

## HUMANITY UNFRAMED: A SOCIO-SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL CARTOON ON ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT

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### ABSTRACT

*Israel-Palestine conflict is embedded with multifaceted layers of historical, political, and socio-economic complexities which has led to widespread violence, displacement, and human rights violation. This study conducts a socio-semiotic analysis of a political cartoon published in The Guardian UK newspaper, during The October 7 War, 2023. The aim is to explore how the cartoon portrays the humanitarian crisis in Palestine. Visual and textual elements both within the selected cartoon are scrutinized using Kress and Van Leeuwen's Visual Grammar framework to effectively convey its meaning. This study intends to evoke empathy, critique, and solidarity for the civilians impacted by the crisis, through an in-depth investigation of representational, interactive, compositional and contextual meaning of the cartoon, including modality, perspective and framing techniques used by the cartoonist. The results show that the political cartoons serve as a powerful source of visual communication, condensing intricate political and social matters into concise, frequently satirical, and visually captivating depictions. By unravelling the semiotic resources embedded in the cartoon, this study deepens our understanding of how visual communication influences discourse surrounding the Israel-Palestine conflict and its humanitarian aspect.*

**Keywords:** political cartoon; socio-semiotic analysis; Israel-Palestine conflict; humanitarian crisis; Gaza

### INTRODUCTION

The Israel-Palestine conflict is a long-standing and complex geopolitical struggle. It traces its roots with emergence of Zionism and Arab nationalism in the late nineteenth century that include the Balfour Declaration of 1917, expressing British mandate over Palestine and the establishment of the State of Israel (Waxman, 2019). This triggered the first Arab-Israeli war and displacing hundreds of thousands of Palestinians (Caplan 2019). Sachar (2013) argues that Israel-Palestine history is not a linear progression, but it is a series of contingencies and decisions. Subsequent wars and territorial disputes, such as the 1967 Six-Day War, the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the 1987-1993 First Intifada, and the 2000-2005 Second Intifada have violated the basic rights and dignity of the people living in the region (Pearlman, 2011; Finkelstein, 2018). The conflict has also involved various political and religious actors and movements, such as Split with the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority in the West Bank after a Palestinians resistance movement; In 2006, Hamas emerged winning the Palestinian legislative elections and by 2007, they had seized control of the Gaza Strip (Hroub, 2010). The 2006-2021 Gaza wars, and the October 7 War 2023, have further intensified the humanitarian crises characterized by violence, displacement, and human rights violations.

The October 7 War 2023 has claimed tens of thousands of lives and extensive damage to civilian infrastructure, such as homes, schools, hospitals, and power plants, in both Gaza and Israel (Knell, Berg, & Gritten, 2023; Codish et al., 2024). UN office reported more than 25,000 Palestinians and 4,000 Israelis have been killed since 2000 as a result of the conflict

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(UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs 2024, January 24). The majority of the fatalities were civilians, including many children and women. The conflict has attracted international attention and intervention, as well as diplomatic efforts to achieve a peaceful resolution, such as the UN Security Council Resolution 2712 (United Nations Security Council, 2023), the US-led peace conference (Al Jazeera, 2023), the Qatar-Turkey mediation (Al-Monitor, 2023), the Morocco-Russia initiative (Morocco World News, 2023), and the South Africa case in the ICJ (South Africa Asks ICJ to Help Stop Imminent Tragedy in Gaza; Canada to Resume UNRWA Funding, 2024). The international community's complicity in the face of the crisis and its failure to ensure accountability underscores the integral connection between the conflict's humanitarian aspects and its historical, political, and socio-economic causes and consequences.

Political cartoons are a potent form of visual communication that distills complex political and social issues into concise, often satirical, and visually engaging representations (Conners, 2007). Political cartoons, independently, provide a strong alternative to conventional news reporting by delving into stories and events in ways that ordinary political cartoons cannot achieve (Onwuka & Udoe, 2019). Political cartoons are essential tools that the cartoonists use to address divisive socio-political topics without facing censure from governing authorities. Such media discourse is represented visually through the use of exaggeration, caricatures, historical references, and symbols to convey their message. In his study on pictorial Arab Facebook posts during the Israeli invasion on the Gaza Strip in 2021, Al-Dala'ien et al. (2023) claimed that visual communication might carry implicit signals that require analysis to uncover their underlying symbolic meanings. Additionally, it makes the case that the links made by caricatures between various cues might have important ideological and societal consequences. Analyzing the semiotic resources within these political cartoons as a visual communication is crucial for unraveling the layers of historical, political, and socio-economic meanings conveyed.

The Israel-Palestine conflict serves as a prevalent theme in numerous political cartoons, reflecting diverse perspectives and narratives shaped by the audience, cartoonists themselves, and the platforms where they are published. According to Bourdon & Boudana (2016) political cartoons concerning the Israel-Palestine conflict, visual representations serve as potent tools for conveying complex narratives and socio-political commentary. Through a fusion of visual imagery and textual clues, these cartoons encapsulate the frustration and disillusionment of both Israelis and Palestinians, while also mirroring the polarization and radicalization of their opinions and attitudes, as discussed by Danjoux (2018). Shindler (2023) further underscores that "the cartoonist is not only a commentator but also a participant in the political process" (p.12).

The Guardian UK, a renowned British newspaper with a global readership, holds considerable influence in shaping public opinion on national and international affairs. Political cartoons have been compared to safety canopies that allow newspapers to express ideas that are too difficult to express in straightforward editorials (Mohammed 2014). The political cartoons featured in The Guardian UK offer a distinct perspective through which it portrays its stance on the intricacies of the Israel-Palestine conflict. This study seeks to explore how The Guardian's political cartoons represent and frame the humanitarian crisis in Israel and Palestine. The research questions guiding this study are as follows:

What semiotic resources are employed in the selected political cartoons featured in The Guardian UK on October 27?

How does it represent the humanitarian crisis in Palestine?

To address these questions, the study analyzes a political cartoon published in The Guardian UK newspaper during The October 7 War of 2023. The analysis is grounded in Kress and Van Leeuwen's Visual Grammar framework (2006; 2020) to provide a comprehensive understanding of visual communication. In subsequent sections, the study delves into a detailed socio-semiotic analysis of the selected political cartoon, aiming to shed light on the intricate interplay between visual communication and political discourse surrounding the Israel-Palestine conflict.

### Literature Review

Roland Barthes (1972) is recognized as a pioneering figure in socio-semiotic analysis within media studies, especially for his use of this method to analyze photographic imagery. He introduced a nuanced understanding of signs, delineating two layers of meaning: denotation, representing the surface or literal meaning, and connotation, which delves into deeper, implied meanings influenced by cultural context, authorial intent, and audience interpretation (Chandler, 2000; Allen, 2001; Cobley, 2014). The most overtly political component of Barthes's output is his "mythology," or myth analysis. Discourse-analysis in media studies is a direct descendant of Barthes' work on myths from journalistic and political domains (Robinson, 2011). Semiotic analysis is the study of signs, including words, images, sounds, gestures, and objects, as developed by Roland Barthes. Using this paradigm, Dianiya (2020) exposes and critiques the prevailing ideas and power structures such as those pertaining to nationalism, capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy in the Parasite movie media representation. Pervasive presumptions and prejudices that affect how audiences perceive media communication are also challenged by embedded ideologies in semiotic resources.

Stuart Hall (1980; 2018) has also made significant contributions to socio-semiotic analysis in media studies with his encoding/decoding model of communication. Departing from simplistic views of media effects, Hall proposed three possible audience positions in decoding media texts: dominant, negotiated, or oppositional. A dominant reading aligns with the intended meaning of the text, a negotiated reading adapts it to fit one's perspective, and an oppositional reading rejects it in favor of an alternative interpretation (Hall et al., 1980). This model emphasized the active role of audiences in interpreting media texts and highlighted the variability of interpretations based on social and cultural contexts, experiences, and expectations (Pillai, 1992). This offers a dynamic understanding of media communication and fostering critical engagement of diverse audience.

Political cartoons and visual communication share a symbiotic relationship, leveraging the power of images to convey potent messages on pressing political issues. Alhasnawi and Radhi (2023) concludes that political cartoons use in protest posters as a humor anecdote matter more than they seem to. They dig deeper into the analysis of specific social issues spanning a lengthy history, surpassing the creative or aesthetic qualities of design and content. In this way, the intended meaning of humor discourses extends beyond. Chen, Phiddian, & Stewart (2017) asserts that editorial cartoons serve as cultural mirrors that influence viewers' perceptions in order to remark on notable political individuals and events through caricatures, analogies, and parodies. A study on how the Ukrainian President Zelensky is portrayed in memes and cartoons demonstrates that the most common humor strategies used by verbal and non-verbal elements are satire, association contradiction, parody, and narration (Semotiuk & Shevchenko, 2023). Analyzing political cartoons using multimodal methods reveals their complex use of signs and meanings to communicate

political messages and opinions (Lennon & Kilby, 2021), shaping public opinion and raising awareness, particularly in public health advocacy (Ashfaq & Russomanno, 2022). Political cartoons and pocket cartoons, in particular, provide a way to convey complex social and political commentary through visual illustrations. The reception of these cartoons varies depending on the gender and age of the viewer and includes political commentary as well as romantic anecdotes, which are particularly popular among women (Dunbar and Stirling-Middleton, 2024). Overall, political cartoons play a crucial role in shaping public opinion and fostering awareness, tapping into the emotions and values of their audience.

Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006; 2020) established seminal work on visual communication, providing a valuable lens for analyzing visual media discourse. This includes three dimensions: representational meaning, interactive meaning, and compositional meaning. In visual discourses, representational meaning encapsulates the core elements of events, participants, actions, settings, and other multimodal resources, while interactive meaning focuses on how the visual discourse interacts and engages the viewer. Analyzing features such as proximity, angle, gaze, and the dynamics of demand and offer within the visual discourse offers a valuable perspective for discussing the appeal and effectiveness of visual communication. Compositional meaning pertains to how the visual text is organized to form a unified and cohesive piece. It involves layout, framing, alignment, balance, and the integration of visual elements. Information value plays a role in the placement of these elements. These dimensions of meanings can further be assessed through contextual meaning that relates the visual text to its social, cultural, historical, and ideological context. It considers genre, purpose, audience, occasion, and intertextuality (connections to other texts or media).

Previous research on political cartoons and their impact on public opinion has explored various aspects, such as their historical development and evolution (Sani et al., 2014), their stylistic and thematic features (Baumgartner, 2008), their cognitive and affective effects on the audience, their ethical and legal issues, and their comparative and cross-cultural analysis. However, there is a gap in the literature concerning the specific focus on The Guardian's political cartoons and the Israel-Palestine humanitarian crisis, using a multimodal approach that examines how the visual and verbal elements of the cartoons communicate meaning and ideology about the crisis. The study discusses the implications and limitations of political cartoons as a form of media discourse and social observation on Israel-Palestine conflict.

### **Methodology**

This study adopts a qualitative research design for the analysis of the political cartoon. The qualitative research design is considered appropriate for analyzing the complex meanings conveyed through the semiotic resources within the political cartoon. The cartoon under analysis is sourced from The Guardian's official online archives. A systematic sampling technique is utilized to ensure the cartoon's representativeness, concerning humanitarian crisis in Palestine.

Data Analysis



The cartoon, created by Ben Jennings and dated 26.10.2023 (Jennings, 2023) is about the Israel-Palestine war. In the illustration, four figures sit around a big red table. Their plates and glasses are empty. Only their upper bodies are visible, set against a backdrop of cracked, desolate ground with no sky and a looming shadow of a missile overhead. A speech bubble above the figures reads: “IT LOOKS LIKE WE WON’T BE HUNGRY FOR MUCH LONGER...”.

**REPRESENTATION MEANING OF THE CARTOON**

The cartoon vividly depicts four individuals attired in traditional garments, subtly referring to their Arab Muslim Palestinian identity and civilian status. They are unarmed, seated around a large oval-shaped red table, with the presence of a missile shadow casting over their heads. This stark contrast between defenseless civilians and the alarming shadow of the missile signifies the power asymmetry and oppression between military operations and the plight of civilians, symbolizing their vulnerable state amidst conflict.

The scene depicted in the cartoon paints a grim picture of desolation, characterized by cracked ground, rubble, and an absence of sky, evoking a sense of hopelessness and despair. The barren landscape serves as a poignant metaphor for the harsh realities of drought, famine, and environmental degradation, reflecting the lack of prosperity and optimism for war-affected civilians. This portrayal underscores the severity and urgency of the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Palestine, emphasizing the need for immediate attention and assistance.

The cartoon establishes a clear dynamic of power imbalance between the military missile’s shadow and the civilians below. The missile looms higher without any identifiable markings, while the civilians are depicted lower, overshadowed and defenseless. Their averted gazes convey a sense of resignation and helplessness in the face of overwhelming

force, highlighting the asymmetry and injustice inherent in the situation. The absence of specific national identity associated with the missile suggests a broader commentary on the nature of warfare and its indiscriminate impact on civilian populations.

The perspective of the cartoonist is conveyed through the use of sarcasm and exaggeration, evident in the civilians' fearful expressions and the ambiguous identity of the missile. Through this visual language, the cartoonist prompts viewers to critically reflect on the humanitarian crisis, particularly within the context of Palestine. Contrary to a literal interpretation, the cartoon invites empathy towards the plight of civilians and raises questions about the role of military interventions in exacerbating their suffering. The perspective of the cartoonist is also implied by the use of imagery and symbolism. The cartoon serves as an indictment of the injustices perpetuated in conflict zone that is Palestine.

The modality of the cartoon is significant because it is representing a realistic yet exaggerated picture of the humanitarian crisis in Palestine. The cartoon uses naturalistic colors, shapes, and details to create a sense of realism and authenticity. However, the cartoon also uses distortion, exaggeration, and symbolism to create a sense of irony and critique. The cartoon thus conveys a high degree of truthfulness or realism, but also a high degree of attitude or evaluation.

**TABLE 1:** Representational Meaning of the Cartoon

Feature	Semiotic Resources
Participants	Four civilians wearing traditional attire
Actions	The shadow of a military missile over the civilians seated around a red table with empty plates and glasses
Setting	A barren destructive landscape, cracked ground, rubble and no sky
Relations	The shadow of a military missile positioned higher and closer to the viewer, while the civilians positioned lower and over shadowed
Perspectives	The civilians with averted gazes and fearful expressions, and the military operations with a sarcastic or ominous statement
Modality	The naturalistic colours, the distortion, exaggeration, imagery and symbolism

### INTERACTIVE MEANING OF THE CARTOON

The cartoon establishes contact with the viewer through a speech bubble containing text that directly addresses the viewer, reading: "IT LOOKS LIKE WE WON'T BE HUNGRY FOR MUCH LONGER..." This statement is interpreted as sarcastic and ominous, inviting the viewer to engage with the cartoon and infer its meaning and intention. The medium distance shot used in the cartoon shows the upper bodies of the four participants and the table, fostering a feeling of involvement and closeness between the viewer and the participants, as well as realism and detail. This distance also allows viewers to perceive the expressions and emotions of the participants and contrasts them with their surroundings.

A horizontal angle is employed, placing the viewer at the same level as the civilians, fostering a sense of equality and neutrality, as well as objectivity and observation. This angle reveals the relations and perspectives of the civilians and highlights the power imbalance between them and other objects. The civilians' averted gazes, avoiding direct eye contact with the viewers but fixed on the missile above them conveys a sense of detachment and fear. This highlights how the civilians feel disconnected from the outside world, their attention consumed by threat of military operations. It emphasizes their isolation and the overwhelming impact of military operations which hijack their daily lives and concerns.

The cartoon displays a mixture of demand and offer modes, with the shadow of the missile in demand mode, demanding the viewers to respond and react, while the civilians are in offer mode, offering the viewers to observe and interpret. The speech bubble is also in a demand mode for viewers' engagement and questioning. The cartoon cleverly employs salience to instantly grab viewers' attention, highlighting key elements such as striking bright red table, the untagged shadow of the missile and the prominent speech bubble. Against the dark background, the red table stands out, symbolizing bloodshed and violence, drawing immediate focus. The shadow cast by the missile adds a sense of danger and oppression, provides an overall impact of the cartoon. Meanwhile, the speech bubble invites interpretation and initiates a dialogue, infused with irony and sarcasm. These elements work together to invite viewers to contemplate the deeper meanings portrayed in the cartoon.

**TABLE 2:** Interactive Meaning of the Cartoon

Feature	Semiotic Resources
Contact	A speech bubble with text that directly addresses the viewer
Distance	A medium distance shot that shows the upper bodies of the four participants and the table
Angle	A horizontal angle that places the viewer at the same level as the civilians
Gaze	Averted gazes that avoid eye contact with the viewer but look at the missile above them
Demand or offer	A mixture of demand and offer modes that require or allow the viewer to respond, observe, or engage with the visual elements
Salience	The red table, the shadow of missile, and the speech bubble, which draw the viewer's attention and focus

### THE COMPOSITIONAL MEANING OF THE CARTOON

The cartoon divides the visual content into distinct horizontal zones. The upper zone is dedicated to the speech bubble, while the lower zone accommodates the depicting of four civilians and a big red table. This deliberate division creates a visual hierarchy, directing viewers' attention first to the speech bubble and then to the civilians below. Such kind of structured layout enhances meaning within each zone and allow an easy comprehension of the cartoon's intended message. Similarly, a thin black border surrounding the speech bubble serves multiple purposes. Firstly, it provides a sense of containment and completeness. Secondly, it enhances the aesthetic appeal yet isolating the cartoon from its surrounding that draws focus of the viewers' solely on the content. Additionally, the border acts as a visual cue, guiding the viewers' gaze towards the central message conveyed within the speech bubble. Horizontal alignment, which places the four participants, shadow of missile and the table along the same horizontal axis creates equality and neutrality, alongside a sense of objectivity and observation. The alignment also creates a sense of connection and interaction, as it shows the relation and perspective of the civilians.

The cartoon effectively blends visuals and text to form a cohesive narrative. It achieves integration by using the speech bubble to connect the text and the image, creating a dialogue and conveying message. A scene and a situation are also created by integrating the red table to link the players with the environment.

The strategic placement of elements within the visual text serves as the key to conveying its meaning and ideology. Notably, the positioning of the speech bubble and missile at the top, contrasted with the participants and the table placed at the bottom, creates a dichotomy between ideal and real information. The top side symbolizes threat and general

information, while the bottom side signifies concrete or specific details. This arrangement implies that the speech bubble and missile constitute the central theme or message of the cartoon, while the participants and the table serve as supporting evidence.

Furthermore, the placement of the red table and the missile shadow at the center, with the participants and the setting at the margins, establishes a sense of centrality and periphery in the information hierarchy. The center represents the most crucial or prominent information, whereas the margins convey secondary or less important details. Consequently, this setup suggests that the red table and the missile shadow function as symbols and metaphors of the humanitarian crisis in Israel and Palestine, while the participants and the setting exemplify manifestations of the crisis.

**TABLE 3:** Compositional Meaning of the Cartoon

Feature	Semiotic Resources
Layout	A rectangular layout that divides the visual text into two horizontal zones
Framing	A thin black border that frames the visual text
Alignment	A horizontal alignment that places the four participants, shadow of missile and the table along the same horizontal axis
Balance	A symmetrical balance that places the military missile above the civilians and table, and the red table and the missile at the centre of the composition
Integration	A combination of visual and verbal elements, such as the speech bubble, the red table, and the missile
Information value	The placement of the visual elements in relation to the page or screen, such as top and bottom, and centre and margin

### THE CONTEXTUAL MEANING OF THE CARTOON

The cartoon falls within the genre of political satire, aiming to raise awareness and provoke discussion about the humanitarian crisis in Israel and Palestine, which has resulted in significant civilian casualties, injuries, and a lack of basic services and resources. CNN reported that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) announced an expansion of ground operations in the Gaza Strip, operating forcefully on all fronts to fulfill its goals in the war with Hamas (CNN, 2023). This development occurred amidst heavy airstrikes, with Gaza residents describing the impact of the attacks. Mobile phone service was completely down, and a substantial ground offensive had been anticipated. The international community faced mounting pressure to facilitate desperately needed humanitarian aid into Gaza, which, despite initial deliveries of food, water, and medicine, lacked essential fuel, paralyzing aid operations. Additionally, the cartoon seeks to criticize or condemn the role of the military and the arms trade in exacerbating the crisis, while expressing sympathy or solidarity with the civilians affected by it.

The intended audience of the cartoon is the readers of The Guardian UK, a British daily newspaper that covers national and international news, politics, culture, and sports. The Guardian is the most read quality news publisher in the UK, with a record 35.6 million adults accessing Guardian journalism across both digital and print formats on average per month. The cartoon assumes that the audience is familiar with the context and the background of the humanitarian crisis in Israel and Palestine, and that they share the cartoonist's perspective and values.



The occasion of the cartoon is the ongoing conflict and violence between Israel and Hamas. The cartoon was published on October 27, 2023, shortly after Israel declared to continue assault on Palestine. On October 27, Lynn Hastings, the UN's humanitarian coordinator for Palestine, stated that Israel opposed the delivery of humanitarian aid to northern Gaza. As a result, UN staff would need to risk their own lives if it was determined that such aid would be "lifesaving" to people in need. Israel's subsequent declaration of war against Hamas has further worsened the humanitarian situation in Gaza, where more than two million Palestinians live under a blockade by Israel. Over 7,000 Palestinians have been killed since October 7, including almost 3,000 children, according to the Gaza Health Ministry. In some cases, bombs have turned entire blocks and even large areas into rubble. On October 27, Lynn Hastings stated that Israel opposed the delivery of humanitarian aid to northern Gaza, putting lives at risk.

The source of the cartoon is Ben Jennings, a British cartoonist and illustrator. Jennings is known for his distinctive style and his sharp commentary on political and social issues. The cartoon under discussion is published in *The Guardian UK* on October 26, 2023 (Jennings, 2023).

The red table is an intertextual reference to the Red Cross, an international humanitarian organization that provides assistance and protection to victims of armed conflict and other emergencies. The red table symbolizes the humanitarian aid and the medical care that are needed and demanded by the people in Gaza, as well as the bloodshed and the suffering that are caused by the war. The U.N. humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths described the situation as catastrophic, and the World Health Organization warned that the convoy could only address a fraction of the escalating health needs in Gaza (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2023). At least 20 humanitarian aid workers lost their lives during the intense fighting, further hampering relief efforts (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2024). The cartoon contrasts the red table with the empty plates and the cracked ground, indicating the scarcity and the hardship that the people in Gaza face, as well as the failure or the inadequacy of the humanitarian response.

The shadow of the missile without significant reference any army is an intertextual reference to the arms trade, the global business of buying and selling weapons and military equipment. The shadow symbolizes that not one missile operations are involved, their role and the responsibility of the arms suppliers and the arms buyers in fueling the crisis and the violence in Israel and Palestine, as well as the profit and the interest that they gain from the war. Al-Haq, a Palestinian human rights organization, and the UK-based Global Legal Action Network (Glan) have applied for a judicial review of the UK government's export licenses for the sale of British weapons capable of being used in Israel's actions in Gaza (Abdul, 2023; Al-Haq, 2023; Global Legal Action Network, 2024). The U.S. commitment includes sending Iron Dome air-defense missiles, small diameter bombs, and JDAM kits which convert unguided bombs into GPS-guided weapons to Israel (Robertson, Harris, & Judson, 2023). The Biden administration has additionally asked Congress for an extra \$14 billion to supply air and missile defense assistance and replenish U.S. military reserves provided to Israel (Mascaro, 2023). The cartoon criticizes or condemns the arms trade by showing its impact and its contrast with the humanitarian situation, as well as by placing it at the center of the composition, implying its centrality and its importance in the conflict.

The cartoon addresses the dire circumstances faced by civilians amidst conflict. The phrase "IT LOOKS LIKE WE WON'T BE HUNGRY FOR MUCH LONGER..." also suggests that their suffering will soon come to an end when they die as a result of the ongoing

catastrophe, a foreboding event. It draws attention to the desperation of those trapped in conflict and their unmet basic requirements of livelihood.

## Conclusion

The cartoon's insight deftly conveys the difficult situation that citizens in the midst of the Israel-Palestine conflict experience, while also hinting at the potentially disastrous consequences. Moreover, it effectively conveys the seriousness of the humanitarian issue inside this conflict by evoking feelings of empathy, critique, and sympathy with those impacted through vivid imagery and startling contrasts. This study greatly advances our knowledge of how semiotic representations and visual communications impact conversations on intricate geopolitical disputes. Additionally, it offers important insights into the challenges of depicting socio-political concerns in visual media by illuminating the complex interactions between visual components, symbols, and framing strategies.

## Acknowledgement

We remember Hind Rajab (Bilal, 2024), a little Palestinian girl who we sadly lost in the Palestine conflict. When an Israeli tank opened fire on the car Hind and her family were escaping in, Hind was the only one who survived. Later on, she passed away. Hind's fortitude and resiliency in the face of hardship serve as a potent reminder of the terrible human cost of war and the pressing need for peace. Her bravery and tenacity motivated us to work toward a future in which losses like these are unheard of.

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