

UNIVERSIDAD COMPLUTENSE DE MADRID

# Directing Ideologies through Media Cartoons

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MA Dissertation

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The increasing interest in the study of ideologies has heightened the need for a multidisciplinary approach. Therefore, in order to understand how ideologies function, one should first resort to social and political sciences. In this way, it may be observed how the notion of ideology implies the idea of power and it has a direct effect on the society. Although their influence might be considered indirect, according to van Dijk (1995), ideologies monitor the development, change and organization of socially shared attitudes, which in turn control the opinions about social events represented in personal models of social actors, which direct their specific social practices. In the field of political communication, as David Michael Ryfe (2001: 408) points out, the influence of social psychology is of good standing, as 'it was from this discipline that the field inherited its interest in attitudes, opinions and beliefs'. When social actors are considered political actors, an interest in the mental representations people share as political actors emerges. Moreover, in order to understand the nature of ideas and beliefs, their acquisition and their organization in ideological systems, as well as the relationship with other socially shared representations, there is a need for a deep insight into cognitive science. Nevertheless, as ideologies are communicated through text and

discourse, the linguistic studies are responsible for analyzing how these are expressed, formulated and reproduced.

Therefore, it may be said that the study of ideologies has become an important aspect of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). As this paper is concerned with the way ideologies are controlled, it is important to establish what exactly is understood by the concept of ideological control. It is true that most of the times the concept of control or manipulation has received negative associations, and as van Dijk (2006) points out, the practice of manipulation implies the exercise of a form of illegitimate influence by means of discourse, in the sense that “manipulators make others believe or do things which are in the interest of the manipulator and against the best interest of the manipulated” (p. 360). However, this paper will not focus on the concept from that point of view. On the contrary, the present study is trying to give importance to the case in which the ideological control is done in a sort of reverse process, in which the ideologies are changed and developed with the purpose of creating a different mental representation of the issue, on the basis that the old models are not longer consistent with the present opinions and beliefs on a given matter. In addition, as van Dijk (1995) points out, if these new models are socially shared, they may be generalized to different attitudes about specific social issues.

Therefore, as different models are inferred from social perception and interaction, and mainly from discourse about social events, it may be said that the media plays an important role in the directing of ideologies. As van Dijk (1995: 34) suggests, ‘the media stories and their structures are the main source for shared models and for the specific opinions about social events that are represented in such models’. That is to say, the media discourse influences the development of new attitudes and ideologies. In order to illustrate the possibility in which media users might be persuaded by the media

discourse to adapt preferred models on a certain issue, in the case in which these preferred models are inconsistent with previous models media users already have, the redirecting of ideologies must be considered.

However, as images are also created in order to communicate and are considered to be more powerful than words, this study focuses on how the ideologies are controlled through visual imagery, and not only through text and talk. Although considerable research has been devoted to image analysis in order to explain their ideological implication, focusing on the form and content, less attention has been paid to the cognitive aspects through which these visual images are able to direct the beliefs and attitudes of the viewers. Therefore, the remaining issue is to find out the way how the cognitive processes and representations operate through the visual imagery, with the ability to change, develop or create new ideologies.

Therefore, the aim of this paper is to provide a deeper analysis of the cognitive aspects involved in the control of people's minds through visual images. In order to do so, this study was designed to consider how cartoons published in the media along with articles on topics related with the Gaza conflict add their contribution in the process of redirecting people's ideologies in favor of the Palestinians. Moreover, it should be also mentioned that this paper argues that the media users' knowledge in reference to the conflict might had as a basis some previous models in which Palestinians were seen as the bad side in the conflict, while the Israel cause was perceived as the good side. However, with the evolution of the events, it was observed how there was a change of ideology in this concern, and that a redirecting of ideology has taken place, in which Palestinians were seen as the victim and Israel as the evil. In addition, this paper will explain all the strategies carried out in this procedure of ideological change, with a strong emphasis on the cognitive aspects involved in the process.

The remainder of this paper is divided into five additional sections. The first section will discuss the data used in the study, contextualizing it and offering a full description of the material, followed by the procedure of analysis. The second section will present the theoretical background, where the main concepts that lie at the basis of analysis are explained. This section will be divided into four major parts, taking into account three different types of analysis that will be carried out, so to say, textual, image and cognitive analysis, introduced by a first part in which the role of the media and its power will be considered in a more detailed way. Here it is also important to mention that the fourth part related to the cognitive theory will be divided into five subsections, and each of them will provide the theory related to the main cognitive features applied in the data analysis. The third section will discuss the main findings obtained from the analysis and will provide a discussion on them, considering a free interpretation of the cartoons according to the concepts previously described. This section will be divided into four major parts, which will be dedicated to each of the cartoons analyzed, and in which the different types of analysis are considered, following the order in which they were presented in the theoretical section, although in some cases they are interrelated. The fifth section will present a final discussion upon the results, and it will offer also a discussion upon the data from an evolutionary point of view. In this case, the cartoons will be considered as a whole, and the analysis will focus on the evolution of the events, in intent to illustrate some of the changing features of ideologies. Finally, the last section will present the conclusions drawn from the study and it will give place for further discussion and research.

## 2. DATA and METHOD SECTION

### 2.1. Contextualization of Data

The data used in this study consists of four political cartoons published in the online version of the *Guardian* newspaper, a British newspaper founded in 1821 that has a long history of editorial and political independence.

The political cartoons are the main daily or weekly pictorial comments published in newspapers or magazines, referring to current political or social issues. Political cartoons have a long history, as different drawings such as caricatures or other images have been used as early as the eighteenth century. However, the word *cartoon* was first used a century later, referring to a series of humorous and satirical drawings published in *Punch* magazine or the *London Charivari* in 1841. Moreover, along the history, the period of the World War II brought about the expansion of this art. This was mainly due to the power of the pictorial message to convey a powerful message both to barely literate and those who spoke a different language<sup>1</sup>. In addition, as cartoonists can say more through their drawings than may be said through an oral speech, cartoons reflect the minds of the people in some way. Nevertheless, one must bear in mind the irony and the satire the political cartoons carry with them, as the art acts as a visual metaphor to illustrate a point of view on political topics, and thus they are interpretative. In the case of the cartoons<sup>2</sup> analyzed in this study, the current political topic in relation to which they were published is the Gaza conflict that emerged at the end of December 2008, after a six-month truce between Israel and Hamas. The reason for choosing these data is because as it is an external conflict, the media will be very influential, and the public

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on this, see [http://www.ccgb.org.uk/Pages/history\\_of\\_the\\_cartoon.html](http://www.ccgb.org.uk/Pages/history_of_the_cartoon.html)

<sup>2</sup> The cartoons are works of Steve Bell, English political cartoonist whose work appears in the *Guardian* and other publication, and who is known for his left-wing views.

will have to rely on it for its models and social representations, depending on the information provided by the media about the events. Therefore, I believe they will be presented following an ideology that will support one of the parties involved in the conflict, and therefore it may be considered that they are used in directing people's ideologies.

The first cartoon, published on 13<sup>th</sup> of January 2009 under the heading *Demands grow for Gaza war crimes investigation*, is the main daily cartoon that appears along with an article with the same topic. The article presents information on the fact that UN officials and human rights groups demand war crime investigation, accusing the Israeli military of violating international laws, in using powerful bombs in civilian areas, banned weapons, human shields, attacking medical facilities and keeping military casualties low no matter what cost to civilians. Generally speaking, it is mentioned a reckless, disproportionate and indiscriminate use of force by the Israeli army. However, the idea of war crime investigation is put in doubt, as previous attempts in the investigation are mentioned to not have been carried out, as well as an influence of the US and the UK disapproval of a war crime tribunal, which would give a political support to the Israel cause, and would rest power to the victims.

The second cartoon, published on 15<sup>th</sup> of January, with the heading *Israel human rights groups speak out as death toll passes 1,000*, stands also for an article that describes the number of victims in the conflict and considers an internal reaction in Israel regarding the war crime investigations. Although a violation of international laws from both sides is mentioned, and there is a constant intent in giving a balanced image of the both sides attack firing and fighting implications, the idea that the Israeli human rights groups accuse the Israeli military of making use of lethal force in a country that

supports the war in Gaza, gives an important emphasis in conceptualizing Israel as the bad side in the conflict.

The third cartoon, published on 23<sup>rd</sup> of January under the heading *Quest begins for peace between Israel and the Palestinians*, is a weekly cartoon that summarize the news published during the referred week, in which information related to the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Palestinian territory after the ceasefire and the hope of change lead to a possible end of the conflict. However, relying on articles published around the cartoon, it is again mentioned the huge difference in the number of mortal victims on both sides, and the devastating consequences of the conflict in the Palestinian territory. Although the possibility of peace emerges, the presence of Israeli troops in Gaza reflects the occupation they carry out in the area.

The last cartoon, published on 28<sup>th</sup> of January, under the heading *Amid the dust and death, a family's story speaks for the terror of war*, again stands for an article which offers a more personal description of the war, with a story told by a Palestinian man who lost his entire family in one of the Israel's attacks. In this case, the Israeli soldiers behavior astonished the whole world, as they left some very provocative graffiti's, extremely pejorative to Arabian people, graffiti's which appear also in the cartoon and which are part of one of the gravest episodes of the war. At large, the article describes the extreme and cruel violence of the Israeli forces on Palestinian people, killing them on purpose, destroying their houses and their lives.

To sum up, the articles published along with the cartoons that will be used for the analysis share some of the information they contain, and it is specially referring to the contrast between the large number of Palestinian civilians killed and the few Israeli soldiers that have died in the conflict, some of them killed by their own troops.

## 2.2. Methodology

Prior to commencing the study, ethical clearance was sought from investigating about the Gaza conflict and the reaction it has caused worldwide. The data used in this study was chosen after a strong reflection upon the topics it presents, and after arriving to the conclusion that it would be illustrative enough for the aims of the study. The cartoons were chosen considering the evolution of events in the conflict, as the relation between the cartoons and the ideology expressed through them follows a chronological order and thus may be considered coherent. In order to do so, the first step in the election of the data was a thoroughly reading of the newspaper articles published around the events described in the cartoons, so that the acknowledgement of those events and the general information upon them could be applied in the analysis later on. After the collection, the cartoons were briefly analyzed in order to identify those elements that could explain any ideological control they may convey. Next to this point, the cartoons were analyzed in detail, applying each of the theoretical issues that were proposed for this study in order to demonstrate the existence of an ideological control through visual modes.

The procedure of the analysis carried out in this study will be organized according to Norman Fairclough's model (1989), that is to say, after contextualizing the data, it will be described, interpreted and explained, focusing on the following stages:

First, the textual analysis will be applied, in which special attention will be given to the headings under which the cartoons are published, and also to the text that appears with some of the cartoons. In this case, presuppositions, implications, lexical choices, local syntax, and rhetorical figures will be considered in order to identify any directive strategy at the discursive level. Furthermore, after different strategies will be identified, the way mental model form or how the social representations are used through language

will be explained. As the multimodal metaphors that are going to be considered in this study are metaphors conveyed through image and text, the textual analysis will also focus on this issue, explaining the contribution of the language when creating the respective multimodal metaphor.

Later on, the image analysis will be carried out following the models of Burton (1990) and Lacey (1998), with a detailed description of the cartoons, considering the distinction between form and content, focusing on focal points and non-verbal communication aspects. Moreover, when the connotations found in the image are considered, it will be also explained how they contribute to the cognitive processes discussed along the study, such as the formation or activation of mental models or social representations, and how consequently the viewers are influenced when interpreting the images, being directed ideologically to certain beliefs and attitudes.

Finally, in the analysis of cognitive elements, those strategies that are used in the formation of preferred mental models and social representations will be considered. Moreover, the influence of a special class of brain cells that reflect the outside world in the understanding and connecting of human beings will be also studied, as they can be perceived as directing the attitudes people may have regarding the conflict. The last part will consider the cartoons as multimodal metaphors and will discuss each aspect in the cartoons that may be considered metaphorical, and how their interpretations may direct the understanding and beliefs in the interest of one of the parties involved in the conflict and against the other.

It should also be mentioned that it was decided that the best method to adopt for this investigation was one of qualitative nature, as the study here presented involves analysis of documents and it will be an explanatory research.

### 3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

#### 3.1. Power of the Media. Social issues.

Bearing in mind the idea that ideologies are social, and considering that the present study is interested in explaining how ideologies are directed through the media discourse, it should be first taken into account the way these ideologies are reproduced and their function at the social level. In order to do so, it should be stated that the social role the ideologies have implies the idea of organization, management and reproduction of those ideologies, that is to say, how they are socially shared. In order to support this idea, the role of public institutions must be considered, as according to van Dijk (1998), they are the 'practical' and social counterpart of ideologies. Now, there is no doubt that the media represents a central role in the issue. As the media has the capacity to select the information, its presentation, the determined quotation, opinion and topic, one can say that the media discourse is limited in a certain way and conditioned by those who managed it according to a certain set of interests. Therefore, the media possesses a manipulative or controlling skill, which in the case in which the information it transmits is easily accepted by the media users, it might have considerable consequences, as it controls the minds of the people and their attitudes.

Another important idea on which this section is based is that the public does not have a direct access to the event happening, thus the knowledge they will have related to that event depends on the media. That is why the possibility of controlling that information and its presentation gives power to the media in the social context, as it may persuasively lead to the creation of preferred mental models and social representations, which at their turn would be in the interest of the powerful. However, although theorists like van Dijk (1995) suggest that in the general political and social scenario the media has taken side with the powerful, this paper is trying to explain the

reverse process, in which the media sides with the victim, and enters in a process of redirecting of the ideology, as this is not longer consistent with the previous one on the issue. Therefore, as dominant ideologies need a shared social cognition in order to maintain their overall dominance, the possibility of change is given due to the manifestation of a new ideology in the public discourse. Once the ideology has changed, the social practices, the attitudes and opinions may also change.

Getting along with the idea of the information at which the media users cannot have a direct personal access, the role of the media becomes central, as it would be the only credible source of information. Moreover, if there is no alternative ideological source either or any personal experience that might be in disagreement with the dominant ideology presented and reproduced by the media, this will be considered pervasive. Nevertheless, the media users are able to reject ideological statements or to adapt those ideologies to their needs, interest and circumstances, which will debilitate the power of the media and its credibility. More of the same nature, the media power is at a wider scale symbolic, as the mind control cannot be done completely, and the media users may always conserve part of their independent thinking.

In its social context, the power of the media is possible due to the access it has to the public discourse, which will represent a means of the social reproduction of that power. For instance, journalists confirm and reproduce their power through the media. However, it must be said that journalists develop professionally ideologies in relation to more powerful groups, which leads to the idea that the media is controlled by elites, and the information is going to be transmitted according to their interest. Therefore, the newspaper articles or any other discursive items cannot be considered as subjective; rather, a group-based ideology at a larger scale is presented, with the aim of being reproduced and implemented to the public at large. The power of newspapers resides

in the fact that they have the capacity to communicate the information to millions of people at the same time. As Romano (2007) argues, the mass production means serial production, simplification and creation of stereotypes. In addition, when an ideology on a certain issue is already developed, it allows group members to construct their own attitudes and models about the new social event, at large, ‘personal mind control becomes social mind control and ideological hegemony’ (van Dijk, 1995: 32).

Another important characteristic is the quality of the media, which will make it more or less commercial and consequently accessible to the audience. The access the media has to the public enables it with power in that it can be persuasive or even manipulative, as it can control knowledge, beliefs or opinions. Here, an important aspect to be mentioned would be the degree of credibility the media might have, which often can be supported by the fact that the news is transmitted from where the event takes place, or sometimes by the case in which the information is told by someone who participated in the event personally. Moreover, according to Romano (2007), the control of the information and the news transmission is something that has always been used in order to conquer the consciousness of people. The object of a manipulative<sup>3</sup> media in this case would be the acknowledgement of a certain version of the events, that is one-sided and one-way directed sort of communication. The importance of van Dijk (1998)’s work should be considered as he focuses his attention in different discursive strategies used in the ideological manipulation, such as the positive self-presentation, negative other presentation, and so on.

Assuming the idea that the media has the ability to manipulate the readers, it should be taken into account the conditions under which the process of manipulation

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<sup>3</sup> However, this study rather prefers the term of direction of ideology instead of that of manipulation, as the information presented in would not support the powerful, but as it was previously mentioned, it goes against it.

can take place, and its structural properties. First of all, the idea of power applied to the media with respect to the media users, is that the media has access to the information to which the public has not. However, the use of the media influences its power, as it depends on the active participation of the readers. All this implies the idea that in the case of an effective media, the media users accept the news reports as true and the journalists' opinions as correct.

### **3.2. Text Analysis**

As this study is concerned with the way in which ideologies are directed or manipulated through the use of cartoons in the news media, it is also important to consider the texts that accompany the images studied. However, it is important to highlight the idea that manipulation here takes place in a broad sense, and discourse structures as such are not manipulative. Rather, they are used in a process of persuasion, which depends not just on the way the lexical structures are processed, but also on the previous knowledge of the people, as well as on the existent context models. Therefore, as Van Dijk (2006) points out, these structures are effective in certain contexts in the process of influencing the mind of the people and they depend on the way they are interpreted by the receptors in their context models, that is the resources used in the practical evaluative process of discourses when constructing the event models.

It is also of great relevance to consider that the persuasion or the directing of ideological nature relies also on the comprehension. The construction of a mental model by the media users strongly depends on the understanding of the discourse. Therefore, by managing the comprehension, the media manages also the mental models and consequently, it comes at the formation of preferred mental models. However, it is important to bear in mind the major role of the context around the media users, as the

comprehension and the event model formation are also monitored by the communicative situation. In this case, as according to van Dijk (2006) in news reporting a main criterion is the separation of ‘facts’ from ‘opinions’.

Following the theory developed by van Dijk (1998) on the ideological discourse structures this study will focus at the level of textual analysis on the semantic macrostructures, that is to say, the topic. The topic embodies the most important or relevant information for the receptors and it is the main element that they will remember. Topics are crucial in the formation and accessibility of preferred mental models, so to say, they are responsible in an indirect way for the formation or confirmation of ideologies. In the news media, the topic is embodied in the headlines, which are used to signal the most important information of a text, and thus used to assign more importance to certain events.

Another important issue in the text analysis is the local meaning. In this sense, the presence or the absence of certain information might be intentional, as well as the function of expression, which is done in relation to the writer’s interest. In this study the emphasis put on certain information which might be positive or negative for the parts involved in the conflict according to the writer’s interest is considered, bearing in mind the fact that the text analyzed are limited from the point of view of the information uttered. More of the same is the case in which the details and the level of description is studied, since some of the information will be left out and incomplete discourses are going to lead to incomplete models in the users’ minds.

Furthermore, as in the everyday language it is often meant more than it is actually said (Cutting, 2002), there is going to be a reflection upon the discursive implicitness and explicitness, as the implicit information is the information of a mental

model that could or should have been included in the semantic representation of the discourse. The implied information is not emphasized, and it is the information that needs to be concealed in the interest of the speaker, when it cannot be inferred from the socially shared knowledge. When this information needs to be known, then presupposition are going to be used.

Furthermore, the focus will be placed on lexicalization, that is to say, it is going to be paid attention to those words being chosen to express a concept, such as mitigation or euphemisms. Also at the lexical level, the nominalizations are of great importance, as some of the agents or the patients are going to be left implicit. From the grammatical point of view, the study focuses on aspects such as the use of the active or passive voice, the word order and the clause structure. In addition, the analysis will also pay special attention to the way the information is presented considering *the given and the new information* in order to determine where the focus is placed in the sentence. The given information, often associated with the common knowledge, information previously established in the context or information that is part of the extra linguistic context, it is normally placed earlier in the sentence, as the focus is normally placed on the new information that appears later in the sentence (Crystal, 1985).

Finally, the rhetoric figures that are going to be studied, such as metaphors, euphemism, irony, contrast, hyperboles, or repetition moves, are relevant in that they manage the comprehension process, and therefore they represent an important aspect in the structures of mental models.

In conclusion, as the textual analysis is mainly addressed to the study of the headlines under which the cartoons are published, they are considered to play a major role in the process of ideological control, as they are the first item on which the media

users focus in order to know what the main topic is about and further on to decide whether to pay attention to the material or not. Apart from the headlines, the minimalized texts that appear along with the cartoons are also important, as they influence the form of resulting models, as it will be explained later on in the article.

### **3.3. Image Analysis**

Although the media is marked by the use of visual imagery, there is a strong relation between the images, the written text and the graphic elements that come along. As Barthes (1977) points out, the meaning of images depend on the verbal text, and as images by themselves are opened to a variety of meanings, the language is the solution to its anchorage. Therefore, considering that visual meaning is indefinite, the text that accompanies it makes it more definite and exact. Within this relation between the image and the text, it must be taken into account the function of each when the elaboration of the whole occurs. Thus, according to Barthes (1977), there are two main situations. If the text comes first, the images form an illustration of it, while in the case in which the image comes first, the text forms a more definite and precise restatement of it. However, the limitation found to these affirmations is the fact that in the case in which the image accompanies the text there is a connection between the two, but it cannot be said if they share a relation of dependency.

As well as the language, visual images may also convey the subjectivity or objectivity. I consider this idea important for this study, as it should be born in mind that the main usage attributed to the images analyzed hereafter is that of directing an ideology, thus they might represent a rather subjective point of view based on the interest under which they were created and the aims of their impact on the viewer.

Since the images here studied are contextualized according to the text published in relation to them, and furthermore in the article, the headlines and the text that are part of the image itself will be analyzed, it should be first considered that both image and speech are forms of media representations. Since the visual images studied in this paper are thought to be as representative as the language itself in the media context, it should be stated that in some situations the function the image acquires is that of a means of the visual representation of speech. Therefore, there are two types of visual literacy: one in which the visual communication is subordinate to the speech and the images represent unstructured replicas of reality, and another one in which the image and language are at an equal level of focus, and thus the language is independent of the coded image<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, when considering both the language and the image in the analysis, it should be seen that if the language comes first, it will enforce the meaning on the image, while if it comes second, it will impose a new mode of control over meaning, and will turn the image into more powerful, controlled and codified public language (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006).

It seems that at present, “the control over language has decreased in favor of the codification and control of the visual”, as stated by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006:26). This evolution in the use of communicative modes might be explained through the process of human thought evolution. To illustrate this claim, it can be said that due to the human capacity to observe the language and to think about it, and also the awareness developed in order to identify the hidden meaning of different communicative speeches and the concern about the others’ appreciation of the language, the language has become more and more difficult to be handled. Therefore, for the subliminal usage of a communicative mode, the language cannot be as indirect as the human minds require it

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<sup>4</sup> Coded image as opposed to the detailed or realistic image (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006)

nowadays, and perhaps the most appropriate substitute in the charge is the visual mode. The image might convey many more subliminal meanings and, very important in the ideological control, it is able to transcend an emotive immediacy. So to say, it has a faster emotive consequence in the recipient, and more direct as well, being in this way more favorable in the formation of mental modals. Moreover, the image plays an important role in the controlled, persuasive communication, and this idea is strongly supported by Richardson (2006) when stating that the image facilitates a form of mental representation in which the information can be manipulated.

Furthermore, having considered the image as a communicative mode, the relation between the producer and the viewer of the image must also receive attention, as it helps us understand even more the use of the image in a controlled, directed discourse, the way it is perceived, and its consequences on the viewer. Therefore, while the image is the main object to focus on, the interactive participants around it are those who make it an active tool of communication. The real people, who produce and interpret the images in the context of social institutions, are also the ones that regulate what the images may say or should say and the way they should be interpreted. In addition, both the producer and the receiver share common elements, the context of production and the context of reception. In different words, apart from the image itself, they will share a common knowledge of the communicative resources that will enable its creation and understanding. In order to explain why it is possible to convey comprehensible meaning in images, the way social meanings are visually articulated in face-to-face interaction must be considered. Moreover, as suggested by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 121) “the interactive dimension of images is the ‘writing’ of what is usually called non-verbal communication”. We are able to understand an image because we are already able to identify non-verbal communicative elements in the real context,

and with this previous knowledge, we are able to interpret an image, and to understand the message its authors want to transmit with it.

Additionally, the communicative function of an image, in the case of the data here presented that of drawing, is to be read as a piece of objective, factual information. However, over this idea the perspective of the drawing intervenes, that is the presence of a point of view in the creation of the image and the possibility of expressing subjective attitudes. Therefore, the difference between an objective and a subjective image is that the former reveals just what is to know about the representations, while the latter presents what is to be seen only from a particular point of view. Nevertheless, the point of view of the subjective image has been selected for the viewer, it is an imposed point of view, and consequently the viewer's subjectivity is going to be subjective. In the case of the objective images, there is going to be two ways of orientation, one with an action focus and another one with a knowledge orientation.

Having discussed upon the different possible ways of the image creation, its function and usage, it can be concluded that the images do not simply reproduce reality, and they are not used just to offer an alternative way of presenting the information. On the contrary, the images convey those images of reality that are bound up with the interests of the social institutions within which the pictures are produced, circulated and read. Therefore, the most important fact to be stated is that the images are ideological. They are used in order to control, guide or manipulate the minds of the people. And as stated by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 45), "pictorial structures are never merely formal: they have a deeply important semantic dimension". Consequently, when reading images, one should bear in mind the different meanings of the image, the attitude they present, and the pragmatic role they convey. But first of all, in order to identify all these complex structures, it should be mentioned the way the images are read, the things to be

focused on in the analysis, and this is going to be done considering the work of Lacey (1998) and Burton (1990) hereafter.

According to Lacey (1998: 5) the idea of “seeing is believing” is a powerful one when discussing about the ability the images have to communicate a message, as the sight is the sense that gives us the most detailed information. Hence, the analysis will focus on the image in order to discover any kind of message that could be considered of any importance for the viewer. In addition, the image analysis of the cartoons involved in this study will help us to find out how the meaning in the image is constructed. The presence of some kinds of assumptions facilitated by these meanings and their ability to influence the viewer is another idea that will be considered, as according to Burton (1990) “meanings come more powerfully through pictures because these are more like real life than words are. Looking at a picture of a person is quite looking at a real person, whereas looking at a set of words describing that person is not the same thing at all.” The illusion of *being like* is important.

Following the ideas of analysis proposed by Lacey (1998), when analyzing images it is common to distinguish between their form (how the image is created) and their content (what it is in the image). It should be taken into consideration that there are two ways of describing an image. On the first hand, simply describing what we see using terms that are as neutral as possible, and that means from the point of view of denotation. The association that might be done between what we see and other ideas we get, leads us to the concept of connotation, always taking into account the context and other non-verbal communicative issues. When focusing on the non-verbal communication, special attention will be given to the body language, such as facial expression, gesture, clothes and appearance, searching for any aspect that might be

considered as a strategy for directing the ideology of the receptors regarding the events presented in.

As Lacey (1998) suggests that creating an image is more of the same as writing by means of light, then the images, being another type of language, may be read. In order to do so, it must be first distinguished between the image form, how it was created, and the image content, what is in the image. The form, the framing of the picture will be studied, as it will define the position of the picture in relation to a certain setting, and the border between the space the viewer is allowed to see and the one which is out of sight. In relation to the content, in the image analysis one must search for an explanation to everything existent in it. Within the image components that will be analyzed, Lacey (1998) proposes the subject, the lighting and the setting of the image. When studying the subject in the picture, its interpretation will depend on our cultural knowledge and our understanding of social rules. In the case of the lighting, it should be searched for the expressive point of the image, which might have been controlled according to certain interests. In relation to this aspect, Burton (1990) also suggests to be paid attention to color, focus, and other devices used in the picture creation. And finally, considering the setting, it should be paid attention to the foreground and the background in the image, where the subject usually is placed in the former and the setting in the latter. In addition to all these aspects, the context should be also considered, that is to say the social situation in which the message is embedded, as well as the information from outside the text, which will influence the reading of the image.

When considering the images as a whole, Burton (1990) suggests that an important aspect is the significance of repetitions, absence, and sources. Therefore, anything which is repeated may be significant, as well as something which is absent, or left out on purpose. All these aspects are going to be considered when studying the

cartoons, although it must be mentioned that the interpretation of them will depend on who we are and our experience of life.

### **3.4. Cognitive analysis**

#### **3.4.1. Ideologies – a cognitive definition**

As the data here analyzed deals with a concrete episode which is presented to media users, and the analysis centers on how this process of presentation takes place and its consequences, in order to understand how these consequences occur, it should be first paid attention to the media users' mind, trying to understand its mechanism at both personal and social level.

Therefore, if ideologies are associated with beliefs, it might be that those beliefs are stored in the episodic or personal memory when the process is done through personal experiences and in the semantic or social memory in the case of socially and culturally shared beliefs. Moreover, as van Dijk (1998: 29) states, "ideologies belong to the realm of social beliefs and they are located in the social memory". However, it should be born in mind that even ideologies are defined as being social, they may also be individually used, and in this case, each individual may develop a personal vision of the shared belief, which at the social level implies generalizations and abstractions. Moreover, when considering the social beliefs in a discourse, the members of the group are supposed to know them, and in such case, they may be presupposed by the speaker. That is why the implied or presupposed meanings remain hidden in a discourse, but even if they are not made explicit, the speaker may use symbols or clues that would lead the receptor to the intended information. Furthermore, when distinguishing between particular and general beliefs, at the individual and the group level, it may also be said that the particular belief is episodic, and it depends on the context, while the general

belief is abstract or generalized, and it doesn't depend on the context. In conclusion, as claimed by van Dijk (1998: 31) "ideologies are constituted by socially shared general beliefs".

When considering ideologies, the idea of opinions or attitudes and that of knowledge are main ideas to focus on. When social opinions on a specific domain exist, subjects develop attitudes according to those opinions. However, opinions are flexible, especially when there are alternative opinions on the same issue. Moreover, both knowledge and opinions can be defined in terms of beliefs, and it is said that opinions are those evaluative beliefs, based on socially shared values and norms, while knowledge implies the factual beliefs, based on the socially acknowledged truth criteria. Therefore, there is the need of knowledge, which at a large scale, culturally speaking, stands at the basis of all ideologies, attitudes and opinions. Furthermore, ideologies, being the basis of social cognition, are able to control the opinions or attitudes of a group, as well as their knowledge. Therefore, if there is a need of change of opinions, attitudes and knowledge related with a determined issue, the ideologies will be changed or redirected. Again, in relation to this generalized idea, it must be also taken into consideration that there is a blending of personal and group opinions, which marks a difference of opinions at a more personal level. Therefore, the ideologies may be changed or redirected in a generalized way, but without leaving aside the ability of the individual to control his/her personal beliefs and opinions.

To sum up the cognitive definition of ideologies, the idea of factual and evaluative beliefs of groups must be born in mind, as well as the fact that there are mental representations shared by the members of a group, and that they are as much as social as mental. As it has been seen, ideologies stand at the basis of group knowledge, and consequently the group will evaluate facts on the basis of the knowledge acquired

on a certain issue or domain. However, following a contrary direction, it can be said that the nature of knowledge is also ideological. Ideologies are relative and influential, especially if they are identified with the common sense. Furthermore, considering the social aspect, ideologies depend on the social interactions sharing, on social situations, organizations and institutionalization. This idea brings in a cognitive implication in that ideologies are distributed among people's minds through information exchange. Finally, at the cultural level, ideologies depend on social and cultural conditions.

### **3.4.2. Ideological control - Mental Modals**

When approaching the cognitive aspects in the manipulation of ideologies, the first issue that must be considered is that of *understanding*. The way in which the information is presented, whether the focus is on certain information while other is left out, may result in directing the understanding of that information in the interest of the producer (van Dijk, 2006). However, in this case, as the visual images support the information previously presented in written articles, they may also support the understanding of events, focusing just on determined aspects, without considering others.

However, controlling the knowledge, attitudes and beliefs is of bigger interest for the dominant groups, as it generates more stable results. Socially beliefs are not innate, and among the processes through which they are required by the individuals are the social perception, the interaction and communicative events. The mental modals are the devices in charge to establish a connection between the social and personal memory and their respective representations, as by definition they are the mental representation of an experience. A mental modal is subjective, as it is the embodiment of personal experience and interpretation of an event, and its construction is based on the

understanding of that event by the individual. People build experience models based on the interpretation of an experience and description models, which are shaped after the experience models, as the individual understands an external event in the light of those known personally. Moreover, as it will be discussed later on, at the social level, there are the social representations, which are made concrete in models and social memory related to episodic memory and subjective representations (van Dijk, 1998).

Furthermore, in the case of communicative events, there is a particular type of experience models which are known as context models. Although they are subjective, they are also biased, representing the personally variable interpretations and opinions of the communicative events. In this case, the individual is concretizing an event into a mental model which is not based only in the direct personal experience, but it is also related with external information on that event, which may be biased or manipulated. Therefore, it can be argued that models consist both of personal and individual beliefs as well as of particular context of social beliefs. Out from the social context, the individual chooses those elements that fit the existent mental models, and creates a new instance of knowledge. Through this process of instantiation and contextual application it may be explained how knowledge, attitudes and ideologies can be acquired or changed.

In addition, individuals that share a common background and experiences also share convergent mental models and ideologies. That is why it is possible to have ideological biased mental models when they are controlled by group beliefs. The other way around, it is important to point out that, if ideologies encounter their empirical roots in personal models a manipulative process would not take place easily. Rather, if ideologies are the shared framework of mental models that groups of individuals possess, enabling them to interpret the world around (Denzau and North, 1994), in the

situation in which they are biased or incomplete personal models, the ideological control would be easier to occur. Therefore, if mental models within situational and contextual variation can change, the same can happen with an ideology.

Furthermore, when applying this theory to the ideological control or manipulation, the construction, activation and use of *mental models* are part of the target in the process. As claimed by Holland et al. (1986: 12), “cognitive systems construct models of the problem space that are then mentally ‘run’ or manipulated to produce expectation about the environment”. Thus, understanding a news report involves the construction of a mental model of the events presented in the article (van Dijk, 1995), and the manipulative interest in this case leads to the creation of “preferred models”. Moreover, as mental models are considered to underlie visual images, in the case of the cartoons these visual images are already created and given directly to the recipient, and thus they will be considered in the reasoning of the events. One way to influence the structure of a model is the manipulation or control of what is considered to be the important information, as for example, emphasizing or deemphasizing the causes or consequences of events, or applying the same process to those properties that are consistent with the interests of one side and inconsistent with the interest of the others.

### **3.4.3. The control of social cognition- Social Representations**

As discussed in the previous paragraph, the mental models play an important role in the process of ideological control. However, due to the fact that a more general shared attitude is considered to be more powerful than specific mental models, the process of ideological control will then centre on social cognition. In addition, the manipulation of social cognition focuses on ‘the formation or modification of more general, *socially*

*shared representations*- such as attitudes or ideologies – about important social issues’ (van Dijk, 2006: 368).

Therefore, as Moscovici (1984) points out, social representations are to be seen as social shared beliefs, and hence they must be considered within the actual social context. Moreover, in order to understand how social representations are formed at the psychological level, the processes in which the new information is organized and rooted into cultural beliefs<sup>5</sup> and in which the unfamiliar is transformed into familiar<sup>6</sup> should be taken into account.

Moreover, according to Billig (1991), the universal concept of social representations is the knowledge of “common-sense”. They are a ‘practical thought, oriented to communication, comprehension and control of the social environment’ (Billig, 1991: 60). That is to say, a group of people need to share a common thought in order to be able to communicate or to understand the world around them. That is way, social representation are of great importance when it is intended to recall something, be it a value, an idea or a practice of the shared social knowledge and understanding in a subliminal way, in order to use it in the ideological target. Ideological control makes use of social representations when these serve as a basis in the construction of a new mental representation, or as explained by Jodelet (1984: 37), through the process of anchoring, “the cognitive integration of the represented object in the pre-existing system of thoughts” is possible. Furthermore, when this integration takes place, it is very difficult to change them. Ideologically speaking, when a change is wanted, it is important to manage the existent social representations in the matter, as any social event that may be at odds with these group beliefs will thus be rejected or judged negatively.

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<sup>5</sup> This is what Moscovici (1984) defines as a process of *anchoring*.

<sup>6</sup> This is what Moscovici (1984) defines as a process of *objectification*.

It is also interesting to recall that Billig (1991) considered that social representations emerge under certain social conditions, and the mass media plays an important role in this case. As previously mentioned, social representations represent a special way of understanding and communicating what is already known. It is also important to add that social representations are essential elements of the actions that are rooted in them or guided by them. Moreover, the mass media does not use just words in the process of communication, but also images, which are considered to be even prior to oral and written communication through words. If a mental model of an experience produces images in the human mind, then a visual image creates spontaneously a mental representation. Therefore, at the social level, as Mamali (2006: 3.2) points out, ‘visual images are parts of the socialization and enculturation processes and as such are integrative and neutral components of social representations’. Furthermore, as argued by Wagner and Hayes (2005), the social representations are also related to the process of thinking through images, icons and metaphors. This might be reflected by the idea that explains how in order to interpret images, icons and metaphors, the human mind will make use of the previous knowledge that might be related to them, at the personal as well as at the social level.

Visual images may induce strong emotions and different interpretations, as they are used to externalize the verbal events and contribute to the possible social consequences of the public dissemination of these images. They may also have a projective function, in the sense that they are able to create associations between different issues. Therefore, the cartoons studied here have an evocative potential, recalling highly significant social events, a projective function, through different association produced by them, and they have a potential to produce social changes, as

they influence and direct the attitudes people may have regarding the events presented in (Mamali, 2006).

#### **3.4.4. From Mirror Neurons to Social Cognition**

Another aspect that may be explanatory for the way in which we understand things is the idea of *the mirror neuron system*. In the study carried out by Rizzolatti, Fogassi and Gallese (2006), it is shown how through these mirror neurons it is possible to explain the way intentions are understood, by establishing a difference between similar actions with different aims. Apart from that, mirror neurons are also able to give an explanation of what others feel in addition to their actions. In the study, it was shown how the mechanism of mirror neurons existing in human brains responds when an individual performs certain actions and also when the subject observes others performing the same movements.

When considering actions, the understanding of emotions may differ according to each person. However, in a general perspective, when someone observes the way a person experiences a certain emotion, a cognitive elaboration of that sensing information can be triggered so that the other's person feelings are constructed in the mind of the viewer. Therefore, people comprehend others' emotions by means of a direct mapping mechanism, which involves certain parts of the brain able to produce visceral motor responses. Although the mirror neurons system cannot fully explain social cognition, it certainly offers a basis for the understanding of the interpersonal relations on which social actions and behaviors are constructed ((Rizzolatti, Fogassi and Gallese, 2006: 36).

All in all, these mirror neurons allow people to empathize with others, as they provide a direct internal experience and thus understanding of another person's act, intention or emotion. As stated by Elizabeth Thomas (2006), "empathy is the only human superpower—it can shrink distance, cut through social and power hierarchies, transcend differences, and provoke political and social change". This idea might be supported in relation to the image usage, by the fact that when the empathy takes place, mirror neurons are engaged by the image of others suffering, and this process makes use of the public's awakened sense of compassion and revulsion towards certain feelings, emotions or actions. Images, even static, have the same instantaneous reaction in the viewer as a real image of something occurring in a real time, because it makes the viewers identify and sympathize with what they see, and at the same time, "the image produces a sense of moral outrage" (Olson, 2008: 35). Therefore, when empathy takes place, the feelings are mirrored with the aim to facilitate the connection between people, and all this can occur due to the communication between the mirror neurons with the brain's emotional system. All this process may be the basis of the emphatic behavior in which there are instantaneous responses to the distress of others. Moreover, according to Rizzolatti (2008), "mirror neurons show us how strong and deeply rooted is the bond that ties us to others, or in other words, how bizarre it would be to conceive of an *I* without an *us*". In addition, mirror neurons establish a connection between the minds of the people, representing an important role in the social cognition. This connection is not done through conceptual reasoning; rather, the minds of the people are brought together through direct simulation by feeling. This is what Preston (2002; 2007) has defined with the concept of "cognitive empathy".

Nevertheless, as this study focuses on the image analysis, it might be said that images play an important role in the processes in which the mirror neurons system

operates, and as pointed out by Pizzaro, Detweiler, and Bloom (2006: 91), “images transcend language and geographic region, and they are able to strike instantly at the very heart of the viewer”.

All this applied to the study of media cartoons may be explanatory for the way in which these may direct people’s attitudes towards the events, as people are likely to empathize with one of the parties through the visual contact they establish with the human representatives of the party, which allows them to experience the same emotions the stated characters express. In order to support this idea, an important reference is what Pizzaro, Detweiler, and Bloom (2006: 91) mention in their study. They point out that, in the context of the Vietnam War, it is believed that images constituted a relevant contribution to the outrage of American citizen, which ultimately had as a consequence the end of the conflict.

### **3.4.5. Multimodal Metaphors**

In the last part of the cognitive analysis, the cartoons will be considered from the point of view of multimodal metaphors, as proposed by Forceville (2006). Taking into account that the two parts of a metaphor, the source and the target<sup>7</sup>, are part of a whole network of related meanings, there is a feature that is typically associated with the source and mapped onto the target. However, in order to decide what feature is to be mapped, the interpreter of the metaphor has to rely on the context in which it occurs. More than that, the context which the target and the source are part of involves also related concepts, attitudes, cultural values, beliefs, and so on, and the metaphors cannot be interpreted just according to the denotations they may imply. Furthermore, in some

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<sup>7</sup>“The source” and “the target” are terms used by Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, 1999.

situations in which the creator of the metaphor does not provide sufficient features that are to be mapped, the interpreter of the metaphor is going to decide which of the features are to be mapped, according to his/her system of beliefs, culture and knowledge. In some situation, the textual context that surrounds the metaphors gives some clues that facilitate the interpretation, but in most of the cases, it depends on the interpreter how far he or she will go in choosing the mappable feature. But, as mentioned by Speber and Wilson (1995; 1986; Forceville 1996: chapter 5), since features are not always made explicit, the interpretation process is open-ended, which sometimes makes metaphors both suggestive and risky ways of communication.

Moreover, the connotations that take place in metaphors can be evoked by a picture in the same way they are by words, bringing into the scene the pictorial metaphors. Nevertheless, as Forceville (2006) points out, a picture rather than containing a metaphor, what it really does is to invite the viewer to construe the metaphor. Hence, the metaphor's producer may choose to present salient cues for similarity so that the viewer is forced to perceive it and construe the metaphor, or by contrast, subtle hints would give more freedom to the viewer to construe it.

Forceville (2006) proposes four types of pictorial metaphors presented below:

- *Hybrid type of pictorial metaphor*: this is the case in which a unified object consisting of two different parts belonging to different domains is going to be interpreted by understanding one of the parts in terms of the other.
- *Contextual type of pictorial metaphor*: here, a unified object is understood to be something else as a matter of the visual context in which it is represented.
- *Pictorial simile*: a unified object is compared with another belonging to a different category, so that the first is understood in terms of the second.

- *Integrated metaphor*: a unified object is represented in such a way that it resembles another one, even without contextual cues.

Within these four types of metaphors, the one that I am mainly interested in for this study is the contextual metaphor. Here, a certain visually represented thing is placed in an unexpected visual context which strongly cues something else instead. Therefore, the metaphor would bring an interpretation of the first thing in terms of the other. Moreover, the visually represented thing is the target of the metaphor, and the visually suggested thing is the source. Considering all this, the visual context allows the viewer to infer the identity of the source. Nevertheless, the other three types of pictorial metaphors will be also applied in some circumstances throughout the discussion of the results, in order to exemplify and to give a stronger support to the idea of pictorial metaphors that are used in the ideological control in the context of communication.

Further on, when the target and the source are rendered in two modes, then it can be considered a multimodal metaphor. Most of the times, these modes are the written and the pictorial one. It must be also borne in mind that the multimodal metaphor will function only if the perceived source domain is recognized and if it evokes one or more connotations. All this will be applied to the cartoons studied here, as all of them may be considered multimodal metaphors, combining text and image at the same time.

#### 4. ANALYSIS OF DATA. RESULTS

##### 4.1. Analysis of Cartoon 1 (See Appendix)

The first cartoon analyzed in this study appears under the headline *Demands grow for Gaza war crimes investigation*. In the textual analysis of this headline, it must be mentioned that in the spite of the fact that the new information, *demands grow*, is placed in initial position, the given information, *Gaza war crimes investigation* receives more focus due to its final position, and actually it is strongly related to what is described in the image. Therefore, the recipient of the message gives prior attention to the idea that war crimes have been taken place and gives less attention to the fact that they are demanded for investigation. This idea also leads us to consider the presuppositions in the sentence, which are that someone is demanding the investigation and that war crimes have been taking place. However, the agent of the war crimes is implicit and not directly mentioned. This may be so due to the strong message transmitted from the image and that will be later discussed.

However, in the lexical structure of the sentence, it must be observed how through the nominalization of the word *demands*, the agent of the action is left out as it is not part of the information the author considers important. Most of the same happens in the case of the agent of the war crimes, which it is not mentioned either, and thus the focus lies on the actions and not on the agents.

All this is supported by the cartoon, in which in frontal position appears the Star of David, part of a fence made of wire. In the background the Gaza city is represented by buildings, and a black smoke billows out from the left side of the city, crossing the whole image from left to right. Moreover, in the same background, white smoke billows in the same direction, arising on the blue sky. From this description it may be deduced

that the Star of David represents Israel in the conflict and that from the close focal position it has, the image seems to be taken from the Israeli territory, looking at the Gaza city. In the same way, the black and white smoke implies the idea that bombardments have been taken place recently. The fence of wire directs the viewer to the idea of a concentration camp, mostly due to the presence of the Jewish symbol. However, this fence of wire may be also interpreted as protecting the Israeli people from the bombings and the war in general. Furthermore, due to the strong connotation the Star of David carries with it as a religious symbol, I may go further on and consider the fence of wire being the representation of the crown of thorns Jesus wore when He was crucified. Nevertheless, the black smoke billowing from the buildings crosscuts the sky and the image of the Star of David, implying negative and obscure connotations.

Considering the cognitive analysis, it may be said that the understanding of the events is manipulated as in the image the focus is placed just on the attacks at Israeli command, and the information on the attacks carried out by the other party in the conflict is left out. However, this main focus on the actions carried out by Israeli forces is in some way softened by representing the consequences of bombardments from a faraway position, and presenting only the material damages, the bombing of buildings, with no possible perception of any human victim, which can only be implied.

Through the denotation of the image, the mental model which is created is the idea of Israel as attacking the Palestinian territory. With the presence of the smoke, the mental model which is activated is that Israel is in power of more powerful weapons, and therefore their attacks are having worse consequences. This can also be related to the reasons for which Israel is accused and judged as committing war crimes, giving place to another mental model created by the viewer, in which the use of banned weapons is considered due to the white smoke that may be related with the use of white

phosphorus, which so much commented by the press and politics in general. Also, the faraway position in which Israel seems to be from the conflict creates a mental model in which Israeli people are perceived as safe, and the Palestinian people are those being attacked and therefore, killed. However, the fence of wire may also represent the wall between Israel and Palestine, whose construction was very much discussed. Moreover, through the association of the Star of David with the Zeonist movement, the fence may also be interpreted as the barrier through which the Land of Israel is defended against those who would impede its existence.

Moreover, the connotation the fence of wire has resembling a Nazi concentration camp creates the social representation in which Israel is perceived as switching roles and representing the Nazi system, in that in their attacks in the Gaza territory demonstrated to be heartless and cruel. Therefore, *the war crimes investigation* mentioned in the headline are directly related to the concentration camp and its implications, and consequently this may be directing the attitudes viewers have towards Israel's actions. In addition, considering the religious aspect mentioned before, in which the wire fence might be representing the crown of thorns, this could influence the viewer's attitude when associating the sacrifice Jesus has made for humanity with the human sacrifice in the conflict. This religious aspect may also be an allusion to the idea that the whole conflict and its terrific consequences are happening because of religious confrontations. However, the social representation activated here may direct the people's ideologies in favor of Israel, as in the western society, the Islamic religion has in some way negative connotations, while the Jewish religion activated the representation of the holly nation and its historical evolution.

In addition, considering the cartoon as a multimodal metaphor, it may be said that the metaphor in this case is "Israel is Nazi", in which the visually represented

concentration camp would be the source, the Nazi symbol, while the visually suggested, through the symbol of the Star of David, would be the target, that is Israel. In the same way, through the words used in the headline, which refer directly to the war crimes, the metaphor is supported in considering those war crimes similar to those occurring during the Nazi actions towards the Jewish people.

In conclusion, all this may be considered as directing the beliefs and attitudes people have regarding the events occurring in the Gaza conflict, contributing with an emphasis of the negative actions of the Israeli forces. Therefore, the powerful metaphor created here may be able to lead to a social change, in which Israel would no longer be seen as a fighter against terrorism and a defender of the territory, but as a powerful force that kills the innocent in a cruel and heartless way.

#### 4.2. Analysis of Cartoon 2 (see Appendix)

The second cartoon analyzed in this study was published under the headline *Israel human rights groups speak out, as death toll passes 1,000*. At the level of text analysis, I divided the sentence into two main parts. In the first part, *Israel human rights groups speak out*, there is a direct agent that begins the clause, *Israel*, and this can persuade the reader to center his/her attention on the presence of Israel, and to take it into consideration when contextualizing the whole article. However, due to the fact that this part of the information is placed at the beginning, the receptor is most likely to give priority to the second part of the sentence, *as death toll passes 1,000*, as it is identified with *the new information*, being placed in final position. Thus, it may be said that the fact which receives special emphasis is the large number of victims and the use of the verb *passes* may indicate that it is very probable that the number will still be growing. Moreover, also at the lexical level, the use of the verb *speak out* may have as an implication the idea that the Israel human rights groups denounce the injustices committed by their own military forces in the conflict. Furthermore, the expression *death toll* implies victims, people are being killed, and they are innocent, they cannot defend themselves from being killed. The choice of the number *1,000* has also its implication; it announces that the number of victims had arrived to a really big number, now newspapers talk about thousands of dead people. Another aspect that may be explicit in demonstrating how the topic is controlled or directed in order to obtain the preferred mental model is the absence of some of the information. Such is the case that the place where the number of victims got to 1,000 is not mentioned, and it seems that the author assumed that the receptor had already established a mental model in which the Palestinians are the large number of victims, and that people are killed just on the Palestinian territory. All this demonstrates the existence of a generalized belief, and how

certain details are taken for granted. However, by mentioning the fact that the human rights groups in Israel spoke out, the author marks the presence of Israel in the context. It is also interesting to understand the reference to Israel as having an inverse consequence. That is to say, although Israel is mentioned in a positive way, saying that their own human rights groups are protesting against the events, the receptor will acquire the meaning in a negative way, assimilating the actions of Israel as being unfair, unjust and cruel, and understanding in this way why there is the necessity of protest.

A part from the headline, the textual analysis considers also the text that is part of the image, that is to say, the message that appears on the white banner that hangs in central position: ONLY FIVE MORE BOMBING DAYS ... TO BUSHLESS. On the one hand, it may be seen that the beginning of the sentence can be considered as *given* information, as the receptor has already got enough knowledge about the attacks that are taken place in the conflict, and the idea that the bombings will continue can be easily assimilated. On the other hand, the second part of the sentence is considered *new* information, and it will receive the corresponding emphasis, being the main focus of the reader. From the lexical point of view, there is an interesting choice of words with which the author plays. The word *only*, at a first sight may be tricky. First, the reader might think it introduces a kind of optimistic and hopeful message, in the sense that there are just five more days left until the end of the attacks. However, it finally expresses the opposite meaning; it introduces a pessimistic message, threatening the Palestinians of the mere number of days left until the Israel army achieves its target, and that is one of totally destruction of the Palestinian area. Therefore, it may be observed how the word choice in this case is done with an ironical purpose, and how the *new* information helps the reader to get to the intended message. In the same context, the fact that a part of the message is covered by dust, and some of the supposedly existent words

cannot be read, helps the author with a pause, which probably is made on purpose in order to give time for reflection until the final result. What I want to say is that the author plays with elements in the picture and the words in the message in order to obtain an ironical effect. At the beginning an ambiguous message is presented, the reader cannot be sure whether it is an optimistic or a pessimistic message, and by separating the final words which express the final result of the message, the author is able to offer a strong emphasis through an effect which amplifies the intensity of the intended message.

Moreover, in terms of lexicalization, let us consider the use of the word MORE, which implies that there had already been other many bombing days, and this situation is just a continuation of them. The words *bombing days* are referring to the attacks carried out by the Israeli army, and probably it is preferred the word *bombing* in order to leave implicit the image of a bomb exploding on land and destroying everything around. In addition, the receptor is going to activate this mental model and all those elements that are left implicit, such as mortal victims, smoke, fire, etc. are going to appear in the image the receptor will create mentally. In the same way, regarding the word *bushless*, it can be seen how the word itself projects the reader to a mental model, and that is one of total destruction. It creates the image of a deforested land, where nothing was left alive; everything was killed, destroyed, and demolished. Therefore, the word *bushless* also implies victims, mortal victims, and above all, an irreversible destruction of a land and its people.

However, considering the sentence as a whole, it is observed that the agent of the sentence, as well as the patient is left implicit. It is not explained who is bombing and where. This exemplifies again how the reader assumes that the receptor has already

had the general mental modal of the war context, and at larger scale, it can be considered that more than a mental mode, here we have a social representation, as the whole public understands that the Israel army is bombing the Palestinian land.

Nevertheless, considering that the headline is responsible for the contextualization of the image published under it, and it provides a context for that image, it is very interesting to observe that in the picture there are not any human right groups described, nor mortal victims. By contrast, what we can see is bombed buildings and ruins everywhere. The ground is covered by dust and by rubbles. In the background of the image, under the blue sky, the shapes of the city's buildings appear, and getting closer, three of them are visible in detail. Right next to the one on the left, there is a pylon, from which a banner hangs to the building on the right, where it is tied to an architectural element of Muslim culture. The banner does not totally hang on the air, and most of it lies on the ground, and it seems that the dust had covered a part of the message. It is white, and in big blue capital letters it is written: **ONLY FIVE MORE BOMBING DAYS.....TO BUSHLESS**. Finally, in frontal position and almost centrally placed, a human being appears. It is a young girl, dressed in occidental clothes of bright colors, in a standing position that indicates movement. She seems to be walking away, leaving behind the fallen banner. Hence, going back to the initial idea, if the image does not represent physically any of the things mentioned in the headline, this will assume the role of guiding the viewer in interpreting the image, and consequently, the understanding of the image will totally depend on it. More of the same is the case of the text that is part from the image, and its function is to restate what the image describes. All in all, what it can be deduced is that both the headline and the text on the banner are of great importance when interpreting the image.

Going on to consider the image form, it is important to analyze the position from which the image is brought into focus. It seems that the viewer is introduced in the setting; the public receives a central position which permits a general view of the setting. The main access the viewer has is to the main elements that the author considered important, and those are the ruins, the young girl, and the banner. Moreover, the image content provides the viewer with certain meanings. In terms of subject, what the viewer sees is the destroyed Palestinian city after the Israeli attacks. In terms of lightening, there is a mixture of bright and dark colors. Although the sky is blue, the buildings are described in opaque colors. Considering the setting, there are some bombed buildings in the background, the remaining city, and in the foreground the important elements are placed, the subject and the main action.

Continuing with the image analysis, there are several elements that imply certain connotations. Although the headline and the text on the banner do not mention the setting of the image, the architectural element that can be seen on one of the buildings' wall is clearly of Muslim culture, and this is what reminds the viewer that the setting is placed on Palestinian land and not on Israeli one. Moreover, the walls of the buildings present many holes due to the bombings, which imply the existence of previous attacks. This idea together with the previous one creates a mental model in which the Palestinians are attacked by the Israeli army.

In addition, the fact that part of the banner is on the ground implies the idea that someone has tried to take it off, and it loses part of its threatening force. This may add to the previous mental model the existence of defense from the part of the attacked party. However, the dust that covers the banner and that makes it get lost within the debris makes the viewer focus on the large quantity of ruins in the picture, which will emphasize the harshness of the attacks carried out in Gaza.

Moreover, the fact that the banner hangs on a pylon, may represent metaphorically that the message is in fact transmitted by the means of communication. The beginning of the message hangs on the pylon and ends on the buildings, which metaphorically may represent how the information gets to the Palestinian homes through the media, which exemplifies the use of contextual metaphors in the picture.

Furthermore, the presence of the young girl may add important meaning to the image. Firstly, she is the only human being present in the whole scenario, which might imply that in certain way she plays a *metonymical* role, which can serve to attribute the young girl's characteristic to the people she represents. Therefore, as she is seen as the innocent victims in the conflict, those children whose fathers<sup>8</sup>, brothers and families had been killed, and also the undefended ones in the war, the preferred model created here would be that of the Palestinian people being associated with the innocent and weak party in the conflict. The author may have used the young girl also to provoke an empathy with the viewer, in the sense that people will feel compassion for those children that are suffering in the war. In this case, the mirror neurons system is also activated due to the physical position the girl has. She is placed in frontal position in order to be very visible to the viewer, who can observe that she is walking holding her arms very tight to her body, almost held together, with her shoulders slightly raised in such a way that her head is brought very closely to her body. This description indicates that she is scared, she seems to be frightened of what she leaves behind, and she is also walking away resigned as she cannot do anything against the events. She is powerless, and she is walking through the deserted city, without looking to the damages and the ruins, holding her face on the ground.

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<sup>8</sup> I'm referring just to the male members in the Arabian families, as they are the active participants in the war.

In addition, the author may have chosen the young girl as the representative human being, because in the Muslim culture the young girls are not obliged to wear the typical Islamic clothing, and in this way, because of her clothes, the young girl can be identified with an occidental girl, helping to the empathy described below. She is not associated with the Muslim people, she is a child as all the children in the occidental world, and this may create a new mental model of the Palestinian people for the occidental public, a lot much closer to their own culture. Hence, it can be concluded that, with the mental model created here by the girl and her clothes, a social representation of the Palestinian people may be changed. But most of all, in general, the social representation that is most likely to be formed here is that of the Palestinian people being victims of unjust attacks, and although human rights speak out, it seems that the bombings are about to continue.

### 4.3. Analysis of Cartoon 3 (See Appendix)

The second cartoon studied here was published under the headline *Quest begins for peace between Israel and the Palestinians*. Once again it can be observed that the new information is placed at the beginning of the sentence, although the given information is the one which receives focus in final position. Here, what is considered important is the idea of peace between the two parts related in the conflict, and not that the quest has begun. Moreover, the nominalization of the word *quest* is a choice the author makes in order to avoid the presence of the agent responsible for the action, as it is of no interest for the author. That is also why the active voice is preferred, in which the subject is a non-human entity that suffers the action. Therefore, in terms of presuppositions, it may be said that there is someone searching for peace in the conflict, and that there is a war going on between the two parts. The author of the headline chooses to use the word peace as an abstract object that is searched for, in order to highlight the values the concept of peace implies. Another important aspect that is worth consideration is the use of the proper noun Israel and the use of the nominalized adjective Palestinians. Here the preference for the noun gives Israel a unifying characteristic, and embodies it in a single entity. On the contrary, the nominalized adjective *Palestinians* individualizes the nation and refers directly to the people and not to the political entity. Therefore, it may be perceived as an idea of conflict between a political power and civilians, which would add a less powerful feature to the Palestinian party and thus create an unbalanced conflict.

Apart from the headline, the cartoon contains another sentence that completes the image, A GOOD WEEK TO BURY BAD NEWS. First of all, it can be seen that the sentence is written in the infinitive mood, and there is no agent. Here it must be considered that the given information is in initial position, as the text refers to the

present week in which the events have taken place. Moreover, the new information, to *bury bad news*, receives main focus and is placed in final position. It may also be said that the whole sentence is a time-purpose structure, where *a good week* is the adjunct in which the action would be carried out.

Moreover, the contrastive use of the adjectives *good-bad* deserves consideration. The adjective *good* placed in the time sequence gives a positive feature to the situation, implying that during that week positive things have been happening. On the contrary, the adjective *bad* modifying the noun *news*, gives a negative characteristic to the actions going on until now. However, the good over bad may be perceived from the initial position the word *good* receives in the sentence, implying a positive message.

In terms of rhetorical figures, the *bad news* is a metonymy that stands for the whole negative events happening during the conflict. This metonymy is part of the whole metaphor, *to bury bad news*, as something abstract cannot be physically buried, and therefore can be interpreted as the will for ending the negative actions that were happening up until the moment. However, the lexical choice of the verb *to bury* implies the presence of mortal victims and the ritual of burying. Therefore, as during the conflict and due to the attacks lots of people have been killed and many burials have been taking place, the message invites the reader to associate the burial of a person with the burial of war. However, as in the Gaza conflict most of the civilian victims were Palestinians, the message may sound as if it were addressed to the Palestinian people, saying that during that good week they would not bury their people, but the war. In this way, the focus seems to be on the Palestinian party, and on the idea that the attacks towards them will stop, which makes the reader associate the bad actions with the Israeli party. This demonstrates how, in the spite of the fact that the sentence seem to be

neutral regarding the two parties at a first sight, it may be influencing the attitudes people may have when evaluating the events in the context given.

Furthermore, it can be added that the sentence is placed at the bottom of the cartoon, as the author's aim was to give the sentence a supportive role for the visual representation. From bottom to top, it may be seen that on the left side of the cartoon there is an old Palestinian woman, sitting down on the ruins of buildings destroyed in the bombardments. She is wearing typical Arabian clothes and a burka. She seems to be drying her tears with her right hand, while her old left hand is on a bucket. The central part of the image represents the ruins of buildings, that is parts of walls from which some of the bricks are still holding together. On the central upper side of the image, the figure of a Israeli man is placed, situated in front of what might seem to be a wall. His backwards position must be signaled, as well as his cloths, which may suggest that he is a religious Jewish man. The sky is presented as being of a clear blue, with any trace of smoke that might interrupt the peaceful moment.

From this description it must be deduced that all the ruins in the picture are the result of a military attack, and are consequences of war. There isn't any building left, and the entire city seems to have been destroyed. The old woman is suffering, and seems to be crying, as probably she has lost the members of her family in the conflict. She is sitting down without doing any action, as there is anything she could do. She is powerless and in some way she is the innocent representative of the Palestinian country, as an old woman can never participate actively in the war, and she can only suffer the consequences of it. Her body gestures and face indicate that she is crying. Moreover, the Israeli representative is positioned backwards, and therefore the viewer cannot see what he is doing exactly. He is standing, in front of a wall, looking in the opposite direction,

as he would not want to see the ruins, the consequences of war. This may lead the viewer to consider that the Israeli representative does not want to face the consequences of the Israeli attacks. Because of his black clothes, and because he seems to be wearing a Yarmulke Jewish skullcap and beard, which may make the viewer believe that he is a religious Jew, he would be perceived as another innocent and peaceful character. The wall the man has in front of him may be the wall Israel built in order to separate the Israeli territory from the Palestinian one. Therefore, as the man is facing the wall, he might be looking towards Israel in an intention to leave the Palestinian territory behind. Further on, the fact that in the image the spectator may see just the material damages, the ruins of building, it may be understood that these ruins have buried the entire city and all the mortal victims.

In addition, the position the characters receive in the image might carry important connotations. First of all, the woman is placed in frontal position, and it is on her the viewer is focusing first, while the faraway position of the Israeli man rests from the importance given to its role. At the same time, the characters are placed in a parallel position but they are totally opposed, and due to this back to back position, the idea transmitted is that in fact there is no possible reconciliation between the two parts, as there is no contact, and any kind of communication.

However, the attitudes the viewer might have regarding the idea of peace are also directed through the social representations, which are influenced by the characters. That is to say, as was mentioned before, the cartoonist chose to represent an old Palestinian woman and a religious Jew, as they are the innocent representatives of both parties, thus positive aspects are emphasized and a neutral scenario is created.

The fact that the Palestinian woman receives the main focus in the picture, can affect the understanding of the message, as the viewer is likely to perceive the message from the Palestinian perspective. Therefore, the manipulation here consists in seeing peace as the solution for Palestinian suffering, and not for the both parts involved in the conflict. The same idea is highlighted when emphasizing the Palestinian suffering through the old woman, and presenting the Israeli man standing, backwards, as a cold human being that is not that much affected by the events. In addition, the mirror neurons system here can also influence the perception of events. The viewer, being enabled to perceive the suffering of the Palestinian woman, can empathize with her, and experience her suffering. Implicitly, the reasons of her suffering are social representations activated in the viewer's mind, and in this way the attitudes towards the responsible of these reasons are directed. In other words, because of the mirror neurons system, the viewer might identify itself with the Palestinian woman and therefore perceive the other party in a negative way. Thus, although the message initially seems to be neutral, it actually supports one of the parties and directs the negative attitudes towards the other.

Therefore, it could be said that the mental model created here is that the conflict did not have the same consequences for both parties. At the same time, through the Israeli man, the idea that he does not want to see the damages, thus face the results of his actions, might activate the mental model in which the negative features of this party are emphasized. Nevertheless, the most obvious mental model activated here is the consequences of the conflict, the ruins, which would end if peace is achieved.

From a different perspective, the cartoon may be interpreted as a multimodal metaphor. As was mentioned before, here the metaphor is conveyed not only by words, but also by the visual image. When analyzing the metaphor, A GOOD WEEK TO

BURY BAD NEWS, it was said that this metaphor would mean something like PEACE COULD END THE CRIMES. This is so, due to the use of the verb to bury, which it may be easily associated with the mortal victims and with the burial process. As the news mainly dealt with the Palestinian mortal victims, once again the focus is on that party. In the image the metaphor is created through the perception one has seeing the ruins as being the means of burying something. Therefore, the ruins are covering all the mortal victims, as because of them the viewer cannot see anything else. At the burial process taking place, the one who is present there and is crying because of the ones being buried is the Palestinian woman. In addition, the visually represented thing, the ruins all around, is the target of what is visually suggested, the source, which would be the consequences of events. This is supported by the lexical use of *bad news*, which suggests the same thing. Moreover, the idea that PEACE COULD END THE CRIMES is an interpretation that would direct the viewer's ideology towards the conflict, by emphasizing the idea of Palestinians as victims and Israel as being the author of those crimes. Thus, the receptor would probably be more alike to have a disposition for supporting the Palestinian party.

Another possible interpretation, that in which the verb to bury would be associated with the idea of hiding something in order to be forgotten, would have similar results. If one regards peace as being the opportunity in which the consequences of events would be buried, hidden and then forgotten, people would not judge the responsible for the crimes, and the conflict would not be in the attention of the people. Thus, this metaphor could be interpreted as a message of caution too, in that the idea of peace should not let people forget about the negative actions carried out by the Israeli cause, which consequently would direct people's view against this party.

#### 4.4. Analysis of Cartoon 4 (see Appendix)

This cartoon was published under the headline *Amid the dust and death, a family's story speaks for the terror of war*, and it can be observed that it is a very descriptive image of the article published in relation to it, as it summarizes its main idea, how a Palestinian family was killed by Israeli soldier, who, after the murder, left several offensive message for the entire Palestinian nation. However, it is interesting to see how the author chose to illustrate the events in the image, and this is what will be explanatory in demonstrating how the representation of an event is able to lead the public into a certain ideological direction.

First, the textual analysis will focus on the headline and later on, on the text that appears in the image. Again, the headline can be divided into two parts, *given* information and *new* information. The first part, AMID THE DUST AND DEATH, is considered to be given information as it is information with which the reader is already familiarized. The presence of dust and death into the context of war is already acknowledged by the reader, and as such, it is used to contextualize the situation in which the *new* information is introduced. Metonymically speaking, the words *dust* and *death* are the representatives of war, and they recreate the mental model of war in the reader's mind. Moreover, these two words also represent a dark image, which emphasizes the terrible situation of war, the dust representing the destroyed buildings and the death the mortal victims in the attacks, that in this situation may be assigned to the particular case of the family involved in the occurrence. The second part of the headline, A FAMILY'S STORY SPEAKS FOR THE TERROR OF WAR, is identified as the *new* information, and it will receive the proper focus. Here, the agent of the clause is the story of a family, which implies the idea of members of a family telling their experience. With the verb *speaks*, the idea of communication is again emphasized,

as through the story told by someone it is told again something explanatory for the whole event, and that is the *terror of war*. Here, through the use of metonymy, the story of a family describing the terror of war, it is implied the idea that the family had experienced a terrifying situation, such as violence and death, and the information in the first part, the *dust and death*, restates this idea, forming the mental model of a family that had lost its members and its house in the attacks. The idea of communication is important in the sense that it is the case of first-hand information about an external event, which gives more credibility to the reader, as what are read are not opinions, but facts.

Furthermore, although the war is mentioned directly, it is not necessary to mention the two parts involved in it, as the picture and the text that appears with it are explanatory enough as it will be seen later on in the image analysis. It is important to mention that the text in the image is information from the article published previously in relation to the occurring events. However, it is interesting to notice that the author did not represent the whole information, just part of it<sup>9</sup>. There is no doubt that the choice was done in such a way to offer meaning to the image, and this is the case of the sentence GAZA HERE WE ARE, which places the viewer in the right setting, that is, the events occurred in Gaza, and the family in case is a Palestinian one. Pragmatically speaking, this sentence implies a direct address to Gaza population, and the Israeli

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<sup>9</sup> In the article published in relation to the image, there are mentioned several graffiti the Israeli soldiers daubed on the walls of the house in question: "Arabs need 2 die", "Die you all", "Make war not peace", "1 is down, 999,999 to go", and scrawled on an image of a gravestone the words: "Arabs 1948-2009". There were also several sketches of the Star of David flag. "Gaza here we are," it said in English next to one. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jan/20/gaza-israel-samouni-family> [last accessed June 4th, 2010].

soldiers, speaking in first person, establish themselves as the direct agents of the actions. The sentences also implicate a threatening tone, which indicates a sort of superiority, in the sense that the Israeli soldiers perceive themselves a lot much powerful than the people they are attacking.

Moreover, another sentence that appears represented in the image is ARABS NEED 2 DIE. Here there is a direct agent, which gives force to the statement, placed at the beginning of the clause, as *given* information. *Need 2 die* is the *new* information, and, as it is the main focus of the reader, one should consider the verb *need*, which implies a necessity, indicating that there is a reason for which it is needful to kill the Arabian people. The meaning receives strength as it may be also understood that due to the necessity of killing the Arabian people, the attacks will not cease until the aim is accomplished. As the messages were “naively” written in English, being this the language used in international communication, and considering their abbreviated modern calligraphy, the use of 2 for *to*, it might be said that the language used brings the occidental society closer to the events, and there is a stronger implication of the reader into the interpretation of the image.

Finally, there is another written message that appears in the image, it appears on the grave drawn by the Israeli soldiers, written in both Hebrew and English, and it is the word *Arabs*, and two dates: *1948-2009*. Taking into account the social representation of the grave, this implies a dead human being, although, in this case, the use of metonymy is again patent, as the grave stands not just for one person, but for an entire nation. The words *Arabs*, both in Hebrew and English appear on the grave as they represent the entities that had been buried there, and probably the soldiers wrote it in both languages in order to emphasize the fact that the Arabian people were killed and consequently buried by the Israeli army. Next, the dates, *1948-2009*, again are part of the social

representation, in that it is something which is socially and culturally understood as the dates of the beginning and of the end (the date of birth and of death) of the buried entity. Moreover, these dates imply the length of time of the war between Israel and Arabs, which began in 1948, being named by Israel as the War of Independence or of Liberation, and by Arabs as the Catastrophe (al-Nakba). Therefore, the last date, 2009, represent the end of the war, and being written on the grave where the Arabian people are buried, it is indicated that Israel has won the war, and implicitly, has killed the Arabian people.

Furthermore, going on with the image analysis, at the level of description, there is nothing on the background of the picture, there are no buildings, the sky is cloudless and blue, and in it, the drawings left by an Israel helicopter, placed in the upper-right corner of the image, appear. They represent the written messages, some sketches of the Israeli flag and the Star of David, and the grave previously mentioned. In the foreground, there is a demolished house, surrounded by dust and rubbles, and in a corner, there is the silhouette of a human being, sitting on the ruins. In terms of connotation, the lack of buildings in the background and the demolished bombed house in the foreground might imply the idea that as a consequence of the attacks, the city was destroyed and any buildings were saved. This idea can be restated by the presence of the grave as well, which implies the idea of death. Moreover, the demolished house implies a previous attack, and because there is only one person alive, it might be understood that he is the only survivor and the others were killed in the bombings. The presence of the Israeli helicopter going away and leaving behind the drawings done with the white smoke of the helicopter, which on the one hand marks the presence of the Israeli military forces as being the authors of the damaged presented as well as the messages left. On the other hand, as the helicopter is in motion, it seems that the Israeli soldiers

are safe, going on their way, and they leave behind all the terrifying consequences of their attacks.

Moreover, I decided to divide the image into three vertical blocks, as I consider the viewer might be unconsciously guided in his/her interpretation by the strategic position of the elements in the image. Therefore, the first block on the left, represents the message ARABS NEED 2 DIE, and there is nothing under it, except open field, and some rubbles on the ground. All this gives force to the message, which is the main element that stands out for the viewer. Next block, in the centre, consists of three elements: the Star of David, the grave and part of the demolished house. These three elements together might create a mental model in which the demolished house involves human deaths, represented also by the grave, which is positioned right above the ruins, and further on, above all on the top the Star of David appears, implying the idea that the Israeli soldiers are responsible for the previous two elements, and being positioned on top of them all, might also imply the idea of victory. Finally, the third block, positioned on the right side of the image, is represented by five elements: the Israeli helicopter, the Israeli flag, the message GAZA HERE WE ARE, the ruins of the house, and the human being. This block is marked by the presence of the Israel soldiers, which apart from the helicopter is emphasized in the use of the pronoun WE, and by the Israeli flag, which seems to be waving, symbolizing the Israeli presence on the Palestinian territory, and more than that, being there triumphantly. All this Israeli potent presence is positioned upon the Palestinian man sitting on the edge of the ruins, marking a huge difference of power, as the Palestinian man appears as defenseless, weak, represented as such by a small drawing in comparison with a big helicopter that seems to master the whole scene. Moreover, the diagonal view also marks a symmetrical position of symbolic elements that relate with each other. Looking to the image from the up left corner to the bottom

right one, the presence of the Palestinian man is related with the grave of the Arabs and the explicit message that says: ARABS NEED 2 DIE.

Furthermore, considering the image of the Palestinian man, it must be said that his physical position, sitting on the ruins of the house, looking down, holding his hands together, indicates that he is totally defenseless, weak, and static, he does not do anything to defend himself, he stays still without running from the bombings, and he seems he has worn-out in front of the consequences of war. His black clothes emphasize his sorrow, and he seems to be in mourning, as the demolished house and the attacks may also imply that his family died there. Just about the same as in the previous images analyzed, the neuron mirror system may be activated here in the viewer, who will empathize with the Palestinian man, and implicitly with the Palestinian nation.

The last element analyzed in this image is the serpent that appears on the Israeli helicopter. Although the serpent represents the insignia of the Israel Defense Forces, it is very much likely that it does not just inform the viewer that the helicopter in the image belongs to the Israel army<sup>10</sup>, but more than that, it will have an effect on the viewer based on the symbolism of the serpent in the viewer's culture. That is to say, in the occidental culture, the serpent represents the evil, and as a social representation, when interpreting the image, the viewer will be conditioned by this previous knowledge, and will activate a mental model in which the Israel will be perceived as the evil in the conflict. This element in the image may also be considered an integrated metaphor, as due to the strong symbolism the serpent may have socially speaking, as representing the evil, the helicopter, and the Israel army implicitly, will receive a negative evaluation even without the contextual cues. Hence, this element can be

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<sup>10</sup> For further information see: [http://www.search.com/reference/Paratroopers\\_Brigade](http://www.search.com/reference/Paratroopers_Brigade) [last accessed on 15th May, 2010].

considered as a pictorial metaphor, which defines ISRAEL as EVIL, in which the source is the serpent and the visually suggested element, the target, is the evil.

In conclusion, it may be said that due to these possible interpretations that the public may carry out when seeing this image, the mental model created is that the Israel army attacked and killed the Palestinians in Gaza without mercy and with cruelty, bombing the area with the will to destroy everything. Furthermore, their will to kill all the Arabs imply that the conflict does not focus anymore in its initial aims; rather, it went further on in considering the civil population as a target in the attacks, killing human beings unjustly.

## 5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

After analyzing the cartoons individually, it is interesting to have a look upon them as a whole, and to consider them as a continuum, from an evolutionary point of view. Although each cartoon was published in relation to an article, and each of the articles in matter were written on different topics, it is interesting to see how the images involve an evolution in the same way as the events that occur in the conflict are subservient to a progress.

Therefore, a first issue to take into account is how the events are presented from the perspective of each of the parts involved in the conflict. Considering the Israeli presence, the first image presents Israel positioned far away from Gaza, there is an evident distance and the public does not have access to the Gaza script in order to see the consequences of the war. However, in the second picture, the presence of Israel is marked by a threatening message left on the Palestinian territory, but what the viewer sees in this case is the Palestinian town and the ruins of bombed buildings. Moreover, in the third image, the Israeli presence is somehow less obvious in comparison with the Palestinian one, which again directs the viewer's focus on towards the Palestinians, which again are perceived as the victims of the war. Finally, the last image is marked by the presence of the Israeli forces on the Palestinian land, but not from a passive perspective such as in the previous cartoon, but in a violent way, presenting in a direct way the actions of the Israeli forces, their cruelty and will of destruction. Therefore, it can be said that the evolution of the visual description is showing how the Israeli cause is presented each time more negatively, enforcing with each image a more negative attitude towards it.

In the same way, from the Palestinian perspective, the public is involved in the material and mortal damages gradually. First, the viewer cannot see the consequences of the bombings in Gaza, as the area is seen in the distance. But, in the next cartoons, the viewer is directly introduced in the middle of the attacks. However, the harshness with which are presented the consequences of war is also done step by step. If in the first cartoon the Palestinian town conserves its buildings in spite of the evident attacks, in the second one, the viewer can see how those buildings are destroyed, though some of them are still standing. The background of the third image is fully described by rubbles, there are no buildings left, and the old Palestinian woman implies mortal victims. Finally, the last image presents the cruelest description, a totally destroyed house, and those messages that imply lots of mortal victims, supported by the almost insignificant presence of a Palestinian man, who seems to be the only person left alive.

In addition, this path of events visually presented to the public helps to the formation of a mental model in which Gaza is presented constantly as being attacked, the Palestinian people being the victims, and the Israeli forces being those that are bombing, destroying and killing the defenseless people. The constancy of such mental models leads to the formation of preferred mental modals which establishes themselves in the minds of the receptors, which are directed to perceive the external conflict from a directed point of view. Therefore, the knowledge, the belief and the attitude the public is going to have with respect to the conflict is that of seeing Palestinians as the good and innocent party and the Israeli as the bad one.

Moreover, from the point of view of the social representations used in the presentation of the visual images, it might be observed how the usage of some of them in one of the images may influence its use and significance in later ones. This is the case of the Star of David visual representation, which appears at first in the second image,

implying negative connotations through the contextual metaphor it creates, that of the association of Israel with the Nazi system, being Israel the agent of cruel and unjust crimes in Gaza script. Once the receptors of this message create this mental model through the activation of this social representation, it is more likely that, when visualizing the same symbol in the last cartoon, they are going to assign the same values as in the previous cartoon. Consequently, in the last cartoon, the Star of David represented above the grave and within the message ARABS NEED 2 DIE and the Israeli helicopter, will activate in the public's mind the model in which Israel are responsible of cruel and unjust crimes in the conflict. Referring to the religious significance the Star of David implies, this social representation is probably to activate also the model in which the viewer will attribute the war some religious reasons and divergences.

In addition, regarding the contextual metaphor used in the cartoons, there is one that can be mentioned as being present in most of them, and it is that of the rubbles being part of the background of each image. The rubbles and ruins involve previous attacks, bombings and destruction, all provoked by the Israeli forces, and due to their repeated visual representation, they create a mental model which is able to get the public closer to the real setting of the events, and consequently feel closely those tragic consequences of war.

More of the same happens with the presence of the human beings in the images. The comics have the Palestinian people represented in all their form: a child, a woman and a man. A possible interpretation of the use of the human being might be related with the association of those human beings and the degree of the human sorrow in the conflict, which might be also connected with the use of the mirror neurons system in creating empathy in the public. Therefore, at first, the young girl's presence can remind

the viewer of the danger in which the Palestinian children and human beings are, but when seeing the old woman in the next cartoon, the public perceives in a more direct way the pain of the woman and implicitly the idea of human casualties in the attacks. In these two cartoons the Palestinian people are represented by the most innocent representatives in the conflict, the children and the women. However, although in the last picture a man appears, the way he is represented, through a small size, and of black color, along with the context of the image, implies a bigger degree of pain, as even the strong ones in the party, the men who fight, have been overcome. Furthermore, the viewers, with the evolution of events and along with their visual representations, are going to be more and more in favor of the Palestinian party, feeling gradually more empathy with its people.

To sum up, it may be said that the images chosen to be published along with the articles written about the events occurring in the conflict, also present an evolution in the way they represent the respective situations and events. They are focused from a perspective that clearly emphasizes the negative aspects of the Israeli party, which increase gradually according to the events happening at the moment. In addition, through the constantly repetition of the same mental models, it is more likely that the public will establish these models into social ones, which will influence the attitudes and the evaluation people will have with respect to the parts involved in the confrontation.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS.

The analysis in this study tried to show how the cartoons used in the news media contribute in directing people's ideologies in a specific direction in order to provoke an ideological change. For this purpose, the study has focused mainly on the image analysis and the cognitive aspects involved in the control of people's minds, though the analysis of discursive features in the texts published along the images was also considered.

Therefore, it may be concluded that the attention of the receptor regarding the visual images was first guided by the headlines under which the cartoons were published, as the headlines summarize the topic, being this the main idea of a media article. The way in which the information was presented and the images introduced was a first step in directing the understanding, and of what might be the interpretation of the images later on. In this case, the viewers of the cartoons were directed to focus on the idea that war crimes have been taken place, the number of the Palestinian victims were constantly growing due to the Israeli attacks, on the fact that the peace between Israel and the Palestinians was not going to be accomplished, and finally, on the terrifying consequences the war left behind on the Gaza script and its people.

Moreover, through the connotations extracted from the content of the images, it was observed how preferred mental models were created or activated. This was the case of the mental model in which Israel was seen as being the active party that attacked the other one, and due to all the images in the matter, this idea might be emphasized with that of taking for granted that the attacks were taking place just on Palestinian land, being Israel the only assaulter, while the Palestinians were perceived only as passive victims. In the case of the second cartoon, the mental model formed was that the Israeli

attacks killed lots of Palestinian people and that they would not stop until destroying everything around. In the third cartoon, Israel was seen as not opened to communication, and not facing the consequences of the attacks, while the last cartoon was again marking the presence of the Israeli attacks and their mortal consequences on the Palestinian territory.

Furthermore, activated by the visual representations, the social representations were also modified in order to achieve a determined general idea regarding the events. In this way, people would associate Israel with the Nazi, while the Palestinians would be seen as innocent victims resembling the situation of the Jewish people during the Nazi persecution. Most of the same was the case of the serpent in the last cartoon that activated the social representation of the serpent as evil, creating the metaphor of Israel being the Evil.

In relation to the last idea, the concept of mirror neuron system was also applied in order to demonstrate how through visual contact of different emotions people's understanding is affected, and a process of *feeling alike* can take place. In this way, one experiences an emotion which can influence the evaluation of the events, and may be considered as manipulative as it would be in favor of the party with which the viewer has empathized. All this was exemplified with the presence of the human beings in the images, most of them being Palestinian people, all of them presented in such a way that the public will empathize with the Palestinian nation, feeling their pain and perceiving them as defenseless in front of a powerful Israeli army. Regarding the human representatives of Israel, it was seen that their position, representation and symbolism have not been favorable in creating empathy with the viewers, details which again contribute to the negative general presentation of the Israeli party.

Nevertheless, the images were considered to be multimodal metaphors, as both the source and the target were rendered through visual and lexical modes, and also due to the different connotations and interpretations evoked by the source domain in the cartoons analyzed. The main contextual metaphors were Israel is Nazi and Israel is Evil, both of which go further on to establish at the social level the representation of Israel as being the bad part in the conflict, while the Palestinians the innocent and the victims.

All in all, it might be said that through the studied carried out here, in an attempt to identify any manipulative aspect in the use of visual images, the results showed that there is a directing process taking place. More exactly, the author tried to direct the attitudes the viewer might have regarding the parts involved in the Gaza conflict, emphasizing the negative aspects of the Israeli party, marked as the active responsible of the conflict and their consequences, and directing the viewer towards a supportive attitude for the Palestinian party.

Finally, due to the limitation this study has encountered, further analysis and research is needed in order to take advantage of all the cognitive aspects involved in the manipulation of ideologies through visual images used in the news media. I consider all this of great importance, as the visual images are able to convey a stronger message than words are, and because their interpretation is a way in which the ideas on a particular matter are created and established, affecting people's ideologies.

With respect to the future investigation on the topic, it must be mentioned that, due to the fact that all it was exposed in this study was considered from a wide general point of view, considering all the possible interpretations, mental models, and details which might contribute in the directing of ideologies regarding the Gaza conflict and the two parts involved in it. However, in order to demonstrate the real applicable instances

in which all these theoretical points and practical interpretations are able to function, a further research would propose the presentation of the images to two groups of people, each of which would have different ideologies with respect to the conflict, each supporting one of the parties. In this way, it is very probable that each of the groups will interpret the images depending on their ideologies, using their already existent mental models in order to create new ones, and activating their social representations, which may differ according to their knowledge and beliefs. With the results of this future study it would be possible to offer further information on the way ideologies are controlled, directed or changed, with the contribution of physical subjects, real situations and active minds that would be analyzed according to all the points presented along this initial study.

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## APPENDIX

### Cartoon 1, by Steve Bell

Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> of January 2009, on [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)

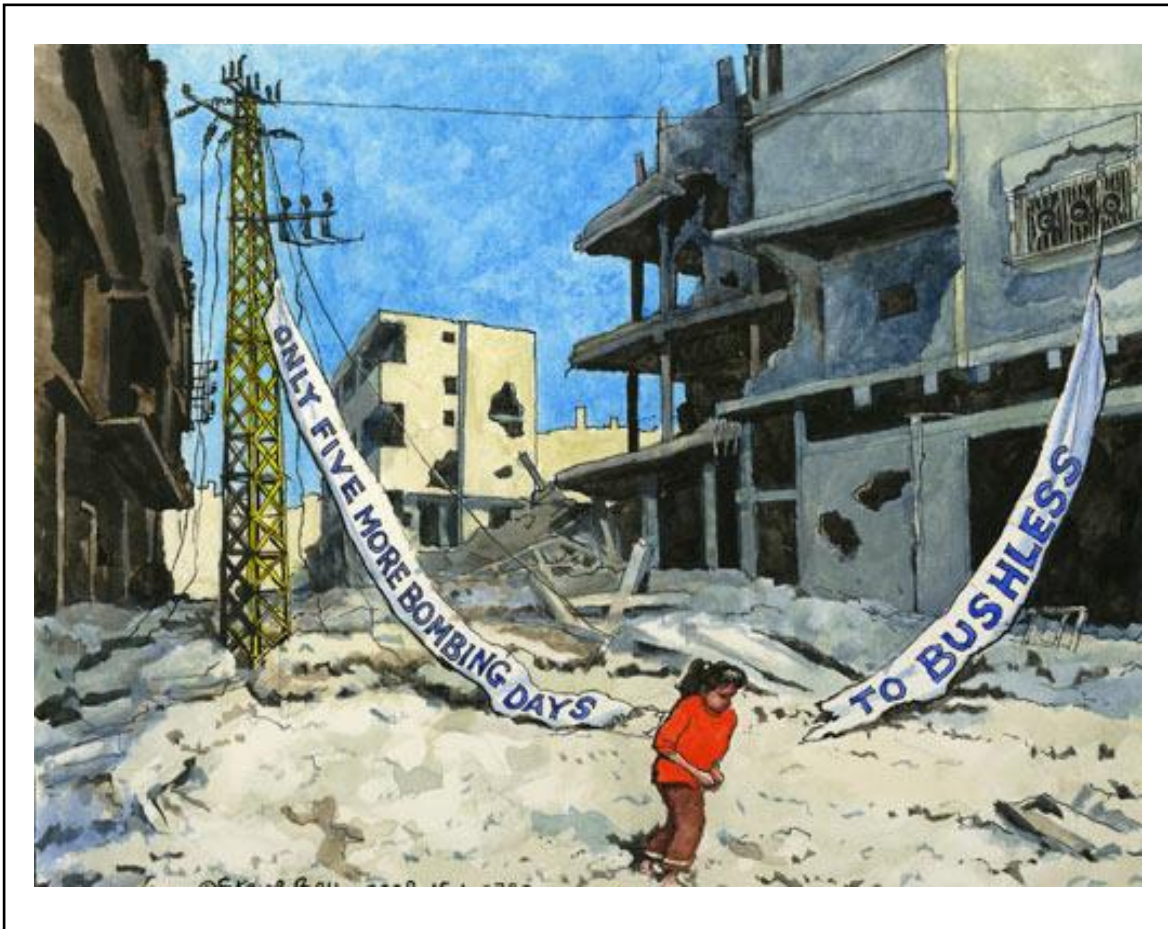
Demands grow for Gaza war crimes investigation



**Cartoon 2, by Steve Bell**

Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> of January 2009, on [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)

Israel human rights groups speak out as death toll passes 1,000



**Cartoon 3**, by Steve Bell

Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> of January 2009, on [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)

Quest begins for peace between Israel and the Palestinians



**Cartoon 4**, by Steve Bell

Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> of January 2009,

Amid the dust and death, a family's story speaks for the terror of war

