objectives. Also, in one of his scientific articles, the Historian Hatem Al-Tahawy has indicated that: Despite the military failure of that campaign, it succeeded in fulfilling a moral victory, as the commander Muslama required from the Byzantine commander Leo III the Isaurian, in 99 AH / 718 AD, that they must build a mosque for Muslims within the city of Constantinople in exchange for the withdrawal of his forces and their return to the Levant. So that Leo was forced to agree, after he was exhausted by the defense for the city. The Arabs were thus able to build the first Islamic mosque in Constantinople, the capital of the Rum State, since the first quarter of the 8th century Gregorian / end of the 1st century Hijri.

In his article, Al-Tahawi also mentioned that, based on many important Byzantine and Arab historical sources, the existence of that mosque inside the city of Constantinople. Further, that the earlier person talked about this was the Emperor Michael VII (348 - 301 AH / 959 - 913 AD) in his book "Administration of the Byzantine Empire". As he mentioned that, "Muslama Ibn Abd al-Malik was the one who ordered to build a mosque for the Muslims in front of the imperial camp inside the city of Constantinople". Later in the Islamic sources, it was known as the "House of court", which was reserved for the detention of leading Muslim prisoners that were the core of the Muslims neighborhood in Constantinople since the 1st century Hijri / 8th century Gregorian.

That Mosque of Muslims in Constantinople continued to play its role, and it was frequently visited by worshipers and travelers of merchants and Muslim travelers until the third century Hijri / tenth century Gregorian. This was shown by the message sent by the Patriarch of Constantinople, Nicholas Mystikos, to the Abbasid Caliph, Al-Mu'taz Billah, in which he referred to his good patronage for the Mosque of Constantinople; and, as a result of the significant commercial status of the city of Constantinople, about the influx of Muslim merchants and their stay for a long period that were up to ten continues years in the Constantinople. What assured that is that the Islamic quarter in Constantinople was one of the first places that were attacked by the Fourth Crusade, in the year of 600 AH / 1204 AD, and that led to the destruction of the old mosque after it was set on fire. The Byzantine people nearby the Muslim Quarter sought to help the Muslim people in an attempt to repel the brutal Latin attack that destroyed and burned four more Islamic mosques.

It means through all of this that the Islamic presence in the city of Constantinople started since an earlier period before the Ottomans originally moved to Anatolia; and playing with emotions and overwhelming religious feelings by falsifying the history does not serve the abstract historical truth, but it corrupts it. Since the history is a book open to all people, it must be read with neutrality away from films and series that distort the purity of its image in favor of achieving private targeted actions and ambitions.