

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Series of Questions Addressed to Eminent Scholar Ata Bin Khalil Abu Al-Rashtah

Ameer of Hizb ut Tahrir through his Facebook "Fiqhi" Page

Answer to Question

Using Artificial Intelligence in the Field of Photography, Drawing, and Videos

To: Islam Abu Khalil and Raed Al-Harsh Abu Mu'adh

Question:

1- Question from Islam Abu Khalil:

As-salamu 'alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu, our honorable Sheikh. May Allah protect you and make Islam established on Earth by your hands.

I wanted to present an important question in this era for many people regarding artificial intelligence, and I hope that the answer will be beneficial for everyone if you publish it on your official page, in sha' Allah.

Today, many people use artificial intelligence to create images of humans or animals. A person inputs certain information along with some parameters into the AI and asks it to create an image, and it produces images or video clips, whether in the form of animation or realistic. It is also possible to input an image of an existing person to create a podcast or a program, or one may request the creation of an image of a person who does not exist at all.

First question:

Is it permissible in the Shariah to use artificial intelligence (AI) to create images of humans or animals? And likewise to create animations or video clips for da'wah purposes or in general?

Second question:

If creating images of humans using artificial intelligence (AI) is permissible, must these images abide by the Shariah rules? Meaning: must the woman be covered (hijab) or not?

May Allah reward you with all good for your responses.

Islam Abu Khalil — 25/11/2025

2- Question of Raed Al-Harsh Abu Mu'adh:

As-salamu 'alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu.

Today, with artificial intelligence, we can convert text into an image, and we can also change the features or type of the image or convert it into animation, and we can also create videos based on textual input. Is altering an image (such as converting it into a cartoon or anime) considered "drawing by hand," or is it something else? Or is it an "automatic generation" based on algorithms and not direct human action?

Answer:

Wa 'alaykum as-salamu wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu.

Your two questions are similar, and here is the answer:

First: Artificial intelligence (AI) programs are a vast door opened for humanity, and artificial intelligence is evidence of the greatness of the Creator, Exalted is He, who عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ *"taught man that which he knew not"* [Surah Al-'Alaq: 5]. Thus, the human became capable of harnessing machines, calculations, algorithms, and computer programs to perform tasks and carry out missions that are difficult for a human being to achieve with his mere effort... Artificial intelligence is a major leap in science and application, and is capable of causing major changes in methods, means, and the course of people's lives and civil progress, etc.

Second: Artificial intelligence is not limited to a single field, but has multiple uses according to the multiplicity of fields of science, knowledge, and application... It can be used effectively in the field of health, medicine, and hospitals, and in the field of sciences and inventions, and in education, and in the military field and wars, and in various arts... and many other fields. Like all sciences and inventions, it can be used for good or evil depending on what the human chooses. It can be harnessed for the good of humanity and the benefit of people, and it can be harnessed for evil, corruption, injustice, and consuming people's wealth wrongfully, etc.

Third: The question we are answering concerns the use of artificial intelligence programs in the field of photography, drawing, videos, robots, and similar matters. **To answer this question, we review the following:**

1. Linguistically, "tasweer" (creating an image) means producing a likeness of a creature that resembles its creation, that is, producing something similar to it. The closer the created image is to the actual creature, the stronger and greater the skill... So creating an image means producing a resemblance to it. The "musawwir" are therefore the ones who create likenesses. But transferring the actual thing itself by any tool is not called "tasweer." The forbidden tasweer is that which has a soul, and the reality of tasweer is drawing something that resembles it by hand or by a camera or by any tool on land or air... and it is not the transferring of the actual object itself.

2- As for the fact that the prohibited image-making is that which has a soul, that is due to the following evidences:

a. Sahih al-Bukhari: On the authority of Sa'īd ibn Abī al-Ḥasan who said: I was with Ibn 'Abbās (may Allah be pleased with both of them) when a man came to him and said: "O Abā al-'Abbās, I am a man whose livelihood is only from the work of my hands, and I make these images." So Ibn 'Abbās said: "I will not tell you except what I heard the Messenger of Allah (saw) say; I heard him say: «مَنْ صَوَّرَ صُورَةً فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مُعَذِّبُهُ حَتَّى يَنْفُخَ فِيهَا الرُّوحَ وَلَيْسَ بِنَافِخٍ فِيهَا أَبَدًا» **"Whoever makes a picture, Allah will punish him till he breathes life into it, and he will never be able to breathe life into it."** Then the man shuddered violently and his face turned pale. So he (Ibn 'Abbās) said: "Woe to you! If you insist on making (something), then make **this tree**, anything that has no soul."

b. Sahih al-Bukhari: On the authority of 'Ubaydullāh, from Nāfi', that 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with both of them) informed him that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said: «إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَصْنَعُونَ هَذِهِ الصُّوَرَ يُعَذَّبُونَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يُقَالُ لَهُمْ أَحْيُوا مَا خَلَقْتُمْ» **"Those who make these pictures will be punished on the Day of Resurrection. It will be said to them: 'Give life to what you have created.'"**

c. Sahih Muslim: On the authority of Nāfi', from al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad, from 'Ā'ishah, that she bought a cushion on which were pictures. When the Messenger of Allah (saw) saw it, he stood at the door and did not enter. She recognized—or it was recognized on his face—the dislike. So she said: "O Messenger of Allah, I repent to Allah and to His Messenger! What sin have I committed?"

The Messenger of Allah (saw) said: «مَا بَالُ هَذِهِ التَّمْرِقَةِ؟» **"What is the matter with this cushion?"** She said: "I bought it for you to sit on and rest your head on." The Messenger of Allah (saw) said: «إِنَّ أَصْحَابَ هَذِهِ الصُّوَرَ يُعَذَّبُونَ وَيُقَالُ لَهُمْ أَحْيُوا مَا خَلَقْتُمْ» **"The people who make these images will be punished, and it will be said to them: 'Bring to life what you have created.'"**

d. And this is confirmed by the fact that the imaging of what is not of living beings has come with its permissibility as mentioned in *al-Shakhṣiyyah 2 (Islamic Personality Vol. 2)* – Chapter of Imaging: [(As for the permissibility of depicting what has no soul—such as trees and the like—it has come explicitly in the Hadiths.

In the Hadith of Abu Hurayrah: «فَمُرْ بِرَأْسِ التَّمَثَالِ يَقْطَعْ فَيَصِيرَ كَهَيْئَةِ الشَّجَرَةِ» **"Order that the head of the statue be cut off so that it becomes like the form of a tree."** (It was narrated by Ahmad, and also narrated by al-Tirmidhi and Abu Dawud). And this means that the statue shaped like a tree has nothing (prohibited) in it. And in the Hadith of Ibn 'Abbas: He said: I

heard the Messenger of Allah (saw) say: «كُلُّ مُصَوِّرٍ فِي النَّارِ يَجْعَلُ لَهُ بِكُلِّ صُورَةٍ صَوَّرَهَا نَفْسًا فَتُعَذِّبُهُ فِي جَهَنَّمَ، وَقَالَ: "Every image-maker will be in the Fire. For every image he made a soul will be created for him, and it will punish him in Hell. And he said: If you must do so, then make (images of) trees and things that have no soul."» End.

Thus, the prohibition in the above texts is restricted to what has a soul, and specific to it and not general, by the indication of “until he breathes into it the soul” and “Give life to what you have created,” and the exception of the tree and the like. Meaning that the prohibited image is the one that has a soul. Therefore, the other unrestricted or general texts are carried upon the restricted and the specific, as in the principles (of jurisprudence), meaning: carried upon (images) of beings that have a soul. Such as the Hadiths: (Ibn ‘Umar): «إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَصْنَعُونَ هَذِهِ الصُّورَةَ يُعَذِّبُونَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ» “Indeed, those who make these images will be punished on the Day of Resurrection.” (Ibn ‘Abbas): «كُلُّ مُصَوِّرٍ فِي النَّارِ» “Every image-maker will be in the Fire.” And similar Hadiths.

3. As for the fact that the reality of image-making is that it involves imitation of a created being that has a soul and is not a transfer of its actual essence, this is due to the following evidences:

a. It is mentioned in *‘Umdat al-Qari*, commentary on Sahih al-Bukhari, regarding the Hadith of ‘A’ishah, Mother of the Believers (may Allah be pleased with her), who said: قَدِمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ، مِنْ سَفَرٍ وَقَدْ سَتَرْتُ بِقِرَامٍ لِي عَلَى سَهْوَةٍ لِي فِيهَا تَمَاثِيلٌ، فَلَمَّا رَأَى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ، هَتَكَهُ وَقَالَ: «أَشَدُّ النَّاسِ عَذَابًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ الَّذِينَ يُضَاهَوْنَ بِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ» “When the Messenger of Allah (swt) returned from a journey, I had screened a small room of mine with a curtain having images. He tore it down and said: ‘The people who will be most severely punished on the Day of Resurrection are those who imitate the creation of Allah.’” “هتكه” means: he tore it and removed it. “يُضَاهَوْنَ” means: they imitate or resemble the creation of Allah.

b. It is mentioned in *Fath al-Bari* by Ibn Hajar regarding the same Hadith: «أَشَدُّ النَّاسِ عَذَابًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ الَّذِينَ يُضَاهَوْنَ بِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ» “The people who will be most severely punished on the Day of Resurrection are those who imitate the creation of Allah.” [His statement “يُضَاهَوْنَ بِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ” means: they make what they create resemble what Allah creates... And in the narration of al-Zuhri from al-Qasim in Sahih Muslim: “الَّذِينَ يُشَبِّهُونَ بِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ” — those who resemble (their created forms) to the creation of Allah.]]

And based on that, the prohibited imaging is that which is of something possessing a soul, in imitation of the creation of Allah — meaning that the forbidden image is the one that imitates the creation of Allah, that is, resembles the creation of Allah. And the closer the resemblance is to the actual creation, the stronger the “creativity” in the image... And therefore those who imitate the creation of Allah are called, in other Hadiths, “the image-makers” (al-muṣawwirūn):

«إِنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَذَابًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ الْمُصَوِّرُونَ» “Indeed, the people who will receive the severest punishment on the Day of Resurrection are the image-makers.”

«إِنَّ مِنْ أَشَدِّ النَّاسِ عَذَابًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ الْمُصَوِّرُونَ» “Verily, among the most severely punished people on the Day of Resurrection are the image-makers.”

This was stated in response to a question posed to the founding Ameer (may Allāh have mercy on him) on 23/3/1969: (And he (saw) said: «يَا عَائِشَةُ أَشَدُّ النَّاسِ عَذَابًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ الَّذِينَ يُضَاهَوْنَ بِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ» “O ‘Aisha, the people who will be most severely punished before Allah on the Day of Resurrection are those who imitate the creation of Allah”, meaning those who make images.)

Although, imitation or resemblance is not the reason for prohibition, and therefore depicting trees and other things without a soul is permissible as we mentioned. However, imitation or resemblance is a description of the forbidden image of something with a soul, meaning it falls under the principle of determining the actual subject of the ruling: if the image resembles the creation of Allah, it is prohibited; but if the image is a mere depiction of the thing itself, it is not prohibited. Because depicting a creature is to create an example or form resembling it, not transferring its

essence. And transferring the essence: (is not imaging a person, meaning taking an example from them, but it is the actual person or thing itself being imprinted as an impression. Accordingly, the Hadith forbidding image-making does not apply to it. This is from the principle of determining the relevant context (taḥqīq al-manāṭ), not from the search for evidence alone — one investigates the actual reality of the thing to which the ruling is to be applied, then applies the ruling.) This was stated in the Answer to a Question on 23/3/1969.

Fourth: Based on what has been mentioned above, we answer the questions:

1- We have clarified the rulings on drawing, sculpting (statues), and photographic imaging in our books (Islamic Personality, Volume Two) and in the answers to questions we have published, including an Answer dated 19/03/2017, which contains many details and evidences. We have shown that hand drawing of beings with souls and sculpting them into statues (except for children's toys) is prohibited by Sharia as long as it is done by human effort, in imitation of creation, and one can refer to the answer where the evidences are detailed.

2- After the invention of the computer, it became possible to do drawing and imaging of beings with souls using drawing programs through the use of the mouse, in computer drawing. This is a distinct shift in drawing and imaging, **as the creator uses programming abilities to produce drawings and images. However, drawing by human effort remains imitation of creation, and the closer the resemblance to the creature, the stronger the creativity.**

3- As for photographic imaging, it is permissible and not prohibited because it is a transfer of the actual thing, not an imitation of it. The evidences are:

a- From the **Answer to Question dated 23/3/1969:** *[And as for the photographic image... it is like a mirror. Just as the mirror reflects the essence of the thing upon it, so does the photographic device. What the device produces, besides not being a drawing or forming, it is also not image-making of a person, meaning taking an example from them. Rather, it is the actual person or thing itself being imprinted as an impression. Therefore, the Hadith forbidding image-making does not apply to it. This is from the principle of determining the relevant context (taḥqīq al-manāṭ), not from the search for evidence alone — one investigates the actual reality of the thing to which the ruling is to be applied, then applies the ruling. The reality here is that it is an imprint or reflection, not a drawing or forming, therefore the ruling of image-making does not apply. It is covered by the general permissions, and thus photographic imaging is not prohibited. (05 Muharram 1389 AH / 23 March 1969 CE)]*

b- From the **Answer to Question dated 22/1/1971:** *[Image-making is engraving, drawing, and other things that a person directly practices. Allah has forbidden the Muslim to directly draw any being with a soul, whether on paper, clothing, walls, or other; and forbidden the Muslim to directly engrave any being with a soul, whether on stones, utensils, or other; and forbidden to practice anything resembling drawing or engraving of any being with a soul, whether on leather, walls with plaster, sculpting, or coloring on clothing, etc. Everything that falls under the word “image-making” linguistically is prohibited, including sculpting, drawing, engraving, printing, and so on. However, what is not considered image-making linguistically is not prohibited, and therefore photographic imaging, satellite imaging, and the like are not prohibited. (22/01/1971)]*

4- As for the production of images, drawings, or videos of beings with souls using artificial intelligence, its reality is as follows:

a. A person writes a text in an AI program requesting, through this text, the formation of images of a being with a soul. For example, they may request: *“Draw President X in sports clothing”*, and the AI program produces an image of the requested president in sports attire, either in photographic form or as a drawing, etc.

This also applies to video production. A person can ask a designated program to produce a video with specific specifications, for example, to produce a video of a Friday

sermon for a particular preacher. The program uses the information at its disposal and produces a video of the preacher delivering the sermon as requested, and so on.

b. Based on what we mentioned in points (Fourth - 1 and 3), if the image is a transfer of the actual thing, such as a photographic image in place and time, there is no problem. However, if the image is in the form of imitation of the thing in terms of its creation — as in hand drawing or computer drawing — it is not permissible, because the word *image-making* applies to it, i.e., (they imitate Allah's creation).

If, moreover, this image includes things that are not real, i.e., not as in actual reality, such as altering the features of someone's face, the type of clothing, showing the person giving Friday sermon while they are not there, or forming an image of a deceased person, etc., meaning not in the actual form of the person at the place and time when showing the image, then, in addition to being prohibited, the texts prohibiting deceit, lying, and causing harm apply due to manipulation of images against reality:

- The Prophet (saw) said: «الْخَدِيعَةُ فِي النَّارِ وَمَنْ عَمِلَ عَمَلًا لَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرُنَا فَهُوَ رَدٌّ» ***“Deception is in the Fire, and whoever does a deed not upon our command, it is rejected.”*** (Bukhari)

- The Prophet (saw) said: : «لَا ضَرَرَ وَلَا ضِرَارَ» ***“There is no harm and no causing harm.”*** (Ahmad; also Ibn Majah, and Al-Hakim in Al-Mustadrak)

- The Prophet (saw) said: «وَالْكَذِبُ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْفُجُورِ وَإِنَّ الْفُجُورَ يَهْدِي إِلَى النَّارِ» ***“Indeed, lying leads to immorality, and immorality leads to the Fire.”*** (Muslim: ***“And beware of lying, for lying leads to immorality, and immorality leads to the Fire.”***)

Accordingly, any imaging that changes the reality of a thing and displays it differently from its reality is a lie and deception, which is not correct and not permissible. Likewise, causing harm to a protected person who is depicted untruthfully through manipulation of the image is also not correct and not permissible according to the above evidence. Whoever uses artificial intelligence programs to produce such images is sinful.

The sin increases if these images and videos:

- generate images of the Messengers and Prophets, peace and blessings be upon them, or generate videos representing them and speaking in their tongues, because of the sanctity of the Prophets. Allah, glory be to Him, chose the Prophet with prophethood and the message, which is a special privilege for him and not for other humans. Generating an image or video of the Prophet or the Messenger to whom Revelation was sent is an aggression against the message, a failure to give prophethood its due, and a failure to give the message its proper status, and this is a great injustice to the message and the Messenger.

- generate an image or video that promotes ideas of disbelief (kufr), promotes immorality and vice (fitneh), insults reputations, or promotes any other actions and speech that are prohibited.

This is what I consider most likely regarding this issue, and Allah Knows Best and Judges Best.

Your brother,

Ata Bin Khalil Abu al-Rashtah

18 Jumada al-Akhira 1447 AH

Corresponding to 9 December 2025 CE

The link to the answer from the Ameer's Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/AtaAboAlrashtah/posts/12211107198312>