

# Essay

## *The "New Jihadists" and the Visual Turn from al-Qa'ida to ISIL / ISIS / Da'ish*

Attila Kovács<sup>1</sup>

“(...) the fear of the image, the anxiety that the ‘power of images’ may finally destroy even they creators and manipulators is as old as image-making itself.”<sup>2</sup>

### ABSTRACT

*Visual representation has always belonged among the sensitive, in certain periods even highly problematic issues of the Islamic tradition. This was especially true for various forms of depicting living creatures, or “creatures possessing a soul,” which in the Islamic view show human and animal beings.<sup>3</sup> When taking this basic Muslim viewpoint into account, one could assume that the movements and thinkers of radical Islam, which emerged during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, further stressed the fundamentals mentioned above, the same as in many other issues, and would pursue forbidding and refusing images as such for their movements and followers. However, the situation is much less unequivocal. Despite the theoretical prohibition, or, more accurately, the strict control, one often finds themselves facing an extensive visual culture while examining the various radical and reformist Islamic movements. The aim of this work is to briefly introduce the factors behind these ostensible contradictions, i.e. to schematically characterize the viewpoints of leaders and thinkers of various Sunni<sup>4</sup> Islamic radical and reformist movements concerning visuality.*

Keywords: visual representation in Islam, ISI/ISIS/Da'ish, terrorism

*Islam and the Images*

There is no direct reference concerning visual depiction or its prohibition in the Qur'an. When discussing the issue, the verses concerning the prohibition of idolatry are the most frequently cited (see mainly 7:148 and 21:51-54, as well as 7:191-198; 16:20-22; 25:3-4; 35:40; 53:23). This is where the explicit prohibition of depicting human and animal figures hails from, since they correspond the most with the forms of the idols. Various expressions are used to describe them in the Qur'an: *awthan* (sing. *wathan*) (22:30; 29: 17, 25) "idol", "depiction of God", especially made of metal; *tamathil* (sing. *timthal*) (21:52; 34:13) "picture", "pictorial representation", "statue", *ansab* (5:90) or *nusub* (5:3; 70:43) especially with the meaning of "sacrificial stone"<sup>5</sup>. The word *sura* (plur. *suwar*), used in modern standard Arabic for "picture" is mentioned in the Quran several times (3:6; 7:11; 40:64; 64:3), but always in connection with Allah as God – Creator and as a meaning of stressing of "forming" or "shaping" as a privilege of God. "He is Allah, the Creator [*al-Khaliq*], the Shaper [*al-Baqi*], the Fashioner [*al-Musawwir*] (...)" (59:24) In summary, the Qur'an gives an exact and at the same time banning viewpoint concerning visual representation only in relation to idolatry and / or its potential dangers. The opinions offered by Sunna, the prophetic tradition, are much more unequivocal. Numerous references concerning images can be found in the classical *hadith* collections.<sup>6</sup>ey can be roughly categorized in the following way:

(1) The first category includes the hadiths which consider images "unclean" and preventing human obligation (*ibadat*) towards God, for instance the practice of prayer (*salat*). This group is well characterized by the prophetic tradition, which claims that "Angels will not enter a house in which there is a dog or there are pictures"<sup>7</sup>.

(2) The next category of *hadiths* commenting on the prohibition of images could be characterized by concern over creating images and statues, since this activity itself violates Allah's exclusive right of creation and forming. This group is well characterized by this statement, attributed to Muhammad: "Those who make these pictures will be punished on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be said to them. "Make alive what you have created. But they will be unable to do so."<sup>8</sup>

(3) The following group includes traditions, which allow the portrayal of non-human and non-animal creatures. This field is not free of troubles either, since not all the standpoints concerning plants are unequivocal.

(4) The fourth and last group of hadiths is created by the exceptions of the categories mentioned above. We mean the prophetic tradition concerning the “most favorite” wife of Muhammad, ‘A’isha. It is well-known, that ‘A’isha became the Prophet's wife at a very young age and therefore Muhammad made an exception and allowed her to perform her daily prayers accompanied by her dolls – anthropomorphic visual representations!<sup>9</sup>

As the examples and categories presented above illustrate, Sunna has a firm and, compared to the Qur’an, a very definite view concerning visual representations. Naturally, this theoretical viewpoint changed numerous times in various historical periods and at various geographical settings. It covered or tolerated various practices and ranged from firm prohibition until permissive, even supportive standpoints. However, this short work does not allow detailed elaboration of the issue, therefore attention will be paid to Sunni reform or radical movements in the following part.

### *Islamists and the Images*

The re-definition of visual representation belongs among the numerous challenges, which the nearly two-hundred-year-old reformist Islamist movements need to face in modern times. There are two fundamentally disparate standpoints concerning visual representation (*taswir*):

(1) The first was formulated by Wahhabism, a movement leaning on a neo-Hanbali tradition led by Muhammad ‘Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1792). The early definition of this standpoint opts for a complete refusal and visual representations are, among many other things (for instance the veneration of saints, coffee, smoking etc.) listed among the impermissible innovations (*bid’a*) or things to be destroyed. This standpoint is kept by most modern Saudi religious scholars and various radical groups following the neo-Hanbali or neo-Wahhabi traditions.

(2) The second standpoint, which differs significantly, relies on the teachings of the representatives of the Egyptian Nahda, especially those of Muhammad ‘Abduh (1849-1905) and Muhammad Rashid Rida (1865-1935). This standpoint retains a certain allowing position while keeping in mind the prohibition of idolatry.

This line is followed by The Muslim Brotherhood (*Jama’at al-ikhwan al-muslimin*) and the thinkers and movements connected to it, both in theory and practice. The fairly rich visual culture of e. g. the Palestinian Hamas movement relies on this standpoint as well. In the next part of this paper we shall further examine the development and relationship between these two interpretations.

We may begin with the neo-Wahhabi tradition and the practice of individual Neo-Salafi, Jihadi and Takfiri groupings. The interpretation of Islamic doctrine formulated by Muhammad ‘Abd al-Wahhab has changed significantly in the past centuries, but despite this, the thought and practice which creates the essential character of Saudi Islam is based upon his teachings. One of the defining official representative organs of this standpoint is the Permanent Committee for Islamic Research and Issuing Fatwas (*al-Lajna ad-da’ima li ’l-buhuth al-’ilmiya wa ’l-ifta*). For a long time, the leader of the Committee was ‘Abd al-‘Aziz b. ‘Abdullah bin Baaz (1909–1999). Its members included Shaykh Salih al-Fawzan (1933- ), Shaykh Muhammad b. Salih al-Uthaymin (1925–2001) and the present leader of the Committee, Muhammad b. Hadi al-Madkhali (1931- ). These key figures of neo-Wahhabi thought have paid a lot of attention to the issue of visual presentations.<sup>10</sup> Their fatwas, despite representing the “hard line”, do not refuse the use of images in all cases. It is tolerated as necessary (*daruri*) in cases such as ID photos, pictures in newspapers “mediating information” or portraits on banknotes, but they may never be self-serving.<sup>11</sup>

This standpoint was followed on the brink of 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century by radical Jihadi groups, (like al-Qa’ida for instance) that rely on many aspects of the neo-Wahhabi tradition. However, there is a field, where the thought and practice change completely, namely the audiovisual depiction. The video-messages of Osama bin Laden (1957–2011), Ayman az-Zawahiri (1951- ), Abu Mus’ab az-Zarqawi (1966–2006) are well-known. How is this possible despite all the strict refusal

and banning? The answer is less complicated than one may expect: the judgment of modern telecommunication devices and technologies in the neo-Wahhabi tradition is very pragmatic, since they may be viewed as excellent and highly effective tools of the mission (*da'wa*) and therefore serve the common interest of the Muslim community. As for the human depictions occurring in such cases, they are not viewed as images but only as “shadows” of human or other beings. This standpoint created space not only for the videos carrying ideological messages mentioned above, but also for other film material directly ordered by the Saudi government, such as cartoons presenting the life of Prophet Muhammad or religious TV channels, e. g. *al-'Iqra*. In a slightly paradox way, these visual forums often feature the vehement opposers of visual representations as well. However, in the past centuries several jihadist movements have turned away from this Wahhabi tradition marked by the policy of al-Qaeda and, even though with applying several restrictions, assigned visuality a much more important place in its propaganda. The most typical example could be the so called Islamic state in Iraq and the Levant (*Da'ish* / ISIL / ISIS) which created its own visual world, hand in hand with the “classic” video messages and fighter videos<sup>1213</sup>.

Besides the strict stances mentioned above, there exists a different and much more allowing tradition, which led to the creation of several new reformist-radical movements, which have a rich and fairly diverse visual culture. This contemporary moderate Islamist interpretation of pictorial tools can be traced back to the leading personality of the Egyptian *Nahda* movement – Muhammad ‘Abduh. He is the main thinker who established this allowing, even approving tradition. He devoted a separate text to the issue, titled “Paintings and sculptures: their usefulness and ruling” (*as-Suwar wa 't-Tamathil wa Fawa'iduha wa Hukmuha*)<sup>14</sup>. ‘Abduh of course kept in mind the dangers of idolatry hiding behind visual culture, but he kept a stance allowing the use of images, which they called “a form of poetry that one sees instead of hearing”<sup>15</sup>.

The second important representative of the *Nahda*, Muhammad Rashid Rida is not so enthusiastic about visuality. In a writing published in *al-Manar*, the main text of the *Nahda* movement, he systematically names the fields in which he considers visual

representations to be allowed. They are the following: (1) “beings possessing a soul” in books, in case their verbal characteristics is not possible or sufficient; (2) in works concerning natural sciences, especially anatomy; (3) in works concerning military technology (first of all in the case of weapons and topography); (4) in works concerning security policy and spying<sup>16</sup>. In his work titled “The Caliphate or the Great Imamate” Rida sharply commented against the, in his consideration Ottoman, practice of the public depiction of high-ranking statesmen<sup>17</sup>. This seemingly strict standpoint in many ways approaches those of various radical jihadist groupings, which, not accidentally, often refer to Rashid Rida not only in the issue of visual representation.

However, the viewpoints of ‘Abduh have found their followers as well. Among them are found personalities of no smaller significance than Hasan al-Banna’ (1906–1949), the founder and first leader of the Muslim Brotherhood. In his pamphlet titled “Our Mission” (*Da’watuna*), Banna’ even calls visual propaganda praiseworthy<sup>18</sup>. The later ideologist of Egyptian Islamists Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966) was sharing the same position. The Brotherhood retains this standpoint in later periods as well, not only in Egypt, but also in the organization's branches abroad (e. g. in Syria, Jordan, Palestine etc.) and movements inspired by them, for instance the aforementioned Palestinian Hamas movement.

This is the basis of the standpoints of Shaykh Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradhawi (1926–), which are best described in his well-known book “The Lawful and Prohibited in Islam” (*Halal wa haram fi ’l-Islam*)<sup>19</sup>. Qaradhawi is one of the most determining a most controversial representatives of modern radical Islam. Being of Egyptian origin, he began his activities in the Muslim Brotherhood, but then he was forced to exile. He lives in Qatar, where he regularly explains his viewpoints on issues of all kinds. The most significant discussion among the above-mentioned radical standpoints are connected to Qaradhawi. Several renowned Saudi scholars, including Muhammad Nasr ad-Din al-Albani (1914–1999) and Salih al-Fawzan, have sharply criticized Qaradhawi's allowing views concerning images. Salih al-Fawzan dedicated to this issue an entire book, “The rules of Islam on Visualization” (*Hukm al-Islam fi ’l-taswir*). However, despite all

criticism, Qaradhawi cannot be accused of extensive permissiveness. In fact, he applies the standard Islamic tradition to the challenges of the modern era. His standpoints are moderate, yet still characteristic of certain “puritanism”. A proper example is his view on the use of images, e. g. portraits of family members, in Muslim households. This is permissible according Qaradhawi, however, should not be overdone and rational thinking should be kept in mind<sup>20</sup>. Despite this standpoint Qaradawi, similarly to Rashid Rida, refuses the public display of historical figures or “heroes”<sup>21 22</sup>. Qaradhawi, together with numerous religious scholars holding moderate views on visual depictions, refuses three-dimensional representations that is statues of all kinds<sup>23</sup>.

However, beside scholars who permit the use of visual representation while obeying certain rules, such as Qaradawi, there are ones who pronouncedly support it. One of the most important of them is without doubt Hasan at-Turabi (1932–) from Sudan. In his article “The Dialogue of Religion and Art” (*Hiwar ad-din wa 'l-fann*)<sup>24</sup>. Turabi presents the view, that images, photographs, even sculptures (!) are allowed, as long as they depict the persons appropriately (respectfully, fully dressed etc.). Furthermore, visual culture – together with poetry and theater – should according to at-Turabi become the most suitable tools of Islam's fight against the “Western cultural invasion”<sup>25</sup>.

Even though not in at-Turabi's decorative way, numerous radical Islamic organizations view visual representation as the first and most important carrier of their political, religious and ideological messages. Visuality is complete, does not struggle with language or other similar problems, has a direct effect on emotions and is probably the most straightforward method of communication and therefore it became the basic propaganda tool of several radical Islamic movements. They opted for the largely pragmatic and indoctrinative use of images and imagery, which in many cases lead to the creation of a new, rich and widespread, visual culture of radical Islamic movements, which might be “foreign”<sup>26</sup> in its formal elements, but its content is undoubtedly Islamic. This new world of images became an important and inseparable part of these movements' way of expression and the researchers examining these movements are required to

involve the new visual culture in their analyses beside the traditional reading and interpretation of texts.

*Jihadist visual Images from the al-Qa'ida to ISIL*

In a revealing letter to former al-Qa'ida in Iraq leader Abu Mus'ab az-Zarqawi, Ayman az-Zawahiri provided his reason why a media campaign is part of his group's list of strategic priorities. Az-Zawahiri explained, "More than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media"<sup>27</sup> and this media was from the birth of the Jihadist ideology at least partly a visual one. If we looking to the typology of Jihadist visual representation there we can find following categories: a.) „iconic images”, b.) audiovisual materials, c.) photography, d.) journals, pamphlets, bulletins, e.) posters, billboards, murals, graffiti f.) computer graphics. I will illustrate the different in the use of visual representation by the al-Qa'ida and ISIL following those categories.

In the use of basic „iconic images” is the *ar-Raya* „black flag“ or the „eagle flag“ with the inscription of the Islamic creed (*Shahada*), a historic Islamic flag, used by the most of Salafist or Jihadist movements (see picture 1).



Picture 1.

Both al-Qa'ida and ISIL use this basic visual symbol, but in the case of the black flag of the so called Islamic State (see picture 2 and 3) the simple inscription of the first part of the *Shahada* (“there is no god but God”) is combined with „the seal of the Prophet” (see picture 4) containing the second part of it (“Muhammad is His messenger”).



Picture 2.



Picture 3.

Those symbols are used in many variations and forms by many Jihadi, Salafi and Takfiri movements from the Caucasus to Somalia.

From the Jihadists visual representation the videotapes of the Jihadist leaders are most well-known. The first Jihadist media organization was created during the final days of the Afghan war by ‘Abdullah ‘Azzam (1941-1989) (see picture 5) a Palestinian-Jordanian Islamist, leader of the „Arab-Afghans”, the first mentor of Usama bin Laden.



Picture 4.



Picture 5.

This media organization called as-Sahab (“The Cloud”, see picture 6) produced the famous video-tapes of Usama bin Laden (see picture 7) and Ayman az-Zawahiri (see picture 8).



Picture 6.



Picture 7.



Picture 8.

But the audiovisual footages (DVD, VHS, TV, etc.) of the speeches and communiqué of al-Qa'ida leaders are made with only basic visual skills, a static camera and fully focused on the text missing the full potential of visual propaganda. The videotape of al-Qa'ida in Iraq, a predecessor of ISIL, and his leader Abu Mus'ab az-Zarqawi are more dynamic, but still copies the classical al-Qa'ida / as-Sahab visual style (see picture 9).



Picture 9.

Zarqawi, who made many important ideological shifts in the doctrine of the Jihadists also made some steps forward in the use of visual representation. Both Azzam and Zarqawi are of Palestinian descent and came from an Islamist environment very different from the “classical” Jihadi-Salafi ideological position, especially on visual representation.

On the other hand the audiovisual materials and videotapes published by the major media organizations of ISIL as the al-Hayat Media Center (see picture 10) or al-Furqan Foundation (see picture 11) are made in a completely different way with a well-trained media professionals with excellent visual skills.<sup>28</sup>



Picture 10.



Picture 11.

For example the famous video of the ISIL leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi or „Caliph Ibrahim” performing Friday preaching (*khutba*) in Mosul (Iraq) on the 9<sup>th</sup> of Ramadan 1435 / July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014 is working with many cameras moving dynamically around the leader of ISIL showing him and his audience (see pictures 12 and 13).



Picture 12.



Picture 13.

ISIL as well as other Islamists are always emphasizing how strictly are they following the footsteps of Prophet Muhammad and the “only authentic” Muslim tradition, but in many cases they are much more influenced by contemporary western populist political ideas, media technics and other manners of religious fundamentalism. In the visual representation of ISIL we can identify many influences of the western popular visual culture. A good example of this influence is the preaching video of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. On this videotape the leader of ISIL is posing and dressing like the famous Muslim ruler

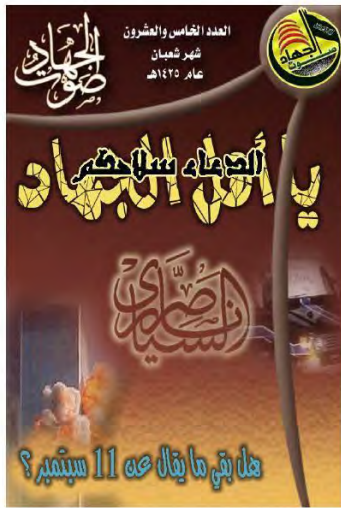
sultan Salah ad-Din in the Hollywood movie *The Kingdom of Heaven* (Ridley Scott, 2005) played by the Syrian actor Ghassan Mas'ud.

The Jihadist – booth “old” and “new” – are massively using the photography. A wide distribution of photographs showing fighters posing with weapons was always an important cornerstone of the Jihadist visual representation (see picture 14).



Picture 14.

A central role in the Jihadist propoganda plays the pamphlets, magazines and other publications.



Picture 15.



Picture 16.

From the production of the al-Qa'ida the most representative are the *Sawt al-jihad* ("The Voice of Jihad", see pictures 15 and 16) magazine or the military magazine of the movement named *Mu'askar al-Battar* ("al-Battar military camp", see pictures 17 and 18). Both publications are using some visual images, but never cross the line with the figural representation of humans or animals, or if they stay on the ideological position of Muhammad Rashid Rida (see there).



Picture 17



Picture 18

The ISIL Arabic language publications as the *al-Gharba'* or the *an-Naba'* magazines are in some way similar to this visual style, but on the cover we can see some figural visual representations of fighters (see picture 19 and 20).

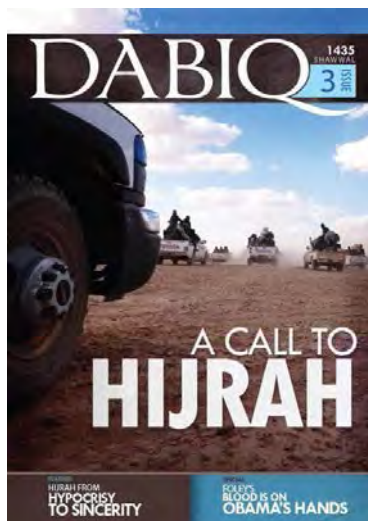


Picture 19



Picture 20

On the other hand the English languages periodicals of ISIL as the *Dabiq Magazine*<sup>29</sup> or the *IS Report* and *IS News* are on the cover and inside as well full of figurative representations of humans (see pictures 21 and 22).



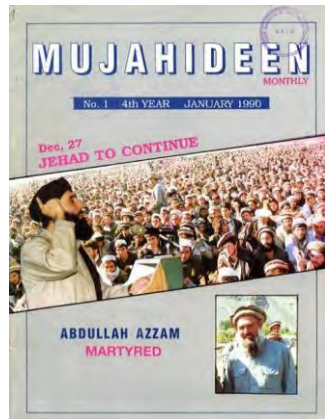
Picture 21



Picture 22

There is a significant difference in the use of the images in the ISIL publications addressed to Arabic and English speaking audience. This kind of differentiation was not new to the Jihadist press. The Afghan Mujahids English languages periodical the *Mujahideen Monthly* was using many visual images in the late 1980s and early 1990s (see picture 23). A most recent example is the English language

magazine of the al-Qa'ida in Arabic Peninsula distributed mainly in the USA and Western Europe the *Inspire Magazine* (see picture 24).



Picture 23



Picture 24

The posters, graffiti, murals and billboards were and are very intensively used during the so called Arab spring. We can see the great importance of those public images in the political struggle across the region, especially in Egypt<sup>30</sup>, but also in Libya, Syria, Iraq and elsewhere. In the case of ISIL the most significant act of this kind of visual dominance the public space is the massive covering of ar-Raqqa with the billboards of propaganda (see picture 25) using figurative images after the conquest of the city.



Picture 25.

The newest, but the most advancing kind of the visual representation produced and used by the Islamist world-wide and across ideological differences is the computer graphics. The “classical” al-Qa’ida propaganda didn’t use digital images, but the Zarqawi lead al-Qa’ida in Iraq started to use computer graphics in the years 2004-2005. Some of those digital posters showing the leader Abu Mus’ab az-Zarqawi as “the lover of Jihad” (see picture 26) or reflecting the shift in the ideological position of the movement as for example the radicalization of the Shi’i-Sunni conflict (see picture 27).



Picture 26.



Picture 27.

The computer based digital images are used by ISIL websites and social media in an advanced way. Those images are showing predominantly the fighters of the movement (see pictures 28-33). The digital posters are mostly signed by the authors so we can identify from 8 to 10 different “artists”, which is not a significant number yet, but this segment of propaganda can play a major role in the future as we have seen in the case of other Islamist movements.



Picture 28.



Picture 29



Picture 30



Picture 31



Picture 32



Picture 33

### Conclusions

In the case of using pragmatic approaches in the use of images as highly effective means of propaganda of the movements' ideology and thoughts, a basic fact applies: images as an ideal carrier of a direct and often emotional message perfectly fit the needs and goals of these movements, since they want to address their potential audience directly, without language or other barriers (literacy and understanding of written texts), with the aim of creating mainly an emotional reaction. In this sense, images are much closer to live speeches – a favorite verbal tool of these movements' propaganda – than written texts (pamphlets or books). One should not forget, that

the understanding of a written text is, compared to verbal expression or images, a much more difficult and complex task. Images, unlike books, allow an effective distribution of highly simplified ideological messages. As a plus, the ideology of radical Islamic movements is rarely significantly sophisticated. However, even if the situation was different, images can still serve the function of the first and primary level of propaganda, ideological indoctrination or struggle.

The third prerequisite of the creation and development of visual culture of radical Islamist movements is the technological factor associated with the commercialization of imagery. As mentioned several times above, images were before the era of modern technologies of reproduction (e. g. press, photography, television, computers, digitization etc.) a luxurious and relatively hardly accessible product. That means, that no matter how effective they were as carriers of any messages, they were useless due to their low accessibility. This changed rapidly in the twentieth century, especially in its last decade, when the spread of computers and digitization became a true catalyst of the world's global visualization. Computers and the Internet provided opportunities not only for simple reproducing, but they became unprecedentedly effective tools of distribution of these images.

Due to these factors we witness a massive “visual turn” of certain radical Islamist movements at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These movements have not only created their own images and other visual representations with the aim of spreading their ideological message and propaganda, but they connected them to an integrated visual culture. A certain “emancipation” of images in relation to texts is occurring, while the classical Islamic tradition has been based on texts and their interpretation, some radical Islamic movements have begun a wide use of visual representations as well. This practice of using images (too) led to a great extent to what might be called a “pictorial turn” using the words of T. J. W. Mitchell<sup>31</sup>. Despite the fact that Mitchell elaborated his theses in the Western context, several aspects of his iconology, which he applied mainly on Christianity, can be, with certain modifications, applied on Islam or Judaism. However, in the case of radical Islamic movements, one may not say that images could fully substitute texts, due to the very recent

shift from texts to images. The issue is more about the interconnection of texts and images in which both components have equal positions. As seen on the examples analyzed in this work, the text is often an integral part of the image and the same applies vice versa. However, this “equal position” means a significant shift and the process of a “pictorial turn” in the case of these radical Islamic movements is with no doubt one of the most dynamic and fascinating changes that we witness in the current Islamic world<sup>32</sup>. The Palestinian Islamist movements as the Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad already created an “empire of images” and to compare to them the new Jihadist as the ISIL are only on the beginning of that process, but as we know in the last two years humans created more visual images than for the rest of all human history. The Islamist are not an exception and researchers focusing on present changes on the Middle East should definitely not underestimate them.

### *Bibliography*

---

<sup>1</sup> Department of Comparative Religion, Comenius University in Bratislava.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas W.J. Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essay of Verbal and Visual Representation*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1994, 15.

<sup>3</sup> See: Eva Baer, *The Human Figure in Islamic Art: Inheritances and Islamic Transformations*, Costa Mesa, Mazda Publishers, 2004. and Jamal J. Elias, *Aisha's Cushion: Religious Art, Representation and Practice in Islam*, Cambridge – London, Harvard University Press, 2012. 20-44. and Silvia Naef *Bilder und Bilderverbot im Islam. Von Koran bis zum Karikaturenstreit*, München, C.H. Beck, 2007. 12-22.

<sup>4</sup> Due to significantly different standpoints and practice of Shia Islam, this work only deals with the Sunni interpretation and practice.

<sup>5</sup> For more information see Gerald R. Hawting, “Idols and Images”, In: *Encyclopaedia of the Qur’an*, Leiden – Boston, E.J. Brill, Vol. 2, 2002. 481-483, Naef 2007: 12 and Younus Mirza, “Abraham as an Iconoclast: Understanding the Destruction of ‘Images’ through Qur’anic Exegesis”, *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, Vol. 16 No. 4, 2005. 413-428.

<sup>6</sup> *Sahih Bukhari* 1: 8: 419, 426; 2: 23: 425; 3: 34: 318, 428, 440, 659; 4: 54: 447, 449; 4: 55: 570, 571; 5: 58: 213; 5:59: 585; 7: 62: 110; 7: 63: 259; 7: 72: 833-844; 8: 73: 130, 151; 9: 93: 646-647; *Sahih Muslim* 24: 5252, 5246, 5249, 5253, 5258, 5262, 5264-576; *Sunnan Abu Dawud* 27: 4143-4146; *Muwatta Malik* 54: 6-8.

<sup>7</sup> *Sahih Bukhari* 7: 72: 833 and elsewhere.

<sup>8</sup> *Sahih Bukhari* 7: 72: 835 and elsewhere.

<sup>9</sup> *Sahih Bukhari* 8: 73: 151 and elsewhere. Among others, this precedent enabled the creation of the „Muslim Barbie doll”, distributed under the name *Fulla*.

<sup>10</sup> See: <http://www.marabic.com/creed/pictures/index.htm>

<sup>11</sup> Shaykh Abdul-Aziz bin Baaz: „The Islamic Ruling Concerning Tasweer”: <http://forums.islamicawakening.com/f16/what-correct-ruling-tasweer-2535/>

<sup>12</sup> Carol K. Winkler & Cori E. Dauber (eds.) *Visual Propaganda and Extremism in the Online Environment*, Washington, Strategic Studies Institute - U.S. Army War College Press. 2014.

<sup>13</sup> As an example: <http://alplatformmedia.com/vb/index.php>

<sup>14</sup> Muhammad ‘Abduh „as-Suwar wa ‘t-tamathil wa fawa‘iduha wa hukmuha”, In: ‘ABDUH, Muhammad, *al-A‘mal al-kamila*, Bajrut, al-Mu‘assasa ‘l-‘arabiyya li ‘d-dirasa wa ‘n-nashr, Vol. 2. 1972. 171-208.

<sup>15</sup> ‘Abduh (1972): 206.

<sup>16</sup> Naef (2007):114.

- 
- <sup>17</sup> Mahmoud Haddad, „Arab Religious Nationalism in the Colonial Era: Rereading Rashīd Ridā’s Ideas on the Caliphate“, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 117 No. 2, 1997. 253-277.
- <sup>18</sup> Hasan al-Banna’ „Our Mission“, In: AL-BANNĀ’, Hasan, *Five Tracts of Hasan Al-Bannā’ (1906-1949). A Selection from the Majmū’at Rasā’il al-Imām al-Shahīd Hasan al-Bannā’*, IIFSO. 2006. 60-62.
- <sup>19</sup> Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi (n.d.) *The Lawful and Prohibited in Islam*. 48-56.
- <sup>20</sup> Al-Qaradawi (n.d.): 53.
- <sup>21</sup> Al-Qaradawi (n.d.): 54.
- <sup>22</sup> This is probably closely connected to the cult of Gamal ‘Abd an-Nasir and his followers in the post of the Egyptian president, who harshly stepped up against the Muslim Brotherhood several times.
- <sup>23</sup> Al-Qaradawi (n.d.): 102.
- <sup>24</sup> Hasan at-Turabi, “Hiwar ad-din wa ’l-fann“, *al-Ghadir*, Vol. 2. 1991. 229-244.
- <sup>25</sup> At-Turabi (1991): 243.
- <sup>26</sup> E. g. rooted in leftist, nationalist political or popular visual culture.
- <sup>27</sup> Quoted in “Internet Jihad: A World Wide Web of Terror,” *The Economist* (July 14, 2007) 29.
- <sup>28</sup> Loretta Napoleoni *The Islamist Phoenix: The Islamic State and The Redrawing of the Middle East*, New York – Oakland, Seven Stories Press. 2014. 16-20.
- <sup>29</sup> All issues of *Dabiq* are accessible on: <http://www.clarionproject.org/news/islamic-state-isis-isil-propaganda-magazine-dabiq#>
- <sup>30</sup> Basma Hamdy & Don Karl (eds.) *Walls of Freedom: Street Art of the Egyptian Revolution*, New York, From Here to Fame. 2014.
- <sup>31</sup> Mitchell (1994): 11.
- <sup>32</sup> Christiane Gruber & J. Sune Haugbolle (eds.), *Visual Culture in the Modern Middle East: Rhetoric of the Image*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2013; Lina Khatib, *Image Politics in the Middle East: The Role of the Visual in Political Struggle*, London – New York, I.B. Tauris, 2013.

\*\*\*

CORVINUS KÜLÜGYI ÉS KULTURÁLIS EGYESÜLET

[biztpol.corvinusembassy.com](http://biztpol.corvinusembassy.com)