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AN EVALUATION OF FILMS WITH THE GENOCIDE THEME DURING THE CENTENARY

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From past to the present (especially in 2015, which is the 100th anniversary of 1915), when the films of Armenian film directors or of directors who have shot films about Armenians are examined, it is seen that, most of the time, these films have a political purpose integrated into them. The purpose of these initiatives is to convey a message about the Armenian genocide to the audiences of these films.

The directors attempt to encourage the acceptance of the claims of Armenian genocide and to prove that this claimed genocide indeed occurred ends up having a detrimental effect on the films they direct. The films directed in accordance with the claims of genocide not only fail in terms financial gains, but also receive mediocre or worse ratings from film critics. Despite the fact that these films end up being viewed by very few people, the directors still insist on continuing to shoot films that incorporate the theme of genocide. When the directors insistence on the theme of genocide is taken into consideration, it can be said that the factors that encourage the directors to shoot such films is not a passion for cinema, but rather their intention to and encouragement of making propaganda by involving politics in their films.

It is natural for any director to want to convey a message to the audience via the film s/he shoots. However, the directors who shot films with the theme of Armenians and 1915 strictly embrace a narrow point of view over a highly disputed subject like the Events of 1915 and forcibly try to present the theme of genocide to the audience. Situated on a factually weak basis, these films turn out to be weak in terms of both historical accuracy and script. Therefore, the mentioned directors fail to present a film of high quality that would receive high ratings from film critics.

It is evident that, as long the directors continuously intend to convey a message of genocide to the audience of the films, then films shot by these directors will remain fixed at the same point in terms of quality. Since this mentioned mentality persists in the same form even in the 100th anniversary of the past sufferings, it is evident that even the best

films with the genocide theme will fail in reaching enough viewers and in conveying their message.

Therefore, the directors who shoot films with the genocide theme end up only comforting themselves. These directors, who have embraced the duty to portraying the Events of 1915 as genocide, eventually do not achieve anything other than the fulfillment of this said duty. In these films, the painful experiences of Turks, their losses, and their worries are completely neglected. However, it is known that the Turkish-Armenian compromise and reconciliation is a development that both the Turkish and the Armenian side desire. If films are shot with a more inclusionary and innovative point of view, then they will contribute to the process of Turkish-Armenian compromise and reconciliation.

The film critics approach to films with such a genocide theme constitute another problematic issue. It can be seen that in many instances in their evaluations, the film critics -due to ignorance or carelessness- accept the claims of genocide displayed in the films without question, and proceed to comment on the films with this acceptance. Moreover, some of the films with the theme of genocide depict scenes which involve the slaying or the assassination of Turks. However, the scenes that show such attacks on Turks are neglected by some of these film critics. The evaluation of the film critics give the impression that, from the point of view of film critics, the attacks on Turks displayed in the films do not constitute a moral issue in any way, nor do they have much of an importance. Unlike what some critics claim, these films based on the theme of genocide are not attempts that reflect good intentions. This is so because these films that cover the Events of 1915 treat the historical facts from a one-sided and cut-and-dried perspective, which only end up reinforcing anti-Turkish sentiments.

These directors have to realize that by shooting films with the theme of Armenian genocide, they will never be able to reach a constructive result. These claims of genocide have for decades worn out Turkish-Armenian relations and created conflict among brotherly people. It would be beneficial for everyone to give priority to the production of films that would rehabilitate Turkish-Armenian relations. Films are pieces of art that have the ability to influence societys frame of mind. Film directors should cease to focus on the bigoted genocide theme and should shoot films with peaceful intentions that integrate an unbiased point of view. This will contribute to Turkish and Armenian people getting accustomed to each other and being able approach to issues of the past in a more moderate and understanding manner.

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