



The Religious Perspective Has Formed Its History with a Sanctity

Ottoman “Pragmatism” Drained “Andalusia”

History is deeply intertwined with myths when the history is religiously employed for political purposes. We find this clear in the situation of the Ottoman State when its history is addressed only from a religious perspective. When the focus is on that it is the last Islamic caliphate. As a result of that, its history seems as a pure white and sacred history, even though its real history is in fact a gray history. Hence, the history of the Ottoman State is found in the writings of political Islam as a history of an epitome of whiteness that is encapsulated in tales of myths, and as a near - sacred history; further, perhaps far from gray historical reality.

One of the controversial points in this regard is the question of the view of the Ottoman Sultans on the issue of the retrieval of Andalusia by the Spanish. In addition to the plight of the people of Andalusia; where some people paid a great tribute to the question of the messages of the Andalusia's people that were sent to the Ottoman Sultans for saving them from the abuse of the Spanish. They saw this as a proof of the religious status of the Ottoman State. But they do not draw the same attention to the messages and the call by the people of Andalusia upon most Muslim rulers, whether in the Maghreb, i. e. West, or the Levant, i. e. East. As this means that the demand for help was not only limited to the Ottomans, but to the various countries of Islam too; However, we notice the great interest in highlighting the messages of the people of Andalusia to the Othman family, as if they are the only that were the protectors of Islam.

So we find among the supporters of the political Islam a clear ideological attempt to highlight the status of the Othman family in helping Islam and Muslims in Andalusia in regard to the persecution of the Spanish. Indeed, this is deeply exaggerated, devoid of a purpose and an objective and it is far from the historical reality.

In addition, if we go through some of the most important academic studies on the history of the Ottoman State, we will find something that contradicts the legendary history of the Ottoman relationship with Andalusia. One of the most important studies on the Ottoman history in general, and on the Ottoman foreign policy in particular is "The Ottoman State and the Surrounding World", by the German Professor of Eastern Origin, Thuria Faruqi. As well as the well-known Turkish historian Khalil Inaljik's book, "The History of the Ottoman State from Emergence to Decline".

From the beginning of her study, Thuria Faruqi focuses on the "pragmatic" nature of the Ottoman foreign policy, and even she gives an interesting sub-title in this regard: "The Islamic Law and the Sultanate Pragmatism". From this interesting title she proceeds to criticize the historical saying that prevails in many writings about the Ottoman era, "Dar al- Islam and Dar al-Harb", i. e. the region of Islam and the region of war, where the Region of Islam is the world of Muslims, and otherwise is the world of the infidels, which is a region of war. Thuria Faruqi reached important and serious conclusions that are; from the beginning, the Ottomans realized the meaning of politics and that it was purely pragmatic. We must therefore distinguish between the pragmatic policy of the sultans and the adherence of some scholars to the traditional saying of "The Region of Islam and the Region of War". Faruqi cleverly points to a fundamental issue in politics, which is the contradiction between what is declared and what is realistic, as well as what is for domestic publication and that influencing the subjects with religious inclination, and the requirements of the foreign policy:



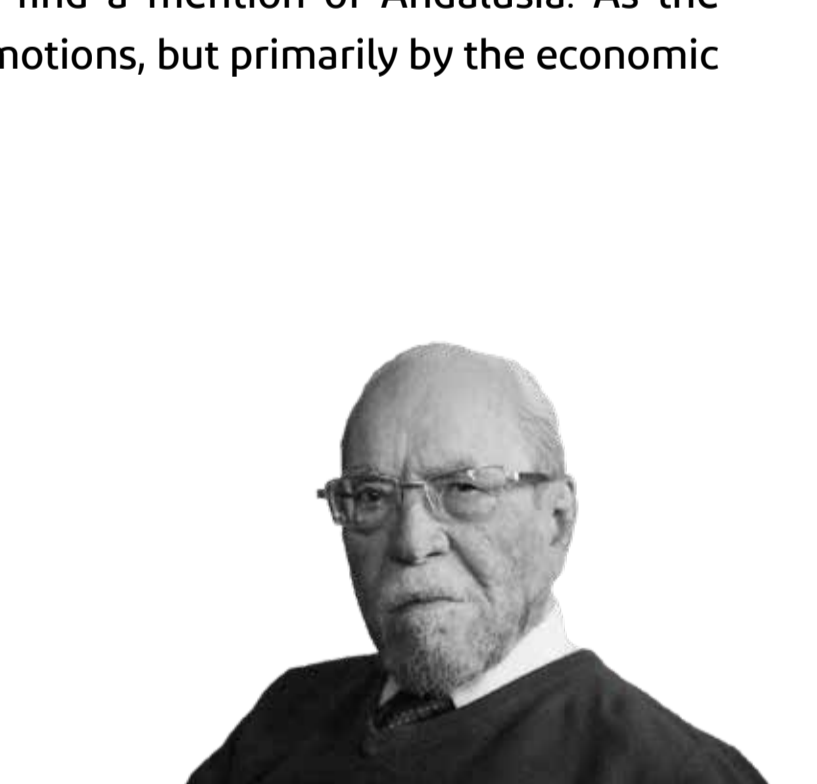
Thuria Faruqi:
The Holy War was interrupted by the relationship among the Ottomans, the French and the Venetians for political and economic interest.

“As it can be seen from the Ottoman perspective, the expansion of Islamic territory through the War against the Infidels played a key role in legitimizing the rule of Sultans. While the compatibility between the Ottoman rulers, from one side, and their Venetian counterparts and the Habsburgs family, from the other side, was not rare in the border territories; however, we find the confrontations were more known in both oral and written cultural materials ... the Venetian tendency to introduce the commercial considerations with the Ottomans over the Holy War had received a considerable criticism. The King of France, Francois I, was the only one of Europe's leading monarchs who was willing to withstand widespread anti-propaganda by entering into an alliance with the Ottomans” according to Faruqi's description.

The study of Thuria Faruqi here is of great importance because it contradicts the traditional sayings that are common in the Ottoman literature about the Dar al-Harb, i. e. region of war, "region of infidels". And that the foreign policy of the Ottoman Sultans in Europe was an "Islamic" policy; as she makes clear that it was a purely pragmatic policy. On the other hand, we find the same thing that is: the enemies of the Ottoman State; the Venetians and the Habsburgs family abandoned the principle of the "Holy Crusade War" in order to maintain the commercial transactions with the Ottoman State. Instead, the King of France has a military alliance with the Ottomans against European Christian countries. As this is the politics, economics and pragmatism at its highest stage.

By reading the events of the war and the policy of the Ottoman sultans through the writings of Faruqi and Khalil Inaljik, we can hardly find a mention of Andalusia. As the Ottoman policy was not motivated by the religious emotions, but primarily by the economic interests.

On the other side, the last fall of Muslim strongholds in Andalusia was the fall of Granada in 1492 AD. Inaljik clearly illustrates that the Ottoman were engaging at that time in many battles in Anatolia, eastern Europe and the Islamic East; accordingly, how do the Ottomans pay attention to the question of Andalusia? Inaljik gave the period from 1402 AD to 1526 AD an interesting title, i. e. "Dying and Resurgence". As that period began with the horrific defeat of the Ottomans by Tamerlane near Ankara, which almost eliminated their State; further, the Ottoman Sultan, Bayezid I, himself was captured. The Ottomans therefore refrained from but only to rebuild their state again, and restore their positions in the Balkans and Anatolia, which enabled them to conquer Constantinople in 1453 AD. Subsequently, Mohamed Al-Fateh focused on the Balkans, facing Serbia and the annexation of the Murrh in 1460 AD, and the conquest of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1463 AD. As well as he also was faced by major problems in Anatolia regarding the Karaman Emirate. This was in addition to the fierce battles in Albania and the siege of Shkodra in 1474 AD and a new confrontation with Venetian. In 1480 AD, he sent an army to Rhodes Island, but he soon died in 1481 AD.



Khalil Inaljik:
Until 1491, neither Andalusia nor its Muslims were mentioned in the events of Ottoman foreign policy.

After the death of Mohamed Al-Fateh, a violent rebellion broke out among Al-Ankshariyah and a violent power dispute broke out between Mohamed Al-Fateh's two sons, "Jim and Bayezid". Bayezid soon came to power and, in his early reign, was advised to abandon his father's policy of the many wars that had strained the Treasury of the State. Where this was exacerbated by his brother Prince Jim fled to Egypt and requested the assistance of the Mamelukes against his brother Bayezid, which led to several military campaigns between Bayezid and the Mamelukes until 1491 AD, which in fact weakened the both parties.

Thus, at least until 1491 AD, neither Andalusia nor the Muslims of Andalusia were mentioned in the events of Ottoman foreign policy, which was engaging in the Balkans and the Anatolian conflicts, as well as the beginnings of the Ottoman-Mameluke confrontation.

References:

- 1) Khalil Inaljik: The history of the Ottoman State from Emergence to Decline, translated by: Muhammad Arnàout, Dar al-Madar al-Islami, 2002.
- 2) Thuria Faruqi: The Ottoman State and the Surrounding World, translated by: Hatem Eltahawy, Dar al-Madar al-Islami, 2008.