

Role of Graphic Art in Reducing Terrorism and Extremisms in the World: A Case study for Visual Art of Contemporary Iraq

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ABSTRACT

Graphic art's origin can be found since early origin of human being, when the primitive existence in the caves and forests and used cave wall to make fetish either to seek protection or as a means of prayer to God or to express their feelings and emotions over there, where they were residing. Terrorism has become one of the most threatening scourges of societies. Iraqi artist also used the graphic arts as a weapon in its struggle as well as in national emergencies in past as posters and advertisement motivating and provoking interest of audience during their disunity in their regime. For the case study, contemporary Iraqi artworks were identified for the period (2015-2020) and (5) works were selected to cover the society of study. Results showed that the contemporary Iraqi artist cleared the echo of the dangerous phenomenon of terrorism, oppression, violence and the dispossession of rights (samples 1, 2 and 4). The contemporary Iraqi artist represented the situation realistically until his visual works became clear as if they were clearly telling realistic stories (samples 3 and 5). It had now become the most powerful weapon to alter the existing concept of public at a mass scale and has deep effect on mentality of people. This can also be used to reinforce the brain of terrorist and extremist, with a motivational ideas and a sympathetic approach to bring back them towards the mainstream of nation.

Keywords: Graphic art, motivated, terrorist, extremist, visual art, contemporary Iraq.

1. Introduction

Terrorism was first originated during French revolution's Reign of Terror when the Jacobins, who ruled the revolutionary state, used violence including mass execution by guillotine, to compel obedience to the nation and demolish the absconders; this was the status until mid-19th century [1]. Expressing the term terrorism, it can be said that, an act or behavior that threaten or induce severe brutality to the individual/group; induce severe destruction to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system[2]. As per above definition, the use of violence or such activity must be framed to severely influence the government or to intimidate the public, and is made in keeping the view for the purpose of leading a transfer of political power, religious or ideological aim. Extremism is explained by the British Government as vocal or active opposition to fundamental existing moral, ethics and values, including democratic establishment, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs [3]. The radicalization is expressed and contested because of the many positive or non-harmful connotations that 'radical' and 'radicalism' have [2].

"Graphic" has been derived from Latin word Graph which means writing and evolved to represent each and every form of design through which a means of communication is established in either artistic or commercial wise either printed, photographed or having visual in accordance with all walk of life and include all fields of arts [4]. It can be expressed in otherwise that presently we are in graphic world. Graphic art communication is a process by which feeling, emotion, thoughts and ideas is transferred from sender to recipient by different available means conventional to modern digital mode of mass communication including social media. To produce a communication process, we have to define Information Design of Graphic Art [5].

Searching the root of graphic art in history it is observed that in the early days of human evolution they were writing the symbols and holograms to help him easily record their ideas, emotions, thoughts and events for the purpose related between them and God and used as tool to transfer their view to next generation by engraving and etching on the cave walls, stones and leaves and the journey had arrived in present condition to express it in different communication medium of modern days [6, 7]. As the more idea exists more is required to set an organized way to express and ensure its transmission to others and helped in creating a new trend that had joined many more trends and applications of graphic design, the field of information design[8]. The need of focusing on the concept of information design due to its elements of communication and it focuses on its two most important principles related to the field of graphic design. Edit ability means the process of feeding person with different knowledges while Communicability is the exchange of these knowledges between individuals and societies and both are directly proportional with evolution

and civilization [6]. With above description it can be said that graphic design require with information and facts in sequential manner with the aim of communication of its meaning to the individual or group of persons [8]. Designer design the data and information in such a way that recipient can modify, guide and direct the recipients behavior and it may help him to develop the necessary changes as per taste and interest of the behavior and helping him to enhance his behavioral decision for him to respond with the world around him [9]. This is why it is said that information design in the graphic art is most important area that depends upon the visual language as an vital component of the information design process and consist of mainly two basic ways: First, trend related with psychological view; it deals with the design based on perception, analysis, memorizing and studies of meaning from which it is possible to deal with cognitive and behavioral abilities, meaning and memory of the concerned recipient from different perspective. The second way, trend related with physiological view; it deals with representation in design studies and making systems to direct recipient's behavior and process the design accordingly [10].

In graphic art information design and modulation is one of the most important aspects of communication related with the visual language, and it can be presented by using and applying it to be benefited from it by using in many different design practices represented in designing information graphically in the form of illustration or printings and publications as in newspapers, magazines, comic books and advertisements [11]. Visual language is like any language could not be understood through using the rules of another language, hence it is a must to create linguistic base for clarification, and it may need find a new concept enabling focus on words implementation and functioning with images in an integrated and effective way. Different languages were designed for the purpose of sharing views, thoughts, ideas and emotion between individuals with each other's or with the surrounding environment, languages are designed and created to convey to do the above said purpose and evolved specially in the last period, as the computer and wireless communications played a significant role in its evolution. Also the expanded capabilities of graphic applications allow user to perform drawing, presentation and printing regardless the abundance of information.

The objectives of the current study are to integrate the use of graphic art in reducing terrorism and extremism in the world of 21st century which has now threatening the entire humanity to a great extent. To clearly that graphic art in this modern era has the potentiality to reduce the threat level of terrorism and extremism by making the public more aware and sensitive enough to tackle the situation in more emphatic and descriptive manner. To inform the public clearly and effectively about terror threat level to the exposed clearly and effectively and compliance with the various security measures they might encounter in their daily lives. It is also the aim to improve the public understanding and compliance with the various security measures they may encounter and to make the public how to act, think, behave and

respond in case of terror attack. The usefulness and effectiveness of graphic art in reducing terrorism and extremism is also our prime motto of this particular research. For the case study, to analysis contemporary Iraqi painting works for reducing terrorism effects in the period (2013-2020).

2. Methodology

Methodological approach adopted by me is to present an overview of the technique adopted and it may also demonstrate the literature followed and collection of primary and secondary evidence. 2.1.

2.1. Overview of the approach

Since the topic **Role of Graphic art in reducing terrorism and extremism**, is sensitive enough and has to act accordingly and lawfully for proper analysis of the data. In order to express findings of the patterns of feeling, behaving, responding of individuals' on the pictures and graphic on the internet which may be useful to policymakers and practitioners? The research team employed the following methodology: a literature review, a collection of primary data through semi-structured framework [12].

2.2. Literature review and stakeholder engagement

During literature review to find the key features relating to role of graphic art in reducing terrorism and extremism in the World. This methodology subsisted of an exacting and efficient search and revision of the literature, by ensuring specific search terms and defining exclusion/inclusion criteria. Initial literature was identified through efficient search using a combination of search terms, including [13,14,15]: a) extremism and terrorism, b) use of graphic art c) role, effect, and influence d) reducing terrorism and extremism. The research team identified further literature by snowballing from the initial literature. The review focused on answering two related questions: What empirical evidence is available in the public domain on terrorism and role of graphic art? What empirical evidence is available on de-radicalization process of terrorist and extremist with the help of graphic art conventional and digital media? The research team used a number of internet resources in concert with a hand-search of relevant websites relating to terrorism and extremism radicalization. Some inputs were also obtained from different source like academics and policy experts within the government to get an overview of the key issues and ideas currently informing policy.

2.3. Five themes emerging from the literature review

Review and search describes graphic art may be used in many ways to appeal to the mass to revitalize the youth which may be radicalized and provoked to become a terrorist and extremist. Internet, social media with the use of graphic art in digital and

conventional method can be used. Internet which is being used as a radicalization tool to promote terrorism, extremism and radicalization and mass communication media by some groups, across the globe in order to enhance their popularity and acceptance. It can be said that internet has become a chamber to convert innocent people into cruel, violent, psychopathic, and unsocial part of society has been found by different research groups across the globe.

2.4. The role that Information Design can play in counterterrorism

While informing or responding during terror attack or threat level, vigilance awareness and mode of action and in case of attack it is very difficult to send a language both written and visual that intimate although avoiding ambiguity. Visible Language and maintaining a sense of calm (as highlighted by ASPI – Australian Strategic Policy Institute, in their 2015 report alarming the Alarm – Terrorism Threat Communications with the Australian Public) [15]. As per research in Information Design and graphic art, it is most clear that visual intimation could be used successfully in order to make the public known and aware about terror threats, security measures and vigilance. Research and review in above matter indicate that public remember approximately 80% of what they see and do and 30% of what they read [16]. It is very clear that visual media has a great potential to influence and make them aware more efficiently in increasing the capacity of understanding more complex information and their use (e.g. Otten et al., 2015) [17]. Countries like France, are using infographic and motion graphic to make the people aware about the threat level of terror attack and terrorism information to the public and Australia and USA are also using the same pattern of symbolic representation to their public, indeed USA is also using 5- level colour coding system to their public as information providing measure to the public, but some group and activist are criticising that illustrating such coding graphic in the street and town are a sign of weakness. The benefits of using visualization to communicate information effectively are further supported [18]:

- 1) The use of code and images which are not enough to gain attention and also not provoking fear and undue emotion in the case of terror threat.
- 2) In case of low level of literacy in general public it is necessary to provide according information and additional features in the design pattern to make the public more aware and known about the thrust of terror attack and threat level exposure.
- 3) In order to ascertain the local need it is necessary to assess the needs of the audience, experiment, and test and emphasize toward a final design.

This tier of evidence reinforces the need to use visualization in order to engage the public and communicate clearly the Terror Threat Level system.

2.5. The power of infographics and motion graphics in communicating information

Making aware the public by infographic is less effective and interesting than that of motion graphic because of its efficiency in transmitting concise information to the

public. Use of motion graphic is more affective and can play a major role in transmitting effectively the message in more accessible and benefit able for a larger community inclusive people with varying level of literacy and iq level [4].

2.5.1. Infographics

Graphically represented mode of visuals/graphics in digital mode or in other mode which contains graphics/visuals and topography in order to represent and transmit required information clearly and quickly in a particular way and can be easily understood, remembered, digested and absorbed by general populations. As per great thinker, there shall be three distinct basic features in infographics, they are 1. Comprehensive, 2. Retentive 3. Appearance in effectiveness infographics [19]. As per, it is very engaging, eye catching, and exciting when displayed in a clear and graphical format any information for the audience when looked at. However when the audience look at an adequately designed infographics the concerned brain at once digest the adequately designed and presented visuals in no time at first exposure [20]. A good infographics is always a notifying, instructing and persuading the populations always [21]. Moreover using only text in infographics is found less effective than that of using the combination of both text and visuals and provide better results [22, 23, 24]. This is why providing any information to the general population regarding terrorism and extremism it is better to use both texts in combination with visuals.

2.5.2. Motion graphics

A mode of graphic art which is nothing but the combination of digital graphics with motion and text along with sound and narration is called Motion graphics [25, 26, 27]. Motion graphics has an extra benefit of engaging the audience by its motion and narration in digitally designed graphics and text over it due to its uniqueness [28, 29, 30]. As a result it is a affective way to enhance learning, understanding, and memorising benefits as compared to infographics in a better way [31, 32, 33]. Multimedia learning enhances the cognitive approach and in depth understanding with a catchy vision [34, 35, 36], by allowing users to process information across auditory and visual channels [37].

2.6 Data analysis of the case study (Iraqi community)

Due to the large community of current study, contemporary Iraqi artworks were identified for the period (2015-2020) and (5) works were selected to cover the society of study.

2.6.1 Research Samples

5 Artworks were purposely chosen as samples for the following reasons:

1. The samples selected represent a level of technical maturity.

2. The fact that the selected works of art bear the features of modernity in the mechanisms of their operation.
3. The selected artworks represent works of well-known artists in the Arab art scene and have been identified by the expert committee. The research community was photographed and presented to the expert committee to select the most suitable among the works.

The research samples were analyzed critically, through a general description of the pictorial scene, and then linking the relationships between the shapes and revealing the aesthetic and psychological dimensions of Westernization in modern Arab painting. And then analyzing the samples quantitatively according to the research tool in order to achieve accurate results and also the ability to generalize them.

2.6.2 Research approach

The analytical description approach was adopted within the limits of a technical vision to analyze the research samples to achieve the objectives of the current study.

3. Results and discussion

3.1 Concept of sample one

Work Name : Live drawing

Artist name: Ramy Faris

Country: Iraq

Production date: 2020

Location: The Wall of Al-Tahrir Square



Fig.1: Live drawing for the wall of Al-Tahrir square

As shown in Figure 1, the artistic painting illustrates a group of vocabulary: the search for freedom, the struggle against terrorism and the fight against terrorism in all its forms. The artist was able to clarify hidden worlds that lie in the automaticity that allows suggesting aesthetics that bear several connotations, as the deaf walls turned into vivid paintings that simulate the human being and utter what he feels and hopes and seeks to reach peace.

3.2 Concept of sample two

Work name: Spyker Massacre

Artist name: Ammar Salem

Country: Iraq

Production date: 2015

Location: Camp Spyker in Salah al-Din
Governorate



Fig.2: Spyker Massacre in Salah al-Din Governorate

As shown in Figure 2, the work illustrates the famous Spyker massacre, which killed 1,700 people at the hands of ISIS terrorist gangs. The artist shows that the water has turned to the red color cause of the blood of the dead. It is the ugliest images of terror attached to the memory.

3.3 Concept of sample three

Work name: Prisoners

Artist name: Mohamed Abbas

Country: Iraq

Production date: 2015

Returnee: Private artist collection



Fig.3: Prisoners for private artist collection

As shown in Figure 3, the work demonstrates placing the recipient in a cognitive environment in which the cognitive standard is deviated, to generate a very bad psychological connotation or effect. The artist's style stems from self-thoughts that carried the influences of a society that believes that women are prisoners to him and that he practices all illegal things on her. This work represents violence against

women, whether the practices of terrorism on them or restricting their freedom from society.

3.4 Concept of sample four

Work name: Baghdad

Artist name: Fatima Jawdat

Country: Iraq

Production date: 2018

Returnee: Artist's own collection

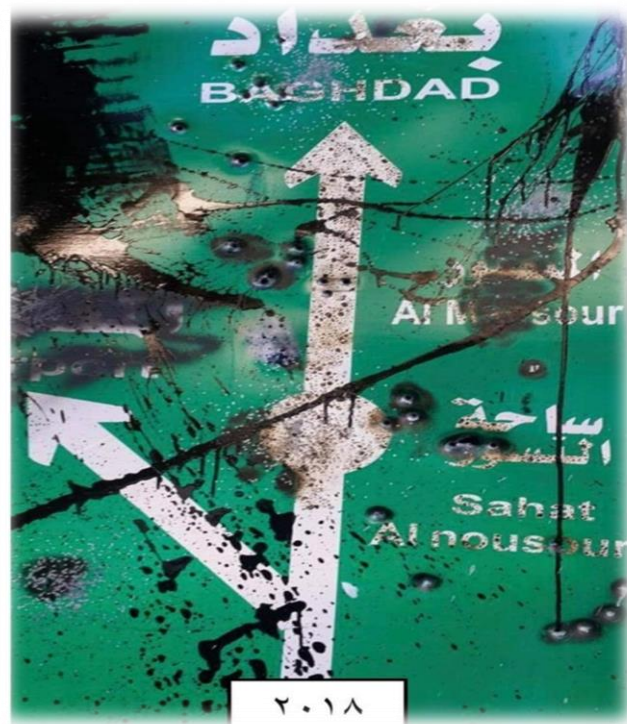


Fig.4: Baghdad form Artist's own collection

As illustrated in Figure 4, this work is distinguished from the rest works by representing a shocking reality of the impact of terrorism on cities. The artist was able to draw the true face of terrorism and extremist thought, far from religion, civilization and humanity, awareness, knowledge and belief in freedom, and the role of art determines when people turn to it and appreciate its importance in nourishing the soul and leaving behind everything that calls for war and diaspora. The artist was able to embody suffering and convey it, clarify the ugliness of terrorism, and make from his brush a spotlight in the darkness of reality, to direct public opinion in a sound direction, and warn society against terrorism through his artistic works.

3.5 Concept of sample five

Work name: Childhood

Artist name: Reda Farhan

Country: Iraq

Production date: 2016

Returnee: Artist's own collection



Fig.5: Childhood form Artist's own collection

As shown in Figure 5, the artist illustrates through this work the childhood and the dangers surrounding him to express a contradiction in the renaissance thought, as he was deprived of his responsibility for himself and his freedom of choice. In fact, this is one of the main ideas that embodied terrorism in its worst form, using children by the aforementioned groups, which makes them victims in many ways, as they can be used to commit acts of a criminal nature and the effects that may result from that, which may lead to the loss of their lives and the lives of others. The innocent, in addition to the physical and psychological harm that may be inflicted on them.

4. Conclusions

With above discussion and finding it is clear that

- Graphic art has travelled a long distance right from the cave painting to the modern era of digitally transformed infographic and motion-graphic with digital media.
- Graphic art is strongest and most effective mode of transmitting ideas, knowledge, emotions, and creativity.
- It is most accessible, digestible and absorbable means of transmission in mass public to make them aware and to educate them easily effectively and with less effort in short time.

- The medium of graphic art is proved as an emphatic engine for all revolutions and liberation movements in the whole world.
- The Graphic art has enormous potentiality in gathering and mobilizing peoples' concerns for production, existence, safety, security and work.
- Graphic has a strong role in spreading extremism through its multiple fields either printed or electronic.
- Graphic art has a tremendous potentiality in minimising terrorism and extremism by making the general public aware educated, and trained to act in time of observing any possible threat level of terrorism like activity in their vicinity or anywhere they feel and inform the authority concerned and reducing the damage to the public lives and property
- Graphic art can educate and make aware the public, what to do on the visualization of the Terror Threat Levels, of associated security information,
- It has a potentiality to train effectively the public effectively in no time to educate on how to react in the case of a bombing terrorist attack and reducing the damage to lives and property.
- The contemporary Iraqi artist found the echo of the dangerous phenomenon of terrorism, oppression, violence and the dispossession of rights, An important topic to clarify this with his artistic works in portraying the behaviour of the phenomenon and the extent of its ugliness in a contemporary visual art style (samples 1, 2 and 4).
- The contemporary Iraqi artist has a radiant emotional sense of what is happening to his country, as this artist is aware of the seriousness of these transformations in the political history of Iraq. He represented the situation realistically until his visual works became clear as if they were clearly telling realistic stories (samples 3 and 5).

5. Recommendations

With the above research there is some recommendation

- Graphic art can be used as a better tool against terrorism and extremism as an protective gear.
- Graphic art in its modernised form as infographics and motion graphics can be used as vigilance purposes.
- It can also be used as instructing people about terrorism and extremism in a better way.
- Graphic art has also a benefit to reduce the extent of damage to the lives and property by systematic making aware the general populations across the globe about its modes of operations and alarming mode.
- It can also be used as monitoring purposes to reduce the damage and destruction of public lives and property.

- Emphasizing on education and raising cultural awareness among students and youth to counter extremist ideas.
- Creating a code of conduct for the profession, binding on all graphic designers, locally and globally, confirming its validation and imposing severe penalties for all violators.
- Conducting regional conferences to determine the important and contemporary terms and concepts of graphics and emphasizing good uses from bad uses of it.

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