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FORMATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF ART AND CULTURE IN THE MUSLIM EAST

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Abstract

The article analyzes, from historical and cultural perspectives, the attitudes formed in the early period of Islam toward architecture, visual arts, and music. It highlights the rapid development of architecture in the formative centuries of Islam, demonstrating how Islamic aesthetics gradually emerged through architectural solutions in mosques, madrasas, and social structures. At the same time, a cautious yet neutral approach toward visual arts is observed – the fact that no harm was done to the statues and the Sphinx in Egypt vividly reflects this stance. Restrictions on depicting living beings are explained in connection with the moral and spiritual upbringing of tribes that had not yet completely freed themselves from the influence of idolatry. The article also discusses how attitudes toward music were shaped during the same period and how its role within the spiritual and religious context was variously interpreted. Thus, the paper scientifically explores the early formation of religious and ethical perspectives on the different forms of art — architecture, visual art, and music within Islamic civilization.

Keywords

islamic art, figurative prohibition, calligraphy, geometric ornamentation, arab architecture, timurid architecture, andalousian architecture, mosque decoration, miniature painting, music in islam, hadith and aesthetic guidance, cultural heritage, religious influence on art, ornamentation, sufi art.

Islam manifests itself not only as a system of faith but also as a profound moral and spiritual framework that has exerted an immense influence on the development of human culture and civilization. Within Islamic civilization, values and principles such as the pursuit of knowledge, refinement, justice, humanism, and enlightenment occupy a central place. These ideals encompass social, political,

spiritual, and aesthetic spheres, presenting a harmonious interpretation of morality and beauty.

In Islam, art is viewed not merely as a means of decoration or entertainment but as a vehicle for expressing the wisdom of existence and refining the human spirit. In Muslim culture, disciplines such as architecture, calligraphy, music, literature, miniature painting, and traditional applied arts have played a vital role in expressing spiritual beauty and guiding humanity toward virtue and perfection.

Muslim culture and art evolved as an integral component of world civilization, characterized by the high manifestation of human intellect and creative potential. The cultural processes within the framework of Islamic civilization gave rise to distinctive stylistic directions and artistic traditions in fields such as architecture, visual arts, music, calligraphy, literature, and crafts. Each of these disciplines passed through specific historical stages, developing in harmony with Islamic worldview, aesthetic ideals, and spiritual values.

Architecture. When speaking about the role of art and culture in Islam, the medieval Muslim East—particularly the regions of *Mawarannahr* (Transoxiana), Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and later Northern India and Turkey—comes vividly to the fore.[21]. In the Muslim West — encompassing the Maghreb states (North Africa), al-Andalus, and Sicily — distinctive forms of architecture and artistic ornamentation emerged, which Europeans collectively referred to as **"Moorish culture."** In Egypt, although fortress-like mosques and other buildings had been constructed even before the Mamluk era, the architectural style that later became known as **Mamluk architecture** took shape. This designation arose because many of Egypt's prominent Islamic architectural structures were reconstructed and given a unified appearance during the Mamluk period[22].

Early Islamic architecture was characterized by simplicity and functionality. The defining feature of this period's architectural style lay not in external ornamentation or complex forms but in the expression of spiritual meaning and divine ideas. The **Kaaba**, Islam's most sacred architectural symbol, represents the earliest and purest example of Muslim architecture. Built in the form of a cube, without windows and with a single door positioned in one corner, it embodies the principles of minimalism. Its simple structure reflects the Islamic notion that meaning takes precedence over form and decoration.

The earliest Islamic structures in Medina — particularly the mosques — were likewise based on simplicity and practicality. In their architectural design, priority

[21] Ettinghausen, R.; Grabar, O.; Jenkins-Madina, M. *Islamic Art and Architecture: 650–1250.* – New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2001. – 448 p.
[22] Blair, S. S.; Bloom, J. M. *The Art and Architecture of Islam: 1250–1800.* – New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1994. – 648 p.

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was given not to external embellishment but to convenience, spatial harmony, and communal unity. Thus, in its formative stages, Islamic architecture evolved upon the principle that spiritual content prevails over physical form.

During the reign of **Caliph ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān** (644–656 CE), Islamic architecture entered a new developmental phase. At his initiative, the main mosques of Mecca and Medina were reconstructed and structurally enhanced. Within this process, skilled stonecutters and builders were invited through an agreement with the Byzantine Empire, and for the first time, mosques were rebuilt using the advanced construction technologies of the era. As a result, new architectural styles and structural solutions began to take shape within Muslim architecture, and mosques emerged not only as places of worship but also as centers of cultural and spiritual life[23]. Today, the only surviving architectural element dating back to the construction works carried out during the caliphate of **ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān** is the **"Riwāq al-ʿUthmānī"** — the colonnades surrounding the Sacred Mosque (*al-Masjid al-Ḥarām*) in Mecca. These arcades not only embody the simplicity and proportional harmony characteristic of the earliest phase of Islamic architecture but also bear witness to Caliph ʿUthmān's constructive policy of expansion and beautification of the mosque. The "Riwāq al-ʿUthmānī" later became a source of inspiration for many Islamic architectural traditions that emerged in subsequent centuries, particularly for key stylistic elements such as the **arched colonnade** and **iwan** (vaulted hall or veranda).

The process of assimilating the advanced achievements of other civilizations and harmonizing them with Islamic architectural traditions continued consistently throughout later periods. In this regard, cooperation with the **Byzantine (Greek) school of architecture** played a particularly significant role. Peace treaties concluded between the Islamic state and Byzantium often included not only military or political clauses but also provisions concerning cultural collaboration in the fields of construction and architecture. As a result of this cooperation, a synthesis between Greek-Byzantine traditions and local Islamic styles took root, giving Islamic architecture its distinctive aesthetic foundation.

The **Umayyad Mosque in Damascus** (the Great Mosque of the Umayyads) is a striking example of this synthesis, as it originally stood on the site of the **Church of Saint John the Baptist (Yaḥyā, peace be upon him)**. Later, according to the terms of an agreement between the Umayyads and the Byzantine Empire, Greek artisans adapted and reconstructed the building into a mosque. The mosque is among the earliest Islamic structures decorated with **Greek-style mosaics and gilded vegetal**

[23] **Omer, S.** *An Analysis of the Expansion of the Prophet's Mosque by Caliph 'Uthman b. 'Affan.* – In: *Al-Shajarah: Journal of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC–IIUM).* – Vol. 23, No. 1, 2018. – P. 35–60.

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motifs, reflecting a blend of Byzantine artistic heritage and emerging Islamic aesthetic principles[24].

In the regions of **Iran, Khorasan, and Transoxiana**, the most commonly used building material in the earliest examples of Islamic architecture was **clay**. As a result, many of the structures erected during that period eventually deteriorated over time, leaving behind almost no architectural traces of their original appearance.

In later centuries—particularly during the **9th and 10th centuries**—the production and use of **baked brick** became widespread throughout these regions, giving rise to new architectural traditions. This construction style, characterized by the use of baked brick and, to a lesser extent, stone, with upper surfaces often covered in **tilework and glazed decorations**, is referred to in scholarly literature as the **"Iranian style."**[25].

The **Samanid Mausoleum** is considered the oldest surviving baked-brick structure in **Transoxiana**. The key distinction between the Transoxianan and Iranian architectural styles lies in the use of materials and ornamentation: in Transoxiana, **decorative effects were achieved using the bricks themselves**, without relying on tilework.

Examples of this approach can be observed in architectural monuments constructed before and shortly after the Mongol invasion, such as the **Samanid Mausoleum**, the **Arslankhan Minaret**, the **Jarkurgan Minaret**, and various structures in **Old Urgench (Kuhna Urgench)**. These monuments exemplify the mastery of brickwork typical of the Transoxianan school, where geometric patterns, symmetry, and light-shadow interplay were used to create aesthetic harmony without the aid of colored tiles[26]. The practice of decorating buildings with **tilework** began during the reign of **Amir Temur (Tamerlane)** and the **Timurid dynasty**. From this period onward, nearly all architectural monuments from the Timurid era and subsequent centuries feature structures richly adorned with glazed tiles.

In **Northern India**, where the primary construction material was **stone**, architectural works such as mosques, madrasas, palaces, and pavilions were built entirely of stone and ornamented with intricate stone carvings. The earliest example of Islamic architecture in this region is the **"Mosque of the Splitting of the Moon" (Masjid al-Inshiqāq al-Qamar)**. According to local traditions, one of the

[24] Hillenbrand, R. *Islamic Architecture: Form, Function and Meaning.* – Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995. – 624 p.
[25] Blair, S. S.; Bloom, J. M. *The Art and Architecture of Islam: 1250–1800.* – New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1994. – 648 p.
[26] Jarrar, S.; Riedlmayer, A.; Spurr, S. *The Architecture of the Islamic World: Its History and Social Meaning.* – London: Thames & Hudson, 1994. – 288 p.

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native maharajas witnessed the miracle of the moon's splitting, investigated its cause, and subsequently embraced Islam, commissioning the construction of this mosque. Currently, the site is under consideration for reconstruction and preservation.

The grandeur of **Indian Islamic architecture** is most vividly exemplified in masterpieces such as the **Qutb Minar** and the **Taj Mahal**, which embody the synthesis of Persian, Central Asian, and indigenous Indian artistic traditions, reflecting both spiritual symbolism and exquisite craftsmanship[27]. **Turkish architecture** assimilated and enriched the advanced achievements of **Byzantine architecture**, developing distinctive forms imbued with an Islamic character. The first grand congregational mosque in Byzantium — the former church of **Hagia Sophia** — exerted a profound influence on the external appearance and structural composition of later mosques.

The leading figure of Ottoman architecture, **Mimar Sinan**, who was of Armenian origin, enjoyed great esteem in the service of the sultans. Turkish architecture is distinguished by the style first employed in **Hagia Sophia** — the use of **low-domed, stone-built mosques** — a feature that became a defining characteristic of Ottoman architectural design[28].

In most cases, Muslims utilized the architectural structures of earlier peoples and religious communities, adopting and even enriching their achievements — a fact that stands as one of the greatest contributions of Muslims to the development of universal human civilization **(Ettinghausen, Grabar, & Jenkins-Madina, 2001)**. Unlike the Mongols, Muslims never devastated or plundered the unique buildings and cities of the territories they conquered[29].

Visual Art

When discussing visual art, one inevitably recalls the various prohibitions and restrictions in Islam, along with the differing opinions regarding their foundations. However, this issue is rather complex, and interpreting it solely from the perspective of prohibition would not constitute a complete or objective approach. In reality, Islam did not *absolutely* reject visual art; rather, it **limited its content and purpose according to spiritual and moral principles**. Consequently, within Islamic civilization, decorative arts — including **arabesque patterns, calligraphy, and geometric ornamentation** — reached a high level of sophistication and became one of the fundamental directions of Islamic aesthetics.

[27] Ettinghausen, R.; Grabar, O.; Jenkins-Madina, M. *Islamic Art and Architecture: 650–1250.* – New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2001. – 448 p.
[28] Blair, S. S.; Bloom, J. M. *The Art and Architecture of Islam: 1250–1800.* – New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1994. – 641 p.
[29] Blair, S. S.; Bloom, J. M. *The Art and Architecture of Islam: 1250–1800.* – New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1994. – 652 p.

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Nevertheless, to address the matter objectively and scientifically, one must first turn to the **primary sources of Islam**. In particular, the Qur'an (Sūrat Sabaʾ, 34:11–13) describes how, during the reign of Prophet Solomon (Sulaymān), the jinn participated in the construction of cities, palaces, and places of worship. Interestingly, they were also commanded to make statues, as stated in the verse:

"They made for him whatever he desired — sanctuaries, **statues (tamāthīl)**, large basins like reservoirs, and heavy cooking cauldrons."

This Qur'anic verse explicitly mentions that **statues were produced during the time of Solomon**, yet the text offers no condemnation or prohibition regarding the practice. Hypothetically, if the act of making statues had inherently constituted *shirk* (idolatry) or a prohibited activity, such work would not have been performed under the command of a prophet. It is noteworthy that, although the **Torah** also forbids the depiction of living beings, no disapproval is expressed in relation to Solomon's use of such artistic forms. Rather, the reference merely records the **fact** that statues were used as **architectural decorations** (The Muslim Artist's Conflict: Figurative Prohibition in Islam, 2021).

Furthermore, a **hadith** explains that the origin of idolatry arose when members of a community, after the death of their righteous people, began to make statues in their memory; gradually, they started venerating these images, and in time, this practice evolved into **idol worship**[30]. That is, if we pay attention, what is condemned here is not the making of statues itself, but rather the unhealthy attitude of that people toward the statues[31]. Indeed, for peoples given to idolatry, the idols they worship need not be sophisticated works of art. Most of the idols from the Age of Ignorance were merely simple stones or pieces of wood distinguished by a slightly different shape or color. For example, as mentioned by Ibn al-Kalbi in his *Kitāb al-Aṣnām*, the idol *al-Lāt* was a tall, white stone set up on one of the hills around Ṭāʾif. *al-ʿUzzā*, on the other hand, took the form of a tree regarded as sacred by certain tribes. The Companion Khālid ibn al-Walīd (may Allah be pleased with him) cut it down, thereby bringing an end to its worship[32]. Thus, even when the idols of the Age of Ignorance were shapeless objects or lifeless entities such as trees, this did not prevent idolaters from worshipping them. To this day, in certain regions of the world—particularly among tribes in parts of Central Africa and Southeast Asia that have preserved primitive forms of belief—fetishism traditions still persist. In such communities, the fetish object is often an ordinary

[30] Spahic, O. The Islamic Prohibition of Statues and Images: An Analysis of the Underlying Wisdom. – Kuala Lumpur: IIUM Press, 2019. – 15 p.
[31] The Religious Prohibition Against Images. – In: *The Islamic Awareness Series*. – [S.l.]: Islamic Awareness, n.d. – URL: https://www.islamic-awareness.org/ (дата обращения: 08.10.2025).
[32] Ibn al-Kalbī, Hishām ibn Muhammad. *Kitāb al-Asnām* / Ed. by Ahmad Zaki Pasha; Trans. by Nabih A. Faris. – Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952. – 88 p.

stone, stick, or other natural item regarded as sacred. However, its sanctity does not lie in its physical form but rather in the religious perception of the community that venerates it. For followers of other faiths, these objects hold no significance whatsoever.

From this perspective, the notion that figurative art itself leads to idolatry cannot be considered scientifically valid. After all, an image or a form, as a means of representation, is a neutral phenomenon. Indeed, idolatry continues to exist among primitive societies where the level of artistic development is low or where aesthetic traditions of visual expression have not yet formed.

Islam's neutral stance toward visual art is also reflected in the practical examples of its early history. Although Egypt came under Muslim control during the caliphate of the Rightly Guided Caliphs under the command of the Companion ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ (may Allah be pleased with him), the existing statues, the Sphinx, and other structures bearing human imagery were left entirely untouched and unharmed—clearly illustrating the early Islamic approach in this regard[33]. Most of Egypt's sculptural monuments were severely damaged much later, during the French colonial period, and those that could be preserved were transported to various museums across Europe. In particular, the world-famous Sphinx had its face shot at by cannon on the direct orders of Napoleon Bonaparte[34].

At the same time, the prohibition on depicting living beings during the early Islamic period should be evaluated within its objective historical and social context. This is because, without strict restrictions, the various Arab tribes who had only recently turned from polytheism to monotheism might not have fully abandoned their former customs[35]. Therefore, in order to eradicate the vice completely, it was deemed appropriate to impose a strict prohibition on its underlying causes. This approach proved to be effective for its time. Later, when the cause itself disappeared, a number of relaxations regarding the visual arts began to appear within Muslim society[36]. For example, in some cases, drawing images of living beings was permitted on the condition that their shadows were not included. Similarly, it can be observed that the *miniature* genre developed as a form of artistic illustration — not as highly realistic representation, but rather as decorative art accompanied by explanatory or narrative elements[37]. In these paintings, one can often observe a deliberate avoidance of realistic depiction. For instance, in

[33] Islam's Prohibition of Drawing Images and Erecting Statues. – *The Religion of Islam Portal*. – 2019. – URL: https://www.islamreligion.com/ (дата обращения: 08.10.2025).
[34] Demystifying Arab Views of Ancient Egypt. – *Arab World Studies Journal*, 2021. – Vol. 18, No. 3. – P. 45–57.
[35] Эльассаль, М. А. Исламское искусство и его особенности // *Islamic Arts Magazine*. – 2022. – № 4. – С. 45–58.
[36] Figural Representation in Islamic Art // *Metropolitan Museum of Art* [Электронный ресурс]. – 2000. – Режим доступа: https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/figs/hd_figs.htm (дата обращения: 08.10.2025).
[37] The Muslim Artist's Conflict: Figurative prohibition in Islam // *Al-Islamic Review*. – 2021. – Т. 12, № 3. – С. 78–90.

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miniatures portraying the Kaaba, its door is usually drawn not at the edge of the building but in the middle of the wall. This may be explained by the fact that the artist painted it imaginatively without having seen the actual structure.

When depicting human figures, little attention was paid to anatomical accuracy — the images were drawn in two dimensions, and sometimes distant objects or figures appeared larger than those nearby. The determining factor here was the *significance* of the depicted subject rather than its physical scale. Trees, walls, and people were shown upright, while pools, tables, and other horizontal objects were drawn from a top-down perspective. The relative size of buildings within the composition was not emphasized, and later such stylistic choices came to be recognized as features of the genre itself.

Because the depiction of living beings was prohibited in the early Islamic period, artistic ornamentation was primarily focused on *inanimate forms* — that is, botanical motifs and natural landscapes[38]. A vivid example of this can be seen in the decorations of the **Umayyad Mosque**. The second type of ornamentation, known as *girih*, consisted of geometrically symmetrical patterns and lattice-like designs. Later, the combination of these two styles — geometric and vegetal — gave rise to a new artistic form characterized by **symmetrical floral motifs**, marking the emergence of a distinct art style within Islamic aesthetics[39]. These patterns were also reflected in **wood carving art**. In other words, even the presence of certain restrictions played a **productive role** in the development of art. During the **late Umayyad** and **Abbasid** periods, depictions of **living beings** began to appear occasionally, marking a gradual relaxation of earlier prohibitions[40]. During the Abbasid persecution, the Umayyads who established a principality in Andalusia constructed palaces, one of which featured the **"Court of Lions"**, where **stone sculptures of lions** were arranged around a circular fountain.In the post-Timurid period, the architecture of **Transoxiana** also incorporated animal imagery in prominent structures: the **Sherdor Madrasa**, the **Nadir Divanbegi Madrasa**, and the **Khwaja Ahror complex** all feature depictions of lions, tigers, wolves, antelopes, and simurghs on their **pishtaqs** (monumental portal facades)[41].

Hadith literature contains narrations indicating that during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him), **children's toys** often featured representations such as **dolls and birds***42*. There are also hadiths indicating that objects bearing images

[38] Grabar, O. *The Formation of Islamic Art*. New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1987. – 256 p.
[39] Bloom, J. M.; Blair, S. S. *Islamic Arts*. London: Phaidon Press, 2003. – 412 p.
[40] Ettinghausen, R.; Grabar, O.; Jenkins-Madina, M. *Islamic Art and Architecture: 650–1250*. New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2001. – 448 p.
[41] Golombek, L.; Subtelny, M. *Timurid Art and Culture: Iran and Central Asia in the Fifteenth Century*. Leiden; New York: Brill, 2007. – 375 p.
[42] al-Bukhari, Muhammad ibn Ismail. *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, ḥadīth no. 6130

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were **neither discarded nor destroyed**, but were instead used in daily life for practical purposes, such as **beds and pillows**[43]. Taking these points into consideration, many contemporary scholars **permit the depiction and ornamentation of natural landscapes and various cultural monuments**[44]. Similarly, it is permitted to depict living beings when making **toys for young children**. However, scholars emphasize that these objects or images should serve **practical or aesthetic purposes**, and one must take special care to prevent excessive veneration or the formation of an unhealthy attachment to them.

Music. Some people hold misconceptions about music in Islam, even claiming that it is prohibited. However, a review of primary Islamic sources and historical evidence suggests otherwise. For example, in **Surah Ar-Rum (30:15)** it is stated: *"Those who believe and do good deeds will rejoice in the gardens [of Paradise]."* Many Companions and exegetes interpreted the verb "rejoice" at the end of this verse as referring to **listening to music**.

In **Al-Zamakhshari's Tafsir Al-Kashshaf**, a long hadith is cited explaining that when the Prophet (peace be upon him) described the music of Paradise, a Bedouin stood up and asked, *"Is there music in Paradise as well?"* The Prophet replied, *"Would Paradise remain Paradise without it?"*

There is some scholarly disagreement among Sufi masters regarding the permissibility and origin of music. Supporters include **Imam Al-Ghazali, Suhrawardi, Hujwiri**, and several **Naqshbandi sheikhs**. As evidence for the permissibility of listening to music, they cite the following hadiths of the Prophet (peace be upon him):

"Beautify the recitation of the Qur'an with your voices; indeed, a beautiful voice increases the beauty of the Qur'an."

"Everything has its adornment; the adornment of the Qur'an is a beautiful voice."

These narrations indicate that music and sound can be considered permissible and even valuable for spiritual and aesthetic enrichment. [45]

Additionally, regarding the permissibility of listening to music, the following hadith from **Sahih al-Bukhari** is cited:

'A'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) reported: "Abu Bakr entered upon me while two Ansari slave girls were singing verses in celebration of the Day of Bu'os. Neither of the two girls was a professional singer. Abu Bakr said, 'Are the devil's flutes to be played in the House of the Messenger of Allah?'

[43] Muslim, Ibn al-Hajjaj. *Sahih Muslim*. Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, ḥadīth no. 2107
[44] al-Qaradawi, Yusuf. *The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam (al-Halal wal-Haram fi al-Islam)*. Indianapolis: American Trust Publications, 1997. – 358 p.
[45] 1038 ص.2006 : ىنفحلا معنملا دبع روتكد.ةيفوصلا ةعوسوملا .ةرهاقلا

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The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) replied: "O Abu Bakr, leave them alone; every people has its festival, and today is our festival."

This narration demonstrates that **listening to celebratory songs was permitted** in a controlled and non-professional context, especially during festive occasions. [46]

Rabiʿ bint Muʿawwidh reported: "On the morning after my wedding night, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) entered and sat on the mattress I had laid out just as you would sit. The girls were playing the tambourine in a circle, recalling their fathers who had passed away at Badr. One of them sang: 'Among us is the Prophet who knows what will happen tomorrow.'

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: 'Stop this song and continue with your previous song!'"

This narration illustrates that **music and singing were permitted** in a social and celebratory context, particularly during joyful occasions, as long as it remained appropriate and did not involve prohibited content.[47]

Additionally, in **Sunan Ibn Majah**, a hadith with a sound chain of narration reports:

Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated: "One day, while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was walking through the streets of Madinah, he heard some slave girls singing: 'We are from the Banu Najjar tribe, and we are happy to be neighbors of Muhammad.'

He said to them: 'By Allah, I love you as well.'"

This narration further demonstrates that **listening to songs or celebratory expressions** in a joyful and respectful context was permitted during the Prophet's time.[48]

Imam Ghazali said: "The texts regarding listening to music, playing the duff (tambourine), performing ghina (melodic singing), dancing, playing swords and spears, as well as watching and listening to these activities, indicate their permissibility." [49]. In *Mukashafatu-l-Qulub*, it is further stated: "Among the companions of our Prophet (peace be upon him), Abdullah ibn Ja'far, Abdullah ibn Zubayr, Mu'awiya, and others listened to songs. Some of the earlier generations, including certain companions and the Tabi'un, did not consider listening to music blameworthy. When Salim ibn Abu Hasan was asked, 'Do you consider listening to

[46] Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari. *Al-Jami' as-Sahih*. Vol. 1, Two Eid Books. Tashkent: 1991. – p. 259.
[47] Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari. *Al-Jami' as-Sahih*. 3 vols. Kitab al-Magazi – p. 17; see also: Kitab al-Nikah – p. 410.
[48] Yusuf Khattar Muhammad. Sufi Encyclopedia. Kazan: Iman, 2004. – p. 83.
[49] Same source. – p. 85.

songs forbidden?' he replied: 'People better than me considered it permissible and listened to it. So what can I say?'"

If we pay attention to the hadiths, the Prophet (peace be upon him) only objected to the content of the songs. This means that the content and quality of a song can be criticized and even prohibited if necessary. However, musical works of high quality and taste, which have become masterpieces of world culture, and national maqams with deep and profound meanings in every word, are naturally exceptions.

Islam has never hindered the development of culture and art. Even when certain restrictions were set, they opened the way for new ideas, styles, and alternative directions in art. This, in turn, requires contemporary Muslims to approach the widely spread cultural forms and works of art in modern life with a broad perspective, to derive aesthetic pleasure from what they like, to maintain a tolerant attitude toward what they do not like, to understand beauty individually, to appreciate its different aspects, and to recognize the role of each element in shaping cultural refinement.

The Muslim community has always had the potential to shape, preserve, develop, promote, and set an example in matters of taste, art, and culture, and it remains the sacred duty of every Muslim to uphold this legacy.

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