

Directed Entertainment and Its Role in Obscuring the Role of Young Men and Women

(Translated)

These days, young men and women are preoccupied with watching World Cup football matches—to the point of obsession—often neglecting their Shariah and worldly duties. They organize public, private, family, and social gatherings solely to watch these games, even though there are critical, life-altering issues weighing heavily on their generation. Indeed, this generation no longer sees promising prospects for building its future, all while conspiracies are being hatched against the Ummah, momentous events are unfolding, and blood is being shed from the wounds of their nation—particularly in the blessed land of Palestine and other Muslim lands. This preoccupation leads an observer to question the seriousness with which the current generation regards the events unfolding around them and the plots being devised against them. It raises doubts about their concern for their own future and the destiny of their Ummah—concepts rooted in the Islamic principle of Istikhlaf (vicegerency on earth), as stated in the Almighty's words, ﴿وَإِذْ

﴿وَأَمَّا خَلْقُ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾ “And mention, O Muhammad, when your Lord said to the angels, ‘Indeed, I will make upon the earth a vicegerent’” [TMQ Surah Al-Baqarah: 30]. It also relates to the very purpose of human creation and existence, in accordance with the Almighty's words, ﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾ “And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me” [TMQ Surah Adh-Dhariyat: 56].

Undoubtedly, a large segment of people feels anger and frustration, lacking awareness of any solutions to the painful reality facing the Islamic Ummah and humanity at large. This is precisely why the youth are so engrossed in this “game,” they view it as an escape from reality and from fulfilling the responsibilities of vicegerency and worship. This is the generation expected to strive for change and shoulder the concerns of the Ummah and humanity. Yet, we must not dismiss this generation as trivial. Instead, we should make allowances for the pressures of reality and the arduousness of the path of change—a path that demands the sacrifice of all that is precious.

When we add to this the conspiracies of the regimes ruling the Muslim World and the West's profiteering from this game, the challenge facing the youth becomes formidable. Since their inception, these regimes have set out to undermine the Ummah and its aspirations—ambitions to break free from the hegemony of the kafir (disbelieving) colonialist, to achieve liberation, and to maintain independence in Deen and way of life. This includes a lifestyle and civilization that align with the noble nature of the Ummah's own culture—such as forms of entertainment that are legitimate and consistent with the serious character of the Ummah and its youth. These agent regimes have devised numerous schemes to erode the seriousness of the younger generation, aiming to create a cohort concerned only with pleasure and amusement—a generation incapable of bearing the burdens of change, which requires seriousness and sacrifice. The House of Saud's replacement of the “Committee for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice”—despite the latter's own deviations from the true concept of that Shariah obligation—with the “General Entertainment Authority” serves as a prime example of these regimes' policies and objectives. While this specific example was cited due to the linguistic parallel with the preceding discussion, the actions of other regimes are exactly the same—if not more extreme. All these regimes maintain ministries of youth and sports allocated massive budgets—sometimes exceeding those for health, education, and industry—including the military sector—alongside ministries of the arts that patronize vice and the morally wayward. Their aim is not merely to entertain the public through forbidden means, but to tether the younger generation to trivialities and prohibitions, thereby cultivating a frivolous, irresponsible generation that gives no thought to the affairs of Muslims—let alone to their own well-being or the bleak future awaiting them under these regimes.

While entertainment is fundamentally permissible in Islam, it must be governed by Sharia and must not conflict with the nature of Islam as a Deen of vicegerency and the Dawah we carry to all people; nor should it clash with the character of the Dawah carrier—specifically, the

seriousness required of that role. One must remain aware of the link between forms of entertainment and how hostile forces exploit them to target this generation. It ill befits a Muslim—embodying the spirit of the words of Umar (ra), *أنا لست بالخبّ، ولا الخبّ يخدعني*, “I am not deceitful, nor does the deceiver deceive me”—to be herded like cattle toward a guillotine prepared by the malicious, who have poured millions into its creation. Furthermore, entertainment is not an end in itself. Instead, it is a means of resting and renewing one’s energy to undertake the momentous tasks required for the Ummah’s revival.

The Muslim—and the Dawah carrier in particular—possesses a distinctive character rooted in seriousness and a preoccupation with the ideology and principles of the Dawah. Consequently, he cannot accept forms of entertainment that weaken this character, contradict its demeanor, or erode its dignity and gravity. To exert influence on society and among his peers, and to be capable of leading the Ummah and humanity at large, the Muslim and Dawah carrier must uphold these qualities. These are the qualities of a statesman and a carrier of the Dawah—traits incompatible with a penchant for play and frivolity, even regarding permissible activities. This is especially true given the current state of the Ummah and humanity at large—a humanity floundering in the pitch-black darkness of secularism, desperately seeking a hand to reach out from the gloom, rescue it, and guide it to safety. Consequently, for the Dawah carrier, the criterion is not merely general Shariah permissibility. Instead, one must ask: Does this form of recreation align with the character of a Dawah carrier—with their inherent seriousness, intellectual rigor, self-discipline, and dignity—or does it undermine and tarnish that character? Clearly, any recreation that draws one toward Western cultural trends or vacuous entertainment programs, or that fills the heart with trivial preoccupations, is detrimental to the mission and the character of the Dawah carrier—even if it involves no explicitly forbidden acts. Its cumulative impact on one’s consciousness and resolve is perilous.

Balancing recreation with the serious burden of carrying the concerns of the Ummah and humanity requires acknowledging that the soul needs some respite to avoid boredom or weariness. However, one must strike a balance between the dawah carrier’s role and the need for rest; such rest should be exceptional—akin to a warrior’s pause—rather than the idle leisure of the heedless. As reflected in the words of Salman to Abu Darda (ra), *إن لربك عليك حقًا، ولنفسك عليك حقًا، ولأهلك عليك حقًا، فأعط كل ذي حق حقه*, “Your Lord has a right over you, your soul has a right over you, and your family has a right over you; so give each one their due right.” There is a vast difference between a Dawah carrier adopting a disciplined recreational regimen—such as physical exercise or walking—and imbibing the poison laced within the forms of entertainment devised by adversaries: be they political regimes, media outlets, or ministries of sports and arts. The most important guideline is for the Muslim—and the Dawah carrier—to review his recreational activities against two standards must be applied in tandem: the standard of the detailed Shariah ruling, and the standard of its impact on the character of the statesman and the concerns of the Dawah. If both standards are satisfied, then recreation is deemed praiseworthy rather than blameworthy.

O Allah, You have appointed man as a vicegerent on this earth and commanded him to fulfill the obligations of this stewardship and to worship You as You truly deserve to be worshipped. Make us among those who comprehend their mission and discharge their duties, and do not let us be among the heedless and the distracted. O Allah, grant us sincerity in bearing the concerns of this Deen, steadfastness on the path of change, and the insight to distinguish between truth and falsehood, and between what is beneficial and what is harmful. Allah (swt) said, *﴿رَبَّنَا لَا تُرِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ﴾* “Our Lord, let not our hearts deviate after You have guided us and grant us from Yourself mercy. Indeed, You are the Bestower.” [TMQ Surah Aali Imran: 8].

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