

American University of Beirut | **AUB**

QAEM

Revolutionary Poster Series

Fatema Taher

BFA in Graphic Design

ArD | Department of Architecture & Design

FEA | Maroun Semaan Faculty of Engineering & Architecture

Beirut | May 15, 2020

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

UNDERGRADUATE SENIOR PROJECT
IN
GRAPHIC DESIGN

SUBMITTAL FORM

QAEM: REVOLUTIONARY POSTER SERIES

by
FATEMA TAHER

FINAL YEAR THESIS & PROJECT

407 GD 2020

ADVISOR: **LEILA MUSFY**

Approved by Thesis Advisor:

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light yellow background. The signature is stylized and appears to read 'L. Musfy'.

Leila Musfy | Professor
Department of Architecture and Design

Date of Thesis final presentation: MAY 15, 2020

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT
THESIS, DISSERTATION, PROJECT RELEASE FORM

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Last First Middle

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to Leila..

00ABSTRACT.

QAEM /or “**The Uprising**”/ is a poster series addressing the rise of righteousness against falsehood, the uprisal of the deprived and the oppressed. The messages are conveyed through a predominantly typographic treatment of quotes by key revolutionary figures and religious texts (Arabic main visual + translation at bottom). The series begins with why one should uprising and ends with the eventual triumph of righteousness, covering in between all the different aspects and morals of an uprisal. The posters aim to remind one of the necessity to reject oppression and identify it as an issue that concerns everyone apart from their affiliations and the location where oppression is taking form.

DELIVERABLES:

- * A series of **10+** posters widespread across the streets of Beirut as part of a traveling exhibition (throughout the Arab countries and later in Europe).
- * Each poster has a **QR** code that - once scanned - directs you to a **website** where you'll be able to further read about the poster + have the choice of opening/participating in a debate. (+ **audio mashup** for one of the posters).
- * The posters vary in size (**07** A1/**03** A0) and material (**09** paper/**01** fabric).

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01 OVERVIEW.

IDEAS EXPLORED:

- 1. Condemnation of injustice:**
As a 1st step, I address the audience with a conscientious question, intriguing them to think and ask themselves about this concept and where they stand from it or what role should they be concerned in playing.
- 2. A unified uprisal shall dismantle imperialism:**
Here I attempt to sow enthusiasm in one's soul in order to awaken the revolutionary in each of us through a spread of a spirit of unity, along with a hint/reference to the enemy.
- 3. Why uprise, for the oppressed, against the oppressor:**
Now, I further stress on the 1st point while reinforcing the motive and the cause for which we must rise.
- 4. Uprising requires unity and inclusivity:**
After understanding why and against what/whom one must uprise, I here clarify that uprising concerns everyone and transcends race/religion..
- 5. It may require sacrifice:**
The battle may require blood/tear-shedding, loss prior to gain. And one should be willing to go till the end for the cause.
- 6. If there is will, there is way:**
The common quote says "the eye cannot resist the awl". However, not only is number not a factor but so is the enemy's power, for power comes from the within not from equipment. That is especially proven to be true by the Palestinian's improvised weapons ("Carlo" homemade gun, Slingshot..) or the more widely known Molotov Cocktail.
- 7. Imperialism is the root of all tyranny:**
Reminding of the enemy whom we all share in common no matter the divisions.
- 8. To follow the precedents:**
Reminding/introducing to the audience names of revolutionaries who uprose against oppression. This should encourage us to look up to these people and follow their paths.
- 9. The revolutionary chants:**
This is to reinforce the enthusiastic spirit through revolutionary chants that have played a big role in giving birth to and keeping alive many revolutions throughout history.
- 10. Promised salvation:**
The series ends with assuring one that the right will eventually triumph. Therefore ending an all-connected chronological flow of posters that come together as parts of a whole, creating a complete picture of the concept of uprising.

02 PROCESS.

WHY:

Man is **principles**.

Therefore, every case of injustice should concern and affect each one of us personally. One mustn't hold their peace but instead speak out against the oppressor for the littlest of things counts significant. And I, as a concerned individual, find it a duty of mine to raise awareness to why liberation movements should rise and to why we should be standing among them.

The more common political/revolutionary poster is often pictorial, counting on the image's impact to deliver its message. We're also used to them being specific to a single agenda, rarely concerned with the public's interest, never concerning all. I'm challenging this by attempting to produce revolutionary posters that speak to and concern everyone, counting on type as my (almost) only tool.

- Provocative quotes that express themselves and demand confrontation.
- No redundancy, makes one think, no generic quotes.
- Tackles different aspects of the revolution while questioning what a revolution is or how it should be.
- Doesn't have an aggressive/straight forward call to action (such as that in Uncle Sam's example), but may achieve the same goal more smoothly.
- **Shows people why and how they should rise instead of just asking them to do it.**

03 POSTERS.

01. “Don’t you see that the truth isn’t being practiced and falsehood isn’t being renounced?”
«ألا ترون إلى الحق لا يُعمل به وإلى الباطل لا يُتناهى عنه»

inspired by: Karbala [Imam Hussein]

An awakening question that should be asked regularly.

The fingers pointing out to all directions could be seen as:

- The pointing finger of speech and reprimand.
- All/most sides are to be blamed.
- Conflict.
- Each side claims not guilty and blames the others.
- Pointing out towards chaos that has become everywhere.

size: A1

02. “The depressed of the world have uprisen to fight the forces of evil.”
«لقد هبّ مستضعفوا العالم لمجابهة قوى الإستكبار»

inspired by: one of [Nouri Maliki]’s speeches

The typography forms the US flag (and general reference to the West) through the stripes that intertwine at the top of the poster then gradually become loose, with the star of David from the Israeli flag replacing the US star and falling down, signifying that the whole flag is now dismantled for the oppressed have uprose.

size: A1

03. “So that the world does not sleep with all its weight above the bodies of the poor and disadvantaged.”
«حتى لا ينام العالم بكل ثقله فوق أجساد الفقراء والمحرومين»

inspired by: Yemen [Che Guevara]

The weight of the world breaks the weak and oppressed, inspired by Yemen and South Africa.

size: A1

04. “Resisting injustice is not determined by belonging to a religion, race, or sect.”
«إن مقاومة الظلم لا يحددها الإلتزام لدين أو عرق أو مذهب»

inspired by: [Che Guevara]

The phrase is made up of tiny icons/faces referring to different religions and race, forming a map-like form that connects to all sides.

size: Ao

05. “I see death only as happiness and life with the oppressors only as insufferable.”
«إني لا أرى الموت إلا سعادة والحياة مع الظالمين إلا برماً»

inspired by: The 1m martyrs revolution, Algeria [Imam Hussein]

The poster is an Ao made up of 1 million red drops that symbolize blood-shedding of those who sacrifice themselves for the cause and the tear-shedding of those who endure the loss.

The further you stand from the poster, the more apparent the phrase, the more homogeneous the background. The further you approach the poster, the more faded/invisible the letters, the more apparent the drops.

size: Ao

06. "The eye resists the awl."

«العين تقاوم المخرز»

inspired by: Palestine

improvised weapons (Palestinian Carlo gun), ne2ayfe, or the more widely known molotov cocktail prove the common saying wrong.

If one has the will, one has a way. We can fight from nothing.

These improvised weapons - often called homemade weapons - are made from whatever material that is available. The Carlo gun is assembled from different metals and objects, the molotov cocktail is a glass bottle with a rag and liquid X. Therefore, the quote in the poster is formed from tape and scraps with photos of those improvised guns.

size: A1

07. "Imperialism is a cancerous gland."

«الإمبريالية غدة سرطانية»

inspired by: [Imam Khomeini]

Imperialism is a devilfish/octopus for it lays its tentacles on every water and shore.

The tentacles are 7 as in the 7 red striped of the US flag.

The tentacles may be metallic/machine-like since unlike an octopus, imperialism is soulless. At the end of each tentacle could be a texture/remaining of: soil, water, blood..

The head of the octopus is formed by Arabic typography.

size: A1

08. "The revolutionaries have only one face in my soul."

«فالتوار لهم وجه واحد في روحي»

Koufiyya made from names of key figures who uprose against the enemy.

The Koufiyya is a symbol of the revolutionary, and this poster being a fabric Koufiyya made of around 1000 names of revolutionaries from around the globe, one may take it off and choose to wear it, thus carrying with him all those revolutionaries who have once wore it.

size: A0

09. "The international revolutionary chant."

«التشيد الثوري الأممي»

The poster includes letters of several writing systems and a man playing music on his gun. When QR code of this poster is scanned, you're directed to the website where - aside from reading more about it and being able to open/participate in a debate - you'll also be able to download an audio track that I mixed.

size: A1

+ **audio mashup**

10. "Rather, we dash the truth upon falsehood, and it destroys it, and thereupon it departs. finally ends assuring one that the right will eventually triumph."

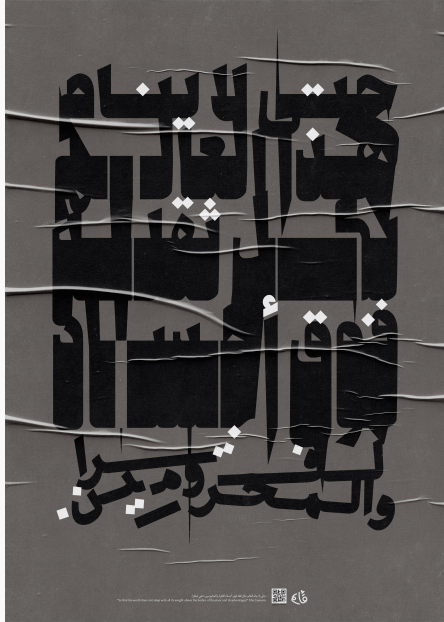
«بل نقذف بالحق على الباطل فيدمغه فإذا هو زاهق»

inspired by: Quran, common belief that a savior will eventually come

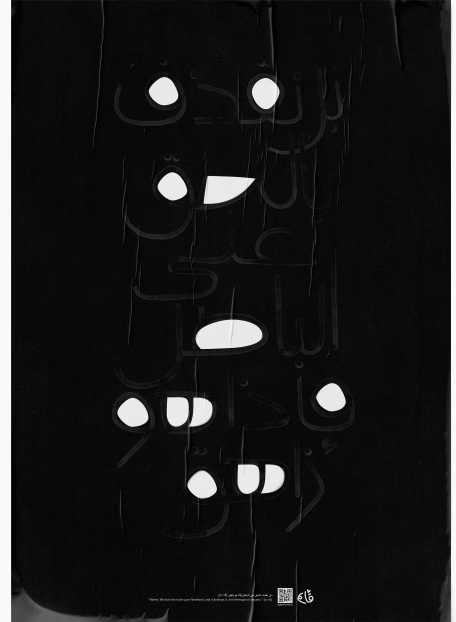
The poster is matte black with glossy black for the typography, and only the counters appear in white. This is to show that there will eventually be light after darkness and the righteous will triumph.

size: A1

03



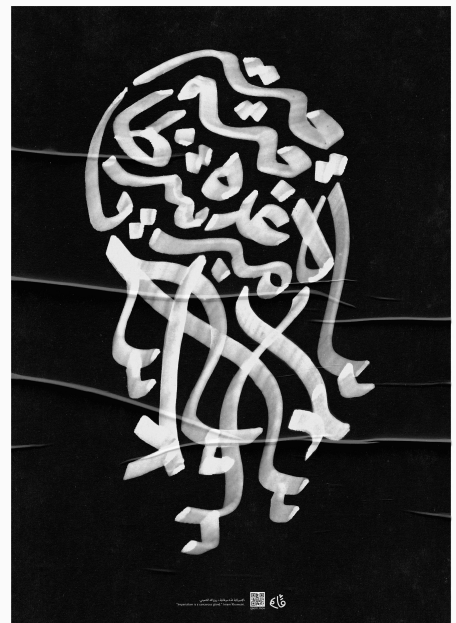
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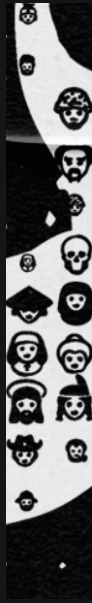
06



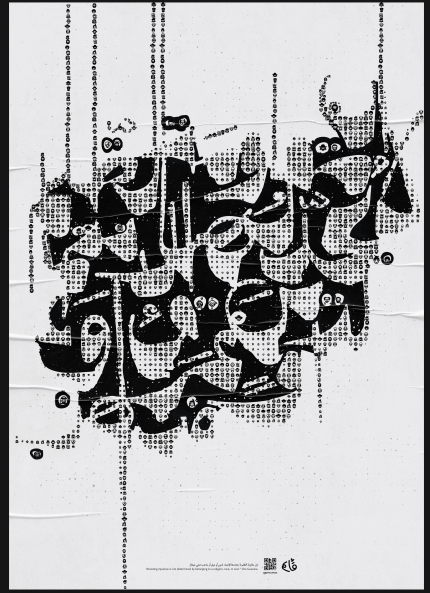
07



01



04



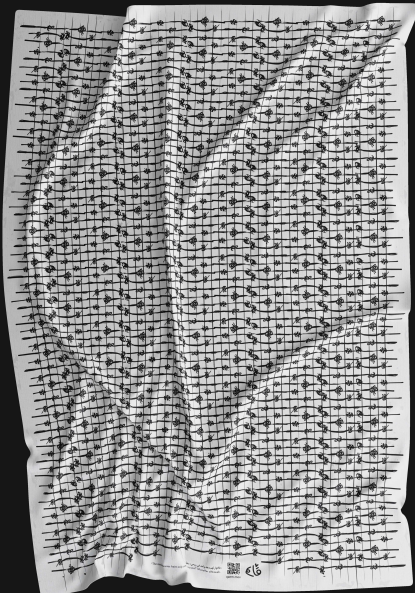
05



02



08



09







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"The world has agreed to fight the forces of evil" 2015

