

# Visual Narratives of Dissent. Analyzing Street Art and Protest Imagery During the Arab Spring Revolutions

Narrativas visuales de la disidencia.  
Análisis del arte callejero y las imágenes de protesta durante  
las revoluciones de la Primavera Árabe

**Nezar Abdulkareem Omar Al Rawi**

rawi.nizar@gmail.com

Recibido: 20/09/2024  
Revisado: 15/12/2024  
Aceptado: 15/12/2024  
Publicado: 01/01/2025

Sugerencias para citar este artículo:

Al Rawi, Nezar A. O. (2025). «Visual Narratives of Dissent Analyzing Street Art and Protest Imagery During the Arab Spring Revolutions», *Tercio Creciente*, 27, (pp. 27-83), <https://dx.doi.org/10.17561/rtc.27.9196>

## Abstract

The Arab Spring revolutions, which began in 2010, profoundly transformed the political landscape of the Middle East as a popular response to the lack of development, the decline of liberation projects, and the failure of Arab governments to ensure prosperity, stability, and social justice. These uprisings emerged from widespread frustration with authoritarian leaders who prioritized self-glorification, supported by oppressive security systems and tools of repression.

Arab regimes also restricted rights and controlled narratives through propaganda-driven media while allying with religious groups to maintain power. This environment of political stagnation, economic crisis, and censorship limited the ability to express aspirations for freedom and justice.

In this context, visual arts emerged as a vital medium for channeling dissent and organizing protests. Social media and artistic expressions such as street art, graphics, and digital design provided safe and accessible platforms for communication. These artistic

expressions not only documented and amplified the revolutions but also became symbols of hope in the fight for a new era of freedom and justice. Their impact mobilized the masses and challenged authoritarian regimes, showcasing the power of art as a tool for social change.

**Keywords:** Graphic Design, Activism, Social Art.

## Resumen

Las revoluciones de la Primavera Árabe, iniciadas en 2010, transformaron profundamente el panorama político de Oriente Próximo como respuesta popular a la falta de desarrollo, la pérdida de proyectos de liberación y el fracaso de los gobiernos árabes en garantizar prosperidad, estabilidad y justicia social. Estas revueltas surgieron en un contexto de frustración popular ante líderes autocráticos, centrados en su propia glorificación, apoyados por sistemas de seguridad represivos y herramientas de opresión.

Los regímenes árabes también restringieron derechos y controlaron la narrativa a través de medios propagandísticos, además de aliarse con grupos religiosos para mantenerse en el poder. Este entorno de estancamiento político, crisis económica y censura limitó la capacidad de expresión, dificultando la comunicación de aspiraciones de libertad y justicia.

En este contexto, las artes visuales emergieron como un medio crucial para canalizar el descontento y organizar protestas. Redes sociales y manifestaciones artísticas como el arte callejero, gráficos y diseño digital ofrecieron plataformas seguras y accesibles para la expresión. Estas expresiones artísticas no solo documentaron y amplificaron las revoluciones, sino que también sirvieron como símbolos de esperanza en la lucha por una nueva era de libertad y justicia. Su impacto movilizó masas y desafió a los regímenes, demostrando el poder de las artes como herramienta de cambio social.

**Palabras clave:** diseño gráfico, activismo, arte social..

## 1. Introduction

The Arab Spring revolutions, a series of political uprisings that began in 2010, that dramatically reshaped the political landscape of the Middle East.

Despite the varying positions of Arab governments on these revolutions and the different descriptions of the popular movement during what was known as the Arab Spring in the theories currently circulating, as the names differed between those who used the terms revolution, uprising, and popular protests, no one may disagree that all of these events came as a popular response to... The erosion and disappearance of

development plans, calls for liberation, and major renaissance projects expected from Arab governments.

We have seen popular anger prevail in the Arab street in most Arab countries after hopes for achieving prosperity, stability, and social justice died. After the majority of Arab presidents turned into figures devoted to self-glorification, they became closer to dictatorial idols, relying on huge intimidating security systems that controlled every aspect of life, and used various tools of oppression, humiliation, and humiliation against those calling for political reform.

The regimes in most Arab countries have also worked to strip individuals of their rights, hide their voices by possessing huge media machines with misleading rhetoric that repeat nonsense, and getting close to ideological religious groups that provide people with some conditional social services to ensure that corrupt regimes remain in power by insinuating these groups. As a worrying and suspicious alternative in the event that the ruling regimes are removed from power.

Amidst all this political stagnation, economic depression, suppression of personal freedoms, and narrow opportunities for a decent living, the ability to communicate grievances and aspirations for freedom has often been restricted by strict government censorship of traditional media.

In response, visual arts emerged as a powerful alternative means of rapid communication, as social media platforms provided a safe and available platform for communication between activists and their audiences, which crystallized new ways, means, and tools for declaring protest that powerfully and quickly paved the way for the Arab Spring revolutions.

The visual arts played a crucial role in documenting, amplifying and shaping the Arab Spring revolutions, from street art to graphics, photography and design for screens, as the artistic expressions of the Arab Spring became a powerful language of opposition and a symbol of spreading hope in a new era of freedom, justice and economic development. This article explores the multifaceted contributions of the visual arts to the Arab Spring revolutions, and examines the ways of expression and means of action of several types of visual arts that had powerful effects in mobilizing the masses and sending powerful messages to the public, observers, and security services that were completely unprepared to confront this very effective peaceful weapon in Areas of influence, communicating information, documentation, emotional and mental stimulation, and expressing the aspirations of the crowd.

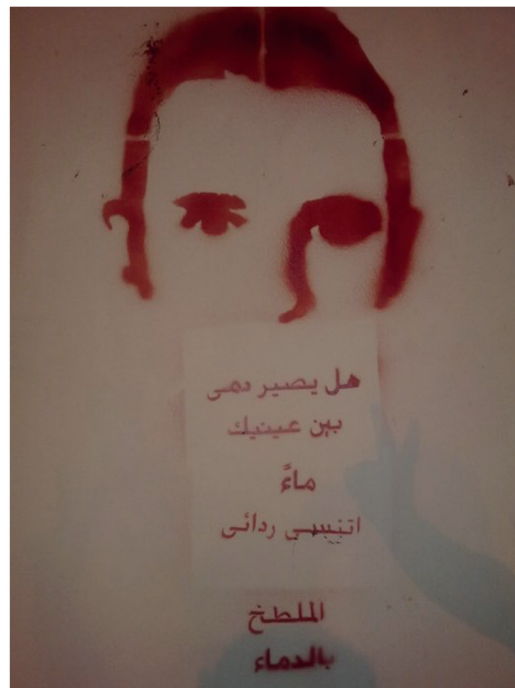
We will see the diversity of artistic and technical styles and the different ways of expression that have combined to express the aspirations of the people who rose against the corrupt authoritarian regimes.

### Sample number 1

**The description:** Mono-color Graffiti in the form of stencil art (Stencil Art), with the portrait of Khaled Saïd and the lines: “Will you see my blood as water? Will you forget the blood stains on my clothes?” on the facade of the Egyptian Ministry of the Interior in Cairo.

**The artist:** Anonymous.

**The analysis:** The idea of the Egyptian Revolution of January 25, 2011, was engendered after the beating of the young Khaled Saïd by police officers on June 6, 2010, in the Sidi Gaber neighborhood of Alexandria. Seven months later, activists upset by that crime organized and led protests. They also linked their profiles on Facebook and other social networks with those of Saïd. In addition, they contacted human rights institutions.



This simple work appeared in various squares in Cairo and Alexandria, the city of origin of the young man. In it, the abstract portrait of the victim is presented, who was assassinated by members of the Sidi Gaber Police Station after being arrested in an internet cafe near his house and brutally beaten in front of the people while being taken to the patrol. The crime moved the Egyptians and prompted them not to forget Saïd, to demand revenge and restore dignity, both for the martyr and for all the people.

The artist put in place of the young man's mouth a simple and direct stanza that calls not to forget the murder that occurred. In the image, which is almost the only one known of Khaled Saïd, the victim looks innocently and confidently towards the viewer, as if the words that wanted to come out of his mouth were in his eyes, which reminds us of his role as a blogger and critic. towards Egyptian state policy, posting on the Internet information denouncing atrocities committed by security agents and human rights violations.

The work shows how the crime gagged the young man's mouth, but not his soul. Khaled Saïd's friends aspired, through the publication of his image, and despite the changes and simple stylistic additions, so that the Egyptians would not forget the victim, in addition to inciting them to continue uncovering the infringements of the regime's security institutions and demand that those responsible for all crimes and violations be held accountable since the regime had been in dictatorial power for almost 30 years.

Khaled Saïd is an icon and an unforgettable example who denounces the brutality, irresponsibility, and disregard of the regime toward the rights and will of the Egyptian people.



The work was done in a single color, following the model known as “Stencil”. The artist opted for dark red and not black, normally used in this type of work. Dark red has to do with symbology more than with techniques since it gives verve and visual strength to express the desire for revolution and change. It is necessary to know that the spectra of the red waves quickly reach the eye and that they are capable of remaining in the memory, in addition to stimulating feelings and enthusiasm, since it is, expressively, the color of love, revolution, affection, and the strength.

The execution of this work on the façade of the Egyptian Ministry of the Interior is clear proof that the message, included in it, points to the agents and security members, officially linked to the Ministry.

As for the poetic text, simple and direct, it is addressed to all the Egyptians, as if asking them if they consider that their blood, spilled without fault, is water that has no value, and if their death and their image with the distorted face, as a consequence of the brutal blows, they will fall into oblivion.

Khaled Saïd was wearing a simple shirt, like the ones civilians wear, only it was covered in blood, referring to the fact that he was a peaceful person.

His blood was not spilled on a military or work outfit, but rather he was killed while leading his normal life, away from all kinds of violence, which makes him an icon that represents all the people of Egypt, which can also be being a victim while going about their daily lives, for the simple fact of talking about freedom.

## **Sample number 2**

**The description:** Graffiti in the form of stencil art (Stencil Art), with the portrait of Mohamed Bouazizi on a wall in the Tunisian capital.

**The artist:** Anonymous.

**The analysis:** On December 17, 2010, the photo of the Tunisian, Mohamed Bouazizi, went around the world. It is the image of a young street vendor who doused himself with a flammable liquid and set himself on fire in public, as a protest against being abused by the police and local authorities in Sidi Bouzid. The image quickly spread on social networks and international media, thanks to a person who was nearby and recorded what happened with his mobile.



Tunisian activists began to spread the portrait of Bouazizi, which shows him with his head tilted and looking slightly to the left, smiling innocently, as if he were reconciled to himself, and that he wanted nothing more from this world than his right. to live in peace and with dignity.

Bouazizi's image became a referent motto for the Tunisian people, who a few days later occupied the streets of the capital. The photo became a nightmare for the authorities, as the security agents treated it as if it were a violation of the Law and a dangerous image, capable of generating rebellions.

The work was based on the maximum simplicity and the fastest artistic technique (spray colors and perforated etched Stencil mold), suitable for the illegal act and the sensitivity of the security agents of the Zine El Abidine era. Ben Ali. Speed and simplicity predominated in the image, which gave the work an acute revolutionary metaphor, which includes an idea work that does not need explanations or comments, and that recalls Bouazizi as a hero of the Los Jasmines Revolution, an event through which ended the dictatorial regime of Ben Ali, 23 years after coming to power.



(Fig. 1) In the red-black illustration Che Guevara

It is difficult to separate the similarity between the way of creating the most unique image of Bouazizi and that of the Argentine revolutionary Ernesto “Che” Guevara, who is an icon of the revolution and the fight in favor of the poor. Hence the implicit message that led to the extension of the image: a call for revolution against the dictatorial regime that took advantage of the wealth of the Tunisian people. A connotation is to have faith in the poor and work to restore their rights by force.

This work does not contain many artistic dimensions, but it is effective, abstract, and simple; in addition to the expressive force that reflects the pulse of the street, which indicates the strength of the arts and their speed in satisfying the demands of the angry masses, as well as their ability to direct political messages precisely and directly.

### Sample number 3

**The description:** The design of a “Join the Revolution” slogan, was posted on social media at the beginning of the Egyptian Revolution, in January 2011.

**The artist:** Egyptian designer Mohamed Gaber.



**The analysis:** The slogan is made up of four words: “Join the revolution”<sup>1</sup>, written with ta’līq (Persian) calligraphy, which is a type of script whose letters are characterized by their elegance, flexibility, and simplicity.

We note that the slogan, in Arabic, joins the letters “ن” from “كن”, which means “Join” and the “م” from “مع”, “a”, which, in reality, should be separated.

The design is painted black and red. The first is the dominant color; however, the word “the Revolution” is written in red, without the “ث” and “ة” dots that come in black, like the rest of the words. El diseñador agregó al texto los diacríticos del alfabeto árabe, que normalmente acompañan a ciertos tipos de caligrafía árabe, como en el Thuluth, el Nasj y el Thuluth al-Yalī.



(Fig. 2) Be With The Revolution - on T-shirt.



(Fig. 3) Be With The Revolution - on a wall.

The first mistake made by the designer was the unnecessary addition of diacritics to the slogan since ta’līq calligraphy does not accept them, thus breaking one of the main rules of this type of script. Another mistake in the image is to overwhelm it with text decorations that have no value or need, thus confusing the receiver, so that it prevents him from continuing to observe the origin of the textual composition.

Regarding the political aspect, this slogan had a huge impact on the security forces, since it was one of the slogans that spread the fastest on social networks, due to its extreme simplicity and the direct call for everyone to be in favor of it. of the Revolution, despite their political divergences.

Likewise, it spread very quickly in the streets due to its easy implementation on the walls and simple printing, it was stamped on the shirts worn by young people in the demonstrations, and others did not hesitate to put it as a tattoo.

The rapid spread of the slogan had to do with the spark of revolutionary enthusiasm, ignited by the angry masses who took to the streets without any preparation.

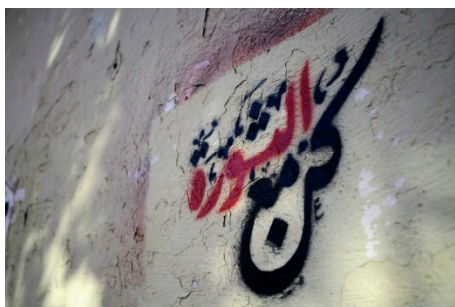
Another point in favor of this slogan is that it is stripped of any political tendency or affiliation, as well as its legibility and ease of implementation, on different types of

1 In Arabic, there are three words (كن مع الثورة). (ةروثلا عم نك).

surfaces, using various methods and techniques. Also, take care of its original design when copying it, and this is a particularity of most of the slogans that are based on Arabic calligraphy.

It is worth mentioning that many bloggers and groups still use this slogan, almost nine years after the Egyptian Revolution, in order to announce that their members are proud to belong to this movement. The most outstanding of them is the so-called “Join the Revolution”, whose name is inspired by the meaning of the logo. The group is made up of young Egyptian bloggers and activists, whose goal is to launch a campaign to restore the values of the Revolution that they believe were stolen, first by the religious political parties (the Muslim Brotherhood), and later by the old government institutions. , which emptied the Revolution of its content.

The power of the slogan and its ability to last for a long time on walls, clothing, or even tattoos, as well as its presence in different media such as the Internet and print publications, is due to its text-based eloquence. concise, devoid of details or references to any political or religious affiliation.



(Fig. 4) Be With The Revolution - stencil.



(Fig. 5) Be With The Revolution - Tatoo

A point in favor of the designer is the speed in carrying out the design, launching it, and being able to post it on the most prominent profiles of social networks; pages that were created, at that time, in order to try to motivate the masses to participate in the Revolution. Another favorable aspect is the choice of the phrase, which was, and continues to be, one of the most eloquent, clear, direct, and short, since it includes an explicit request: to support the Revolution in general, either through participation or join her, without going into more detail.

Returning to the designer, when analyzing his interviews with the media, some of which appear on his own website, we see that he does not mention that it was an adaptation of



an ancient logo, whose author was a famous Persian calligrapher named Mishkin-Qalam<sup>2</sup>. Many followed in the Persian's footsteps, including the Iraqi calligrapher Khalil al-Zahawi<sup>3</sup>, whose works were renowned for their quality and creativity. He also designed a teaching booklet on ta'liq calligraphy, which was printed in thousands of copies in the 1980s, and spread throughout countries that use Arabic calligraphy.



(Fig. 6) Be With The Gad - Original design by Mishkín-Qalam (1826–1912)

By comparing both designs, and following the rules of the ta'liq, it is obvious that the artist made the original dull, by being processed on the computer and converted into a vector format, which normally produces heavy graphic blocks with centers balanced in its central part, instead of being written with a reed pen, which gives the ends of the letters precision and elegance, in addition to giving the corners curvatures and meeting points that stand out for their distinction and agility, as well as the ease of diversifying the thickness of the letter. It also stands out for its great softness and harmony. In contrast, the obvious haste and lack of knowledge of the rules of Arabic calligraphy made the design lose the aesthetic value of the original.

2 Iranian artist (1826-1912) and one of the most prominent Baha'is. He was one of the 19 Baha'i Apostles.

He is considered one of the best-known calligraphers of the 19th century in Persia. Author of the symbol known as "The Greatest Name", calligraphy used by Baha'is throughout the world. He was born in Shiraz and resided in Isfahan. A few years later, after converting to Bahaism, he traveled to Baghdad (Iraq). Before becoming he was a Baha'i Sufi. He was one of the pillars of ta'liq calligraphy. He was interested in astronomy. he died in Palestine in 1912, at the age of 86.

Edward Granville Browne: A year Amongst the Persian, A&C Black Ltd. 1893, new edition published by the Cambridge University Press 1926, reprinted 1927, p. 227.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mishk%C3%ADn-Qalam> [Accessed September 20, 2022]

3 Khanaqin, Iraq (1946-2007). He was an Iraqi artist and calligrapher, considered to be one of the most famous calligraphers in the Islamic world. In Iraq he was nicknamed "The Sheikh of Arabic calligraphy." he got a license in Persian calligraphy from the great Iranian calligrapher Hassan Zarin Khat in 1975. He was a member of the Association of Arabic Calligraphers. He was assassinated in Baghdad on May 26, 2007.

[https://web.archive.org/web/20160307113318/http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/arabic/middle\\_east\\_news/newsid\\_6696000/6696757.stm](https://web.archive.org/web/20160307113318/http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/arabic/middle_east_news/newsid_6696000/6696757.stm) [Accessed September 20, 2022]

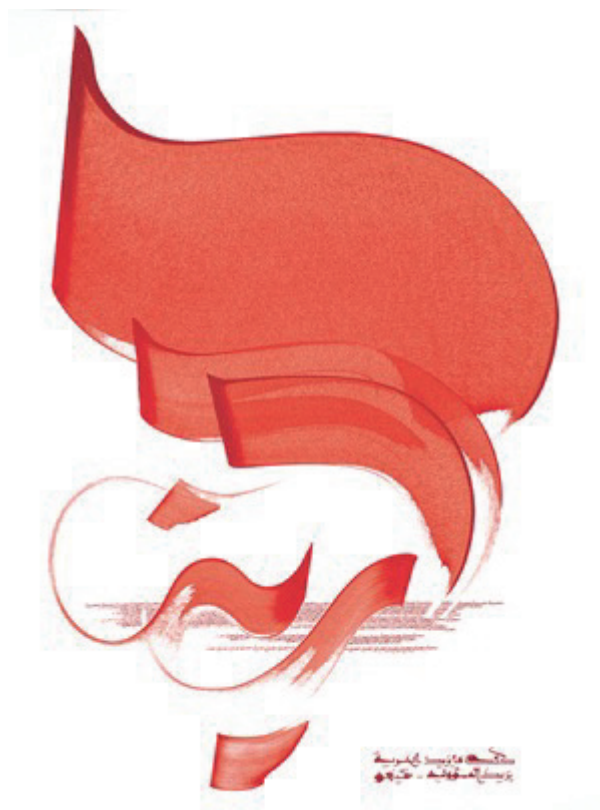
### Sample number 4

**The description:** A calligraphic work with the p politician Freedom.. the source of courage - Pericles

The origins of courage is freedom.  
(Pericles), published on the artist's website and on his Facebook profile in February 2011. It was also broadcast by media communication and social networks.

**The artist:** The Iraqi Hassan Massoudy.

**The analysis:** This work is part of a series of works produced, in recent years, by the Iraqi artist Hassan Massoudy. The works, in general, are based on the Arabic alphabet.



For years, the artist has dedicated himself to making works with a single word, usually with a general meaning and significant concept, such as “love” and “peace”, among others. The word “Freedom” arose at the beginning of 2011, with the explosion of the masses in the Arab Spring, as intellectual support for the liberation movements and protests in Arab cities, where the Arab peoples demanded more freedoms.

This work spread rapidly on social networks and the media. Likewise, the protesters printed it in different sizes due to its provocative capacity and the phrase added by the artist, under the word “freedom”: “The freedom is the secret of courage”, by Pericles<sup>4</sup>.

The artist used the color red to write the word “Freedom”, thus giving it more strength and enthusiasm. He also used large brush strokes, passed through repetitive motions, to draw the head of the first letter of the word (ح), giving the head a large size, which does

4 Athenian politician (495-429 BC). He ruled Athens intermittently from 460 B.C. until his death. He converted the Delian Confederation, from a league of balanced forces to the Athenian Empire. He led Athens in the Peloponnesian War against Sparta. He has a recorded speech by Thucydides about the future vision of Athens. In the year 477 BC, and for nine years, he built the Parthenon, entrusting the work to two architects: Ictinus and Callicrates, and under the supervision of Phidias, who is considered one of the pioneers in freedom of expression in past times, since he advanced the pioneers of Greek critical expression and expression, such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. He left a great speech that includes noble principles related to freedom of expression and discussion. (Pericles, Encyclopedia Britannica, 2002, Herodotus, VI, 131).



not fit the body of the word, but dominates most of the formal setting, as if the intention were to elevate and give greater importance to salient values and themes. It also gives an effect similar to the hoisting of huge flags and insignia that wave in the space of the work, and signal, or promise, victory and near and sure triumph. Likewise, the movement of the brush continues drawing the inclinations of the letters “ر” and “ي” so that the artist extends them in a wavy and horizontal way, reminiscent of the waves of water, or even those of sand in the desert.

What most inspires significant freedom as a concept in this work is the great autonomy to free the brush that flows through the smoothness of the ink, as if shaking all the rules and formal restrictions to finally produce a new structure, in addition, to creatively formulate a new form of the concept of “liberty”, which leads to thinking about the demands of the people and moving away from political concepts and political and economic restrictions in the country, until reaching a deeper understanding, for being a means to create new ways of looking at old things and not just the freedom that removes old political restrictions.

It should be said that the word “freedom”, through this work, is realized for the first time in the Arabic language at the hands of a famous calligrapher and artist. The way in which the work was carried out and its great autonomy enchanted the young Arabs, who ended up using it as a symbol of the fight against the usual methods of repression, used for many years.

Finally, the symbol in question turned out to be beauty in the face of tyranny, freedom in the face of restrictions, words in the face of weapons, and contemporary art in the face of worn-out dictatorships.

### Sample number 5

#### The description:

Illustrated portrait of Bashar al-Asad, with a barcode (2011) printed on his forehead, referring to the expiration date. It was circulating on social media at the start of the Syrian revolutionary movement in 2011.

**The artist:** Anonymous and signed by a pseudonym (Amjaad).

**The analysis:** This simple illustration featuring the face of Syrian President Bashar al-Asad was published at the start of popular protests in Syria. The main lines, in general, are black; while gray was used in the shadows with less intensity, that is, in the hair and in the



mustache. sky blue was used for the eyes; however, for more conviction, the painter did not want to use light blue to avoid giving a realistic tone, since al-Assad's eyes are actually of this color, but not of this same degree. The reason why he used this tone is for artistic and expressive purposes.

The painter did not tend towards caricature, since he fully respected the actual percentages and sizes, but he did add a barcode with the expiration date (2011) on the forehead of the Syrian president, like those used on food products, as if al-Assad were an expired product.



(Fig. 7) Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad

We will start by analyzing the blue color of the eyes. Blue has a negative meaning in Arab culture, since it is related to death, corruption, and pain, as well as being the color of grief and ordeal. The Arabs, in their sayings, say: "a blue enemy", that is, of great enmity; since the blue color of the eyes usually referred to foreigners who came from afar: the Byzantines and the Dailamites, considered great opponents of the Arabs, for this reason, all the adversaries were called "blue" even if they did not have the same color eyes .

The language and the foundations of Arabic culture were formed between the desert and the cities on the banks of the rivers, especially the Tigris and the Euphrates between Iraq and the Levant. At that time, the Arabs associated the color blue with everything that did not make them happy, since it did not appear in the environment in which they were, in addition to representing the color of bruises, the face of the dead, and the mold on bread. Even the sky in the desert and sunny areas are not completely blue, but are closer to pale gray, due to the strength of the sun's shine in those areas.

For this reason, the blue color in al-Assad's eyes can mean the evil that comes from them, or even that he is approaching his final destiny, as a person or ruler. Blue produces discomfort as it is the color of the enemy, as indicated above in the passage taken from the book *Murûy al-Dahab*, especially if it is one with a lot of hatred and hostility.

The blue gives the drawing a high-tension point of contact due to the lack of other colors in the other parts of the work, making the eyes of the portrait the eye of the portrait.

The attraction to the eyes is an appropriate centralization since it gives the receiver a wider opportunity to communicate with the drawing and to observe it carefully, and, as a consequence, send to the recipient's mind much more than the message of the image offers. construction site.

The placement of the barcode, on the forehead of the portrait, is the biggest, most important, and most prominent indication of the work. Therein lies the work's revolutionary message, as the code turned Syrian President Bashar al-Assad into a commercial product dedicated to normal commercial consumption and sale. Here the painter despised the leader by setting the expiration date (2011), which is the year of publication of the drawing and its circulation on social networks.

This design did not predict the downfall of Bashar al-Asad, or even his resignation in

2011, but eloquently signaled the expiration of his term as hired president; that is to say, it became a rotten and unviable product, without the credibility to continue representing the interests of Syria and its citizens.

The reason why most Syrians and many foreigners believe that Bashar al-Assad is a paid person is that since the beginning of the Syrian crisis, he began to act against the interests of the state and the will of the people, and even for having been ordered by other countries such as Iran and Russia, instead of listening to their citizens and the wise men of the United Nations, the European Union and the Arab League, among others, who provided advice and political initiatives to solve the crisis and avoid the bloodshed.

### Sample number 6

**The description:** Design a poster with the title “YOU are ready”. A call to participate in the Egyptian Revolution of January 25, 2011, was circulating on social networks before its unleashing.

**The artist:** Anonymous and signed by the “Youth Movement of April 6”<sup>5</sup>.



**The analysis:** This poster was designed in a clear way, since the most striking object appears in the center of the work, while the rest of the elements are scattered on both sides, right and left. In the background, we find the three horizontal stripes that make up the Egyptian flag: the red one at the top, the white one in the center, and the black one at the bottom. In the central part, in which Saladin’s “golden” Eagle appears, the illustrator placed a hand that points to the receiver, in addition to distributing the most important demands around it. The largest and clearest phrase is the poster title “YOU are ready”, which appears in the upper center. On either side are a number of direct objections. On the right, which is where you begin to read in Arabic, appear: “No to theft”, “No to

<sup>5</sup> Opposition political movement that appeared in 2008. It was created by young Egyptians after the General Strike of April 6, 2008, at the invitation of the workers of the city of El-Mahalla El-Kubra, and in solidarity with the political forces. It was adopted by the youth, who started a general strike. Most of the members of the Movement are young people who do not belong to any tendency or to any specific political party. The Movement made sure not to adopt any ideology in order to preserve the ideological diversity within it. The “April 6 Youth Movement” was one of the first to call for the January 25 Revolution. In September of that same year, the Movement was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. (Aspden, Rachel (2016): *Generation, Revolution: On the border between tradition and change in the Middle East*, 1st ed., Harvill Secker, p.72).

monopoly”, “No to corruption” and “No to unemployment”. On the left side, we see “No to torture”, “No to injustice”, “No to poverty” and “No to Mubarak”, as if the demands ended with the most important of all, that is, the rejection of that Hosni Mubarak would continue as president of Egypt.

In the lower right part the phrase “Our appointment will be on January 25” appears. The number is in red to highlight and confirm it. Likewise, the appeal was written in white to stand out from the rest of the image.



Fig. 8) I Want You for U.S. Army (1917), poster. Source: Library of Congress.

On the left side, specifically in the shadow area, the illustrator drew a sketch of a face that screams loudly and in pain to express that the demands are from people who feel hurt and outraged and that from that moment on it would be difficult to gag her and reassure her. As for the hand that is in the center of the poster, and that points to the receiver with the index finger, he corroborates that the word “YOU” is addressed to all Egyptians, that is, that everyone is called to participate in the Revolution. This reminds us of the poster designed by the American illustrator James Montgomery Flagg with the image of Uncle Sam pointing at the receiver, and with the phrase “I want YOU for U.S. Army”, which means “I want YOU for the United States Army”, which was used to promote enlistment in the national troops during World War I.

On the right side, there is an image that shows a brawl between the citizens and the authorities, and a little further down, some hands taking a chain, with which they seek to give the idea that it is time to break with the monopoly of power. political.

The poster seeks to highlight two points. The first is the announcement of the date called by the activists to unleash the popular movement: January 25, which was preceded by a great wave of announcements to participate in it. The second is that President Hosni Mubarak had to leave his post, thus rejecting coexistence with the regime he represented, since we know that the political movement of the Youth of April 6 began demanding reforms, as well as putting an end to injustices and human rights violations.

The demands increased over time, due to the harsh response of the security forces against the masses and the failure of politicians to handle the crisis, even calling for the fall of the head of the regime. The objective of the design is for Hosni Mubarak to leave the presidency of the Arab Republic of Egypt, something that preceded at that time.

The poster stands out for its centrality, which gives it an attractive touch, considered a good option to announce the demands, in addition to its suitability to be published on social networks as a previous invitation to take to the streets and participate in the demonstrations.



The negative part of the design is the excess of figurative words, which fill almost the entire work, turning it into a pamphlet type that could cause a less-than-desired effect on the recipient, due to the competition between the designs and the appeals in those years. Despite everything, the design was very successful as it was signed by the “April 6 Youth Movement”, which was widely accepted by the masses, and who, thanks to his ideas, increased the number of supporters and followers who had in those years.

### Sample number 7



**The description:** A poster with the title “Free Libya”, which circulated on social networks during the Libyan popular movement in 2011.

**The artist:** Anonymous.

**The analysis:** It is a transversal horizontal design, in which a dove, a flag, and two words appear on a green surface as if they were a piece of nature with grass as a background. The highlight is the use of the old Libyan flag, adopted by the revolutionaries to confront the forces of the regime, under the command of Colonel Muammar al-Gaddafi.

The flag, designed by the Libyan politician Omar Faiek Shennib in 1951 and re-adopted in 2011 by the National Transitional Council (CNT), consists of three horizontal stripes: red, black, and green, as well as a crescent moon and a star. in the center, both in white. According to the 1951 Constitution, it is the flag of independence and was hoisted for the first time after the proclamation of the United Kingdom of Libya, on December 24 of that same year. The coup d'état of September 1969, or the so-called “September 1 Revolution”, led by al-Gaddafi, abolished the use of this .

Re-adopting the flag of independence announces the non-recognition of Gaddafi’s coup and the end of his era. It also refers to the restoration of the pre-1969 policy, which means that the people have delegitimized the Libyan leader, making him incapable of remaining in power.

The white dove, for its part, is the symbol of peace, with which the designer refers to the pacifism of demonstrations and protests, just like the bird that heads towards the sky with strength and confidence. However, Gaddafi ordered the brutal repression of the popular protests, leading the country to total chaos and, as a consequence, to international military intervention in order to paralyze the forces loyal to the colonel.

It can be easily noticed that the dove, which also symbolizes the will of the people, is directed towards the word “Libya”, written in white and in Kufic calligraphy. This type of writing is normally organized, with lines and right angles, unlike the rest of the Arabic calligraphy that uses arcs and derives from the circle, in most cases.

The designer chose this style of calligraphy so that the name “Libya” would remain straight, like a solid structure. His intention was to demonstrate the perennial strength of the country. The word “Free”, which is next to it, with a slightly smaller letter, refers to the fact that there is nothing greater than the Homeland. This is written by hand, without using any type of calligraphy, clearly symbolizing the meaning of “Freedom” that breaks all limits and old molds, as a reference to the will of the revolutionary masses to build a Libya free of all kinds of limitations and cross towards new horizons of the future.

This design was one of the most used and reissued by the Libyan people throughout the Revolution, as it indicates hope and strength, in addition to reminding two values: an ancient one, the constitutional value of free Libya, whose laws, like the Constitution, were abolished by Gaddafi. The second is that of freedom that transcends all the limitations and borders imposed by the dictatorship for more than 40 years.

The green background is reminiscent of spring, fertility, and development, giving the poster a lot of positivity, as well as a call for optimism for the future of the Libyan Revolution.

### Sample number 8





**The description:** The description: A painting work entitled “Deir Ezzor”, with a size of 80\*52cm based on acrylic paint and oil on canvas. The work was made with the technique of oil painting knives.

Date: 2013.

**The artist:** Riyadh Askar.

**The analysis:** The analysis:

The work contains three types of symbols. In the central part, there are drawings of people and human faces, around which written texts are scattered. In the background, color degradations of fractured spaces are used in different degrees of color. As for the human figures that are in the center of the work, they are separate fragments of a photograph of civil protesters, in addition to the smiling face of a young man surrounded by non-detailed faces of children, where the factions predominate, thus avoiding relating them. with certain people.

Written texts, for their part, contain three axes. In the first, which we can call “The Title” or “The Margin”, the word “The Syrian Revolution” appears, written in large size, on the upper right. Despite its importance, it looks dim, since it is written in a white tone on a part of the background that is almost the same color. Also, some of the terms are displayed on that white background, which makes it sometimes hard to catch on quickly. With this, The artist titles the work and links it to the great event: “The Syrian Revolution”.

On the second axis, which we can call “The axis of values” or “The axis of the cause”, The artist writes in Kufic calligraphy stanzas of the poem “Will to live”, by Aboul-Qacem Echebbi, which during Spring Arabic began to appear in various works, and that encourages people to work and sacrifice to achieve freedom, as well as to refuse to live with restrictions and limits, under repression and violation of human rights. The verses in question are:

If one day the people decide to live      Fate must be subject to orders,  
Night must be faded and                      Chains must be broken.

The writing appears, like the images, divided into colored areas that match the background tones, giving it the impression of being incomplete and uncontinuously, despite the fact that the words of that famous poem appear in most of them. the work and cannot be lost sight of.

The third axis is that of the place, where The artist writes the name of the city “Deir Ezzor”, which was cruelly bombed in the summer of 2013. , Specifically in August. The Syrian Army fired its multiple rocket launchers toward the city, which was almost completely destroyed.

The name of the city is also not seen clearly enough to become a prominent title but appears like the rest of the words: broken with different shades of colors, which sometimes coincide or differ with those of the base of the construction site.

Going to the bottom of the work and its analysis we see that the most important area, almost a quarter, was dedicated to the flag of the Syrian revolutionaries, and not to the official insignia of the State. The first has the same colors as the official one, but with a different order in their positions, with green becoming the top part instead of red, and red

for the three stars instead of the two green ones. As for the white in the center and the black at the bottom of the flag, they maintain their position.

For the rest of the background, The artist used colors close to earthy, so we see brown and yellow with different degrees that vary from light to dark.

Regarding the method used to carry out the work, it was a union between expressive and artistic values, since the painter used the knife painting technique and wrote all the words with oil and acrylic colors, which led to the appearance of interruptions, alterations and crossroads in the color areas, as well as between the words of the work, giving it more harmony and interior homogeneity, and as a consequence, an artistic touch.

Regarding the expression, the knife, with its sharp blows, contributed to creating a visual tension on the humanitarian crisis that the work deals with, especially towards the children's faces that abound in the center of the image.

The method used to paint these faces achieves more empathy towards them since it reflects alterations that show the recipient that these children are in an inhuman situation since they suffer from the fire from the bombings, which makes everything in their vicinity around is broken, even their innocent souls. The work, in general, is a loud cry launched by the young artist Riyadh Askar. The work circulated in the press in some countries after posting the image on his Facebook profile and publish it on various pages of other activists who were working to support the Syrian Revolution by monitoring their news and disseminating artistic and documentary themes that show the world the ugliness and cruelty of the regime and its brutal way of silencing the people.

### Sample number 9



**The description:** Diseño de pantalla “El suicidio del presidente yemení”, se trata de un diseño realizado en 2011, mediante el programa Adobe Photoshop.

**The artist:** Anonymous.

**The analysis:** Screen design is considered one of the newest forms of artistic expression. It is a work carried out quickly and precisely to be shown on the screen of the netizens, for which its dimensions are adapted to those of the computer monitor. This type was spread during the Arab Spring revolutions due to the ease of obtaining the materials, which are mostly images and written texts, which are found on the Internet for free. Likewise, this prototype was distributed due to its simplicity to be exchanged, transmitted, and published on social networks, which are considered the main channel of information on the events of said events, from the incendiary appeals to the revolutions, passing through the stage of the protests.

This design is a collage made using the Adobe Photoshop program to merge various images, text, and color fragments in JPG format.

The work consists of three famous images. The first is that of a historic gate in the center of the capital: “Bab al-Yemen”, considered the oldest in the country, a historical and tourist landmark over a thousand years old. It is considered the main entrance to the Old City of Sana’a, in the southern part, and the only one remaining of the four known: “Bab Shueub”, “Bab Assabah” and “Bab Setran”, along with two others built in a period later: “Bab Khuzaymah” and “Bab al-Shaqadif”.



(Fig. 9) File: Bab Al Yemen in Sana'a.  
From Wikimedia Commons, the free media repository



(Fig. 10) A picture spread in the Arab press of a man burning himself with what looked like a gun in his hand.

The second is that of an immolated man. After a long search for the photo on Arabic web pages, since these are the ones that report news of this type, rather than the pages in English, Spanish, French, or German, the researcher discovered that said image has been



used repeatedly in various news sites, dealing with cases of immolation by lawbreakers or perpetrators of crimes, and is rarely used when dealing with people who burned themselves in the context of anti-regime protests. Observing the characteristics of the person and his attire, the investigator believes that the image is not that of an Arab. Details such as the street and the cars that appear in the original photo show that it may be from a Southeast Asian country.

What is different in this image is that the immolated person carries a weapon, which is why websites avoid it when the news is about political protests in a country. Instead, a random symbolic photo of a person setting themselves on fire is attached, since being armed has nothing to do with a protester. An example of the use of the image is that it accompanied a news item about a Jordanian citizen who blew himself up after murdering his partner and burning his body.

That being said, the photo of the artwork was well selected, as it shows former President Ali Abdallah Saleh as if he had something resembling a weapon in his hand.

The last of the three is the image of the slain man (the one in the second photo), whose face was changed to that of the former president of Yemen, resulting in a composite image of Saleh on fire in Sana'a's most important square: Bab al-Yemen.

For the concept game, the designer layered three layers of dark white, red, and blue, and on top of it, he put a headline "Yemeni President Blows Himself Up Today in the Capital Sanaa, Demanding Change for the People Calling for Freedom," as if it was about a piece of television news.

In the lower right part of the design, the word appears: "Urgent" to indicate the importance of the news, and in the upper right part the words "direct" appear, to indicate that the event has just occurred or is still happening, in addition to the name of the capital Sanaa, which informs about the place of the event, broadcast by the news. At the bottom, also on the right side, the designer added the logo of the Qatari channel Al-Jazeera, known for its seriousness and speed in following political news in the Arab world. Despite the rapid execution of the design and its ease, it contains a lot of rhetoric and black comedy, since it reflects reality in an ironic way, showing an image of the dictator burning himself in protest against the people who demand freedom.



(Fig. 11) The Same design before putting Al Jazeera Logo on it.

It is an image of harsh and sarcastic criticism that claims that this autocrat has a fossilized mentality and that he only offers Yemenis the oppression that he himself is used to, and that he is absolutely not willing to listen to the voice of justice..

The design, at the time, received a series of criticisms for the use of the Al-Jazeera logo, which is considered an illegal act. However, those responsible for the channel did not object at that time because it had no commercial purposes.

The channel took it as something simple and funny to use, considering that its emblem is available on many websites, with high quality and precision.

All these comments have led some activists to republish the design with the official cut, which led to the removal of the word “direct”, which is located at the same vertical level as the channel’s logo.

This design was widely spread on social networks due to its creative value that combines certain contradictions: it uses black comedy to express a bitter situation and describe a criminal who acts against his people. It also uses real images in a way that produces a surreal another of the anomalous reality that is prevalent in the land of Yemen

### Sample number 10

**The description:** An illustration on the web pages.

**The artist:** Carlos Latuff<sup>6</sup>.

**The analysis:** This caricature was made by The Brazilian artist, Carlos Latuff, who committed to issues such as liberation, the defense of human rights, and the right of people to resist oppression and dictatorial political regimes. The drawing represents the image of the young Egyptian Khaled Saïd, who was tortured and subsequently murdered at the hands of security agents, in the Sidi Gaber neighborhood, in Alexandria, months before the Egyptian Revolution, specifically on June 6, 2010.



6 Caricaturista político brasileño (30 de noviembre de 1968). Sus obras abordan una variedad de temas, incluidos: el antisionismo, la antiglobalización, el anticapitalismo y la oposición a las intervenciones militares de Estados Unidos. Es conocido por la creación de imágenes que representan el conflicto israelí-palestino y los acontecimientos -de la Primavera Árabe. Algunas de las caricaturas de Latuff que comparan a Israel con el nazismo han sido acusadas de ser antisemitas, por el Centro Simon Wiesenthal y por algunos autores. Latuff ha desestimado los cargos de antisemitismo como “una estrategia para desacreditar las críticas a Israel”, mientras que el crítico de libros Eddy Portnoy en The Forward ha declarado que, si bien su mensaje es “furiosamente crítico” de Israel, no es antisemita. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carlos\\_Latuff](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carlos_Latuff) [Accessed September 18, 2022]

In it, the victim appears holding the former Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak, who ruled from October 14, 1981, to February 11, 2011, with the thumb and forefinger of his left hand. The leader looks like a dwarf, compared to the size of Khaled Saïd, who is shown as a giant who catches an insect or a little mouse.

The drawing portends the power and strength of the Egyptian Revolution, which is capable of symbolically turning the victims into giants, and the regime, represented by the former president, into a mouse or garbage. That is why we see that Saïd holds Mubarak with only two fingers, at the level of his eyes. The idea is to show that the dictator is lightweight and filthy, therefore he doesn't even deserve to be fisted.

The young Khaled Saïd is assertive, with regular features and even a look of indifference. Hosni Mubarak, for his part, looks motionless and unable to react and resist as he spreads his arms and legs, as a sign of his total surrender and acceptance of his fate.

In the sweatshirt that Khaled Saïd is wearing, which is the same one he is wearing in the photo posted on social networks and which was taken from his Facebook profile, The artist noted the date of "January 25", which is the day of the concentration of the indignant masses in Cairo's Tahrir Square. Latuff added the hash symbol (#), referencing the call by young internet activists for the people to occupy the squares in the center of the Egyptian capital.



(Fig. 12) Khaled Saïd's profile picture on Facebook.

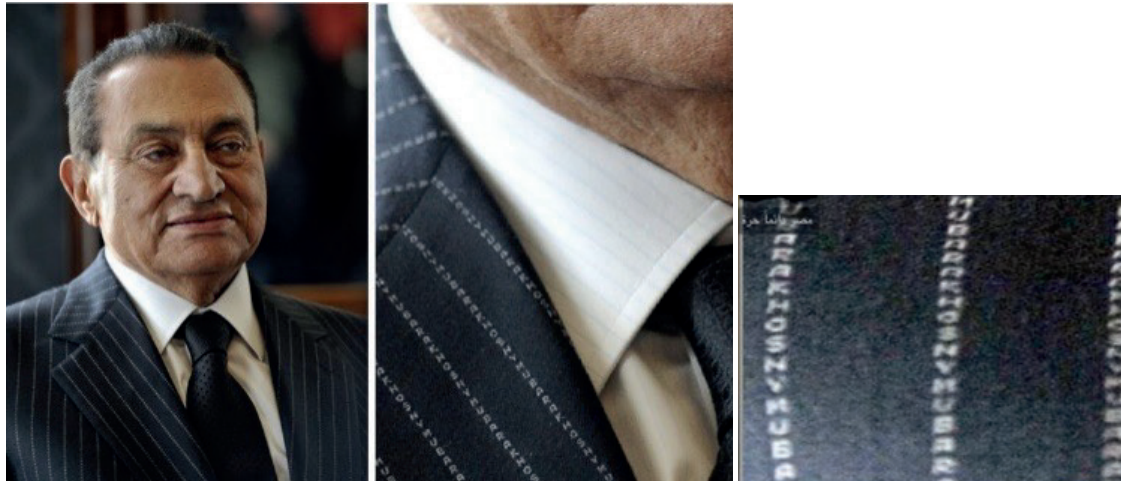
On the one hand, the label is related to the victims, so that they remain immortal and are considered symbols of the fight against corrupt regimes. On the other, to instruct that the demonstrations on January 25th will overthrow the political system, thus managing to end the repression and get rid of it hand in hand with the youth.

When analyzing the drawing, we see that we are facing a game of contrasts. The most important of all is that the idea it contains is that of a caricature, while the executive technique is that of a cartoon.

It is inevitable to talk about the contrasts used by Latuff, who knew how to handle them from the beginning, and more than once, to confirm the visual message of the drawing. The clearest contrast is the difference in size between Khaled Saïd and Hosni Mubarak, by which the viewer is drawn from the first moment. This contrast can be seen from two different perspectives: the first is that the murdered young man seems gigantic. The second is that he maintains his human size while the former president becomes much smaller.

Regarding Saïd's hand that holds Mubarak, we see that its size increases as a consequence of the visual logic of the image since the hand is closer to the victim's body and that it extends toward the viewer. That's why it looks bigger. It also serves to symbolize the strength of the fist that grips the former president, with just two fingers. The dictator, in this case, is the size of an insect that cannot escape from that enormous, strong, and sure hand.





(Fig. 13) Mubarak's suit, however, spells it like "Hosny Mubarak" (via Buzzfeed; photo via Tumblr).

(Fig. 50) Close-up photo of Mubarak's suit.

Holding Mubarak with his left hand made Khaled Saïd occupy the opposite side of the drawing, giving the tyrant the right side of the drawing, which is considered the reception part for the viewer. Despite all of the above, it did not achieve the desired effect due to the small part that Hosni Mubarak's body occupies compared to the size of Khaled Saïd's optical mass. Another clear contradiction can be seen in the clothing of both characters. Mubarak wears his famous blue suit, of which the Arab and international media displayed as one of the most expensive garments of a president. The suit in question has his name printed in small letters, thus achieving a unique piece that no other president has and whose price is unimaginable. In addition, it is classic and inspires monotony, tradition, and severe conservatism. For his part, Khaled Saïd wears a gray youth sweatshirt, a commonly used garment that is not difficult to acquire. Likewise, this type of clothing is what is usually used by contemporary youth, who lean towards pragmatism, vitality, and the ability to be up-to-date, in addition to retaining the qualities of simplicity, ease of use, and extreme flexibility.

The last most important and influential contradiction, where the direct expression of the message appears, is the difference between the look and facial features of the hero Khaled Saïd, against the agitation, trembling, and instability of the defeated satrap, who is balanced in the air, heading towards its inevitable downfall.

**Sample number 11**

**The description:** Graphic Design of superimposed photographs, made with Adobe Photoshop, is a work that combines the images of a huge tornado and the flag of the Libyan Revolution. The image was distributed on social media at the start of the Libyan revolutionary movement in 2011.

**The artist:** Anonymous.

**The analysis:** The design refers to a direct, fast, and powerful idea, and, at the same time, presages, through sharp visual language, that the Libyan Revolution is strongly approaching the capital, Tripoli.

The main element of the drawing is a huge tornado, which by its greatness connects the earth with the sky. Its message is strong because it is covered with the flag of the Libyan Revolution, adopted by the rebels who fought against the regime of Muammar al-Gaddafi.

The design consists of three main symbols: the first is the body of the tornado, which is located in the central part and has total dominance over the receiving environment; the second, is the general panorama of the road and the cloudy sky; and, lastly, the sign indicating the way to Tripoli.

The set of symbols strengthens the visual message since the body of the tornado is painted with the colors of the Libyan flag of the Kingdom that existed before the coup led by Muammar al-Gaddafi in 1969. The colonel took advantage of the absence of the sovereign Idris I, who was receiving medical treatment in Turkey, and seized, together with his supporters, control of the royal palace and state radio, thus announcing the abolition of the monarchy and the birth of the Libyan Arab Republic, which years later became the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

The wind of the work is a “tornado”, due to its enormous size, and that devastates everything that is in it. Here we see the metaphor of the destructive power of the Revolution, which will undoubtedly put an end to the regime and its supporters. The landscape of the road and the sign indicate the final destination: Tripoli, the Libyan capital. The breadth of the road, for its part, also refers to the greatness of this movement. The protests in the different cities of the Arab country began on February 17, 2011, demanding reforms in the political system through the overthrow of the head of the regime. The response of the security forces towards the demonstrators was extremely severe and brutal, through oppression and abuse. They did not give up, and after fierce clashes and battles, they controlled the strategic city of Benghazi. , the second largest city in the country.

Once Benghazi was liberated, the rebels organized their ranks, benefiting from the desertion of a large number of members of the government, political figures, and even several high-ranking members of the Army who declared their support for the Revolution, in protest against the brutality of the authorities against the protesters.

The ferocity of the regime caused the name of Tripoli to appear on the sign in Latin letters, perhaps to give the visual message the ability to communicate with more segments of international supporters of the Libyan case at the time.

This symbol is particularly important since it determines the itinerary of the Revolution. The regime’s media, for their part, tried to minimize the importance of what had happened, by declaring that it was only a defection of some cities, an attempt to separate Benghazi from the body of the State, thus giving the idea that it was not a revolution, in every sense of the word.

The simple and focused design contains more than one meaning, a message in favor of the Revolution and its journey towards change to restore the values of the Libyan state, undermined by the military coup that ushered in a 42-year dictatorship. The unique leadership made the country one of the worst violators of human rights.

## **Sample number 12**

**The description:** Graphic design poster for the screen, created in 2011, which was implemented into illustrations, often using Adobe Illustrator vector graphics editor.

These are three horizontal stripes: red, white, and black, from top to bottom, respectively, and which represent the Egyptian flag. In the central part there is a text written in both Egyptian dialectal Arabic and English that says: “Take Care Egyptians”, that is, “Be careful Egyptians”. The sentence in dialectal Egyptian is longer as it adds: “If discord spread, no one would be saved: neither Muslims nor Christians.”

The colors used for the text are black, red, and gold, which is the same as the national flag.

**The artist:** Ramy Design.



#### The analysis: The analysis:

From the first moment, you can tell that, for this image, the designer was inspired by the colors of the national flag. The insignia is considered one of the most important symbols of the modern Egyptian state and was officially approved in its final form, without any objection or criticism, in 1984.

It is worth mentioning that the first people to use flags in political history were the ancient Egyptians, and that is proven in their scriptures. As a consequence of this long history, the national flag underwent great changes, on some occasions, and sometimes simple modifications.

The current flag was adopted on October 4, 1984, and consists of three horizontal stripes of the same size, whose length is twice its width. The colors of this are red at the top, white in the center, and black at the bottom. In the central area appears the Eagle of Saladin, in gold, looking to the right. For the ancient Egyptians, this bird was a symbol of eternal life.

The design is characterized by its clarity and directness, as well as by the direct revelation of the hidden message it contains: that the Egyptians have to unify their ranks during the Revolution of January 25.



(Fig. 14) The official flag of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

This design was one of those that was widely disseminated, for bringing together the sacred symbols of Christianity and Islam; that is to say, the cross and the crescent moon, in a clear reference to the fact that Egyptians, Muslims, and Copts are part of a single people, who fight for the same human and patriotic values: a single flag and a unified State in which they live together, and that there is nothing that can separate them.

The design was based on a creative idea, through the formal alteration of the initials of “Be Careful”, that is, the “T” and the “C”. The phrase in question is famous for being a warning, caution, and attention, and, at the same time, for being friendly. This consists of two words, whose initials were modified to make them look huge, becoming visual forms that communicate the message in a new and different way.

The letter “T” became an obvious cross, considered the most prominent symbol of Christianity. For its part, the “C” took the shape of a crescent moon, one of the symbols of Islam. Both badges refer to the Christians, Copts, and Muslims settled both in Egypt and in the world.

The designer chose the color red for religious symbols because of its ease in reaching the eyes of recipients and its ability to compete with others for a quick view of it, as well as its symbolic association with revolutions and struggle. of the masses at that time.

Likewise, we can say that the red color of the cross and crescent makes the addressee sometimes compare them with the emblem of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, a voluntary aid organization that cooperates with state authorities, whose task is to save and help victims in armed conflicts and natural disasters. This makes us conclude that the designer intended to give that nuance because the rest of the letters of “Take Care” appear in black.

Ramy Design has broken with the monotony of colors through the gradation technique. Here you can see that the crescent and the cross have been colored in a red gradient, one of the good options that Adobe software gives since it offers sensitive gradients and extremely soft color tones, which create visual distortion in the receiver and they eliminate the uniformity of solid colors, characterized by harshness and sharpness, especially when the content of the design is political and direct. Under the warning “Be careful” the word “EGYPTIANS” was written in capital letters and in gold, which is the color of Saladin’s Eagle which appears in the center of the national flag. Gold was used in order to give it maximum importance since it is compared to gold, whose beauty and value are incalculable, and which in the eyes of others is the longest-lived, most durable, and brilliant element. The designer sought to demonstrate that the people, like the precious metal, is the heart of the Revolution, its goal, and its value; and that if he disagreed for religious reasons, everything would be lost. In addition, he replaced the bird, considered the symbol of state power, with the word “Egyptians”, which makes it clear that the people are the most important and powerful thing that exists in the country. So, if this is the heart of the Egyptian flag, the citizens, in this case, are the heart of the State and the cause that the whole world came out to defend.

It is also observed that the designer has given thickness to the word “EGYPTIANS”,



through the imaginary shadow that falls on its edges, thus making the recipient see it as if it were an ingot. This idea refers to gold, on the one hand, although here it is accompanied by the feeling that the word is made in three dimensions, giving it a visual and verbal weight that, in turn, conveys confidence and weight.

As for the rest of the long sentence, located in the white strip, it is only an excess of design; The author already repeats the message in Egyptian dialect through many words, which causes it to lose its symbolic and expressive importance.

This could be justified due to the Designer's desire to spread his outline quickly to force society to get involved, even those who don't care so much about visual messages, symbols, or the meaning of colors, and all they want to do it is reading clear, direct and powerful instructions, advice or warnings.

### Sample number 13

**The description:** A graphic design featuring a caricature of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad sitting on a throne and adjusting his tie. Behind him appears the official Syrian flag, and in the background the image of a completely destroyed city.

The caricature was published by the British weekly magazine *The Week*, under the headline "Should we let al-Assad win? Al-Assad Tightens His Control", June 22, 2013. It also circulated on social media in 2015 as the military crackdown on the Revolution intensified.

**The artist:** Howard McWilliam.

**The analysis:** Looking at the Syrian regime's response to the challenge posed by the Arab Spring, and the strategy followed to suppress the demonstrations in the bloodiest and most egregious way, we see that the authorities turned to foreign forces such as Russia, Iran, and Hezbollah, among others, without ever hesitate to take advantage of their support in order to resist the popular uprising that broke out on March 15, 2011. The result of the oppression often led to the general annihilation of the uprising in some towns and cities. For their part, the rebels did not receive any type of external help because they only





expressed their desire for reform and renewal and that their demands be taken seriously, to reach a dialogue and understanding between the people and the government, and, finally, achieve a unified vision for the future of Syria.

The Syrian regime has tried to balance its position between Russia and Iran, its main patrons and supporters. However, Damascus has tended more towards the ayatollahs for 40 years, because their sectarian projects in the region are linked to the continuity of the al-Asad family in the presidency. As for Moscow, Syria knows perfectly well that the Kremlin's intervention is to achieve a series of objectives, including ensuring its presence in the area, through the naval base in Tartus and the Hmeimim airbase in Latakia.

The Syrian president realized that his stay in power was important to both parties, so he exploited this point to the maximum, making both Tehran and Moscow pay large amounts of money, and support the official Army with men. and weapons.

Faced with the Russian intervention, the armed opposition was forced to withdraw beyond the outskirts of the capital, Damascus; as well as from Aleppo, Palmyra, and, the cradle of the Revolution, Daraa, which led al-Asad to reject any initiative, national or international, to share power with the opposition in a government of national unity.

The Syrian opposition, for its part, began to receive support from Turkey, the Arabian Gulf states, the European Union, and the United States. However, the insurgents lost Aleppo, the country's second-largest city, in December 2016. The regime's victory was seen as the culmination of its growing strength in recent years, giving it the hope of returning to the international community and retaking control of Syria.

After what happened, The artist conveyed the point of view of the revolutionary masses around Bashar al-Asad, who did not care about anything except maintaining power at all costs, even if he was left alone with his throne ruling the destinies of a shattered country. In the background of the caricature, we see a city that resembles large Syrian cities, with its medium-rise buildings and a series of mosques that can be seen by the minarets. Likewise, it is observed that the sky is covered by smoke screens, which confirms the idea that this city has been destroyed by the recent bombings.

The city is devoid of all human, animal, and plant life. The artist concentrated on showing the destruction and annihilation practiced by the regime since the realization of this work coincided with the news of a chemical attack against a Syrian city by the official Army.

On September 9, 2013, the British newspaper The Guardian published an article headlined: "Al-Asad did not order chemical weapons attack in Syria, German press say", thus insinuating that the genocide was not led personally by the Syrian leader. However, phone calls intercepted by a German surveillance ship operated by the Federal Intelligence Service reinforced claims by the Barack Obama administration, Britain, and France that elements of the al-Asad regime, and not renegade rebel groups, were responsible for the attack on the city, which is clearly illustrated in the drawing.

You can barely see the official Syrian flag, bowed and humiliated, behind the shoulder of a president who, for The artist, does not respect the notion of the State, and whose only interests are his personal appearance and the throne, from which he governs the future of a country in ruins

The president looks proud of himself as he adjusts his tie, and casts a confident look toward the viewer without any expression on his face, which means that he does everything calmly and coldly, in addition to stating that the situation is calm and that there is nothing going on at the back of the work, or that it is just something simple and unimportant.

### Sample number 14



**The description:** Multi color Colored graffiti depicting the portrait of the Egyptian regime's Interior Minister, Habib al-Adli, with a text made up of eight words in two sentences: "The execution of al-Adli" and "The butcher of the Interior"<sup>7</sup>.

**The artist:** Ammar Abo Bakr<sup>8</sup>.

The location: Tahrir Square, Cairo.

**The analysis:** On the morning of the fourth day of the Revolution, Friday, January 28, 2011, called by the protesters "Friday of Anger", the Mubarak regime cut off the wireless means of communication: mobile phones, and the Internet, to prevent the angry masses to get in touch and thus be able to organize demonstrations. Despite all the measures taken, hundreds of thousands of people left the various mosques, once the Friday prayer was

7 In Arabic, there are two words in each sentence

8 A well-known Egyptian muralist and graffiti artist. His work spans portraiture, history, and pop culture depicting the 2011 Egyptian Revolution. Throughout the Revolution, Ammar Abo Bakr painted in defiance of the police, who covered his art in white paint as a sign of justice. criminal. His works often challenge regimes or injustices, and the most famous are found on Mohamed Mahmoud street, one of the capital's main arteries leading from the Ministry of the Interior to Tahrir Square. They can also be seen in other places such as Alexandria, Beirut, Brussels, Amsterdam, Berlin, Cologne, and Frankfurt. In an interview with Sarah Mousa for the Jadaliyya ezine, Abo Bakr said: "...While (artists) are strongly opposed to the military and want to make that stand, we love the people and would also like to introduce art to people... I want to present some beauty to people who can see it, see that their streets have beautiful murals, and feel joy." Abo Bakr currently works with other artists on projects inside and outside of Egypt.

over, heading towards Tahrir Square. Likewise, the image was repeated in many other Egyptian cities, such as Alexandria, Suez, El Mansoura, Ismailia, Damietta, El Fayun, Menia, Damanhur, Eastern Governorate “Sharqia”, Port Said, and North Sinai.

Attempts by the police to evict the protesters were in vain, forcing them to withdraw from the Qasr al-Nil bridge in Cairo. The demonstrators, for their part, took control of Suez and Alexandria and burned the headquarters of the National Democratic Party (PND). In addition, there were assaults against some police stations as a measure of reprisal for the wounded and martyrs killed in the protests.

As a consequence, President Hosni Mubarak, as military governor, decided to impose a curfew throughout the Republic, from six in the evening until seven in the morning of the following day. Likewise, military units, with armored vehicles, were deployed for the first time in the streets.

Cairo witnessed massive protests and demonstrations after the Friday prayer. Police forces fired tear gas canisters and sonic bullets to intimidate citizens who poured out of the Al-Azhar Mosque and nearby ones. The demonstrators called for “the fall of the regime” and sought revenge on those responsible for the death of citizens who became martyrs in Suez.

Mubarak resigned on the eighteenth day of the Revolution. The total balance of the deceased until that same day was 1075. January 28 was considered the most tragic of all, as 664 martyrs fell, after police attacked peaceful protesters in various parts of the country, after being ordered by Interior Minister Habib al-Adli to respond harsh and strict towards those who protested, which caused them and their supporters to launch a media campaign against al-Adli “The Assassin”, which included a series of artworks and posters that accused the minister of being a criminal, in addition to shedding light on violations committed by the security services.

This graffiti was one of the most famous and influential, since Habib al-Adli’s face appeared in black and orange in order to attract attention, benefiting from the abstraction technique that turned his features into features similar to the photographs that newspapers published for a long time. Also, the implementation method was important, since the work should be done in a minimum time, to guarantee that the creators were not arrested by the security agents.

The artist used Arabic calligraphy, similar to Word fonts used by the press, to announce the message of the graffiti clearly and simply, making it look like an eight-word newspaper headline. The first four “The execution of al-Adli”, is a surprising phrase, just like a news item that deals with a real event. The other four “The Butcher of the Interior”, referring to the Ministry that he directs, are like a subheading that clarifies who “The Butcher” is. So mention who the criminal was, what is his character, and what the crime he committed, after mentioning his name and putting his picture.

Words appear in blue to ensure color contrast, making them noticeable and clearly legible. Likewise, the color in question gives them a real and believable tone, as to what happened or what will happen in the near future, according to the work, whose message came loud, clear, and boldly everywhere.

**Sample number 15**

**The description:** Graffiti of multi color represents a security agent with a baton in his hand who is about to step on two small flowers.

**The artist:** Keizer<sup>9</sup>.

**Location :** In the Zamalek neighborhood, Cairo, and in Luxor.

**The analysis:** Since the first day of the Egyptian Revolution, on Tuesday, January 25, 2011, protests have turned into clashes between demonstrators and security forces in Tahrir Square. That day was called by the former “The day of anger.”

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9 He is the pseudonym of an Egyptian street artist and graffiti artist Anonymous whose work has gained popularity and notoriety in the aftermath of January 25, 2011, Revolution. Keizer is reportedly a 33-year-old man who does street art full-time in El Cairo. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keizer\\_\(artist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keizer_(artist))  
[Accessed October 1, 2022]



The tragic situation in which the people found themselves led to a call for a massive demonstration, coinciding with the Day of the Egyptian Police, in order to protest against the deterioration of the political, economic, and social situation, as well as against the abuses committed by the Ministry of the Interior and the repeated violations of human rights, in addition to the violence faced by the young people.

The call to demonstrate and take over public squares was launched on social networks, Facebook and Twitter, by non-partisan political forces: the Facebook profile “We are all Khaled Said”, the Youth Movement of April 6, the Youth for Justice and Freedom movement, the Egyptian Movement for Change “Kifaya”, the National Association for Change and the Popular and Democratic Movement for Change “7ashd”.

The various civil society groups accepted the invitation and attended the demonstrations. The protests spread throughout the entire geographical area of Egypt, after erupting in Cairo, specifically in Tahrir Square, and from there they reached Alexandria, Suez, Al-Mahalla al-Kubra, Ismailia and other governorates, turning into massive popular demonstrations at sunset on the same day. Despite the magnitude of these, they were overwhelmingly ignored by the official media. That January 25, the first martyr of the Revolution fell in Suez, in front of the Al Arbaeen district police station. Immediately afterward, the fuse of the Revolution was lit, whose main motto was: “The people want to overthrow the regime”. As a consequence, the Ministry of the Interior, under the mandate of Habib al-Adli, immediately ordered the dispersal of the demonstrations and sit-ins throughout the Republic.

The minister’s orders led the security forces to use, from day one, violence against the protesters, beating them with batons or chasing their meetings with armored cars, in addition to other violent acts that caused serious injuries to the crowd.

Keizer quickly implemented a sketch of a man carrying a club in his raised right hand; he also wears a helmet similar to that of the Central Security Forces (FSC) in Egypt. Likewise, the muscular corpulence of the agent gives him an image of heaviness, rudeness, and violence. The man in the work is about to step, with one leg, on two small flowers, one red, and one green.

Apparently, The artist wanted to convey the feeling of severity and cruelty of the police officer through the sharp angles of the figure. Likewise, the different parts of the body indicate that this man is immune: gloves, protective knee and elbow pads, military boots, a riot helmet with a plastic visor, with which he protects his face, and the bulletproof vest, with which he protects himself the chest and abdomen. The image was painted in a similar way to the cartoon, showing the character with his defensive weapons, violence, severity, and musculature of him, attacking two small flowers in order to crush them with his huge shoe and big body.

Graffiti spread rapidly through Cairo in the first two days of the Revolution, due to its ease and rapid implementation, on the condition that it be done away from the eyes of security agents and their spies. The work has the ability to firmly express and describe the position of the police and the violations they committed against the unarmed people who occupied the squares demanding changes.

If we look closely at the graffiti, we see that the shape of the two upright flowers would

have an additional meaning: that they both have a power that the burly man lacks, despite everything he carries. The strength of the flowers appears in two elements of the artistic work. The first is the firmness of the flowers, vertical and stable on the artistic base of the work, while the policeman's body seems unstable and, perhaps, wobbly due to the simple fact that he is standing on one foot and leaning his body back slightly. The second is its colors: red and green, considered a contrast, where the high energy of the first and the extreme vitality of the second, in addition to the wave tension caused by the contradiction between both colors, makes the viewer feel the energy and vitality of flowers, qualities that can give people hope for a growing future and the strength to face a great dark, dead and black state of mind.

The strength of labor and its message resides in the two flowers since the image of the policeman represents the violence that the regime exercises against peaceful people. The artist does not conclude the scene with the crushing of him but leaves the ending open to give hope of resistance and survival, as well as to achieve the desired change, which gives triumph to life and establishes a more beautiful and bright future.

### Sample number 16

**The description:** Bi-color graffiti of different types of weapons and torture tools. At the bottom appears the phrase "The accessories of the regime."

**The artist:** Keizer.

Location : The Zamalek neighborhood, Cairo.

**The analysis:** The graffiti artist, in this work, shows us various types of tools and bladed weapons used by the Ministry of the Interior, represented by the security forces and the police, against protesters and those arrested. Of the rarest tools that are clearly noticeable in the work, we find a medical syringe, a small pocket knife, a machete of those used in street warfare, and an ax for felling trees. These weapons have nothing to do with the police or security agents in Egypt, or even in the world, with which we can see that this graffiti accuses the Ministry of the Interior of being behind the attacks on protesters by individuals and unidentified groups, giving the impression that they came from the part of the town that rejected the protest movements.



On the fifth day of the Revolution, Saturday, January 29, 2011, President Mubarak addressed the people in a speech announcing that he was aware of the aspirations of the people and consequently dismissed the Ahmed government. Nazif, who had been in office since July 14, 2004. However, the president refused to resign. The following day, after violent protests, the leader issued a presidential decree in which he appointed Omar Suleiman as Vice President of the Republic, a position vacant for almost 30 years, and whose last holder was Mubarak himself. He also announced the appointment of Ahmed Shafik as Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

That same day, after President Mubarak's speech, the phenomenon of thugs appeared for the first time on the country's political scene since the beginning of the Revolution. The response of some protesters was to launch the campaign "Protect your big house" until the situation improved and citizen security was restored. The idea was for some young people to settle in front of their homes and residential areas in order to protect them from bullies. These, for their part, besieged the streets and squares of Cairo and the provinces, and began, on a large scale, to loot several banks, companies, and shops; in addition to sabotaging hotels and shopping centers, such as Arkadia Mall. Many bandits were also deployed, who imposed the payment of fees on passers-by so that they could continue on their way. This all happened after the Ministry of the Interior ordered its agents and troops to withdraw suddenly, thus creating a security vacuum that helped spread chaos and insecurity, leading to residents chasing the policemen, as well as arresting setting fire to various police stations, and sabotage various state and private institutions.

All this coincided with the resignations and dismissals of high officials of the Egyptian state. The Ministry of Transport, for its part, announced that the subway stations had been looted and sabotaged. In addition, the President of the Egyptian Stock Exchange announced the freezing of negotiations as a result of the demonstrations in the country, he also announced the total suspension of the tasks of the Central Bank of Egypt during the same period specified by the Stock Exchange. .

The protesters were sure that the Home Office was the one who allowed the thugs and saboteurs to jump on the scene. For them, it was a clear coordination between both parties to discourage the rebels from demanding the overthrow of the regime, by spreading chaos, threatening the Egyptian economy, and destabilizing the country.

This graffiti clearly sums up the idea in a unique message, as it puts the tools used by vandals and bandits in street combat on the same level as the conventional weapons of security forces: rifles, handcuffs, rubber bullets, and a grenade. tear gas.

In the visual center of the work, Keizer drew a noose that was large in size, compared to the rest of the tools, thus giving him a great capacity to express himself, as well as communicate with the recipient. The message is that all these tools: official weapons to carry out arrests, and not the official ones like those used in cases of torture, revolve around homicide, considered the main method followed by the Ministry of the Interior, especially the death penalty, and not through other techniques, such as murder or any other type of death.

The selection of black and yellow to implement this graffiti was successful since the former is capable of representing the weight, force, and cruelty of sharp and lethal weapons and tools. Dark yellow, for its part, represents negative states or effects, such as oppression, depression, cowardice, anxiety, and disease. .

The sentence written at the base of the graffiti reads “The accessories of the regime”, with a classical Arabic font that expresses certainty and confidence, as well as its legibility and clarity. The artist’s intention is to make a comment out of the sentence, which is why he put it at the bottom of the work, and not at the top so that it would not play the role of the title, since the comment describes the situation, as it is. ; while the header summarizes it. Often the title comes first and the content explains it, making the content part of the title. The placement of the phrase below the tools suggests that this is the pure reality that exactly describes everything that viewers see with their own eyes as if it were a linguistic translation of the visual elements that appear above.

This work was a moving message to the world, as it coincided with the chaos Egypt found itself in, causing everyone inside and outside the Arab country to worry about the state and its components. The spread of the work on social networks led to a wave of accusations between supporters of the Revolution and supporters and defenders of the regime, which they considered the safety valve for the survival of the Egyptian nation, as well as being the only one capable of saving the country and protecting the people.

### Sample number 17





**The description:** Caricature depicting a burly Egyptian policeman showing the muscles of his right arm towards a group of protesters carrying a banner reading “I claim my right”; while the left arm, which is shown to be much skinnier than normal, is directed toward a group of three thieves, who are smiling.

**The artist:** Doaa el-Adl<sup>10</sup>.

Published by: Al-Masry Al-Youm Daily, No. 2815 of January 29, 2011.

**The analysis:** On Friday, January 28, 2011, called by the protesters “Friday of Anger”, hundreds of thousands of protesters left the various mosques, once the Friday prayer was over, heading towards Tahrir Square, despite the suspension of the mobile phone service and the Internet by the Mubarak regime, to prevent the angry masses from getting in touch. The image of huge demonstrations was repeated: Alexandria, Suez, El Mansoura, Ismailia, Damietta, El Fayun, Menia, Damanhur, Eastern Governorate “Sharqia”, Port Said, and North Sinai.

That day resulted in at least 664 martyrs and more than a thousand injured among the peaceful demonstrators, as a consequence of the violence carried out by the police. .

One day after Bloody Friday, the daily Al-Masry Al-Youm published a special edition with a list of figures and images of the violations committed by the forces of the Egyptian Interior Ministry and other security bodies. Articles and reports that appeared in that issue described the ugliness of excessive law enforcement force. This cartoon was disseminated to describe the tragedy and the strangeness of the event in a simple, ironic, and strong way at the same time, in order to reveal the absurd behavior of those involved.

The artist herself titled her work: “Dissolve the sit-in by force”, the same headline echoed by the pro-government Egyptian media, at the time, to justify the violent intervention of the security forces.

The surface of the work is divided horizontally into two symmetrical parts, showing a man dressed in the uniform of the Egyptian police. He is standing in the center, and his height is three times bigger than the rest of the people in the graffiti in order to suggest a revolutionary power.

On the right side, there are three men wearing the striped uniform and the mask, with which the image of an outlaw is associated. On the left side, there is a group of people who carry a banner with the slogan “I claim my right”, in reference to the people who demand their rights peacefully.

The policeman’s body leans towards the receiver; while his gaze is directed towards the protesters, mockingly. His wry smile shows cruelty, plus he wears a thick mustache that tries to show masculinity and virility. The work seeks to illustrate a stereotype of men in power who exaggerate to show their dominance.

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10 Egyptian caricaturist (Damietta, 1979). He graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Alexandria University, Department of Theater and Cinema. His first caricature had been published in 2005, and since then she has been published in Dustor daily, Sabah Al Khair magazine, and, later, Rose el-Youssef magazine. In 2008 she moved to the daily Al-Masry Al-Youm, where she continues to work to this day..

<https://www.albawaba.com/entertainment/doaa-el-adl-460129> [Accessed on January 30, 2023]

The policeman raises his right arm against the demonstrators. An arm with its sleeves rolled up that shows in its gigantic muscles the strong resolve of the government towards them in order to scare them and threaten them with decisive action, thereby explaining the meaning of the word “force” that appears in the title. That word refers to the brutal and exaggerated corpulence of the policeman, who represents the regime, in the face of the force of the demonstrations that are based nothing more on the slogans used.

Looking at the details of the protesters’ faces, we discover that they look fearfully at that force. Through people’s faces and clothing, we realize that they are poor and living in misery; quite the opposite of the three outlaws who appear on the right, whose bodies seem healthy and their faces smile with joy, happiness, and a sense of peace and even security.

The policeman directs a left arm, in the form of a cantilever, scrawny and half-dead, towards the outlaws, which facilitates the work of the criminals and leniency towards them, due to the impotence and lack of will of the regime, unless that was the intention: to protect them from the police so that they would not be discovered.

Despite the fact that the outlaws represent the minority and are known by the authorities, they are protected by the security institutions, which even turn a blind eye; while those who claim their rights, who are the absolute majority, face the cruelty of the regime and peacefully resist the excessive force used against them to put an end to their revolution.

### Sample number 18

**The description:** Mono-color graffiti with the face of President Hosni Mubarak, and the phrase “get a visa” at the bottom of the image.

**The artist:** El Teneen<sup>11</sup>.

Location: st Mahmoud Bassiouny, Cairo.

Fotografiado por: Maya Gowaily.



11 “El Dragón”: Pseudonym of a 29-year-old Egyptian Anonymous street artist and graffiti artist. His works gained popularity and notoriety after the 2011 Revolution. The Teneen is actually part of the “Dragon Team” or “El Teneen Team” couple; however, the artist (identified as male, by Al-Masry Al-Youm newspaper) currently works independently. His artworks have been described as “icons of the January 25 Revolution.” [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El\\_Teneen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/El_Teneen) [Accessed on January 30, 2023]

**The analysis:** This work is characterized by its great abstraction, in order to speed up its production and shorten the time to implement it. We note that it is expressively strong; however, it is simple in terms of execution, due to the danger involved in making works that criticized or attacked the head of the regime in the early days of the Egyptian Revolution. The most outstanding thing in this type of work may be its technical side, since it sends an emergency message, even though the implementation methods, which make the receiver notice how The artist has put his freedom at risk to be able to do it, especially living in times like the one he was in and in a city like Cairo, which was ruled by a tyrannical police state, which had no mercy towards anyone who tried to undermine the honor of the regime, in addition to not hesitating to repress anyone that he thought of wresting office from the dictator.

The theme of the work was simply to demand the removal of Hosni Mubarak from power, drawing his portrait in the form of stencils. The work showed the president a little more senile than usual. Under the leader's portrait, The artist wrote "get a visa". The intention was to force Mubarak out of office.

The work was very daring, appearing at the beginning of the Egyptian Revolution, an event that lasted 18 days, and which witnessed serious human rights violations, such as the arrest of activists. These transgressions caused many of the activist artists, as is the case of the executor of this graffiti, to sign with pseudonyms. Some of them did not reveal their identity until today, for fear of being persecuted, imprisoned, arrested, and slandered, for participating and standing out as artists in the Revolution, despite the fact that the regime collapsed many years ago.

Later, journalists published some interviews with artists of the Revolution in which their identity was revealed, although these dialogues were not documented by reliable sources. However, despite the scarcity of the interviews, they were quickly disseminated on the Internet once the interviews were over.

The subsequent events that Egypt experienced: changes in political positions and concepts, as well as the partisan and ideological affiliations of the participants in the Revolution, led to the minimization of the importance of these artists, many of whom are already outside the country. The rest do not want to talk much about that phase since it produced conflicts that continue to this day.

The work stands out for its frankness, speed of implementation, and expressive power, as well as playing with words to give it an ironic character. One last point to be observed is the seriousness of working in this field, which can lead to the extreme that The artist loses his life, as was the case with Mohamed Christy, who died after being shot by security agents during the Revolution.

### Sample number 19

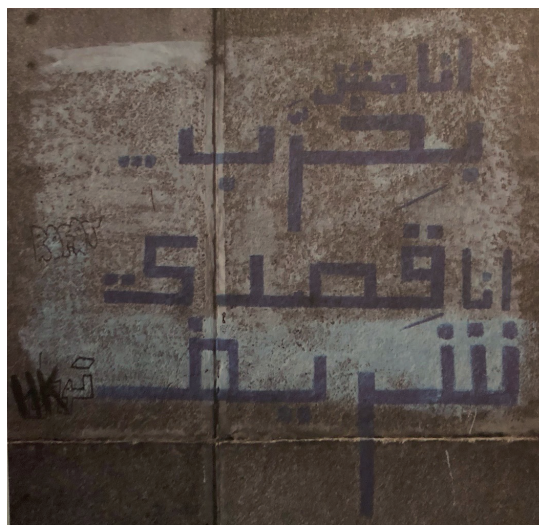
**The description:** Mono-color graffiti with the phrase “I am not sabotaging. My intention is noble” geometric calligraphy.

**The artist:** HK.

**Location :** st Sheikh Raihan, Cairo.

**Photographed by:** Omar Kamel.

**The analysis:** Here we find a work that is characterized by its great abstraction. It is based on a written text that contains two particularities: the first is that it is easy to read, in terms of pronunciation or understanding. The second is that it is easy to perform since it is a geometric line that moves vertically in a 90° position, or horizontally between 0 and 180°.



(Fig. 15) A sample of square geometric Kufic script.

This method is called “square Kufic script”, and it produces full or incomplete squares, as in the example on the image, where the researcher writes the same term for illustrative purposes.

It is observed that The artist greatly widened the distances between the letters that did not follow the complete quadrature, in order to achieve an easier visualization. Likewise, he differentiated between the words, without saving on the spaces between words and lines, and almost put each of them on a line to give the receiver a greater capacity for reading and understanding.

This graffiti carries the slogan of defending the revolutionaries, qualified by the state media, at that time, as “saboteurs” and “intruders” who wanted to destroy the country in favor of the interests of hostile nations.

The message is clear, concise, and strong at the same time: that the revolutionaries have a good and noble intention. The method of abstraction, direct and severe, and the rapidity of the implementation, far from any complicated technique, demonstrate the great challenges that artists faced at that time. The graffiti artists were forced not to reveal their identity; in this case, whose designer signed with the letters “HK”, far from any sign or nickname that would make it easier for the security authorities to recognize him; otherwise, they would not hesitate to arrest and torture him.



## Sample number 20

**The description:** Mono-color Graffiti of a collage titled “The Revolution scores a goal”.

**The artist:** Sad Panda.

Location: st Merghani, Heliopolis, Cairo.

Photographed by: Maya Gowaily.

**The analysis:** This graffiti documents a new technique not widely used in this artistic field: “collage”, where The artist made a photographic montage with two large images. The first is that of the body of the famous Egyptian former soccer player, Mohamed Aboutrika , the top scorer of the national team noted for his speed, his high level of physical condition, and his ability to score goals, characteristics with which he led the teams in which he played to win titles in national, African, and international tournaments.



(Fig. 16) Saad Zaghloul (1859–1927), former Prime Minister of Egypt. author as Hanselman.

The artist put the figure of Aboutrika, the head of his compatriot, the leader and revolutionary Saad Zaghloul , who was one of the most prominent politicians in the contemporary history of the Arab country, for being the leader of the 1919 Revolution , considered a brilliant milestone in the political history of Egypt. Both the uprising and its leader are admired by the people since thanks to them arose the national policy of refusing to submit to the British occupier and his puppets.

With the choice of Aboutrika and Zaghloul, it is clear that The artist wanted to send a message of confidence, both to the protesters, who were in the midst of the revolution, and to the supporters of the regime, who knew perfectly well that these two heroes are much loved by the Arab public, in general, and Egyptian, in particular.

Mohamed Aboutrika, who Egyptians used to recognize by the number “22”, was the first national player to wear this number in the history of football in the land of the pharaohs. Also, years before the Revolution broke out, he made history with his local team “Al-Ahly” and the national team, winning many tournaments at the national and African level, thus making him a true hero for the masses, despite being a person of humble origin. Therefore, the choice of Aboutrika’s image was appropriate, since he is an idol known by

the generation of the Revolution, who follows his victories and his achievements thanks to his perseverance and the support of his team, soccer being a collective game that needs heroes, where victories are not achieved without a joint effort.

It seems a good option to use Aboutrika's body, due to its strength, youth, and ambition, characteristics similar to those of the young revolutionaries who formed the body of the Revolution and the powerful material of the protests.

As well as the election of the head of Saad Zaghloul, a symbol of which the modern history of Egypt is proud, for being one of those who created the political identity of the Arab country, which is still standing. Historically, he was the first to try to drive the occupying British troops out of the country, the founder of the first nationalist political party "Al-Wafd" and the biggest Egyptian symbol that the masses supported and turned around him. Thanks to his courage and leadership, the Egyptian people achieved one of their greatest victories: the recognition of the country's independence and the subsequent implementation of the 1923 Constitution, which declared Egypt a sovereign state.

The artist called the work "The Revolution scores a goal", despite the fact that the movement had not ended. Perhaps his intention was that skepticism had already been left behind, abolishing the crimes attributed to her, in addition to uniting the ranks of the people, leading them to imminent victory.

### **Sample number 21**



**The description:** Graffiti of multi colors with the smiling face of a young man. The title of the work is “The martyr Saif Allah Mustafa, 16 years old. Student”. , 16 años. Estudiante”.

**The artist:** Ganzeer<sup>12</sup>.

Location: st July 26, Cairo.

Photographed by: Othman al Sharnouby

**The analysis:** The fact that Saif Allah Mustafa was wounded by a bullet inflamed the feelings of the revolutionaries and opponents of the Hosni Mubarak regime since the young man was barely 16 years old and therefore did not consider himself a protester in the sense of the word. . He was just a child, whose curiosity led him to observe the strange events that he had never seen, heard or imagined would take place in Cairo, a safe and stable city since he was born.

The boy passed away five days after being admitted to the hospital, despite the efforts of the medical staff. His death made him become a symbol of the Revolution, as well as proof of the brutality and barbarity of the regime, which insisted on resorting to savage methods, which did not differentiate between adults and children.

International law defines a crime against humanity as murder or genocide perpetrated against the population, whether by a person, institution, or regime. The attack is usually large-scale and systematic, directed against civilians. One of the conditions of genocide is that it be committed against one or more people, as well as forcing the victims to live in conditions that obviously lead to the annihilation of part of the people. .

This introduction is necessary to be able to understand the message of The artist, who carried out the work in a hurry: to communicate to the world the crimes against humanity committed by the regime, in its attempt to crush the revolutionaries who only sought the right to live. with dignity.

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12 Ganzeer (Egyptian Arabic: pronounced [gæn ], “chain”) (born 1982 in Giza[2]) is the pseudonym used by an Egyptian artist who has gained mainstream fame in Egypt and internationally following the 2011 Egyptian Revolution. Prior to the revolution, Ganzeer’s popularity was widespread yet limited to the spheres of art and design. Ganzeer’s artwork has touched on the themes of civic responsibility and social justice and has been critical of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, or SCAF, which has ruled Egypt since the February 2011 resignation of former president Hosni Mubarak.

He is a regular contributor to the online magazine Rolling Bulb. Described by Bidoun Magazine as a “Contingency Artist,” Ganzeer is quite accustomed to adopting completely new styles, techniques, and mediums to adapt to the topic he is tackling at any given time. The Huffington Post has placed him on a list of “25 Street Artists from Around the World Who Are Shaking Up Public Art,”

while Al-Monitor.com has placed him on a list of “50 People Shaping the Culture of the Middle East.”

He is one of the protagonists in a critically acclaimed documentary titled Art War by German director Marco Wilms. Ganzeer was also cited by German Arte as one of Egypt’s highest-selling living artists today.

The message for the revolutionaries and protesters was to demonstrate the weakness of the regime and its security body, since it was charging against the children “in self-defense”, which deeply affected the revolutionaries who saw the death of a 16-year-old boy it gave them the responsibility to work seriously to uproot the tyrannical regime, which did not waver at all and which clung to power in the cruelest way, openly disregarding all human, ethical and legal values.



(Fig. 17) Saif Allah  
Mustafa's profile picture  
on Facebook.

Ganzeer, for his part, opted for a portrait of the martyr smiling and wearing adolescent clothes, like any other boy his age, be it in Egypt or in the world. The artist, with a favorable attitude to the work, slightly changed the size of the eyes and the direction of it to give the recipient a touch of pity.

The graffiti, for all of the aforementioned, carries an emotional charge that unfolds between the smile of hope and the recipient's sensation of the magnitude of the murder of the young martyr Saif Allah, as well as the sacrifices and losses of the Revolution.

This is what we notice in The Artist's emphasis on putting the martyr's name, his age, and his position as a high school student, which denies him the revolutionary aspect, much less that of a criminal.

### Sample number 22

**The description:** : Graffiti in Bi colors: black and yellow which represents a child, painted on his back, who throws the six-pointed star into the wastebasket. At the bottom appears the phrase: “No to normalization”.

**The artist:** Zeft<sup>13</sup>.

**Location :** The Maadi neighborhood, Cairo.



13 Anonymous graffiti artist during the Revolution, who decided to abandon his career once the movement ended. Here we find the only interview with him.  
<http://cairoscene.com/In-Depth/Six-Years-After-The-Uprising-Where-Are-The-Graffiti-Artists-Of-Egypt-s-Revolution-No> [Accessed on January 31, 2023]



**The analysis:** This graffiti marked the beginning of a new phase of demands, represented in the set of demands and slogans promoted by the artists of the Revolution, who, through this and other works, were able to present the different points of view of the revolutionaries on foreign affairs. , which indicated a stage of maturation of the artists of this movement, who began to realize what was happening around them and to give their point of view in an artistic way for the first time to say what the government should do Egyptian regarding its foreign policy.

The essential symbol of the work is the child who turns his back to the viewer. That child is “Handala”, the revolutionary conscience in generations of artists who know how to oppose what is happening around them. One of the most outstanding generations is that of the Revolution since his objection came to overthrow one of the most dangerous and long-lasting dictatorships in the world.

In this graffiti, The artist rejected the normalization of diplomatic relations with Israel, adopted by the Egyptian government since the signing of the Camp David Accords, after 12 days of negotiations with the mediation of the president of the United States at that time, Jimmy Carter.

Finally, the Accords were signed between the Egyptian president, Mohamed Anwar al Sadat, and the Israeli prime minister, Menájem Begin, on September 17, 1978, at the Camp David (Maryland) presidential complex, on the outskirts of the US capital, Washington DC .

The artist placed Handala in a circle, as if he was thinking about the global framework, that is, international affairs. Despite the fact that Handala represents the point of view of the Palestinian people, he was sidelined at the time of negotiations between the Egyptian authorities and the Israeli state, which continues to violate the rights of the Palestinians, without regard to their interests, and despite that the cause is yours. In this graffiti, The artist gave a larger size to Handala, the boy in old and ragged clothes who goes barefoot, as always painted by his creator, Naji al-Ali .

Handala nonchalantly tosses the six-pointed star into the trash, as if drawing the viewer’s attention to the insignificant Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty. In addition, he indicates that it is not necessary to work and be in coordination with the Israelis, since the situation of the Palestinians is worsening, 40 years after the signing of the Camp David Accords .

Also, it should be noted that going for bright yellow, plus black, reminds us of warning signs of danger as if it were telling us that there is a serious problem or a restricted area. The artist wrote “No to normalization” clearly, with a type of calligraphy similar to that used in the headlines of the Arabic press as if he rejected the origin of thought and everything after it.

For all the above, we conclude that the work in question belongs to the post-Mubarak era since it deals with the issue of diplomatic relations with Israel. Various works also appeared that supported the popular movements that started later in the rest of the Arab countries. The Egyptian revolutionary artist came to turn the walls of Cairo and other provinces into works that support civil protests in Libya, Syria, and Yaman.

### Sample number 23

**The description:** Mono-color graffiti of Hosni Mubarak's face behind the bars, titled "The Execution of the Tyrant".

**The artist:** Mahmoud Suleiman.

**Location:** the wall of the Faculty of Fine Arts in Luxor.

**Photographed by:** Maya Gowaily

**The analysis:** This graffiti from Luxor, a southern governorate and the most important province of Upper Egypt document the popular and artistic movement in the area.

The Egyptian Revolution, which started on January 25 in Cairo's Tahrir Square, was not limited to a single city or region, but spread to all the cities of the country, thus raising the voices of the revolutionaries. Likewise, art became the weapon of peaceful protesters, making artistic works gain more strength and influence.

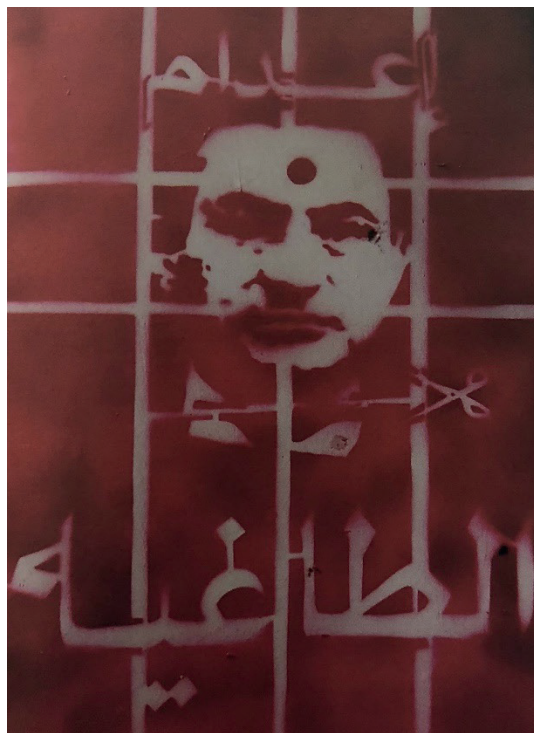
This graffiti shows the increase in the level of courage and intrepidity, which indicates that it is work after the overthrow of the regime of Hosni Mubarak, who officially resigned on February 11, 2011, under popular pressure, ceding power to the Council Supreme of the Armed Forces.

The work publicly demanded the execution of the deposed president, described as a "tyrant", as he was identified as responsible for the fall of martyrs and wounded, as well as material losses that affected the national economy, solely in order to remain in power for force, despite the popular opposition he faced.

Suleiman put a circle on the president's forehead as if he were suggesting his execution by firing squad, which is the way to end the life of the military in Egypt and in many Arab countries, whose laws do not allow hanging. As is well known, the head of the regime graduated from the Egyptian Military Academy as an officer, and from there he rose through the ranks and positions until he became president on October 14, 1981.

The artist also drew a horizontal line across the president's neck, beginning with open scissors to further emphasize that he should be assassinated, in case the small circle on his forehead isn't enough to get the point across. and the message of the work.

In the work, the president was placed behind horizontal and vertical lines, making reference to the bars of the cell. Both the dungeon and the use of the word "execution" and not "murder" indicate that they want to comply with the law literally. With this, it was demonstrated that the Revolution and its artists did not present any disorderly approach, but rather respected the law and citizen pacifism. One of the most important demands



of the revolutionaries was to apply social justice; an unattainable objective without first achieving respect for the law and reaching legal justice.

Therefore, the work did not demand that Mubarak be murdered or tortured by the people, but rather that he be executed under Egyptian law, which punishes murderers and saboteurs with the death penalty.

The works of art that demand the execution of the ex-president and his Interior Minister, Habib al-Adli, have spread after the appearance of both before the Egyptian Justice, who was tried by the Cairo Criminal Court on charges of violations of human rights and the murder of peaceful demonstrators during the January Revolution. Mubarak denied the accusation; however, on June 2, 2012, he was sentenced to life in prison. The sentence was appealed and a new trial was held. On November 29, 2014, Mubarak was cleared of all charges. .

It is true that the course of the trial and its results were disappointing for the revolutionaries; nonetheless, it was considered a great victory for the Revolution and its promoters. The trial became a landmark and one of the most important political events in the world, and the most significant in the contemporary history of Egypt and the Arab world, since, for the first time, a president is put on trial after a peaceful popular revolution. due to pressure from the people.



(Fig. 18) Graffiti from the same time called for the execution of Habib al-Adli, the regime's interior minister.

### Sample number 24

**The description:** Multi-colored graffiti, depicting hands breaking the ropes with which they are tied, plus the colors of the Egyptian flag and two puzzle pieces. The work shows the date "January 25" and the word "FREEDOM".

**The artist:** A group of students from the 3rd year of the Department of Murals of the Academy of Fine Arts in the Cairo neighborhood of Zamalek<sup>14</sup>.

**Location :** The wall of the Academy of Fine Arts, Zamalek neighborhood, Cairo.



14 Maslamani, Maliha (2013): Graffiti of the Egyptian Revolution, Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, 1st edition, Beirut, January, p. 84.

**The analysis:** Groups of students from the Department of Murals at the Academy of Fine Arts, in the Cairo neighborhood of Zamalek, covered the walls of their college with graffiti, thus showing their public support for the Revolution and the efforts of the protesters, a few days after the Husni Mubarak resigned from office.

These graffiti works are a new indication that the Revolution is already a reality that has eliminated and broken the restrictions on freedom of expression, thus allowing artists to implement large works of multicolors and designs, which take several days to complete, without fear of being arrested or punished. Likewise, it is possible to adopt this type of artistic work through official organizations such as the Academy of Fine Arts, which is a public entity, and whose students no longer hide their support and participation in the movement.

The work, in general, includes four formal axes, which, as a whole, communicate a specific idea quickly, strongly, and clearly.

In the upper part the word “FREEDOM” appears, becoming the title of the work, as well as being the main objective of the graffiti, as if it were the peak reached by the protesters, as well as being the maximum value to which the Revolution, and that it was finally obtained.

Each letter of the word “FREEDOM” appears colored with dark red and yellowish-orange, thus giving it a festive appearance. The reason for the use of capital letters is to indicate the supreme value of the term and that it is the final objective of the outbreak of the Revolution.

The second axis is the colors of the Egyptian flag, which served as the background for the work. The badge gives the impression that it is waving, thus giving the graffiti a strong visual charge, as a consequence of the contrasting colors: red, black, and white. For its part, the “golden” Eagle of Saladin, which occupies the central part, was eliminated; but its color was used in the word “FREEDOM”, which provides a meaning and a symbolic link between the gold of the bird of prey and the word as if the first carried the second towards the sky.

Then the two blue pieces of the puzzle appear, in a successful attempt to create visual tension based on contrast and contradiction with the colors of the Egyptian insignia, thus providing more tension to the work. The number two appears on the first piece of the puzzle and the number five on the second. In addition, they added the word “January” divided into two syllables: “Janu” and “ary”, referring to the date on which the event occurred.

Just as the flag informs the worldview that the event is Egyptian, the date, day, and month indicate that the event that occurred in the country of the pharaohs fit together like a puzzle, thus achieving the union and cohesion of the invisible people, in order to lead the country toward the desired freedom, through the revolution against the regime.

The last axis, which contains a lot of expressive energy for the work, is that of the bound hands that broke the ropes, which is strongly and directly correlated with the restrictions removed and, consequently, the citizen’s liberation from his captivity. This image gave the graffiti an important humanitarian touch, turning it into a message against all kinds of



limitations, like the Revolution of January 25, which did not tend towards any political or ideological thought, nor did it belong to any political, religious, or economic; but towards the Egyptian, pretending to defend him and demanding his rights.

Therefore, this work is of paramount importance on different levels. The most outstanding is declaring that the arts of the Revolution are already legitimate, thus guaranteeing the right and freedom of expression for the first time in Egypt in public and in broad daylight.

### Sample number 25

**The description:** Graffiti from a movie titled: Tahrir 2011: The good, the bad and the politician, which is made up of black and red.

**The artist:** Aya Tarek<sup>15</sup>.

**Location :** The wall of the French Lyceum, Chatby, Alexandria.

**The analysis:** Before analyzing this work, we must refer to the film represented and promoted by it, a film made during the Revolution of January 25, 2011, which had its premiere in Egyptian theaters before the end of that same year.



The exhibition of the film consists of two important points: the first is that it is considered an art of the Revolution, as well as a tool for artists to record their objections to the methods used by the political regime to repress and silence voices. Of the young. The second point is that this graffiti represents the film, adopts its message, and promotes it. For all of the above, the researcher creates a synopsis, even though the film is not part of the Thesis samples, because, in this case, it is the central theme of the graffiti, so it is necessary to know the details of it in order to understand the intellectual message of the sign.

This film brings together the projects of three filmmakers who documented the events of the Revolution in the streets with their cameras. The first is Tamer Ezzat, who was interviewing a group of ordinary people in Tahrir Square and choosing them from the ranks of protesters. The director asked them to give their opinion on what was happening around them, recording the difficult moments they were going through. The documentary shows the friendliness and good humor of the Egyptian people, despite their sorrows

15 She is a painter, street artist, and illustrator born in Alexandria, in 1989. Her portfolio is impressive since it includes multiple projects and artistic collaborations, as well as feature films, stretching from São Paulo to Fráncfort. <https://www.ayatarek.com/about-aya-tarek> [Accessed on January 31, 2023]

when it documents the fall of the martyrs. It also documents the speeches of the ousted president, Mubarak, and his opinions. This part is the documentation of The Good.

The second is The Bad, directed by Ayten Amin , , who met with a group of Egyptian police officers and tried to find out their views on the events, how much they sympathized with the victims, and their ability to understand the events. The director showed the agents and their responses impartially. It may be that the first idea we have about the film is that it will teach us the ugliness of police officers and those of the Ministry of the Interior, but whoever has seen it will be left wondering how the director could, in such a situation, walking and photographing those events, as well as managing to interview them to answer their questions.

The third part is entitled The Politician, by director Amr Salama, who revealed the secrets of politicians through about ten questions, with which he was able to clarify the reason for the demonstrations. Salama asked his questions to the most prominent: Dr. Mohamed el-Baradei, Mustafa el-Feki, and the writer Alaa al-Aswani, among others. His goal was unique: to end the 30-year era of Pharaoh Mubarak.

The title of the film was inspired by (The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly), a famous Italian-Spanish-German film released in 1966, whose plot is about three men: a bounty hunter, a hired killer, and a thief, who fight in Search for buried treasure (gold coins) from the American Civil War era. The scenes of the film are of fights, hangings, battles, and concentration camps.

The creators of the film cleverly replaced “ugly” with “political”, demonstrating, in the end, the dishonestness of the State’s plans, the consequence of which was the division of the people into two groups: of the good guys who are repressed by the bad guys, and those who do the bidding of those in power.

We return to the biography of Aya Amin, who mentioned in a television interview on Deutsche Welle (DW) that her grandfather was an artist, well-known in Alexandria, who even painted movie posters, that he had a studio and was highly respected by people .

The fact that his grandfather was a movie poster painter affected him personally and mentally. Despite being a graffiti artist, Aya chose this film that documents the events of the Revolution and condemns politics and politicians and she dedicated a work of hers to her in her hometown, Alexandria.

The drawing includes words that make the film known, whose official title is relatively long: Tahrir 2011: The good, the bad, and the politician. The work, which is made up of portraits, places President Hosni Mubarak at the top, as a leader and occupies the top of the pyramid of events. A little above the president, two figures appear. On the right, is the barrel of a rifle; and to the left, is a red banner that appears to be raised by the arms of a protester. The color of this indicates the power of the claim and the insistence on fulfilling it.

To the right of Hosni Mubarak appears a drawing that shows the ferocity of the security forces, professionally armed and raising their weapons against the people in defense of the president. On the left, a little towards the lower zone, the face of a young Egyptian appears, whose head and nose are covered, suggesting that he was seriously injured by

the security forces. Despite what has been mentioned, the victim casts a strong look at the receiver that calls for continuity and self-confidence. The proof is in the size of the face, which is prevalent at work.

In the drawing, you can see some letters, in large size and in red, of the verb “overthrow”, which is part of the slogan “The people want to overthrow the regime” chanted by protesters during the Egyptian Revolution and the Arab Spring. Likewise, the same color was used in the eyes of “the ugly” Mubarak and in those of the “bad” policeman, thus forming a carefully implemented graffiti with an expressive force that describes to the receiver which of them is the good one, the bad one. and the politician.

In the lower part, there is a small body stretched out, as if it were a corpse, and on whose head something similar to a gas tube was placed, referring to the use of tear gas by the regime to emphasize the mistreatment of the protesters. The mortal remains of the young man show that the drop in victims was real and that it was not just simple injuries among the ranks of the revolutionaries.

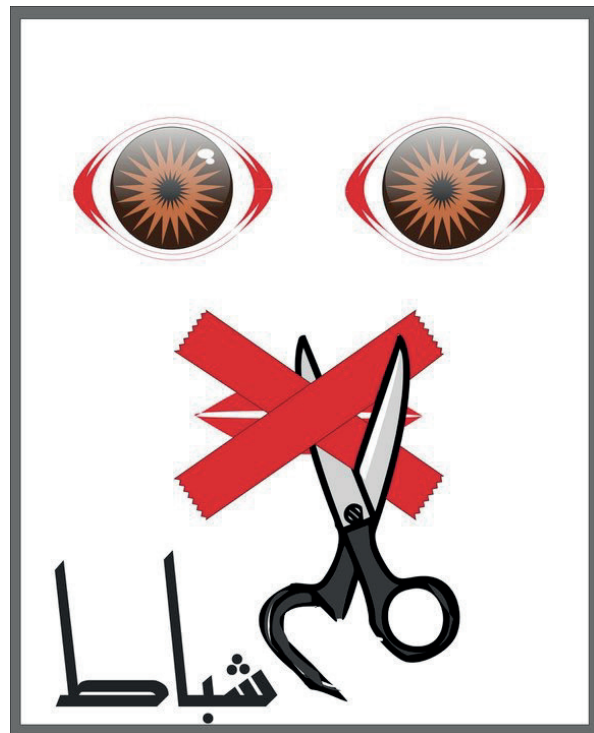
The artist used black for the background, in addition to scribbling around the work to give a sense of tension, darkness, violence, and some uneasiness to the scene that documents the cruelty witnessed by the Revolution. Both the film and the graffiti work hand in hand to convey the message very strongly and with different methods.

### Sample number 26

**The description:** A poster posted on social media in February 2011.

**The artist:** Nezar Al-Rawi (The researcher).

**The analysis:** A wave of popular protests broke out in Iraq at the beginning of February 2011 as a consequence of the events of the Arab Spring, which was closely followed by the Iraqis, as well as the dissolution and corruption that consumed almost all the structures of the Condition. The Jasmine Revolution and the January 25 Revolution that overthrew Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and Hosni Mubarak, respectively, were the trigger for the protests, led by youth and civil society activists, who demanded an end to corruption and offer job opportunities to the unemployed, especially university students.



Other demands had to do with political, economic, and social reforms. However, observers noted the absence of political parties and blocs, as well as the non-involvement of the dominant religious leaders on the Iraqi scene since the US invasion in 2003, making it clear that sectarian and ethnic conflict has nothing to do with it. with the people, but between political entities that do not represent social reality.

The Iraqi prime minister at the time, Nuri al-Maliki, warned and urged the people not to participate in the demonstrations on February 25, dubbed by protesters “The Day of Rage.” The protests, which were called by the activists, were aimed at demanding the improvement of services and ending corruption.

In a statement, al-Maliki called the protests “suspicious”, noting that supporters and sympathizers of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein are behind them. The former prime minister addressed the people on state television: “I ask you [...] not to participate in tomorrow’s demonstrations because they are suspicious and will give rise to the voices of those who destroyed Iraq, ended its sovereignty, they ruined their institutions and spread crime and corruption.” At the same time, he indicated that “this never means depriving yourself of the manifestations that express your legitimate demands”. Likewise, he added: “I warn you of their plans to turn the demonstrations and protests into murders, riots, and vandalism; in addition to spreading uncontrollable discord, explosions, and explosive belts”.

On the eve of the demonstrations, vehicles, and motorcycles were banned from Baghdad and Iraqi security forces carried out those orders. At the same time, several journalists who had participated, a week before “The Day of Rage”, in a sit-in in Firdus Square were arrested. .

Many activists affirmed that they received threats from Anonymous groups in order to cancel the sit-in and not participate in the demonstrations on February 25, which is why the poster was designed by The artist and published on his personal Facebook profile, días antes de las protestas, y de allí se dio a conocer rápidamente entre los activistas.

The designer was based on a style that tends more towards simplicity, by choosing few elements with clear connotations. The work represents a face, with dilated eyes and a mouth covered with an elastic band. Likewise, some scissors appear that are about to cut the tape in order to free the mouth.

At first, we see that all the elements are on a light white background, surrounded by a gray box, in order to take advantage of the clarity of the first since the work was designed for screens, which makes white gain as much value as possible. luminosity, leading to great tension between the background and the elements that look clearer and sharper.

In all that space, the dilated eyes stand out. The designer was inspired by the eyes of the doll that appears in the Dead Silence movie poster . The eyes were covered in red, giving them an image of tiredness and fatigue, as well as speaking directly to the receiver saying that they are afraid or waiting for something serious to happen.

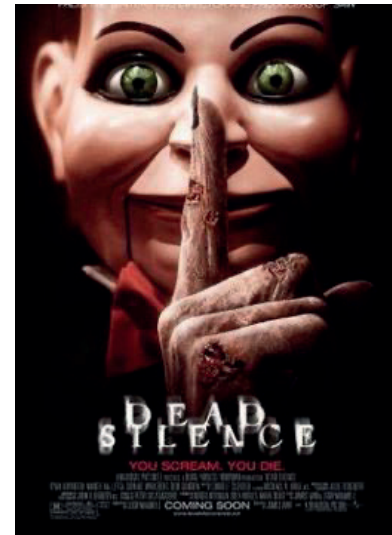
The tape that covers the mouth refers to the muzzling of voices, a practice carried out by the authorities and institutions, by prohibiting mobile television units from accessing the demonstration squares, confiscating cameras, and arresting journalists.



The objective of the poster was to convey the atmosphere of silence and tension. Likewise, he puts the scissors on the tape to achieve what he longs for: freedom of expression, which is considered the most outstanding right confiscated by al-Maliki.

The red ribbon is wide to emphasize the severity of the prohibition, but the scissors, in black and white, were stronger in reference to the great will of the people to achieve their demands.

Rawi took advantage of the number 25 written in Hindu numbers, used in the Arab world since 5 has the shape of a circle “٥”, and 2 that looks like an arc or an “L” written backward “٢”, and whose final form is a pair of scissors, which will free the mouth of the people and grant them freedom, on February 25 “٢٥”, called “The Day of Anger”. The name of the month in question appears in the lower left part.



(Fig. 19) Dead Silence Movie Poster 2007

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