14488 - Is It Prohibited to Depict the Companions?

the question

I had a disagreement with someone about the representation of the Companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in movies and plays, as happens a great deal nowadays. He said that this serves an interest, calling people to Islam and spreading noble Islamic morals and attitudes. What is your opinion on this matter?

Summary of answer

Depicting the companions of the Prophet Muhammad in films, plays, or other media is prohibited in Islam. Their honored status, as praised in the Quran and Hadith, must be preserved. Such portrayals expose them to mockery, distort their legacy, and may lead to doubts about Islam. Islamic teachings emphasize that when harm outweighs any potential benefit, the act becomes impermissible. Therefore, representing the Companions in any visual form is considered prohibited.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Understanding the Status of the Companions

The Companions have a high status in Islam, because they were the contemporaries of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him); they fulfilled the duty of supporting him and being loyal to him, and they strove for the sake of Allah with their efforts, their wealth and their selves. Hence the scholars agreed that they are the elite and the best of this Ummah, and that Allah gave them the honour of being the companions of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He praised them in His Book when He said

(interpretation of the meaning):

{Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. And those who are with him are severe against disbelievers, and merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and falling down prostrate (in prayer), seeking Bounty from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure. The mark of them (i.e. of their Faith) is on their faces (foreheads) from the traces of prostration (during prayers).} [Al-Fat-h 48:29]

And the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) praised them when he said: “The best of my Ummah is my generation, then those who come after them, then those who come after them.” (Narrated by Al-Bukhari, 3650 and Muslim, 2535)

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) warned against belittling them, mocking them or insulting them when he said: “Whoever insults my companions, the curse of Allah, the angels and all of mankind will be upon him.” (As-Silsilah As-Sahihah, 2340)

Why It Is Prohibited to Depict the Companions

Portraying any one of them on stage or on the screen is contrary to this praise from Allah, and is detrimental to the high status and honour which Allah has bestowed upon them. That is because representing any one of them in this fashion exposes them to mockery and ridicule.

Actors are usually people who have no room for righteousness, piety and Islamic morals in their lives. Moreover those who put on plays are doing that as a means to earn money, and no matter how much they try to avoid it, it will involve some lying and backbiting.

How Media Portrayals Harm the Companions’ Legacy

Representing the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) has an effect on their status in the hearts and minds of the Muslims, and paves the way for Muslims to doubt their religion.

It also necessarily implies that one of the actors will play the role of Abu Jahl or one of his ilk among the disbelievers, and he will have to utter words insulting Bilal, and insulting the Messenger

(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the message of Islam that he brought. Undoubtedly this is a great evil.

What is said about this serving the interest of calling people to Islam and spreading noble Islamic morals and etiquette is simply an assumption and wishful thinking. Whoever knows the real nature and aims of actors will realize that this kind of acting is in sharp contrast to the real nature of the actors and their audience.

When Harm Outweighs Benefit

One of the basic principles in Islamic Shari`ah is that if a matter both serves an interest and does some harm, if the bad outweighs the good then it is prohibited. Representing the Companions may serve some interest but the harm done by this is far greater than any good that might be achieved.

So in order to protect those interests and ward off the harm, and to preserve the honorable status of the companions of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), we must not allow that.

The Final Verdict on Depicting the Companions

Based on the above, it is prohibited to represent any of the companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in movies or plays etc.

And Allah knows best. May Allah send blessings and peace upon our Prophet Muhammad and all his family and Companions.

Refer to these answers for further information: (181704, 158232, 10452, 22723, 71170, 144322, 115294)

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