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Political Employment of the Tragedy of Andalusia

There are many stereotypical sayings that are repeated frequently in the writings of political Islam, and many of them are related to employing the history of the Ottoman Empire, and perhaps the story of Andalusia and the Ottoman Empire is one of the most important examples thereof. Some talk about the Ottoman Empire's help to the Muslims of Andalusia, and they cite the letters of the people of Andalusia to the Ottoman sultans asking for help. They forget, however, that the people of Andalusia also sent letters of help to many Muslim sultans and kings around the world, so sending messages was not limited to the Ottoman sultans only. Some of them came to say that the alliance of the Ottoman Empire with France and the resulting agreements were later known in our history as foreign concessions, the purpose of which was to form an alliance against Spain to restore Andalusia, or at the very least the survival of the Muslims in Andalusia and the improvement of their living conditions.

Some follow the same mythical approach, or in fact, use history for ideological claims, saying that the Ottoman expansion in Eastern Europe was part of an Ottoman plan to break into Europe, conquer the Vatican as they had been conquered by Constantinople, and break Catholic Europe in order to reach the far west of Europe and repossess Andalusia once again.

Certainly, the facts of history reject all these claims that must, in fact, be viewed as a collection of myths or daydreams that heal the wound of the fall of Andalusia, or the political use of history by the current of political Islam and its view of the history of the Ottoman Empire as another history of "Islamic caliphate" and that what came after it was colonialism and the "secular" nation-state.

Most of the serious historical studies that have dealt with the foreign policy of the Ottoman Empire unanimously agree that it was a purely pragmatic policy, and the truth is that this does not defame the Ottoman Empire. Politics is the art of the possible, but the real crisis came - as we have seen - from viewing the Ottoman foreign policy as a "sacred Islamic policy."

Hence, any careful and objective study will prove that Andalusia was not the focus of attention of the Ottoman Empire, so until 1492 AD, the date of the fall of Granada - the last principalities of Andalusia - the bulk of Ottoman politics focused on the East, whether in the face of the Tatars and the invasions of Tamerlane, or the invasions of eastern Europe, or the conquest of Constantinople. And then Andalusia was not the focus of the Ottoman Empire. In addition to this, historical studies indicate that commercial activity has continued between the Ottoman Empire and its staunch enemies in Europe, headed by Venice. Politics has always been pragmatic, and despite the wars, commercial interests took precedence.

In the midst of that was the tragedy of Andalusia and its people, and it has been immortalized in many literary works drawn from history, perhaps the most important of which is the famous novelist group "In the Shadows of the Pomegranate /Fe Zelal Alroman/" by the British writer of Pakistani origins "Tariq Ali"; he recounts the story of the consequences of the fall of Granada, the struggle of its people in order to survive, and the form of life for those people of sinister fate trapped on every side in a Spanish Christian world that knows no tolerance, and he monitors the processes of forcing them to convert to Christianity or forcible displacement.

Let's be patient concerning the history of Andalusia and make progress in stopping the process of employing the tragedy of Andalusia in the literature of political Islam.