



جَمْعِيَّةُ الْعُلَمَاءِ وَغُورِ الْاِسْلَامِ بِسِنِغَافُورَةَ

Persatuan Ulama dan Guru-Guru Agama Islam (Singapura)  
Singapore Islamic Scholars & Religious Teachers Association

## FOR MEDIA RELEASE

22 March 2019

## RELIGIOUS GUIDELINES ON 'BLACK METAL' MUSIC

The arts symbolise beauty. It is human nature to feel attracted and drawn to all things beautiful. Such attraction is an innate human disposition bestowed as a gift from Allah to His servants. Allah s.w.t. declares in Surah Al-Rum verse 30:

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ۝

Meaning: "Then set your face upright for religion in the right state - the nature made by Allah in which He has made men; there is no altering of Allah's creation; that is the right religion, but most people do not know."

2 Islam neither ignores human disposition, nor prohibits the enjoyment of artistic pursuits or entertainment, so long as they are bounded by *shari'ah* (Islamic Law).

### Music from the Islamic Perspective

3 Music is one form of entertainment enjoyed by many people. Renowned Islamic scholars hold different views on music. There are those who disallow it while there are those who hold a neutral stance on it. Among those who disallowed music were Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Malik, Imam Syafi'i and Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal. They held the opinion that music is something to be avoided (*makruh*) or even prohibited (*haram*). However, there were others such as Imam Al-Ghazali, Sheikh Mahmud Shaltut, Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazali and Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi who allowed it but with certain limits and under certain conditions.

4 Imam al-Ghazali in his scholarly treatise, *Ihya' Ulum Al-Din* for example, held the view that the sense of hearing is created in order to listen to beautiful sounds. Nevertheless, he cautioned against heedless entertainment and listening to music excessively.

5 Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi in his scholarly work, *Al-Halal Wa Al-Haram Fi Al-Islam* holds the view that while music is generally permissible, it may be prohibited if certain conditions have been violated.

6 Scholars share the general consensus that music is allowed on the condition that its contents or lyrics are not in conflict with Islamic values, or promote acts which are prohibited in Islam, such as consuming alcohol or drugs. For music to be permissible, its performance should also not violate Islamic rulings on etiquette and behaviour, such as the free-mixing or inter-mingling of men and women that could lead to slander (*fitnah*).

### **'Black Metal' Music**

7 'Black metal' is a sub-genre of heavy metal and rock music. It is characterised by musical elements that are aggressive and violent, and lyrics that propagate anti-religious and anti-God ideologies. According to Harris M. Berger, a professor of music at the University of Texas A&M, 'black metal' synonymously refers to groups that clearly glorify and worship Satan. Rituals involving the worshipping Satan, fire, drinking of blood and others are often included in black metal concerts and performances.

8 On the contrary, Islam regards Satan (*Syaitan*) as an enemy accursed by Allah s.w.t. The Qur'an firmly states that *Iblis* and *Syaitan* have made it a mission to lead humankind astray. Allah s.w.t. mentions in Surah al-Sad verse 82-83:

قَالَ فَبِعِزَّتِكَ لَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ۝٨٢ إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخْلَصِينَ ۝٨٣

Meaning: "Iblis said, 'By Your might, I will surely mislead them all. Except, among them, the purified ones.'"

9 In light of this view, the elements of black metal are clearly in opposition to Islamic teachings. In addition, they violate the conditions prescribed by scholars as

prerequisites for making music permissible. In fact, such music may lead to the glorification of *Syaitan*, or even to the level of worshipping him as God.

10 Not only is music that praises and glorifies *Syaitan* prohibited in Islam, all accompanying activities that relate to worshipping *Syaitan* and calling out to him is forbidden according to Islamic law – similar to the practice of black magic and other related activities.

### **The Need to Exercise Caution in the Choice of Entertainment**

11 Although some black metal fans enjoy the genre and its music merely for the sake of entertainment with no intention whatsoever in glorifying *Syaitan* or to insult any religion, over-obsession with such music may gradually have an insidious effect on one's thinking and emotions. In fact, it may result in the development of a careless attitude and feelings of apathy with regard to sensitivities towards religions that will indirectly lead to unease and disruption among members of a multi-racial and multi-religious society.

12 Not only that, a mistake in making the wrong choice on what a person enjoys or loves will potentially affect him in the Hereafter. It is feared that a person who idolises a group of people who glorify *Syaitan* will be among them in the Hereafter. In contrast, a person whose heart is filled with the love of Prophets and the righteous will be with them in the Hereafter. Abdullah Bin Mas'ud r.a. narrated:

جَاءَ رَجُلٌ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ : يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ، كَيْفَ تَقُولُ فِي رَجُلٍ أَحَبَّ قَوْمًا وَلَمْ يَلْحَقْ بِهِمْ ؟ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ : الْمَرْءُ مَعَ مَنْ أَحَبَّ

Meaning: "A man came to the Messenger of Allah and said: 'O Messenger of Allah, what do you think of a man who loves a particular group people, but have never met them?' Rasulullah s.a.w. replied: A person is with whomever he loves." (Hadith narrated by Imam Bukhari and Muslim Imam)

13 Islam also prohibits us from supporting and promoting the spread of heinous and extremist acts. Allah s.w.t. reminds us of this in Surah al-Maidah verse 2:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ۝

Meaning: “And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty.”

14 To conclude, Pergas urges the Muslim community in particular to exercise more care and be more sensitive in their choice of entertainment and to be wary of the tricks and deceitful ways of *Syaitan*. In keeping with the spirit of helping one another in goodness, members of the Muslim community are highly encouraged to mutually advise one another as well as to urge one another to perform good deeds and to avoid and acts of violation.

15 May we strive to become Muslims with excellent attitudes and behaviour; and may we be able to make evaluations based on sound knowledge and a strong sense of spirituality, such that the Muslim community can be exemplary in showing the path to performing good deeds and welfare to others.

**SINGAPORE ISLAMIC SCHOLARS & RELIGIOUS TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**