

The call of Muslim Brotherhood and confronting moral Westernization



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Drama, in its various forms (cinema, theater, television, and radio), appeals to different segments of society. Not long ago, dramatic production was confined to traditional methods. However, with the rise of social networking sites, it has become possible for anyone to generate topics for drama and present them to the public. The matter is no longer limited to mass production. With the emergence of drama production platforms, both Arab and foreign, there are now specific displays for the content produced. They also acquire or produce content through traditional means.

Since its beginning, drama has been a fundamental aspect of social life; some see it as portraying life with its intricacies and challenges. Drama has shaped the modern value system and altered perception and knowledge trends in society.

Drama is a powerful tool for influencing societies. Its strength lies in its ability to capture attention and effectively influence by portraying the parallel reality of life and human issues in various forms and levels.

In essence, drama reflects societal realities, modifies wrong behaviors, establishes rules that promote victory for human causes, and supports human choices. Undoubtedly, human issues are universal. Diligence, perseverance, belief in a religion, sincerity, instinctive betrayal, treachery, ambition, success, failure, and sadness are all human values that take different forms according to societal circumstances and convictions.

The role of drama serves to address these issues and improve behavior in line with societal values, but how does the drama that Arab and Muslim viewers are exposed to reinforce the value systems of our societies?

First, what is the meaning of a value system?

The value system guides societies' general behavior. It determines the extent to which they accept or reject certain values. Any change in the value system results in a change in individuals' behavior from one type to another.

Behavior is influenced by the value system. Any change in values results in a change in behavior.

The value system comprises cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components, leading to choice, appreciation, and action. Knowledge guides choice, conscience guides appreciation, and behavior is confirmed by action and practical practice.

The relationship between men and women serves as an illustrative example of the variability of the value system.

The structure of Islamic relationships between men and women is based on affection, mercy, and partnership in reward. Different roles are determined by guardianship, which is defined by a standard set by the Almighty God. "Men are the caretakers of women, as men have been provisioned by Allah over women and tasked with supporting them financially." (Al-Nisaa: 34).

The relationship between a man and a woman in Islam is not based on contractual interests, but rather on treating each other with kindness., as God Almighty said, "Treat them fairly" (Al-Nisaa: 19). It is a compassionate relationship, as the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, said (I order you to treat women well, for they are but like captives with you), (There is no woman who prays to God, fasts, guards her chastity, and obeys

her husband except that she will have a status in Paradise with him) Narrated by Al-Tirmidhi.

However, when drama portrayed relationships, especially in the last millennium, it tended to align with the Western idea of the relationship between men and women. This created a value system that was quite different from the Islamic perspective, reinforcing the division between the self (the woman) and the other (the man).

It is a solid dualism in itself that is not subject to any common reference between them. The human essence between them disappeared with the disappearance of compassion, or as Dr. Al-Mesiri, may God have mercy on him, says: (Women have centered themselves and strived to achieve their sense of identity independently, creating an eternal cosmic conflict with man.)

The drama reinforced the process of Westernization within the nation's value system.:

Family relationships (women/men) were not the only goals used to destroy societies. They also witnessed waves of Westernization of the human body, which turned into a commodity displayed on screens and social networking sites.

The mental image of the human being, whether male or female, is valued based on external appearance. The physical measurements are mechanical, functional, and engineering standards suitable for their assigned roles, which are showcased for spontaneous excitement and subsequent promotion on adult websites. It is a complete circle: automatic promotion of products that help you reach the standard, films that present the ideal image, and caresses that transition the instinct, leading to falling into the trap of pornography and its addiction.

The purpose of the drama was to emphasize the concept of the ideal boy and girl and to create a romantic atmosphere at first. This was done to eventually lead to the promotion of the belief that freedom is tied to the expression of one's body. This would result in a shift from the Islamic values of chastity and family-oriented relationships to a state of sexual disorder and unconventional relationships. It also involves the freedom to choose one's gender and cohabitation.

Over the past decade, dramatic productions have increasingly portrayed and promoted family disintegration, violence, and behaviors such as adultery, drug use, and cohabitation. They have also questioned the feasibility of marriage, normalized the term homosexuality, and marginalized the roles of fathers and religious figures.

Additionally, they have mocked legal rulings and aspects of the Prophet's Sunnah, and disdained values of chastity, purity, and virginity. Religious institutions, except for the Church, have also been subject to mockery.

This is on par with Arab-produced drama. It brings to mind actor Hassan Youssef's testimony during a private session in 1998 while I was supervising the production of a historical series. He testified that in the 1970s, there was a wave of films containing excessive nudity that explored issues of bodily freedom and the chaos of sexual desire. These films focused on the idea of girls' liberation, their disobedience to the family institution, and their rebellion against it. He also mentioned that these films were funded by the Egyptian Church and its affiliated institutions. He stated in his testimony, "The film cost one hundred thousand pounds, so the producer was given one hundred and forty thousand pounds to incentivize him to produce and ensure profitability."

What kind of advocacy role is necessary to address this crisis?

We must first acknowledge that there is a real crisis in appreciating and understanding the role of art in building or demolishing societies. Since 1995, we have been completely neglectful of the right to public advocacy. This history is not in vain, as it involves the removal of mosques from the hands of the Brotherhood and preventing their preachers from giving lessons, handing them over to the Salafists. The Brotherhood was limited to a parliamentary political role, allowing preachers from all factions to emerge, including the rise of Amr Khaled (The phenomenon of the new preachers).

Since that date, we should have embarked on a different endeavor, focusing on art and media. When we departed from Egypt, we had to establish artistic production in conjunction with launching satellite channels. I do not mean to imply the random establishment of artistic production, as we have seen in the past, resulting in the creation of weak dramas lacking societal value. Instead, these productions seem to revolve within the same orbit as satellite channels and fall into one category. This situation can be seen as a consequence of the political upheaval and the tragic conflict between the Brotherhood and the ruling state. Enormous amounts of money have been invested in lamentations that seem to only cater to the funder's preferences and are watched by our peers and ourselves.

Now we must first create the desire and will to return and communicate with the general public, and this comes with a set of conditions:

Urging capital to establish a major artistic institution through group contributions.

Forming an artistic committee to translate general values and goals into diverse artistic works that resonate with the community, rather than just satisfying the group's members.

Study and analyze all the works presented in recent years that have undermined societal values, and assess their nationwide impact.

Considering that artistic production stock is as much of an advocacy stock as other stocks where money is spent.

Creating various artistic platforms to showcase the products being offered.

The normative system governing Islamic culture can be evaluated in relation to individuals and societies. It is based on a conditional thinking structure that makes the attainment of permanent afterlife happiness and temporary worldly happiness dependent on following the laws that God Almighty enacted in His Book, and which the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, explained in the purified hadiths.

The measure of societal cohesion is determined by the extent to which societies adhere to and are close to the normative structure in the face of cultural invasion or defeat from sweeping attacks. Therefore, we need to form a committee that includes specialists in art and media, along with a group of scholars, to establish the value system encompassing all aspects of life in Islam.

It will then be submitted to the technical production committee. This will help us resist Westernization.