

Interactive Multimodal Representations of (Non) Arab Leaders through Cartoon Images

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Abstract

This study examines the representation of (non) Arab leaders in ten selected political cartoon images through the lens of Kress and van Leeuwen's model of visual interactive levels and Martinec and Salway's framework of image-text relations. The study aims to indicate the power of such images as cultural artifacts reflect societal norms, ideologies, and political contexts, and to demonstrate the relevance of visual and textual frameworks work together in analyzing multimodal texts. The key questions of the study are: How do political cartoon images use visual and textual elements to represent (non) Arab leaders? and what culture differences can be identified in the portrayal of cartoon images about the authority and leadership in Arab and non-Arab leaders? The study reveals that all images exhibit unequal status, with text subordinate to the image, indicating the visual dominance in meaning-making. The study concludes that Arab leaders-oriented cartoon images prioritize authority and tradition, reflecting collectivist and hierarchical culture values, while the non-Arab leaders-oriented cartoon images employ critique and satire, highlighting individualism and democratic ideals. Through this multimodal analysis, the study underscores how visual and textual elements interact to reflect and construct cultural distinctions, offering valuable insights into the semiotics of political cartoon images as a form of cultural communication.

Keywords: Visual Interactive Level, Political Cartoons, Arab/Non-Arab Leaders, Cultural Comparison, Kress and van Leeuwen, Martinec and Salway, Projection and Expansion

التمثيل التفاعلي متعدد الوسائط للقادة العرب وغير العرب من خلال الصور الكارتونية

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المستخلص:

تبحث هذه الدراسة في تمثيل بعض القادة العرب وغير العرب في عشر صور كارتونية سياسية مختارة بتوظيف نموذج المستويات التفاعلية البصرية لكُرس وفان ليون وإطار علاقات الصورة بالنص لمارتينيك وسالوي. تهدف الدراسة إلى بيان قوة هذه الصور بوصفها أدوات ثقافية تعكس معايير مجتمعية وإيديولوجيات وسياقات سياسية، وإثبات تعالق الأطر البصرية والنصية في تحليل النصوص متعددة الوسائط. وتكمن أسئلة الدراسة في: كيف توظف الصور الكارتونية السياسية عناصر بصرية ونصية لتمثيل القادة العرب وغير العرب؟ وما هي الاختلافات الثقافية التي تحملها هذه الصور الكارتونية في تمثيلها للسلطة وللقيادة عند القادة العرب وغير العرب؟ تكشف الدراسة أن تلك الصور تظهر عدم التكافؤ في المكانة أو الوضع، من خلال تبعية النص للصورة، مما يشير إلى هيمنة العنصر البصري في صناعة المعنى. وخلصت الدراسة إلى أن صور القادة العرب الكارتونية تعطي الأولوية للسلطة والتقاليد، مما يعكس القيم الثقافية الجماعية والهرمية، في حين أن صور القادة غير العرب الكارتونية توظف النقد والهجاء، مما يبرز الفردية والمثل الديمقراطية. ومن خلال هذا التحليل متعدد الوسائط، تبين الدراسة كيفية تعالق العناصر البصرية والنصية وإبرازها الفروق الثقافية، وتقدم رؤى قيمة في سيميائية صور الكارتون السياسي بصفتها شكلاً من أشكال التواصل الثقافي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المستوى التفاعلي البصري، الرسوم الكارتونية السياسية، قادة عرب/غير عرب، مقارنة ثقافية، كُرس وفان ليون، مارتينيك وسالوي، الإسقاط والتوسع.

1. Introduction

In recent years, various linguistic fields have contributed to the study of how language, image, and other semiotic systems which construct and project meanings in texts. One of these is referred to as 'multimodality'. As an interdisciplinary approach based on social semiotics, multimodality acknowledges representation and communication as more than language and systematically examines the ways in which different forms of meaning are socially perceived (Jewitt, 2013). Being the forerunners of the social semiotic approach to multimodal analysis, Kress and van Leeuwen in their (2021) approach to image analysis begin with Halliday's socially based theory of language. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2006, 2021) build on social and systemic elements of Halliday's theory of language as the theoretical bases for their model of analysis of images. Their major objectives are to create a specific kind of grammar and theory directed to visual design and representation, which would explain how language is able to create meaning in texts and from texts (Jewitt, 2013).

Since some of the cartoon images employed in the study are critical of the US president and some of the leaders of the Arab world, they serve as the basis for the data. They are gathered from the New York Times newspaper's social media pages and other online sources stated with each image. Kress and van Leeuwen's model (2021) comprises three levels/meanings of multimodality: representational or ideational meaning, interactive or interpersonal meaning, and compositional structures or textual meaning. This level serves as the foundation for the data analysis. There are status and logico-semantic relationships alongside with the layers of image-text relationships identified by Martinec and Salway's (2005) model. The study also attempts to respond to the following queries: What cultural distinctions exist between the way Arab leaders-oriented and non-Arab leaders-oriented political cartoon images depict authority and leadership, and how do they employ textual and visual components to depict the presidents of the two cultures? However, the study demonstrates three crucial justifications for choosing these cartoon images for analysis:

1. The subject of a political cartoon image is directed towards 'various interpretations'. The 'Grammar of Visual Design' is utilised as research model to show that it is a viable tool for elucidating the interactive or interpersonal meanings of these numerous interpretations.
2. Images of political cartoons are thought to be an outstanding example of authenticity, practicality, and applicability. Political cartoon images can be analysed, and interpretations can be created for communication using these visual indicators, which can also receive third-dimensional and text-image relationships as integrated models. Political cartoons are therefore perfect for using the visual model because they are rich in semiotic significance.
3. The text seen in the cartoon images offers a critical perspective or an ironic twist, and the images can add levels of satire or commentary. This illustrates how various components work together to create a coherent, nuanced message.

Furthermore, the study aims to:

1. show how cartoon images, as 'cultural artefacts', can reflect political settings, societal conventions, and ideologies;
2. highlight the significance of visual and textual frameworks work together in analyzing multimodal texts.

2. Literature Review

2.1 (Social) Semiotics

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Semiotics is the "study of the rules underlying the sign system and helps us understand the use and implications of signs, and in particular, visual and verbal signs in communication" (Fan, 2006, p.123). The so called 'illusion-reality gap' is thoroughly studied in semiotics (Cobley, 2010): "How meanings are constructed and how reality is mirrored and reflected" (Berger, 2010, p. 4) is of interest to semioticians. According to Kress (2010, p. 54), the sign, which blends form and meaning, is the fundamental unit of semiotics. Signs, sign systems, and sign contexts are all studied in semiotics (Fan, 2006).

In contrast to traditional semiotics, social semiotics is another significant school of semiotics. Social semiotics is described by van Leeuwen (2005) as "a new distinctive approach to the practice and theory of semiotics". The British linguist Michael Halliday coined the term 'social semiotics' in his 1978 book 'Language as a Social Semiotic,' which discusses how language operates socioculturally and how culture shapes how verbal language "interacts" with other communication systems.

3. Multimodality

Multimodality is generally described as "an interdisciplinary approach drawn from social semiotics that attends systematically to the social interpretation of a range of forms of making meaning" and "understands communication and representation as more than language" (Jewitt, 2013, p. 1). Precisely, multimodal-oriented text analysis is the study of representation and communication in all of their manifestations, with a special emphasis on texts that integrate and interact with at least two forms of representation to create meaning (O'Halloran, 2011).

4. Political Cartoon

The editorial cartoon is also an example of indirect communication since it relies on personal perceptions and subtle influences. According to van Schoor (1981), the cartoon is a fragmented meditation on human nature. It demonstrates errors and inadequacies. A cartoon's ability to both describe and remark at the same time is perhaps its greatest benefit over news features, which must first describe events before offering critical commentary. Thus, in a way, the cartoon is a social protest and critique of individuals, organisations, and events.

According to several academics (Vinson, 1967; Everette, 1974; Abraham, 2009), political cartoons are a significant medium for forming and making, in the form of constructing, public opinion on crucial political and social topics. The idea that cartoon communication is used for government propaganda, public catharsis, publicity stunts, or educational aids has replaced media historians' previous beliefs that cartoons are not worthy. As a result, media scholars are now paying attention to cartoon research as a potent communication tool. According to Caswell (2004) Political cartoons are regarded as "both opinion-molding and opinion-reflecting"(p.14). According to Inge (1990), "Cartoons introduced generations of readers to symbolic ways of addressing the ongoing problems of society and the philosophical questions of mankind" (as cited in Lester, 2005, p. 222)

Since cartoons offer a secure forum for social criticism to speak thoughts and elevate the voices of the people, Coupe (1969) asserts that "like all journalists, the cartoonist is concerned with the creation and manipulation of public opinion" (p.82). It has an impact on readers' perceptions of politicians. It could have a positive or negative effect on the politicians. It is a humorous, light-hearted, and entertaining form of communication that can be used to form opinions and create an image. In addition to enjoying this medium, people also consider the topics it addresses (Ashfaq, 2008). In addition to being incredibly creative and intelligent, cartoons are also a thoughtful,

inventive, and reasonably priced form of publishing. It goes farther when readers are impacted by the novelty and divergence. While it would not harm the person depicted, it might leave a lasting and powerful impression on its readers (Javed, 1998).

DeSousa and Medhurst (1982) claim that firstly political cartoons have the power to amuse readers by making them laugh at various situations and characters. Second, readers can find a place of catharsis and a way to lessen their aggravation and annoyance with particular events by using political cartoons as an aggression reduction tool. Thirdly, political cartoons serve as agenda-setting tools by humorously expressing a position. Lastly, political cartoons serve as framing functions by offering particular frames on a particular problem in a condensed amount of area and in a single configuration (as cited in Ashfaq & Hussein, 2013). The majority of studies on political cartoons sought to emphasise their nature and purposes. For instance, using a structuralist approach, Morris (1992) examined political cartoons as a visual rhetorical instrument in the democratic process. Furthermore, Delporte (1995) looked into cartoons that made fun of the French president's Dreyfus issue between 1894 and 1906.

Similar to this, Feldman (1995) examined political cartoons' depictions of six Japanese prime ministers using symbolic motifs. Furthermore, some scholars also concentrated on the coverage of presidential election campaigns by political cartoons, as Edwards (1997) who studied the imagery, stories, and metaphors in these cartoons. Furthermore, cartoons are always a significant medium in British society, according to Seymour-Ure (2001). Refaie (2003) investigated the use of visual rhetoric and metaphors in political cartoons by looking at political cartoons from Australia. Baldry and Thibault (2006) also investigated political cartoons as a means of representing the opinions of the general people. Connors (2007) also used popular culture to analyse political cartoons from the US presidential campaign of (2004).

Importantly, a systematic review to related literature notes that little is known about how political cartoons influence and shape public opinion. Additionally, not much research has been done on what readers expect from political cartoonists. Thus, the vacuum in the literature will hopefully be filled by this study.

5. Methods

5.1 Analyzing Images through Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2021): A Simple Outline

The present study takes the theory of visual grammar by Kress and van Leeuwen in (2021) as a research framework. The theory itself is grounded on the findings of 'the former school of social semiotics', originally illustrated linguistic texts (Hu & Luo, 2016). Kress and van Leeuwen's (2021) has explored how things, places, and figures, in an image, comprise a visual design to realize the representative, interactive, and compositional meanings. Moreover, Kress and van Leeuwen form their framework on Halliday's social semiotic approach that centers on his three metafunctions; the ideational, interpersonal, and textual. Yet, Kress and van Leeuwen (2021) use a new terminology in describing those metafunctions. The ideational metafunction is described as 'representational'; 'interactive' instead of interpersonal'; and 'compositional' instead of 'textual' (van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001). This study is limited to the second level which is the interactive since it focuses on the relationship between the image and its audience as well as the communicative intent of the creator. Political cartoons, according this level, allows analysts to explore several key aspects that are crucial to understand cartoon's impact, like: social distance, point of view, and validity.

5.2 Interactive Level

Kress and van Leeuwen (2021) have recognised that visual communication systems make use of resources that both create and sustain communication between the creator and the audience. The interaction category or level is made up of three subcategories; contact (image acts), social distance (frame size), and attitude (a subjective or objective image) (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2021).

5.2.1 Contact

The ways in which images directly or indirectly address their viewers are the focus of the contact between the image and the viewer, that is created and sustained by the visual resources. Depending on whether eye contact is made or not, contact (gaze) can take two different forms of image acts: offer (not looking at the viewer) and demand (looking at the viewer). Kress and van Leeuwen (2021) refer to images whereby the participants make 'eye contact' with the viewer as 'demand' images because, by speaking directly to the viewer, the represented participants symbolically 'demand' something from the interactive participant, causing the viewer to enter into an imaginary relationship with them (Torres, 2015). Additionally, facial expressions can be used in conjunction with a demand act. Also, a demand act can be combined with facial expressions like smiling, pouting, or pointing at the interactive participant; the viewer (Brady, 2015).

5.2.2 Social Distance

According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2021), a viewer can be made to feel more socially connected to the participants they are depicting by using the frame's size (p. 123). According to Hu & Luo (2016) particular social relations are realized through:

- a. the use of close-up shots, in order to show the subject's head and shoulders,
- b. medium shots, to show the represented participant's body roughly down to the knees, and
- c. long shots, which show the entire figure occupying about half the height of the frame.

5.2.3 Attitude

It is possible to convey an attitude, which is called 'point of view' by other scholars, towards the participants in visuals by using specific visual resources. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2021), there are two types of visuals: subjective (with centre perspective) and objective (without perspective). By splitting them into two instantaneous options, which are called 'degrees of involvement and power', they thoroughly examine some subjective features in images. Thus, the angle, or 'point of view', is another third component that elucidates the relationships between the spectator and the portrayed actors. Thus, they talk of two perspectives: vertical and horizontal (p. 135-6). The relationship between the frontal planes of the portrayed participants and the interactive participant (the viewer or image-producer) is what is meant by the horizontal angle. Both a frontal and an oblique angle (point of view) are possible for the photograph. While the oblique angle suggests detachment, the frontal angle suggests involvement. High, low, and eye-level angles, respectively, are used to assess superiority, inferiority, and equality towards the depicted participant in relation to the vertical angle (Yao & Zhuo, 2018, p. 127). Validity markers are used to evaluate the credibility or "truth value" of visual representations. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2021), the following table makes them clear:

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Table no. 1: Validity Markers

Validity Markers	Description	Implication for Truth Value
Colour Saturation	The intensity or vividness of colours used in an image	High saturation suggests vibrancy and realism, low saturation implies abstraction or stylization.
Colour differentiation	The Variety of distinct colours used in an image.	Broad colour range implies richness and detail, limited range suggests simplicity or flatness.
Modulation Colour	The variation or shading within a single colour.	High modulation create depth and texture, enhancing realism, low modulation results in flatter, more uniform areas.
Contextualization	The use of background and environmental elements to situate the subject.	Rich context enhance realism; minimal context might make the subject appear isolated or abstract.
Representation of Detail	The level of fine detail included in the image	Detailed representations increase realism and credibility, minimal detail suggests abstraction or symbolic representation.
Illumination	The depiction of light, shadow, and highlights in the image	Naturalistic lighting enhances realism; flat or unnatural lighting suggests artificiality or abstraction.
Brightness	The overall lightness or darkness of the image	Brightness affects clarity and realism, extremes in brightness may influence the perceived validity of the representation.
Depth	The portrayal of spatial relationships using perspective, layering, or 3D effects.	Effective depth cues enhance the sense of realism by creating a spatial context.

5.3 Martinec and Salway's Model of Image-Text Relations (2005)

Martinec and Salway (2005) have built a framework for how images and/or texts relate to each other in diverse types of multimodal discourse. Their framework combines two types of relationships: equal and unequal statuses and logico-semantic relationships between texts and images based on their relative status.

5.3.1. Equal and Unequal Statuses

To Martinec and Salway (2005), images and texts are divided into independent and complementary equal statuses. When united on an equal basis and with no indications that one is modifying the other, an image and text are considered independent; hence having equal status. The status of an image and a text is taken as complimentary when they are equally united and can modify one another (p. 345). Contrariwise, an image and a text can be unequal when the image subordinates a text or simply refers to a part of the text. Sometimes a text is seen as attached to an image. In this case, it is possible that only a portion of the image is to be associated with the text (p. 347).

5.3.2 Logico- Semantic Relations

To model the image-text relationships, Martinec and Salway (2005) have used expansion and projection, which are originally the two main types of logico-semantic relationships in Halliday's theory.

5.3.2.1 Expansion. Three parts are observed under expansion: elaboration (sub-divided into exposition and exemplification), extension, and enhancement. Martinec and Salway (2005) have demonstrated that in exposition, both the image and the text carry the same level of generality, whereas in exemplification, the levels are distinct. When the image and text have differing levels of generality, either the image or the text can be more general (p. 352). Extension is the second

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part of expansion relation. Extension allows for the addition of new, relevant information by either party. When an image and a text are linked by enhancement, the third part, one of them eventually will qualify the other. Also, circumstantial relationships of reason/purpose, place, and time have been recognized. A text is tied to its ideational content to be received as improving an image, or vice versa (p. 353).

5.3.2.2 Projection. This component is valuable in explaining a situation in which content, represented by text or image, is re-manifested in another mode (Martinec and Salway, 2005, p. 354). A noticeable example of projection is a text-summarizing diagram. It normally picks out the key ideas in a text and re-expresses them in a diagrammatic visual format. There are two basic types of projection, as remarked earlier, depending on whether an exact word is cited or a rough interpretation is presented. They are referred to as "locution" and "idea" by Halliday (1994). A logico-semantic link called projection primarily seems to be present in two image-text contexts: comic strips and texts accompanied by diagrams, like those seen in textbooks, scientific journals, and other publications. It is simple to distinguish between a locution and an idea in comic strips because there are established rules for doing so: locutions are contained in speech bubbles, while ideas are contained in thought bubbles Halliday (1994, p. 220).

6.1 Data Analysis

Cartoon Image No. 1



https://www.chappatte.com/sites/default/files/styles/thumb/public/import_id/L170613-small-1.jpg?itok=MqM-aIC0

6.1.1 Visual Analysis

In this image, the interactive meaning focuses on how visual choices convey relationships between the viewer and the subject within the image. Here in this image, Trump makes eye contact directly with the viewers or the audience, instead of the two men in the room. Being portrayed this way, Trump establishes a clear connection with the viewers; seeking for validation and direct acknowledgment from the audience and bypassing the two men entirely. The hiding sense of this image is to show the ideology outward, to reflect institutional authority (official and military figures). His gaze suggests a sense of confidence and self-importance, sending his direct message to the audience, rather than engaging himself with advisors or military personnel.

When pointing to the two men on his left, he implies a dismissive or authoritarian stance. This shows Trump as a man who perceives himself as above them ordering or speaking about them in third-person terms, without considering their input. The angle of the image is frontal view and low-angle shot of Trump. This would amplify his power and authority, signaling his 'stable genius'

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image (as sarcastically labeled) to the audience. The position of this cartoon image shows the medium social distance. This would allow the viewer to see Trump without getting overly close. The medium distance can create a sense of formality, not too close to show familiarity, not too distant to reflect separation or isolation.

Validity markers here in this image are important. This image has a high intensity of colours to reflect its emotional tone and realism. The difference of colours help to distinguish between elements within the image and to direct attention to the main part like Trump and the officers. Moreover, the shading and gradients within colours create depth and texture. This can add a sense of realism to the image, even when the style is exaggerated for satire. The contextualization is essential in this image. The inclusion of textual and visual cues (e.g., Trump and "NUCLEAR DEAL WITH IRAN") connects the image to a specific sociopolitical scenario. In addition, the bright parts appear in the front of the image, like Trump's face and blond hair to emphasize the main part of meaning, while the darker areas appear at the background.

6.1. 2 Text-Image Relations

In this image, the text and image work together to create an ironic commentary on Trump's persona. The phrase "stable genius" is directly contradicted the absurdity of his statement about the Iran nuclear deal. Moreover, the textual label in all caps amplifies the sarcastic tone, challenging the legitimacy of Trump's claim to competence. The elaboration in this cartoon image is shown in the speech bubble where Trump suggests that "THAT NUCLEAR DEAL WITH IRAN WOULD BE BETTER if it WAS NOT with IRAN"; this elaborates on the cartoonist's satire. The text both can support and examine Trump's character: his dialogue shows a contradictory understanding of diplomacy, align with the critical tone suggested by the sarcastic text. Trump's pointing gesture in this image is both an action and a visual commentary. The men in the ordinary and military attire represent different branches of government, yet Trump's physical positioning and the men's implied response contrast his 'stable genius' label. Furthermore, this serves as non-verbal critique of his authority over these figures reflecting an imbalance between perception and reality.

Cartoon Image No. 2



https://www.chappatte.com/sites/default/files/styles/thumb/public/import_id/I171209c-small.jpg?itok=YNDDe-ym

6.2.1 Visual Analysis

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In cartoon image no. 2, the three characters (Trump, Netanyahu, and Abbas) are somehow looking at each other without facing the viewer. This implies that the viewer is an observer of the interaction, rather than an active participant. This non-engagement gaze invites viewers to critically observe the situation from a detachment and this invites the viewer to analyze the power dynamics and interpret the satire without being invited into the integration. Moreover, Abbas's gaze towards Trump and Netanyahu with a critical or skeptical expression, along with demonstrators pictured behind him, emphasizes his disconnect from Trump's declaration of 'PEACE'. His gaze, directed at the other leaders without full engagement, suggests a more grounded perspective compared with Trump's overly confident demeanor. Furthermore, Trump's gesture of putting his hand on Netanyahu's shoulder is a powerful interactive marker. This kind of touch often signifies control, reassurance, or dominance and implying that Trump sees himself as a central figure who can 'mediate' the situation. In opposite, Netanyahu's crossed arms and angry facial expressions create a stark contrast with Trump's gesture. Crossed arms are often a defensive posture, indicating disagreement or resistance. This shows that while Trump tries to assert control, Netanyahu is not passively accepting it. This tension highlights the cartoon's satire by implying that Trump's attempts at dominance may be superficial or unwelcome.

As concern the angle, by positioning the viewer at eye-level with Trump, Netanyahu, Abbas, the cartoon does not elevate any one figure above the others in terms of literal visual power. This neutrality in the angle invites viewer to critically observe the scene as if they are on equal footing with the characters, which helps emphasize the ironic tone of the scene. Moreover, the medium social distance, where the viewer sees each leader's full body along with part of the background, to reflect a sense of formality and detachment. This distance between the three presidents would allow the viewer to feel involved.

The colour choices for each character and flag function as validity markers by enhancing recognizable. Conveying cultural and political associations. The features of colour (illumination, saturation, brightness, contextualization, depth and representation, modulation, differentiation and colour saturation) add a layer of meaning that reinforce the cartoon's satirical critique. By using high saturation, brightness, and exaggerated colour contrasts for Trump, the cartoon positions him as a simplified or out-of-place figure in a complex setting. Lower saturation, more natural brightness, and realistic colour validities for other characters and background add to the image's validity by grounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in a serious light, thereby highlighting Trump's detachment from the gravity. These colour choices ultimately support the critique, using visual exaggeration and contrast underscore the gap between Trump's detachment attitude and real-world implications of the conflict.

6.2. 2 Text-Image Relations

In this cartoon image, the text "Ok, NOW PEACE" in a speech bubble reflects Trump's simplified approach to complex political issues, ironically presenting him as if he is 'solving' the conflict with a casual remark. The detached, oversimplified phrase critiques his superficial understanding the situation. As for elaboration section, the exaggerated contrast between Trump's "PEACE" statement and Netanyahu's angry expression, with Abbas watching critically, illustrates the cartoonist's irony. Trump's overtly confident, simplistic statement in capitalized letters,

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juxtaposed with the frustrated or skeptical other leaders, underscores the cartoon's satirical stance on Trump's perceived lack of depth in handling sensitive international issues.

Cartoon Image No. 3



https://www.chappatte.com/sites/default/files/styles/thumb/public/import_id/I181103c-small.jpg?itok=rVU4tFPb

6.3.1 Visual Analysis

The gaze in cartoon no. 3 is indirect or offer. Here the soldiers and Trump do not look directly to viewers and this invites the viewers to observe rather than participate the action. Trump's lack of direct eye contact with the audience distances the viewers, encouraging them to critically analyze the power dynamics without feeling personally addressed. The offer position, allowing them to interpret the focus on the soldiers, can emphasize the satirical or critical tone of the cartoon. At the same time, the soldiers are not looking directly at Trump; this would signify reluctance or hesitation. Averted gaze often suggests discomfort, disinterest or even silent resistance.

As for social distance in this cartoon image, the social power is visually presented in Trump's image. Trump is depicted as a higher level or physically powering over the soldiers; this height difference visually establishes his dominance and authority. According to Kress and van Leeuwen's (2021), placing a figure higher in the frame often indicates superior status or power. The positioning reinforces Trump's role as a commanding figure and underscores the hierarchical relationship between him and the soldiers. Moreover, Trump's close proximity to the soldiers while gesturing toward them demonstrates a direct, authoritative relationship. He gives them orders.

Furthermore, the angle of the image is another feature which consists of horizontal and vertical angles. Trump is viewed from a low angle; he appears larger and more imposing, emphasizing his authority. This angle suggests that Trump is someone to be 'looked up to', which is the classic visual technique for representing powerful figure. In addition, a frontal angle on Trump can signify a direct, assertive stance. In this act, Trump is shown as determined and unyielding in his command. This perspective suggests that Trump is fully engaged in his directive, positioning him as a character actively controlling the situation.

Validity markers are presented in this image. High saturation for Trump emphasizes his caricatured, exaggerated persona. The strong differentiation between Trump's colours and the

soldiers' muted tones highlights power and individuality vs. collectiveness. Moreover, lack of modulation in Trump's features reinforces simplicity and exaggeration, soldiers' modulation suggests realism. Minimal context shifts focus to the interaction, enhancing the satire. Trump is abstract and exaggerated, while soldiers show that there is a realistically disconnection between their leader and subordinates. Furthermore, Trump is brightly lit, signifying prominence, while soldiers are subdual, reflecting a lack of focus on their individuality. Darker tones for the soldiers and bright colours around Trump contrast seriousness with confidence. Trump's foreground placement reinforces dominance, while the soldiers' background position emphasizes subordination.

6.2. 2 Text-Image Relations

As far as text-image relations are concerned, this image and text work together to convey full meaning. Trump's visual presence and the soldiers' response are equally important for understanding the cartoon's message. Moreover, the soldiers' speech bubbles expand upon Trump's command, offering reactions that counter his statement. Trump's speech bubble ("BORDER MEXICO") projects his command, while soldiers' responses are a form of commentary on the situation. The statements "NOT THE MiDTERMS!" and "I ENLiSTED TO FiGHT iN THE MiDDLE EAST" add irony and humor, projecting the soldiers' disapproval or disillusionment with the directive.

Cartoon Image No. 4



https://www.reddit.com/r/politics/comments/8rlmlb/here_are_4_hardhitting_cartoons_a_protrump/?rdt=53366

6.4.1 Visual Analysis

Firstly, with regard to participants' gaze, both Trump and Jong Un do not establish direct contact with the viewer. This lack of a 'demand' gaze indicates that the participants are not directly addressing the audience. Instead, their focus is on each other and the handshake, which suggests the scene is narrative. The viewer is meant to observe and interpret critically. Therefore, the absence of direct engagement creates 'offer' image, where the viewer is encouraged to reflect on the interaction between Trump and Jong Un. This cartoon reflects an invitation to the audience to question the meaning and implications of the handshake.

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Social distance is another feature of the interactive level. This cartoon presents a medium distance between the viewer and the participants. This choice balances intimacy and detachment, allowing the viewer to both understand the situation and critically analyze it. The medium shot, here, is used to avoid placing the viewer emotionally too close to the scene, maintaining a critical rather than emphatic stance toward the interaction between the two leaders.

Both leaders are seen from a higher level than the participants. They appear more dominant and powerful to the viewer. The viewer is metaphorically placed in subordinate position, making them feel as though they are 'looking up' at Trump and Jong Un. This perspective emphasizes their leadership roles and the global power they wield, even if it is being satirized. Moreover, Trump may seem overly confident or elevated in his role as negotiator, reinforcing perception of self-importance or ignorance of deeper issues. By placing Jong Un above the viewer (and on a pile of skulls), the cartoon underscores his dominance and control over his oppressed people.

Furthermore, this cartoon image uses validity markers to craft a powerful satirical message. Colour saturation, difference and modulation are presented in Trump's vibrancy with Jong Un's reality to highlight their moral and rhetorical dissonance. Moreover, contextualization and representation situate the handshake within a grotesque, symbolic setting, emphasizing the critique of both leaders. Illumination, brightness and depth are other validity markers, alluding to power dynamics and moral consequences, with stark contrasts reinforcing the cartoon's irony. The skull background or lower planes add layers of meaning, representing the underlying consequences of Jong Un's rule. Trump's area might appear bright, symbolizing his obvious optimism or staged diplomacy. In addition, both Trump and Jong Un appear well-lit, symbolizing their power and dominance.

6.4.2 Text-Image Relations

In this cartoon image, the image dominates as it provides the primary narrative (Kim Jong Un sitting on skulls, the handshake) and the emotional tone (irony and critique). The text complements the image by adding specific verbal irony that enhances the viewer's understanding of the absurdity of the interaction. Without the image, the text would lack context, without the text, the image would not fully convey the satirical. In addition, the text "YOU'RE SO TALENTED AND YOUR PEOPLE LOVE YOU... LOOK HOW THEY'RE SMILING" elaborates the scene by adding Trump's verbal praise, which clashes with the visual context. The text is projected speech (Trump's words in a speech bubble), which directly attributes the dialogue to him. This adds specificity to his role in the cartoon and shapes how the viewer interprets his character. Regarding ideational meaning, this image conveys Trump's style which simplifies or overlooks complex realities. The image shows the deeper, harsher reality of Jong Un's regime, symbolized by the skulls and their smiles.

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Cartoon Image No. 5



<https://images.app.goo.gl/wviJuR5Actr2bP178>

6.5.1. Visual Analysis

Trump's direct gaze at the viewer creates a 'demand'. This type of interaction involves the subject, addressing the viewers directly and engaging them on a more personal and confrontational level. His angry expression reinforces the intensity of this 'demand', as if he is accusing, challenging, or directing his emotions at the viewer. This interaction makes the viewer feel implicated, either as a target of his anger someone expected to respond emotionally or intellectually.

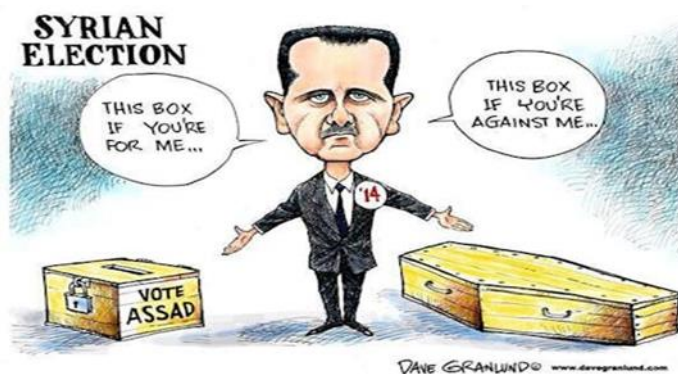
The image likely uses a medium or close-up shot of Trump, heightening the intimacy of the interaction. Therefore, this proximity makes engagement immediate and personal, intensifying the viewer's sense of involvement with the character's emotions. Moreover, the direct frontal angle emphasizes equality between Trump and the viewer, making the interaction feel more confrontational. This perspective positions Trump as someone asserting dominance or attempting to hold the viewer accountable, depending on the viewer's interpretation. By framing Trump in this way, the cartoonist encourages the viewer to focus on Trump's emotional state, making his frustration the central element of the interaction. Additionally, the direct gaze and angry expression establish Trump as a figure demanding attention and possibly exerting authority. The viewer, however, remains interpretive power because the cartoon medium exaggerates and satires his anger, potentially undermining his seriousness. The image positions the viewer to critically assess Trump's exaggerated frustration and ironic reinterpretation of "R & R".

The validity markers are applied in this image. This cartoon image uses highly saturated colours, especially Trump's red tie or the background. This saturation emphasizes the intensity and draws attention to the emotional or thematic elements like anger, frustration and/or power. There is a mixture of colours are used in this cartoon like the red in the tie and the black of the bubbles to enhance readability and clarity. In this image, the use of modulation is somehow low. The slight modulation could appear in Trump's skin tones or background shading, giving the image more depth and dimension. Moreover, there is a background, it might use simple cues (like courtroom imagery or neutral tones) to suggest a setting related to his "TRAIL AND ACQUITTAL" while maintaining the cartoon's symbolic focus.

6.5.2 Text-Image Relations

The image and the text are of equal importance in conveying meaning. The visual element expresses Trump's emotional state and posture, while the text adds depth by specifying his thoughts. Moreover, the text expands on the image. While the visual shows Trump looking upset and pensive, the speech bubbles clarify his reasoning (post-trial relief and plans for relation). The second speech bubble builds on the first, shifting from a benign interpretation of "R & R" (rest and relaxation) to a darker meaning "REVENGE AND RETRIBUTION", creating irony and humor. The text's placement in speech bubbles ensures the audience associates the words directly with Trump, reinforcing his internal monologue.

Cartoon Image No. 6



<https://www.mic.com/articles/90479/the-syrian-presidential-election-summed-up-in-one-devastating-cartoon>

6.6.1 Visual Analysis

In this cartoon image, the direct gaze establishes a 'demand' relationship between Al-Assad and the viewer. The direct eye contact creates a confrontational interactive, as if Al-Assad is addressing the viewer personally with his ultimatum: 'Vote for Al-Assad or face the consequences'. This gaze personalizes the threat, making the viewer feel directly involved or implicated, intensifying the emotional impact. Al-Assad's gaze combines with the threatening context (coffin, text bubble, and election box) to elicit fear, unease, or even defiance from the viewer.

Moreover, Al-Assad's eyes are positioned at the same level as the viewer's; it creates a sense of equal engagement-but in this context and reinforces the intimidation by making the threat feel personal and unavoidable. In addition, a frontal perspective makes the interaction direct and unavailable. Al-Assad's gesture and expression became more confrontational and leave less space for ambiguity. Furthermore, his closeness to the viewer amplifies several interpretations. Al-Assad occupies a large portion of the frame, and the forced to into a metaphorical confrontation with his power and the dire choices presented. This proximity signals the inescapability of his control, making the 'Vote or Die' message more visceral.

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Validity markers are clear in this image. Colour saturation is applied when the intense dark colours in Assad's attire, muted tones for the coffin. This emphasizes authority and grimness. Moreover, the colour contrasting for the two boxes and Al-Assad's figure highlights the dichotomy between 'choice' and punishment. The subtle shading on clothing and texture, boxes, and Al-Assad's gesture add realism and texture to symbolic elements. In addition, the title "SYRIAN ELECTION" and other symbols contextualize the image as a critique of Syrian politics. Al-Assad might be illuminated more brightly than the background, symbolizing his dominance and authoritarian control. The placement of Al-Assad in the foreground and the boxes beside him might create a sense of depth, making the choices appear looming and unavoidable.

6.6.2 Image-Text Relations

The text and image work together in a highly interdependent way to convey meaning. Elaborative relationships clarify the nature of the coercion, with the 'Vote for Al-Assad' box being explicitly tied to his threat and oppressive tactics. Moreover, the extension is seen in the number 14 and the Syrian election text gives specific contextual grounding to the scene, suggesting for the viewer a scene of timing and place. In this image, enhancement occurs when the text and image amplify each other's meaning, specifically through coffin, direct gaze, and implicit threat conveyed by both Al-Assad's visual presence and the words.

Cartoon Image No. 7



<https://www.wrmea.org/2022-november-december/the-world-looks-at-the-middle-east-cartoons.html>

6.7.1 Visual Analysis

In this cartoon image, a direct gaze from Mohammed bin Salman creates a 'demand' image, establishing an interaction between him and the viewer. This demands attention and invites the viewer to engage with his expression and dominant posture. His open mouth (laughing) further emphasizes mockery, reinforcing his confidence and power. Joe Biden, on the other hand, remains the passive figure with no gaze directly towards the viewers. This focuses his defeat and lack of agency in the scene.

The social distance is another sub-section of this level. The image likely uses a medium-close shot, which brings the figures into clear focus while maintaining enough distance to highlight their actions and roles. This medium distance emphasizes the interaction between bin Salman and Biden, rather than inviting emotional proximity to either.

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In the angle section, there are high, low, or eye levels. The cartoon mostly employs a low angle (from vertical angle) to depict bin Salman, showing him as dominant and powerful. Contritely, Biden's position on the ground and inverted posture reinforces his vulnerability and inferiority. This contrast in angles amplifies the power imbalance and aligns with the cartoon's message of dominance. Moreover, the frontal angle here is used when bin Salman is depicted directly facing the viewer. This creates a sense of involvement. So, the viewer is positioned as part of the scene, and specifically through bin Salman's mocking laughter to reinforce control and confidence. On the other hand, Biden is poisoned into oblique angle (not directly looking to the viewer) and this suggests detachment. This can indicate Biden's humiliation from external perspective, amplifying the way of his powerlessness.

Validity markers are important part of interactive level. Firstly, colour saturation is high for bin Salman to emphasizes his dominance through the use of clear colours of Arab clothes. Meanwhile, muted colours for Biden show weakness. Moreover, there are colours differences and modulation of smooth gradients with bin Salman to show dominance. The setting is minimal or symbolic, focusing on the interaction and amplifying the direct critique. In addition, the figures are exaggerated, lowering realism but emphasizing symbolic meaning. Mohammed bin Salman is depicted with brighter and strong light than Biden to reflect dominance and importance. The depth is clear when limited or shallow depth focuses attention on the immediate action and symbolic relationship between the figures.

6.7.2 Image-Text Relations

Moreover, the text and image are unequal and the text "FIRST BUMP DIPLOMACY" and "OPEC OIL CUT" dominates the interpretations of the image. Without the text, the image could be interpreted in several layers of meanings. The text anchors the viewer's thinking of power dynamics to geopolitical issues: the OPEC oil cuts and Biden's failed diplomacy with Saudi Arabia. The image elaborates the text with a dramatic and exaggerated way. Additionally, the title "FIRST BUMP DIPLOMACY" extends the meaning of image by adding irony. It contrasts the diplomatic gestures of a fist bump with the cartoon's depiction of aggression and dominance. The text enhances the image's contextual details about the event it critiques (the U.A-Saudi relationship and energy politics).

Cartoon Image No. 8



<https://www.chappatte.com/en/images/saudia-arabia-looking-for-an-exit>

6.8.1 Visual Analysis

In this image, Mohammed bin Salman's direct look establishes a 'demand' relationship with the viewer. This gaze engages the audience, creating a sense of confrontation or challenge. It implies confidence, authority, and commanding presence, reinforcing his power and central role in the narrative. This direct gaze could also make the viewer uncomfortable, as it forces them to confront the controversial nature of the depicted events.

Furthermore, the medium or long shot portrays bin Salman as a figure of power and authority but not personally relatable. He is distant enough to represent a political leader or institution rather than an individual. This symbolizes how those in positions of authority are often perceived as detached or removed from the realities faced by others, especially regarding justice.

The vertical angle is an important part of this image. The low angle intensifies bin Salman's dominance and control, visually signifying his elevated status. This choice of perspective reinforces the narrative that he holds the reins of power, dictating justice. The combination of a direct gaze and low angle forces the viewer to acknowledge his authority, even as the cartoon critiques it. Moreover, the horizontal angle is frontal; it aligns the viewer directly with the central figure. This alignment creates a feeling of confrontation, as the cartoon demands the audience to judge or engage with the central character. The frontal positioning also places the viewer in the role of a witness, holding the figure accountable for his words and actions.

The validity markers are an important part of the interactive level. The colours are well saturated in this image to emphasize drama and exaggeration, matching the satirical tone of the cartoon. In addition, a stark contrast between the vibrant background and characters may highlight the dissonance between appearance (beautiful setting) and reality (harsh justice and hypocrisy). The contextualization here is presented in the beautiful background which provides a stark contrast to the events depicted, contextualizing the irony. It can symbolize the luxurious setting or idyllic public image of leadership, juxtaposed against the grim realities being addressed (e.g., "Khashoggi") paper. Representation, brightness, illumination and depth are well-presented in this image. The right and bright presentation of bin Salman is here to make him more symbolic and exaggerated character to represent authority and power. The opposite is with the two soldiers and the paper of "Khashoggi" that are in dim or dark position to symbolize secrecy or moral ambiguity or even guilt, aligning with the cartoon's critical tone.

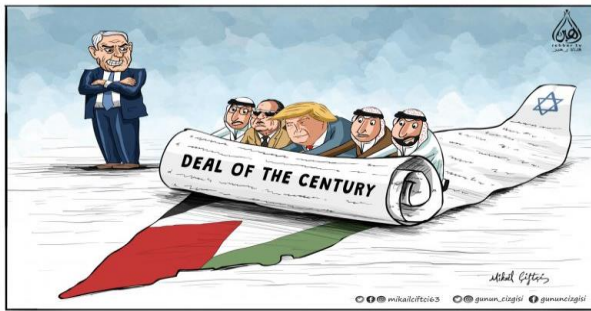
6.8.2 Image-Text Relations

In this cartoon image, the visual and textual elements both carry significant meaning and can stand independently to exist. The image (Mohammed bin Salman sitting on throne, holding the 'Khashoggi' paper, and the soldier arresting another) communicates authority, political power, and critique of justice. The texts (speech bubbles: "... AND SEVERELY DECAPITATED" and "THE CULPRIT IN THIS DESPICABLE ACT WILL BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE") add explicit irony and critique of hypocrisy. However, their full meaning is interdependent, as the text sharpens the satirical tone of the visual and anchors its interpretation. The text in the bubbles clarifies the visual satire. Without the text, the cartoon might be interpreted in various ways, as both "... AND SEVERELY DECAPITATED" and "THE CULPRIT IN THIS DESPICABLE

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ACT WILL BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE" provide insights into hypocrisy of the depicted figure's stance on justice. Similarly, 'Khashoggi' on the paper explicitly names the event of a political opponent figure and shapes the critique in a specific historical political context. In addition, the text extends the meaning of the image by adding layers of irony. The exaggerated speech "... AND SEVERELY DECAPITATED" contrasts with the serene background and formal setting, emphasizing the disconnect between the rhetoric of justice and the reality of violence.

Cartoon Image No. 9



<https://www.cartoonmovement.com/cartoon/deal-century-2>

6.9.1 Visual Analysis

Cartoon image no. 9 represents a kind of offer contact image. The leaders of (Arab Gulf and Egypt) with (Trump, and Netanyahu) do not establish a direct gaze with the viewer, indicting an offer rather than a demand. They present themselves as external actors detached from the viewer, emphasizing the scene's narrative as a political event rather than engaging the viewer emotionally. In this case, the leaders are entirely focused on their activity, ignoring the viewer, which creates a sense of exclusion and detachment. This position of leaders as narrative leaves the viewer as an outsider who observes but cannot influence the scene. Moreover, the leaders' collectively pushing the scroll emphasizes their unity and shared intent. They symbolically pushing the "DEAL OF THE CENTURY" scroll onto the Palestinian flag.

The social distance is another section of the interactive level. All leaders and Netanyahu are likely positioned at a medium distance from the viewer. This means the figures are visible enough to display their actions and body language clearly but are not close enough to feel personal or intimate. This medium distance creates formal or impersonal tone, indicating the political and symbolic significance of the event rather than inviting emotional connection with the characters. Therefore, the viewer is placed as an observer of a larger geographical drama, reinforcing a scene of detachment and powerlessness in the face of these leaders' actions. Moreover, the neutral angle ensures that the viewer observes the leaders' actions without any exaggeration of their authority or dominance, allowing the focus to remain on their activity (pushing scroll onto the Palestinian flag). The slight high angle or neutral angle reinforces a critique of their actions, portraying them as calculated and oppressive. This position is highlighting the dominance and unilateral decision-making of these leaders while emphasizing the lack of involvement or agency for Palestine and the viewer.

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The validity markers are important merits in the interactive level. The colours are highly saturated and this suggests a heightened emotional tone or symbolic exaggeration (e.g. bright Palestinian and Israeli flags) to emphasize their ideological contrast. In addition, the contrast between the Palestinian and Israeli flags is likely sharp to emphasize the political conflict. The leaders' attire like (suits, traditional Gulf dresses), can focus attention on their actions rather than their appearance. Additionally, the scroll that has a modulated colours to make viewers look at three-dimensional adding realism. The detailed background, namely the political setting, would anchor the image in a specific time and place, enhancing realism. Both of the leaders and the scroll appear in clear bright, illuminated and well-depth to support realism and neutrality.

6.9.2 Image-Text Relation

In this image, the phrase "DEAL OF THE CENTURY" integrates the textual and visual elements, anchoring the image's metaphorical and political significance. The scroll serves as a bridge between the visual and textual elements, encapsulating the narrative in a single object. The image depicts a projection relationship between the leaders' actions and the political consequences (Palestine-Israel flags). The spatial arrangement (scroll on the flag) symbolizes cause and effect, suggesting that the leaders' actions directly undermine Palestine's sovereignty in favor of Israel.

Cartoon Image No. 10



<https://times.newsprints.co.uk/26435883-date-14-02-2012-peter-brookes-cartoon-for-the-times-be-mine-syrian-president-bashar-al-assad-holding-a-heart-valentine-s-day-credit-the-times-online-rights-must-be-cleared-by-ni/>

6.10.1 Visual Analysis

Cartoon image no. 10 presents a direct gaze of Bashar Al-Assad which engages the viewer more confrontationally, creating sense of challenge or accusation. In addition, his gaze becomes more menacing with fire, flames, and heavy smoke behind him, reinforcing his association with destruction and chaos. This gaze, combined with the destructive background, could be interpreted as defiance or an assertion of dominance over the ruined landscape.

The distance is a vital section of the interactive level. The fire and smoke in the background suggest devastation and destruction at the national or even global scale. The long distance can create a sense of detachment from chaos, emphasizing its vastness while ensuring the focus on the symbolic actions in the foreground. The medium-shot focuses on Al-Assad to represent a detached relationship with the viewer. The viewer can see his actions (holding the heart) and expressions clearly, but there is a boundary preventing full emotional closeness. The viewer can perceive

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'SYRIA' as a representative symbol of a woman with hijab and handbag rather than an individual person. This semi-detachment conveys her personal death to show a collective suffering.

Another section of the interactive level is the angle. The position of Al-Assad is direct to the viewer and this represents the frontal angle. The frontal angle forces the viewer to engage with his actions (holding the bloody heart) and the moral implications of the destruction in Syria. This makes the cartoon more provocative and emotionally charged. Moreover, there is a low angle and/or frontal angle, emphasizing his dominance, and accountability. His upright posture and direct look reinforce his role as the perpetrator of destruction. Additionally, the woman is positioned at level-angle or at the eye level; it may humanize her more and suggest equality between her and the viewer. This would make the loss feel more personal, but less symbolic of collective suffering.

The colours use can limit the validity markers. Firstly, the fire and smoke in the background likely use saturated reds, orange, blacks and modulated tones to evoke destruction and danger. The woman's body, which is black, has de-saturated tones to reinforce feelings of lifelessness and despair. In addition, the strong contrast between the bright red of the heart and the darkness of the woman's dress create differentiation and focusing attention on the heart as the central symbolic element. The bright illumination might focus on Al-Assad's hand holding the heart, making it a visually dominant element. The fire in the background serves as a secondary source of light, creating a dynamic and chaotic atmosphere. The fire and smoke add depth and scale, showing that the destruction, death and hopelessness.

6.10.2 Image-Text Relation

Firstly, the text bubbles "SYRIA", written on the woman's body directly, identifies her as the symbolic representation of the nation. Without this label, the viewer might not immediately interpret her as metaphor for Syria. Moreover, the phrase "BE MINE!" in Al-Assad's bubble complements his action of holding the bloody heart. It personifies Syria as a possession or object of desire, reinforcing the themes of domination and exploration. Moreover, the label "SYRIA" makes the woman's body explicitly symbolic, clarifying that her lifeless state represents the nation's suffering. The phrase "BE MINE!" provides insight into Al-Assad's intentions, framing his violent actions as an assertion of ownership or control over Syria. This makes his act of holding the bloody heart more than just symbolic violence; it becomes a grotesque form of romanticized possession. The visual element alone conveys themes of violence and destruction. The addition of "BE MINE!" introduces a sinister layer of emotional, manipulation, as it portrays Assad's violence as part of distorted relationship with Syria. This extension shifts the interpretations from physical domination to psychological/symbolic control. The "SYRIA" bubble shifts the woman from an anonymous victim to a direct representation of the nation, making the image more politically charged. Furthermore, the "BE MINE!" bubble adds a level of dark irony, as it juxtaposes the language of affection with acts violence, creating a chilling and provocative critique of Al-Assad's relationship with Syria.

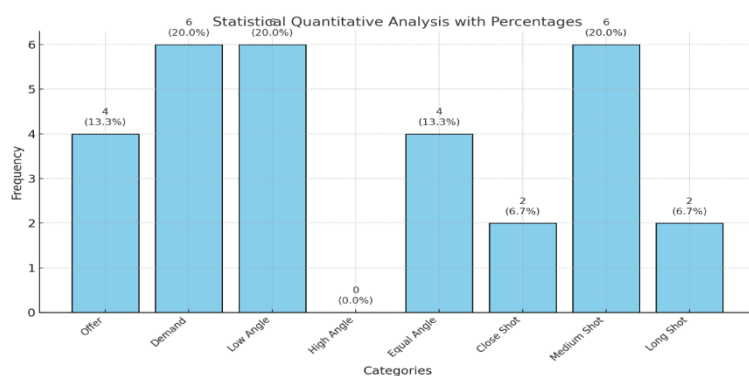
7. Results and Discussion

This section aims discusses the qualitative and quantitative nature of multimodal analysis (the interactive level) and image-text relations of the ten selected cartoons images of (non) Arab leaders from different websites. The following figure demonstrates the frequencies of the sub-sections of the interactive level of the selected cartoons images.

Table 2: The Distribution of the Interactive Sub-categories

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Offer	4	13.33%
Demand	6	20.00%
Low Angle	6	20.00%
High Angle	0	0.00%
Equal Angle	4	13.33%
Close Shot	2	6.67%
Medium Shot	6	20.00%
Long Shot	2	6.67%

Fig. 1: The interactive multimodal categories of the tenth selected cartoons images.



The analysis of the total corpus shows that the difference in gaze types may highlight contrasting leadership perceptions between Arabic (e.g., Mohammed bin Salman and Bashar Al-Assad) and non-Arabic contexts (presented by Trump, Biden and Kim Jong Un, Netanyahu). Firstly, the study shows the use of demand in 6 (20.0%) over 4 (13.3%) in the ten selected cartoon images. The implications seen in (images no. 6, 7, 8, and 10) indicate that that they have demand gazes and that there is an offer (image no. 9). The demand gaze can signify authority, directness, or an appeal to the audience, resonating with culture or political expectations of leadership as commanding and engage. It represents a kind of a criticism or satire of these leaders due to the way the show their desire to assert control and power. In contrast, the fewer instances of demand gaze for non-Arab leaders (2 images; no. 5 and 1) can suggest a less direct communication style or a deliberate choice to convey authority without overemphasis on confrontation or personal engagement.

Offer gazes allow for subtler messaging, focusing on the leaders' environments or abstract values. The singular use of offer gaze could signify contemplation, humility, or a focus on the context rather than direct interaction. This can contrast with the norm, emphasizing the leaders' role in reflecting broader themes or issues. Conversely, the higher prevalence of offer gaze among

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non-Arab leaders could suggest a preference for portraying leadership as thoughtful, strategic, or context-driven. In narrow terms, the use of the gaze depends on culture use. For example, a direct demand might be seen as more authoritative, while in other contexts it might be perceived as aggressive.

Fig. 1 shows 6 (20.0%) low angle over than 4 (13.3%) equal angle. The low angle reflects powerful or dominant positions of the leaders and depicting the viewer is looking up to them. There are cultural differences of using low angle. According to Arabic culture, the low angle reinforces their dominant status and commands respect or submission from viewers. With demand gaze seen in (4 images), the low angle intensifies the sense of direct confrontation and reinforces leaders' commanding presence. Contrariwise, the low angles in the images of the non-Arab leaders also signify power, but with a different tone, when paired with offer gazes (3 images). Instead of direct confrontation, the combination suggests thoughtful, strategic leadership observed from a position of reverence. In these political cartoons, the absence of high angles underscores the consistency to show the authoritative figures. Moreover, the depiction of the equal angle in (4 images) can convey humility, objectivity, or a balanced perspective, contrasting with demand gazes of the other Arab leaders. The equal angle or eye-level angle in non-Arab leaders can emphasize on neutrality, diplomacy, or detachment.

The medium distance, using Kress and van Leeuwen's model of reading images, foresters a sense of neutrality. It shows the cartoons accessible for a wide audience without creating emotional intensity or detachment. Therefore, using 6 (20.0%) as medium distance images have several interpretations. This can indicate a leadership style that balances authority with accessibility, presenting these figures as relatable yet still maintaining a formal relationship, this signifies the Arabic cultures. In the western and non-Arabic culture, medium distance can signal a professional and diplomatic stance, offering clarity while maintain respect for personal boundaries.

Furthermore, the close distance is used in the selected image, as in fig. 1, 2 times of about (6.07%). When depicting the Arab leaders, the close distance can emphasize power, emotional appeal, or direct engagement with the viewer, creating a strong connection. An example is image no.6 where Bashar Al-Assad appears close to the viewer evoking empathy and admiration. Meanwhile, in western and non-Arabic distance, close distance suggests transparency, reliability, or focus on individuality. For example, as seen in image no. (5), Trump's image encourages the viewer to focus on his emotional state, making his frustration the central element of the interaction.

The study also shows that 2 (6.0%) of the selected images are in long distance. In the Arabic culture, this can symbolize detachment, grandeur, or a broader sociopolitical message (e.g., the leader as part of a larger system). A clear example is image no. (8) where Mohammed bin Salman is distant enough to represent a political leader or institution rather than an individual. In contrast, from western point of view, the long distance can indicate formality, professionalism, or focus on leadership from a macro perspective. For example, as shown in image no. (3), the long distance suggests that Trump is fully engaged in his directive, positioning him as a character actively controlling the situation.

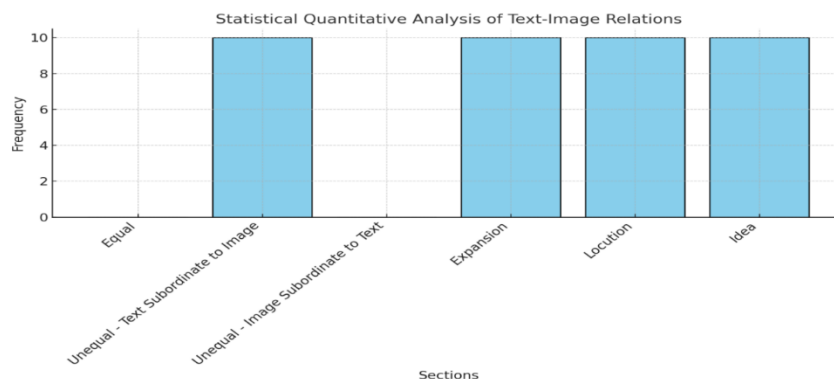
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Validity markers in visual representation can establish realism, emotional tones, and cultural or ideological framing of the image. Satirical or critical images likely employ exaggerated color modulation, abstraction, and stark illumination contrasts. In the selected cartoon images, Arab leaders are depicted with strong saturation, high differentiation, and dramatic illumination, and this evokes emotional engagement or critique of power dynamics. Yet, the non-Arab leaders with subdued palettes and balanced depth can indicate diplomacy. Nevertheless, exaggerated markers in satire could show critique or humor to their leadership.

Table No. 3. Distribution of Numbers of Image-Text Relations

Criterion	Numbers of Images	Percentage
Text subordinate to image	10	100%
Image with project (locution)	10	100%
Image with project (ideas)	10	10%
Equal status images	0	0%

Fig. No. 2: Image-Text Relations in the Tenth Selected Images



The study, as shown in table (2) and fig. no. (2), about 100%, shows that all ten selected cartoon images prioritize the visual mode, which suggests that the cartoons rely heavily on visual elements to communicate the main message. This visual dominance aligns with the nature of political cartoons, where imagery often encapsulates complex ideas quickly and impactfully, while the text supports the message. For example, the image no. 2 of the president pointing can visually represent authority or conflict, while the text adds context.

The study also shows that all the ten selected cartoon images contain expansion features like: enhancement, elaboration, and extension. The study indicates that 10 (100%) images have expansion. The use of expansion features in the cartoon images can differentiate between Arab and non-Arab leaders by highlighting how the text and image interact to convey distinct cultural, political, or contextual narrative. The use of elaboration, which is a type of expansion, can focus on reinforcing symbolic authority or traditional leadership values, in the Arabic tradition. For example, the appearance of Mohammed bin Salman (image no.7) on his traditional chair of kingdom with the text in the paper shows the political opinion of 'Khashoggi' on the paper which explicitly names the event and shapes the critique in a specific historical political context. On the other hand, the non-Arab elaboration focuses on satirical or ironic interpretations of leadership. For example, in image no. (4), the visual shows Trump looking upset and pensive with ironic

shape and the speech bubbles clarify his reasoning (post-trail relief and plans for relation). These features often reflect a democratic culture where critique is normalized.

The study clarifies that the ten images have project (locution and ideas) about 10 (100%) for each image. In idea projection, the text conveys abstract or conceptual interpretations of the image. Concerning the Arab leaders, such idea projection reflects leadership ideology or political goals, often using enhancement for contextual depth. For example, image no. (10) characterizes Bashar Al-Assad using "BE MINE" to reflect dominance and/or violence, while non-Arab leaders lean towards locution projection and extension, highlighting diplomacy or specific policies to add humor or critique. For example, image no. (5) represents Trump using verbal and appears nervous to suit the text of "REVENGE AND RETRIBUTION".

8. Conclusions

The present study has explored the visual and textual dynamics of ten selected cartoon images featuring Arab and non-Arab leaders. This study has addressed how these cartoons images communicate cultural, political and social message. However, the study concludes the following:

1. Visual elements (demand gaze, low angles, formal poses) establish authority and distance. Text expansions elaborate on leadership in domestic or regional contexts, emphasizing tradition and resilience. This is in Arabic culture.
2. Texts support the images' authority, rarely challenging its message, which align with hierarchical cultural norms. The importance of textual and visual interplay in shaping audience interpretations.
3. Visual elements (demanding gazes with medium angles and distance) humanize leaders, showing critique or satire. Text extensions often indicate policies and encouraging critical engagement, this is in western culture.
4. In western culture, cartoons situate leaders within broader international issues, using text and image to provoke thought or humor. The text expands the image's meaning, reflecting egalitarian cultural values.
5. All selected images contain texts subordinate in both contexts, their roles differ. Arabic texts elaborate on existing visuals, while Western text expand and critique.
6. The integration of visual interactive level and image-text relations provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing multimodal communication.
7. The power of cartoons in reflecting cultural and political values is suggestive. In addition to the importance of visual and textual interplay in forming audience interpretations.

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