

Afghan Conflict in Religio-Political Editorial Cartoons Published in Pakistani Newspaper: A Semiological Discourse Analysis

*Ali Furqan Syed*¹

*Muhammad Akram Khan*²

*Rahila Sarwar*³

Abstract:

Newspaper editorial cartoons say what written or verbal discourse structures find much difficulty in conveying that is somewhere remained hidden. For these caricatures have their symbolic and metaphorical significance and having social and ideological meanings, influence the opinion of common masses as strongly as any other genre can. The purpose of this research tries to decode the semiotic discourses of chosen caricatures from Dawn newspaper with focus on the representation of Afghan conflict from July 2020 to September 2021 aiming to look into how the current Afghanistan situation is depicted discursively in Dawn newspaper semiotics and the ideological distinctions in the published portrayals of Afghanistan. Five religio-political editorial cartoons by the cartoonist Zahoor, were purposively selected. Print media semiotic discourses play a vital role in developing particular ideologies, for the analysis of selected cartoons the qualitative research approach is applied. The paper utilizes Fairclough's 3D model⁴ of critical discourse analysis and the Barthes' model of semiotic analysis⁵. A step-by-step analysis is being carried out. The researchers have come to the conclusion that distinct components of the Afghānistān crisis and the US withdrawal are shared by Dawn newspaper. It was also found from the study that Dawn newspaper reflected the ongoing turmoil in Afghānistān through semiotics where situation was so delicate and unpredictable. It has also been portrayed that the world community getting lightly and not taking appropriate measures to extinguish the fire. Religio-political issues like Jihād and the dressing code of afghan Taliban was also discussed in the editorial cartoons. It is concluded that different ideologies, like sociocultural, political and religious ideologies besides ideology of power, discrimination, and capitalism have been presented very effectively through the dawn newspaper's religio-political discourse.

Keywords: *Critical Discourse Analysis, Barthes' Model of Semiotics, Afghān conflict, social and ideological meaning*

¹. Lecturer, University of Sialkot, Sialkot, Pakistan

². MPhil Scholar, SSE(English), Government High School Sawans, Mianwali

³. MPhil Scholar The University of Lahore, Sargodha Campus, Sargodha, Pakistan

⁴. Fairclough, Norman. "Discourse and text: Linguistic and Intertextual Analysis Within Discourse Analysis." *Discourse & society* 3, no. 2 (1992): 193-217

⁵. Barthes, Roland. "Mythologies. Paris: Editions du Seuil." *NO-SPIN ZONES* 17 (1957).

Introduction

With the final flight out of Kābul, the United States officially terminated its military presence in Afghānistān, capping two decades of American participation sparked by the September 11 terrorist attacks. General Kenneth McKenzie announced the US military exit and evacuation of American citizen from Afghānistān. Since August 14, more than 123,000 individuals have been hustled out of America's longest conflict. Last week, a suicide bomber near Kābul's airport killed 13 US service men, bringing the Ṭālibān's approach to Kābul to a halt. Every country's national and international media reflect the devastating effects of the Afghān conflict, and newspaper semiotics departments provide semiotics on it. This research tries to decode semiotic discourses by combining critical discourse analysis with semiotic analysis approaches. The semiotics of Dawn newspapers is the focus of the research.

Since ancient times, amalgamation of art and literature is the only contributor in life. Drawing, sketching and painting are different forms of art from the classical times which proved very useful to evaluate as well as study criticism. The pictures of caves have been used to save and unfold past through drawings and sketches then technique of allegory was utilized as shadowy images of the past. With the evolution of human civilization, art also evolved to many political and social domains. Greek literature introduced tragedy as well as comedy then symbolic art in which political caricatures or cartoons were also included. Mesopotamian civilization highlighted caricatures to satirize politicians of that time in 360 B.C. Social, political and economic instability was also portrayed through cartoons. It developed a marvelous form of criticism. The symbols were helpful to highlight even the sensitive issues. Many linguistic theories emerged in art and criticism to enhance the importance of making cartoons in the later part of 20th century. The idea of 'signification' was introduced by Ferdinand De Saussure¹ later on elaborated critically and theoretically by others. Semiotics is a science where life is studied through signs in society called semiology.² A social cartoon represents language in de-naturalized way "Saussure argue³. To him, hidden message can be conveyed through cartoons. Ḥassān & Dzekiria added to the 'signification' discipline a new phenomenon 'semiology' or 'semiotics'. He insisted that the interpretation of sign-based behaviors of men can be a significant feature of semiology. At lexical and symbolic level verbal and visual practices are utilized for interpreting different semiotic

¹ De Saussure, Ferdinand. "Nature of the linguistic sign." *Course in general linguistics* (1916): 65-70.

¹ <https://www.dawn.com/authors/1521/zahoor>

² Azīz, Asma' 'Abdul, Meḥmūd Ul Ḥassan Hassan, Hisham Dzakiria, and Qaisar Mahmood. "Growing trends of using mobile in english language learning." *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 9, no. 4 (2018): 235-235.

³ De Saussure, Ferdinand. "Nature of the linguistic sign." *Course in general linguistics* (1916): 65-70.

discourses prevailing in the society.¹ Linguistic and metalinguistic proficiency is essential in unrevealing any semiotic discussion. Political cartoons are satiated with social and cultural allusions. Cartoons can be used as a remarkable technique for satire (either comic or corrosive), allegory, humor, similitude, amusement and recreation²

Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

1. To look into how the current Afghān conflict is depicted discursively in Pākistāni religio-political Editorial cartoons published in the newspapers
2. To investigate the ideological differences through semiotic presentation of religio-political editorial cartoons Published in Pākistāni newspapers

Research Questions:

1. How has the current Afghān situation been conveyed discursively in religio-political semiotics published in Pakistani newspapers?
2. How are the ideological differences depicted in the religio-political semiotics related to Afghān conflict published in Pākistāni Newspapers?

Delimitation

This research paper is limited to Semiotic discourse analysis of Dawn national newspaper. Semiotics are selected from July 2020 to September 2021 on Afghānistān crisis arises with US troops swift withdrawal.

Literature review

Kangira and Mwelundila said that print media semiotic discourse has its own place and it can attract the people more than written words. It contains cluster of meanings and cultural context. In addition to proving humor, it criticizes politicians and government as well. The other important trait of political cartoons is that they provide us understandings about social, political and religious values. In a humoring way they uncover the social evils in society. The criticism through these cartoons is very sharpest and shortest. With the help of this technique the duality of people is unveiled. They considered as language in graphic form and important themes they shared with culture and politics³

¹ Tsakona, Villy. "Humor and image politics in parliamentary discourse: A Greek case study." (2009): 219-237.

² Hassan, Mehmood Ul, and Hisham Dzakiria. "The University Students' Beliefs towards Corrective Feedback in Learning English as Foreign Language in Pakistan." *International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering*, 8 (3) (2019): 4094-4100.

³ Mwelundila, Rauna, and Jairo Kangira. "An Analysis of Rhetoric and Humour in Dudley's Political Cartoons Published in the Namibian Newspaper in 2012." *International Journal of Research* 63 (2015)

A sign is generally understood to be "something that represents the value of another." Chandler quotes Umberto Eco as saying, "Semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign."¹ The study of medical signs began in Hippocrates' time, which was after Galen's time, in 129 CE. Stoics appear to be the first to develop a theory of signs. Theologian Hippo and philosopher Avicenna developed sign theory in mediaeval times. Both Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Peirce's semiotic theories are interconnected. Contemporaries founder of the semiotics theory. Signs carry the form of images, flavors, actions, words sounds and events. Peirce claims that nothing is sign but it is demonstrated as sign. Daniel Chandler typifies the model of sign as sign represent three things. These three things are meaning, sense and reference. Language is a system of signs and based on idea of signified and signifier.so signified is taken as meaning²

When it comes to signs, there are countless ideologies and meanings attached to them. The study of sign language necessitates familiarity with the system of linguistic signs as well as an attitude toward those signs and their connotations. The use of symbolic and sign language has been linked to semiotics in various fields of study. Newspapers make use of symbols and signs to illustrate ideas and ideologies. Many scholars from all over the world have studied the signs' discourse and published their findings.³

Borstin argue that people attracted towards images rather than written something written . Socio political cartoons are regarded as a tool of ideological communication. He says that word-picture relation is more appropriate and is being practice in print media. According to his point of view today people are attracted to visuals signs that carry some dominant traits for a common man. They have better understanding according to their intellectual level⁴.

According to Kangira and Mwetulundila's media sign language discourse study, print media discourses have a unique command and can captivate an audience without using words. These sign discourses have a slew of subtextual meanings hidden in plain sight. When people discussed newspaper cartoons, they demonstrated that these symbols aid in clarifying social conditions in our time. They make fun of societal problems in a lighthearted manner while also presenting the facts through cartoons. Newspaper sign discourse is viewed as graphic

¹ Chandler, D. "Semiotics: The Basics 2nd edition Routledge." *New York* (2007).

² Chandler, Daniel. "Codes." In *Semiotics*, pp. 176-222. Routledge, 2017.

³ Eco, U. "The Role of the Reader (London, Hutchinson)." (1979)

⁴Boorstin, Daniel, and M. de Reals. "L'image ou ce qu'il advint du rêve américain." *Revue Française de Sociologie* 4, no. 3 (1963): 359.

language that communicates important cultural, political, and social issues.¹ Media Semiotics is a source of information and communication. Their basic aim is to aware and educate people about this specific phenomenon².

Sapir claimed that every motif of cultural consequence and lay man act of behavior is depends upon communication absolutely Language is a basic mean of communication including verbal and non-verbal way of communication and the other one is semiotics. So, it is not likely say good that people only communicate with verbal or non-verbal communication but they also use language of signs and symbols. Meta-linguistics introduced this concept of language in our life more precisely³

Van Leeuwen postulated that studying the semiotics of newspapers can give people a better understanding of society's social realities. Social, cultural, and economic realities all contribute to the emergence of new semiotic discourses. There are new dimensions and prospects for social reality determined by this semiotics⁴.

VanDijk explains his view about representation of images formation with the help of media is a way of addressing these ideologies properly. Ṭālibān got charge of Afghān Government and brought change in every dimension of people that can be viewed through media as this news broadcaster rapidly through different news channels and cartoons formation in newspapers⁵.

Aljamālī and Ḥussain say that the concept of semiotics in this field of study is very broader. The semiotics of social media was observed and reported. This study involved interviewing 1150 people to learn about their perspectives on the sudden shift in Afghān territory and the role of the media in this context⁶. Kress and Leeuwen's semiotics theory was used to investigate signs and symbols theoretically. The study's goal was to shed light on significant semiotic patterns associated with the Afghān government. In their opinion, semiotics has done well for people, as seen by their positive responses to these signals.⁷

El Falaky studied the editorial cartoons draw out from an Egyptian newspaper Al-Ahrām. The analysis probed how cartoons and images were used to make preference ideologist

¹ Mwetulundila, Rauna, and Jairo Kangira. "An Analysis of Rhetoric and Humour in Dudley's Political Cartoons Published in the Namibian Newspaper in 2012." *International Journal of Research* 63 (2015)

² Al-Khresheh, M., Ahmad Khaerurrozikin, and A. Zaid. "The efficiency of using pictures in teaching speaking skills of non-native Arabic beginner students." *Universal Journal of Educational Research* 8, no. 3 (2020): 872-878.

³ Sapir, Edward. "An Introduction to the Study of Speech." *Language* 1 (1921).

⁴ Van Leeuwen, Theo. "Towards a Semiotics of Typography." *Information Design Journal* 14, no. 2 (2006): 139-155.

⁵ Van Dijk, Teun A. *Ideology: A multidisciplinary approach*. Sage, 1998.

⁶ Hussein, Ahmed T., and Lina Nabil Aljamali. "COVID-19 Humor in Jordanian Social Media: A socio-semiotic Approach." *Heliyon* 6, no. 12 (2020): e05696.

⁷ Kress, Gunther, and Theo Van Leeuwen. "Colour as a semiotic mode: notes for a grammar of colour." *Visual communication* 1, no. 3 (2002): 343-368.

analyst used their perceptible method of Kress and Leeuwen¹ The research divulged that with the use of multimodal contents the editors of newspaper engraved their favorite ideological and political posture on the individuals in the repressing time of cultural and social disruption. Data was gathered by the researcher from publications such as Dawn and The Economist. Incorporating Fairclough's critical discourse analysis and Barthes' semiotic analysis model resulted in a hybrid model of analysis. Using semiotics, the researcher found that chosen newspapers discussed Covid-19 and its long-term effects in cultural and social practice. According to the findings, both The Economist and Dawn actively sought to persuade readers to exercise care.²

This research examines the semiotic discourses in Dawn Newspaper editorial cartoons. The next section provides an overview of the study's theoretical foundations.

Theoretical Background

According to Machin³, Every image has connotes and denotes at the same time. Connotation is a deeper meaning that is based on social, historical, and cultural context. Denotation is a dictionary or literal meaning that merely conveys the surface meaning. Any image can be subjected to a multimodal analysis that takes into account the following factors: participants, size, gaze, settings, objects, and pose. In any image, a person or participant can be identified based on their personal characteristics such as their dress sense, disposition, and manner of speech toward the audience. In photographs, objects have connotative meanings that reveal a deeper meaning than the one that is immediately apparent. There is usually an implicit connotation to them because they present a distinct context in which a participant or individual takes place. To describe a specific period, occasion, or symbolise a thought or an idea effectively, an image's context must be considered. Photographic settings are more common than narrative settings.

A distinctive setting can be used by cartoonists or photographers to illustrate their point of view or philosophy. Body language reveals a person's personality, as well as their lifestyle and ideals. Different body movements, such as controlled, less controlled, hard, and soft, are used to describe a person's personality and ideas. The participants' and objects' large, medium, and tiny sizes are also noted, as they reflect the significant and less important aspects, respectively, according to the situation. The font size of bold and small letters in

¹ Kress, Gunther, and Theo Van Leeuwen. "Colour as a semiotic mode: notes for a grammar of colour." *Visual communication* 1, no. 3 (2002): 343-368.

² El-Falaky, May Samir. "Caricaturing Two Revolutions: Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Egyptian Political Cartoons." (2019).

³ Machin, David, and Theo Van Leeuwen. *Global media discourse: A critical introduction*. Routledge, 2007.

photographs or images is also considered. These letters and words explain the most significant or least important occurrence, either implicitly or directly. The interaction angle of the participant is examined to determine whether it is upward, downward, or vertical. Machin¹ distinguished between two types of gaze in pictures: offer and demand. Participants in the offer image do not look directly at the viewers and do not form any friendly relationships. Participants in the demanding image maintain a direct stare on the audience and establish a friendly and confident contact with them. Both demand and offer images are explained in terms of their social and historical settings.

Methodology

Qualitative research methods can help with data interpretation by providing analytical insights. The study is also qualitative one, and the analysis was done using the descriptive approach to analyse semiotics linked to critical discourse and semiological analysis, the critical discourse and semiological analysis models were combined in this work.

The researcher used the Fairclough model² of critical discourse analysis and the Barthes' model of semiotics³. The mixing was accomplished by an inclusion and exclusion method. The two models, as well as their levels, are discussed in Fairclough's three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis model. Linguistic analysis, according to Fairclough, entails a thorough comprehension of context. Fairclough introduced a step-by-step procedure.

Text (Descriptive Level): lexical choices, grammatical structure, and vocabulary are the first textual categories to be specified.

Discursive Practice (Interpretation) A language user's use of language is seen as a social activity. Here, the written word is examined in relation to its immediate surroundings, which helps to clarify the situation as well as discourse creation even further.

Social Practice (Explanation): At this stage of the investigation, power and ideology are seen as motivators for language use. We investigate the connection between a piece of writing and the context in which it was created and the motivations behind its creation.

The Barthes Model of Media Semiotic Discourse

It discusses the various levels of relevance. There are three different levels of importance. These levels will be covered further down.

¹ Machin, David, and Andrea Mayr. "How to do critical discourse analysis." (2012).

² Fairclough, Norman. "Discourse and text: Linguistic and intertextual analysis within discourse analysis." *Discourse & society* 3, no. 2 (1992): 193-217.

³ Barthes, Roland. "Mythologies. Paris: Editions du Seuil." *NO-SPIN ZONES* 17 (1957).

Level of Denotative: It involves a shared understanding of every image, symbol, or phrase, excluding the possibility of subjective judgment. Any sign or image's visual or literal meaning is discussed.

Level of Connotative: The subject of culture in which a picture occurs is included in this level of significance. Roland Barthes¹ coined the term "connotation" to describe how signs work: "it depicts the interaction that occurs when the sign meets the users' feelings or emotions, as well as the values of their society"².

Myth: It is a semiological concept that a sign is a mixture of the signifier and the signified; hence, the image is a nonverbal language that is accessible to multiple interpretations, readings, and meanings.

Data Collection:

On the subject of Tālibān takeover and US disengagement, the semiotics of Dawn newspaper were chosen. From July, 2020 to Sep, 2021, data was gathered from the www.dawnnewspaper.com online editorial page and five caricatures were selected for the study.

Analysis and Discussion

The semiotic discourse analysis of semiotics selected from Dawn newspapers on the issue of Tālibān takeover and US military withdrawal is included in this part. Semiotics has been analyzed at two levels: **linguistic** which includes verbal discourse; and **semiotic** which includes semiotics i.e. visual or nonverbal discourse from newspaper.



Fig: 1 Taken from Dawn Newspaper on 7th May 2020/Zahoor

¹ Barthes, Roland. "Mythologies. Paris: Editions du Seuil." *NO-SPIN ZONES* 17 (1957).

² John Fisk .1990. Introduction to communication Studies .2nd ed. New York: Routledge.

Linguistic Analysis:

The words give their meaning in context (Fairclough 2003). The word “**WE’LL RESPOND IF THE ṬĀLIBĀN DON’T STOP**” denotes the US exit from the Afghānistān in the context of the Ṭālibān continuous advanced. Biden said in a statement that the US would continue to attack terrorists who presented a threat to the country, but that the military would no longer be used to try to establish democratic societies in countries where they had never been. Nearly 2,500 US troops and an estimated 240,000 Afghāns died in America's longest war which costs \$2 trillion. Since the insurgency began, Afghān government has experienced its most challenging week combating the Ṭālibān and taken control of 12 provincial capitals, marking the first time they have had control of a city since their ouster in 2001. Many observers were predicting that the speedy and unconditional withdrawal of US soldiers would strengthen Ṭālibān power, but few expected it to happen so quickly. Ṭālibān takeover of Kābul, which was once thought to be years away was now possible in a matter of months, or even in weeks. The word explains the “US defeat and helplessness” at the level of interpretation. To explain the occurrence of the word “**exit**” in Afghān semiotic, it relates to the exit of US forces.

Semiotic Analysis:

In Figure 1, the cartoonist employed semiotics. Two figures are heading in opposing directions, one wearing a hat and the other courting the exit point and shouting the words depicted in the bubble. This man (character) is most likely a representative of a US official. Ṭālibān are depicted as a man wearing a turban and *Shalwār Qamīd* (traditional attire) with unclean shoes, clutching an automatic pistol. This second man with a gun is most likely advancing despite the threat that the opposing character is posing. The symbolism of an automated rifle here relates to the Ṭālibān's likely victory and demonstrates their capability? Thick black smoke is obliterating the region's sorrow and devastation. When it comes to the meaning of this cartoon, it is quite serious about the fact that it is about to start a new power game once the United States leaves; and the myth associated to the cartoon is Afghanistan and its innocent people will be subjected to yet another war and destruction. The legend around this cartoon is that it depicts a situation in which the entire country is being impacted by massive power struggles. Moreover, the Taliban’s caricature also represents the Islamic ideology of Jihad which according to the Quran, one must “struggle or exert” oneself in the way of God, which is what jihad means. In terms of Muslim self-understanding, devotion, mobilization, growth, and defense, the Quranic teachings have been crucial. Jihad as a

struggle refers to the difficulty and complexity of leading a moral and virtuous life: fighting against the evil in oneself, striving to be virtuous and moral, and helping to improve society.

As mentioned in Quran:

“And fight in the Way of Allah those who fight you, but transgress not the limits. Truly, Allah likes not the transgressors. [This Verse is the first one that was revealed in connection with Jihad, but it was supplemented by another (V.9:36)]”



Fig; 2. Taken from Dawn Newspaper on 14th Aug 2021/Zahoor

Linguistic Analysis:

In this figure there are two discourses has been used by the cartoonist Zahoor a day before Ṭālibān completely took over the Kābul statement “ṬĀLIBĀN COULD TAKE OVER KĀBUL IN 90 DAYS: US INTELLIGENCE” which is written on a plane paper it was predicted by the US Intelligence that Ṭālibān advance to Kābul would take 90 days but many Americans were left wondering how top Biden officials could have been so incorrect in their recent proclamations that Kābul would not quickly fall, as scared Afghāns watched Ṭālibān forces, move into the capital city of Kābul, confirming the collapse of the US-backed government there. Statement regarded as intelligence failure. In the 2nd discourse “**Hyye this was my line!!**” Another character probably ex-intelligence chief of a country coming out the window claimed that this line was spoken by him.

Semiotic Analysis:

In this cartoon as far as denotative level of Barthes’ modal is concerned, there are total five figures have been showed by the cartoonist. A paper (probably a newspaper) placed on the table with a flower bouquet. There is LCD on the front wall showing an ugly man face with

large mustache, ugly and big teeth. On the other side of the table there is another figure of a scared, stressed, bald and handicapped with an open mouth and falling hair have been shown. Connotatively paper, table, bouquet and LCD are representing the office collectively. LCD representing the media while the ugly men presenting the negative face of media and their role in whole US-Afghān conflict. The most important worth noticing is the figure of the man (possibly ousted Afghān president) who is astonished and scared to the abrupt change and the failure of the world most leading intelligence agency. Perhaps this man is most effected person from this failure. Arm less handicap caricature suggests helplessness and utter dependency of the Ṭālibān government. The myth related to this caricature is that it reflects the US intelligence failure which leads to the turmoil for the setting Afghān government as well as the country and the whole world.



Fig;3 Taken from Dawn Newspaper on 17th Aug 2021

Linguistic Analysis:

In figure three, cartoon contains the figure of bomb which is yet to explode with a water fill bucket lying nearby and the only word which has been utilized is “**AFGHANISTAN**” which is written on the fire thread. If we look back in the word “Afghānistān”, it refers the country that was facing the US-led 'war on terror from the last two decades. Kābul is the capital of Afghānistān. Total population according to the 2017 census was 35530081 with total 657500 square kilometers (250000 sq miles) land (Collins’s dictionary). Word “Afghānistān” denoting the world most vulnerable and war effected country of south Asia. At lexical level, there is negative interpretation of word as for as the context is concern.

Semiotic Analysis

In picture, the world has been portrayed as a primed bomb but there is also a bucket placed near the bomb. After US withdrawal from Afghānistān, the globe is transformed into the

primed bomb which is yet to explode. The Afghān time bomb is ticking which could encapsulate the whole world. Bomb is a symbol of power extortion. The bucket of water is lying near the bomb and water is symbol of calmness, purity and coldness. USA and alliance forces of 46 countries have invaded Afghānistān after 9/11 incident. But after 20 years, USA and its coalition could not be able to materialize their perceived objectives. Resultantly, withdrawal has been carried out abruptly. During two decades, Pakistan has suffered a lot due to involvement of anti-Pakistan forces like India. The question arises which countries can come under blast radius? The answer might be Pakistan, India, Iran, China and central Asian states. Another view is that its media hype; chaos in Afghānistān represents problem for its neighbors because US decided to withdraw its forces doesn't represent a threat to the world. Myth associated with this cartoon is to neutralize the situation rather than propagate the things negatively on social media. It is the need of the hour that sanity must prevail in order to avoid global disaster as it can be manageable till now. All global and regional powers must find the solution of those problems which are the root causes of this phenomenon under the flag of United Nation.



Fig; 4 Taken from Dawn Newspaper on 28th Aug 2021

Linguistic Analysis;

Figure 4 contains the image of an unhappy man with annoyed facial expression holding US Dollar. No word was used in the background of the caricature but the words and digits could be found scripted on the currency note image. These words are “**United State of America**” and **One Dollar** and digits are **1(one)** and **2021**. So, it can be interpreted that although Ṭālibān have got rid of US troops, US Dollar hegemony is unavoidable and the economy is in the hands of Americans. Ṭālibān cannot survive without USA. The financial system of Afghānistān yet to be conquered despite the fact Ṭālibān has swept Afghānistān and UA exit.

The United States has a strong hand in the multilateral institutions that control the flow of international aid that this fragile economy depends on. Americans may be fleeing but the dollar's power will not be diminished.

Semiotic Analysis;

The semiotic symbols in the above image represent the current predicament as well as the Ṭālibān's hatred for Americans and their currency. In figure 5, the cartoonist depicts two objects, one of which is a man (the Ṭālibān) and the other of which is a one-dollar. The image depicts a man (Ṭālibān) in his fifties with a moustaches, beard and traditional turban. The man's facial expression reflects the caricature's central theme which depicts Ṭālibān rage and hatred for US. There has been a lot of symbolic manning of the dollar. The arrows held by the eagle on the dollar, for example, were originally held in the right talon. Arrows represent conflict while the right side represents dominance. Some interpreted this to signify military dominance. The Founding Fathers, in fact, use these symbols to convey powerful sentiments. Although the US Dollar has a variety of symbols, each with its own meaning, the dollar as a whole represents US supremacy, authority, dominance and hegemony over the world. The myth associated to this image is the Ṭālibān's rage and hatred for the United States that is skillfully depicted through semiotic.



Fig; 5 Taken from Dawn Newspaper on 9th Sep 2021

Linguistic Analysis

Ṭālibān and new Afghān government is the subject of the cartoon which contain only one sentence in caption “ṬĀLIBĀN “INCLUSIVE” GOVT FORMED” .The word

“**INCLUSIVE**” is a pun or fun. Although entire discourse is written in capital but Word inclusive has been written in bold. Since Ṭālibān have taken over the control of Kābul world is emphasizing an inclusive government body in Afghānistān. Cartoonist is critically trying to present the current Afghān scenario in this figure. All the demands and advises have been set aside and care taker government have been announced violating the ethnic and women rights. Ṭālibān revealed crucial positions in Afghānistān's new caretaker government a few days ago. The cabinet is all-male and filled with senior Ṭālibān warriors who previously held critical positions during the terrorist group's strict rule from 1996 to 2001.

Semiotic analysis

The Afghāns are pretending to be implementing Islamic rules with letter and spirit. Their physical appearance having beard faces, turbans, wearing simple *Shalwār Qamīd*, their raised *shalwār* showed that how all things are based on *Sharī'a*. It is an appreciable thing that they consider all citizens equal under *Sharī'a* law without any supremacy and class distinction. Apparently, they are going to implement such a *Sharī'a* system, where there will be no inequality, no injustice, no supremacy. If anyone be supreme that will be just better in *Shara'ī* deeds as declared by Last Prophet (S.A) in His Sermon but they also seem to ignore women who are a less important faction of the society, the women empowerment as a fundamental right of women of the entire world, but Ṭālibān ignores wholistically. Ṭālibān's proposed Afghān government is "anything but inclusive" and the Afghān people will not accept a government that excludes women and minorities. No representation has been given to women and minorities in the cabinet as they are an important part of society and have equal rights as the other citizens. This cartoon represents bitter satire at the newly formed government through semiotics. Stereotype cabinet members cannot bear fruitful results as per the opinion of the whole world. On the other hand, the Taliban's caricatures above are truly a representation of Islamic ideology. The need to grow a beard extends to all times and locations, regardless of behavior, fashion, or social norms. All caricatures have a beard by which cartoonist representing the Islamic ideology as ordered by the beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Abū Hurairah reported that the Prophet ﷺ said:

“جُزُوا الشَّوَارِبَ ، وَأَزْخُوا اللَّحْيَ ، خَالِفُوا الْمَجُوسَ.”¹

“Trim the mustaches, let the beards grow back, disobey the Majūs.”

Additionally, the Prophets' and Messengers' Sunnah is to grow a beard. The Prophet Haroon addressed his brothers Musa (peace be upon them both) as Holy Quran said:

¹. Muslim bin Hujjāj, *Al-Jāme Al-Sahīh*, Riyadh: Dār-us-Salām, ed.2000, Hadith# 260, P.125

“يَا ابْنَ أُمَّ لَا تَأْخُذْ بِلِحْيَتِي وَلَا بِرَأْسِي إِنِّي خَشِيتُ أَنْ تَقُولَ فَرَّقْتَ بَيْنَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَلَمْ تَرْقُبْ قَوْلِي.”¹

“O son of my mother, do not take hold of my beard or my head. I was afraid that you would say that you separated the children of Israel and did not wait for my word.”

Conclusion

The study uncovers hidden ideologies and underlying discourses about the Afghān conflict. To comprehend the issue in the setting, the researcher looked at how cartoons depict specific social behaviors and meaning. When the researcher examines how the actors are visually represented, the researcher discovers a substantially more negative assessment of the actors. The cartoons' use of traits, stances, and movements to represent Ṭālibān and Americans infer a higher degree of understanding and disseminates a specific interpretation of the event. The semiotics presents all critical factors and characteristics that led to the Afghān crisis. The cartoonists have devoted significant semiotic resources in promoting the problem of Afghānistān's crisis, which has erupted in the previous two years. Depiction picks and connects aspects to specific activities as well as providing moral judgment, the application of value-laden concepts, and finally evaluating social practice and actors in that context. The potent ideological means of visual and linguistic representations alter readers' perceptions and interpretations of persons and events. By foregrounding the visuals representing the former as the winner and later as the losers, the Ṭālibān's identity as the beggar and America's as the lighter is solidified. This illustrates the notion that cartoons have the ability to choose whether their image is negative or positive. This study shows that print media discourses reflect social reality and language production in any situation and this situation could be very drastic and challenging. It is concluded that Dawn newspaper reflects the ongoing turmoil in Afghānistān through semiotics where situation is so delicate and unpredictable that cannot be conveyed directly. It has also been portrayed that world community getting lightly and not taking appropriate measure to extinguish the fire, such type of conflict can only handle with the employment of blended model of discourse and semiotics. It is observed that fear, helplessness, power, discrimination, hegemony, destruction, inequity have commonly been shared besides hidden ideologies of power, inequity and discrimination and irresponsible behavior of world in general and USA in specific. Semiotic discourse has been successfully portrayed in the cartoons of dawn national newspaper.

¹.Tāhā, 20:94