

Linguistic and Socio-Semiotic Study of the Political Humor in Comic Strips

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- Socio-Semiotics Analysis
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- Ideology
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Abstract

Comics have the power to engage readers; they are shaped by society and also help shape social identities and communities. This article examines the underlying meaning of the well-known comic strip Gogi in order to comprehend its content and how it challenges Pakistan's social, cultural, and political norms. The study of comics is important in understanding how media organizations and authors make their own political and social decisions, and how they replicate or challenge the traditions and practices of their culture. The study sample consists of six Gogi comic strips from the official Gogi Studios Facebook page. Fairclough's 3 D Model and Barthes' Socio-Semiotic approach are employed to analyze the selected comic strips and to explore the relationship between comic strips and society. The analysis of the comic strips reveals the socio-political problems and aids in understanding how they interact with the structures of power in society. The research demonstrates the complexity of comic strips and how they are shaped by social, cultural, and political processes, as well as how intricately they alter those processes themselves. This study makes the case that comic strips are a potent medium for influencing audiences because they subtly depict social and political issues while also challenging and questioning the established social hierarchies. The work is important because it reveals the latent symbolic significance that was concealed in the comic strips' complex language and visual structures.

1. Introduction

Comics are not just a source of entertainment but are also manifestations of popular culture and purveyors of ideology. Ideology is fundamentally connected with issues of social power; the medium of comics itself is powerful and particularly the association of institutional and societal power structures with comic strips lends more power to it. In analyzing comics we must acknowledge that they are primarily images and so predominantly visual but at the same time, we must realize that comics are a language and a unique set of mechanisms to produce meanings (Groensteen 1999, p. 3). A comic strip text combines both linguistic and visual elements. Thus employing both linguistic and nonlinguistic devices, the comic strips provide a means to reflect on current sensitive issues and communicate messages drawing on people's concerns.

Undoubtedly there are relationships between comics, ideology, and the prevailing culture. This study seeks to reveal the ideologies underlying *Gogi* comic strips, the creator of *Gogi* comic strip series is Nigar Nazar who is using her art to create awareness among the masses of Pakistan. In *Gogi* she addresses a wide range of issues and covers a gamut of the positivities and pitfalls of society. This comic strip series is a product of the current culture of Pakistan and the existing problems of political and administrative concern. The choices made by the writer mirror their social conditions and their influence on their outlook and hence on their representation of the subject (Kanwal et al, 2022).

Gogi has been published widely within Pakistan, in a variety of newspapers and magazines since the 1970s. *Gogi* represents an educated and enlightened Pakistani woman, who touches upon pressing issues and takes on the job of raising awareness, particularly about the socio-political situation of Pakistan.

This paper is mainly concerned with the ideological function embedded in the comic strips in order to see the ideological and political dimensions of this discourse and explore the possibilities for the creator of the discourse to engage in resistance and social change. As Fairclough (1992) contends, "not all discourses are ideological, the discursive practices are ideologically invested in so far as they reproduce or transform relations of domination" (cited in Cui 2010). Thus the study aims to reveal how the creator of *Gogi* comic strips employs subtle humor as a strategy to resist and critique the practices of Pakistani politicians and administration.

It seeks to answer the following questions:

- i. What linguistic and semiotic resources are used in *Gogi* comic strips to portray socio-political practices and issues?
- ii. Are there any ideological assumptions encoded in the strips, and what are they?

2. Literature Review

Comic books and comic strips are valuable research areas. This is because they are not just a source of entertainment but are also manifestations of popular culture and purveyors of ideology. "Comics are a language; that is to say, a unique set of mechanisms for the production of meaning" (Groensteen 1999, as cited in Steimberg, p. 2). Jean-Bruno Renard (1978) explains how the ideological analysis of comics is relevant. Media groups and

authors create comics that reflect their ideologies as on the one hand, they make their own philosophical, political, and social decisions; and on the other hand, they share the norms and conventions of their society (Steimberg *Discourse Beyond Words...* p. 2). Superman is a key example of a comic book character holding the United States' democratic political system and its capitalist economy and then there is Batman the playboy comic book character both of them are depicted as contesting evil forces and supporting the socio-economic order (Moore, 2003). "All comics are political," said Alan Moore a comic book writer (cited in McAllister et al. 2001, p.1).

A great deal of research about comics has explored various facets of comics apart from ideological ones. The research on comic art, comic strips, comic books, and editorial cartoons applied a varied range of approaches and perspectives to explore the ways comics communicate (Lombard, Lent, Greenwood, & Tunc1999, as cited in McAllister et al. 2001), including the possible use of comics as an educational tool (Gower, 1995); the influence of comics on children (Wertham, 1954); the persuasive rhetoric of the comic form (Edwards & Winkler 1997); the controversies associated with comics and their history (Barker 1984; Harvey 1996; Lent 1999; Nyberg 1998; Rubenstein 1998); and the psychoanalytic nature of comics (Adams 1983) (McAllister et al. 2001, p.3).

Apart from all the diverse approaches, an ideological approach to comics is necessitated primarily because of two reasons. Firstly, the nature of comic art draws ideological interpretations, as in comic art a unique combination of images and words renders significance to it lending more flexibility to manipulate meaning and thereby investigate the underlying ideological work. In comic art, the elements of communication are often created in such a way as to impose preferred meanings on the reader. The closed ideological text and limited space make the creator of comic art use stereotypes for conveying information quickly (Walker, 1994, as cited in McAllister, et al. 2001). In the same way, the storytelling devices like thought balloons and descriptions also make the themes and values in a comic strip explicit to the reader. Thus, comics are possibly influential in changing the point of view through comic strips (Carrier, 2000, p. 55); and sometimes the ambiguous relationship between word and picture also creates a semantic space in comics (Barker 1989), which renders the potentially polysemic text giving way to multiple interpretations, sometimes completely different from the artistic intent. Also, the application of ideological analysis brings the understanding of comics as a form of social significance.

Barker (1989) argues that the connection between comics and their readers involves complexity which entails the need for more sophisticated analysis to understand the link between comics and their reception and audience as well as the way in which they work towards maintaining or resisting power relations in society. The medium of comics itself is powerful and particularly the association of institutional and societal power structures with comic strips lends more power to it. Comics' research has broadened its scope with a plurality of analytical perspectives in integrating the study of comics as artworks with institutional, identity, and societal aspects of power (Cortsenetal 2015).

The analysis of images must involve both their cultural norms and their perceptual qualities. Barthes (1964, 1977) argues that the viewer of the image gets both the perceptual and the cultural message simultaneously. It was Barthes who studied signs and signification as important elements of any socio-cultural context. As compared to Saussure who had studied the significance of culture in a synchronic manner, Barthes's interest was

in the process of change in meanings across cultural and historical contexts, and because of his influence, the analysis in semiology is marked by an interest in studying cultural practices and, in particular popular culture.

Barthes' semiology sees signification as a layering of meaning, and ideology is perceived as a second order of signification in this analytical distinction. The "set of connotators" (Barthes 1964, 1977, p. 49) are studied as being super-imposed to the level of denotation (Barnhurst Vari & Rodríguez 2004). In this way "ideology has thus been treated as a parasitical sign, attached to the denotative image by means of cultural coding" (Cited in Aiello, 2006, p. 95).

Critical Discourse Analysis is close to social semiotics with a slight differentiation. Fairclough asserts, "CDA is an analysis of the dialectical relationships between semiosis (including language) and other elements of social practices" (Wodak & Meyer 2001, p. 123). Semiosis includes all forms of meaning-making including both verbal and nonverbal aspects. A variety of social practices are imbibed in social lives which are interconnected and every practice has a semiotic element. The focus on social practices allows one to bring together the perspective of structure and that of action. A practice is a way of acting socially, social practices work to not only reproduce structures but also to challenge and transform them. However, social semiotics' believes that every social action is semiotic which makes it distinct, as discursive practices and their textual versions bring changes in social practices (van Leeuwen 2005, as cited in Aiello 2006, p.99). Critical Discourse Analysis involves detailed analysis to explain and uncover the ideological assumptions hidden in words (Habermas 1973 as cited in Cui 2010). CDA's primary focus is on socio-political issues beyond the textual border itself. Its analytical tools consist of both linguistic and non-linguistic factors in order to address social issues and challenges

3. Research Methodology

The study employs a qualitative paradigm through the use of semiotic analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis to examine the comic strips. The analysis is based on Fairclough's 3 D model, interpretation of the sign system drawing on the connotation and denotation, linguistic elements, and visual images of the comic strips.

The sample comprises six *Gogi* comic strips extracted from the Facebook page of Gogi studios for the years 2014 and 2015. The data is selected through purposive sampling keeping in our objective of including those comic strips which are related to the chosen themes. *Gogi* comic strips address a diverse range of social, cultural and political issues from macro-level problems to those dealing with minute day-to-day life. Keeping in the scope of our study we have selected only two major themes socio political and administrative issues and have singled out three comic strips from each for detailed semiotic and critical discourse analysis.

The present study adopts Barthes' Semiotic Approach (1977) and Fairclough's 3 D model (1992) as a primary and secondary framework respectively. Social semiotics proves useful in revealing the power structures underlying visual signification. Barthes proposed that an image's meaning has two layers: denotation and connotation. Denotation refers to the literal meaning of the image, whereas connotation is the symbolic or ideological meaning. Barthes does not look at objects or signs individually but also is interested in the

interconnection of signs or objects. He asserts that connotation is the result of the cultural associations connected to the represented people or objects.

The analysis of images involves the recognition that they are shaped by the subtleties of social power and ideology rendering them a significant mode through which ideologies are produced and onto which ideologies are projected (Sturken & Cartwright 2001 as cited in Liu 2013).

Fairclough's model for CDA involves three interrelated processes of analysis.

- 1 Text analysis (description),
- 2 Processing analysis (interpretation),
- 3 Social analysis (explanation)

Fairclough's three dimensions of discourse are interdependent; the data is analyzed under a single heading. The Critical Discourse Analysis of selected comic strips aims at revealing the intended meaning hidden in the discourse used in the comic strips. The tools of social semiotics proposed by Barthes and those of CDA i.e., text analysis; interpretation and social analysis combined together have been able to reveal the ideology of the cartoonist in creating humor through the use of language and images on the surface level while allowing space for an in-depth study to dig up the range of meanings and the issues of power dominance, inequality, and injustices underlying this surface structure.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

The findings are presented and analyzed under the following categories.

- i. Reflecting Socio-Political Conditions
- ii. Prevailing administrative and communal Issues

i. Reflecting Socio-Political Conditions

The context of these cartoons is the petrol crisis which remained for a few weeks in January 2015 resulting in great turmoil in the country.

Example 1



Figure 1: Public and government officials

a. Semiotic Analysis

This image can be divided into two parts; the right and the left frame, portraying the public on the right and government officials on the left. The major objects on the public side are men and women holding cans and bottles, they are looking happy with smiling faces and some are laughing with excitement. In the background the petrol pump and the banners are obvious; 'No petrol' on the banners indicates some protest. These objects have individual meanings; hence can be called 'signs'. The cheerfulness of the public is associated with the given text saying, 'The Prime minister has taken a strict action and expelled the high officials'. There is only one figure shown in a distance who is surprised rather than happy, representing those in the public who are educated and aware of the reality of the political system and who do not believe in like blindfolded.

The contrast is established with the other frame of the image where the prominent objects are four figures lying on their beach chairs wearing shades and carrying lemonade in their hands; their clothing includes vests and shorts. Joy is obvious from their faces as they are not only enjoying their present state but also the situation which is handled tactfully by the prime minister. The attached text adds to the meaning of the image by saying, 'The Prime minister saved the minister gave us free vacations with a full salary, and alongside calmed down the public rage' wow!

The incongruity is evident through the poor and hopeless conditions of the right frame of the image and the joyous condition of those who are responsible for this situation in the left frame of the image. This makes obvious the fact that the law is ineffective against those who are in power as the powerful can easily escape justice and make merry.

Analysis of Text

'The Prime Minister has taken strict action and suspended the high officials'. The active

voice is used where the Prime Minister is given prominence who by making use of his position suspended those liable for the current distress. ‘Strict action’ and ‘high officials’ are contradictory and prove the futility of the statement.

The utterance on the left side confirms it, here again, the active voice gives agency to the prime minister ‘The Prime minister saved the minister gave us free vacations with a full salary, and alongside calmed down the public rage’ wow! The irony is established through a difference in people’s false hopes as compared to the grave reality of the situation.

The intended purpose behind this projection is to disclose the hypocrisy of the political leaders and the ignorance of the nation towards their insincerity. This image draws on the discursive practice of protests which have become a part of daily life; here the protest is against the government because of their incompetency to provide the necessities of life including petrol. As the crisis of shortage of petrol is aggravated due to government’s negligence resulting in long queues of angry people at petrol stations.

Example 2



Figure 2: Gogi as a spokesperson for the public

The context of the comic strips is based on a public protest march (Dharna) in Pakistan which started from August 2014 to December 2014. It was organized by two parties *Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf* and *Pakistan Awami Tehreek* against the serving government. The comic strip draws the situation of the sit in and its effects.

b. Semiotic Analysis

The image shows four interconnected frames where the message of one is built over another; the recurrent motif in all *Gogi* comic strips is the character of *Gogi* as a spokesperson for the public. In the first frame, the objects (signs) are sacks, bottles, and

some other garbage items which are depicted at a distance with dull color in order to reduce the individual features of these items and increase the focus on their significance. There are the figures of two men collecting these objects from the ground, they look happy through their faces (as the smiling mouth suggests). Then there is the figure of *Gogi* with one of her friends who is regularly portrayed with her in the strips, they both are shown laughing and smiling. The text goes like this, 'Dharnas' have solved unemployment problems, and garbage collectors are making triple money'. This linguistic message complements the image while making clear how the problem is resolved.

In the second frame also tents could be seen in the background along with the litter covering the ground while *Gogi* and her friend are still standing and commenting on Dharnas' role in bringing change. Here two figures are highlighted with a reduced distance from the viewer and they are gulping food, one is smiling and the other's mouth is wide open while eating and the text goes, 'Beggars are getting free food'. In the third frame, crows are shown eating food items from the ground while *Gogi* and her friend standing in the background are listing the advantages of having dharnas and *Gogi* saying 'Crows are having a ball!'

The concluding statement occurs in the last 'We should have dharnas in all cities'; they both are shown leaving the place with a smile on *Gogi*'s face while the other woman is shown as serious and rather grim-faced. They both are holding bags and seemed visitors of the sit-in place; at their side crows are shown flying with food in their beaks. In all the frames the common element is the delighted state of everyone including the garbage collectors, beggars, crows, and *Gogi* herself who is shown grinning throughout which establishes incongruity with the actual pathetic condition implicit in the sarcasm established through visual and linguistic elements.

Analysis of Text

The theme is the political condition in Pakistan at that particular time, and the topic addressed is the sit-in of the two parties against the government. Some of the implications which are found in this cartoon are:

There is code-mixing in the first and the last utterance, Urdu word 'Dharna' instead of the sit-in is used to give a sense of familiarity to the viewer as it was a popular word and frequently used by the people of Pakistan in those days particularly when the long term sit-in took place. The traits that appear in the use of 'Dharna' are humorous and non-serious though in actuality 'Dharna' is the symbol of rebellion and dissatisfaction.

The contrast is established by showing the country's poverty and suffering of the people through the signs of beggars, and garbage collectors, who are bound to eat the remnants and do such work for earning bread, and on the other hand there are people who have that much money and time to hold sit-ins. This condition got much criticism from people. Seeing the condition of the country which is weak with the number of poverty-stricken and unemployed increasing day by day, it is desirable for the political parties to harness their energies in dealing with such issues on a priority basis instead of holding sit-ins.

The utterances are declarative; nominalizations are 'Dharnas', garbage collectors, beggars, crows, and the pronoun 'we', which in this case is meant for the Pakistani nation. The choice of lexical items and images thereof reflect the ideology of the writer, garbage

collectors and beggars are the signs of suffering and poverty of the lower class in Pakistan, the downtrodden who are neglected both by the government as well as by the parties.

The incongruity can be seen by comparing the poor conditions of the underprivileged souls with their pleasure at picking and eating the leftover and then the similarity of their despondent state with the crows add to the absurdity. This attitude of the cartoonist intends to criticize the protesters for creating filth in the place while apparently working for the betterment of the nation. The comic strip builds irony through the concluding statement ‘We should have dharnas in all cities’, in keeping with the damage that these sit-ins have created at the national and international level this is a deep satire because the protest resultantly jammed the capital of Pakistan where the sit-in was organized. Overall the linguistic elements and the images together address the pitfalls of arranging such long-term protests which go against the country and instead of improvement cause decline.

Example 3

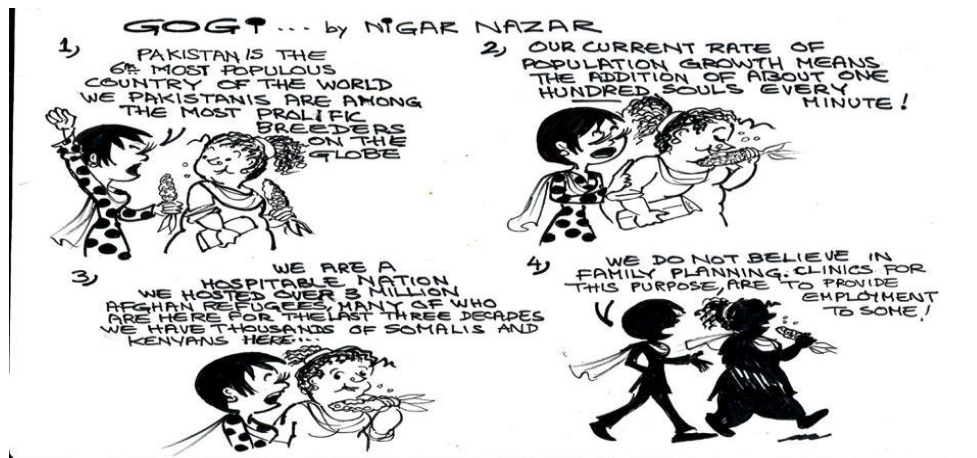


Figure 3: Gogi and one of her friends chatting over a cholee

c. Semiotic analysis

The semiotic perspective indicates two women *Gogi* and one of her friends chatting over a cholee (corn on the cob); the contrast is built through the easygoing, non serious manner with the seriousness of the issues discussed. It represents the general public and their attitudes towards grave problems faced by the country and the causes behind those problems. The artifacts point to the fact that the women depicted are shown as empowered women with a difference that *Gogi* is shown as more educated and informative as she is the one sharing information with the other, the last gesture of the woman is that of throwing the eaten out *cholee* on the street which is symbolic of the whole nation’s attitudes and practices. Thereby holding the nation responsible for the flaws associated with the country.

Salience is the prominent aspect of the image or element of an image that attracts the viewer’s attention. In the analyzed comic strip, their gossiping style is salient as the women are depicted talking in a leisurely style and making fun of the situation. Framing shows

how the elements of an image are connected or disconnected from each other. In the first image, the fourth utterance goes with the image as it is much darker than the rest depicting the intensity of the statement and the gravity of the situation. Darkness here is also associated with the ignorant attitude of the people towards the growing population crisis. Another element that is emphasized is container lodges; it is fore grounded through bold large font and exclamation marks. Both the women are shown from a shorter distance to the viewer, the artist probably wants to make the viewer identify and relate their selves with them.

Analysis of Text

There are multiple themes in the sequenced images, and certain themes may overlap. For example, the theme “Pakistan the most populous country” can be subsumed under the theme “hosting many refugees”. The first statement starts with Pakistan and the rest start with pronouns placing the focus on we and I, giving prominence to the country and the citizens. The topics discussed are Pakistan as the most populous country, hospitable nation, do not believe in family planning, and the solution of all are container lodges. The use of active voice is noticeable which holds the subjects responsible.

The visual images and the linguistic elements are contrastive as the cartoonist intentionally combined the non-serious style of chatting with the seriousness of the issues in order to show the careless attitude of the masses as a nation.

‘Pakistan is the 6th most populous country of the world; we Pakistanis are the most prolific breeders on the globe’.

‘We do not believe in family planning, clinics for this purpose are to provide employment to some’.

‘Our dilemma is to provide a shelter/ home to every Pakistani’.

‘I have a solution!’

‘Container Lodges!’

All the phrases in the images are steeped in ideology and are a deep satire on the cultural and political practices of the Pakistani nation. The satire is evident through playful language, terms, and phrases such as ‘prolific breeders’, ‘we do not believe in family planning’, ‘Our dilemma is to provide a shelter/ home to every Pakistani’ culminating in the solution which is ‘Container Lodges’. Thus the artist draws on the discursive practices in order to project the prevailing issues in the country as well as to make the readers realize and own the responsibility. The intended point of these sequential comic strips is to influence the public and to critique the political parties who instead of seeking solutions to the intense problems and putting their efforts positively, engage themselves and the masses in holding protests.

ii. Prevailing Administrative and Communal Issues

In this comic strip the administration of Pakistan in general, WAPDA¹, and the medical department, in particular, are criticized by the cartoonist as how their negligence could lead to the matters of severe consequences. The topic dealt with is lack of administration and the theme is the state of affairs in medical departments.

Example 1

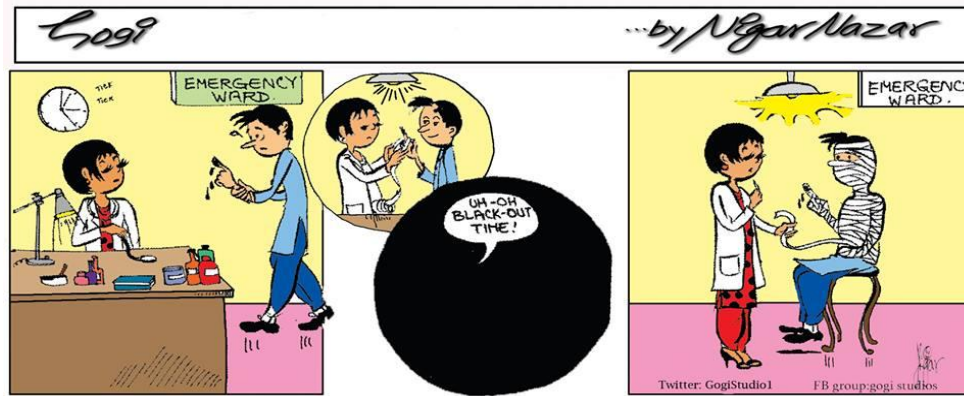


Figure 4: Signs in comic strip

a. Semiotic Analysis

In this comic strip, some signs are indicated; the sign of the emergency ward, a badly cut finger with blood dripping, the electric light, and the most salient is the blackout time sign which is placed in front and in a dark color. The scene shown in the image is that of a man who had entered the emergency ward for immediate treatment as his finger is bleeding badly due to a deep cut. The doctor in an attempt to bandage the finger has bandaged the man while the finger is still untreated with blood dripping and this all happened because of power failure. The first sign denotes the place where the patients are treated in any emergency situation; the interlinked sign is blood spilling finger and then the big size sign of blackout which is to catch viewers' attention and to show the theme or ideology of the comic strip.

The combination of these signs creates a state which is ironic keeping in the seriousness of the situation and the triviality of the arrangements.

Analysis of Text

There is no verbal exchange between the characters shown in the image but rather some verbal signs indicating the situation. The technique of exaggeration is used to convey the message and the theme of the image. The image is not depicted in black and white in order

¹ Pakistan Water and Power Development Authority

to overstate the effect of load shedding which is a common phenomenon of daily life in Pakistan. Yet the cartoonist purposefully addressed such a common issue in an absolutely special setting which in this case is the emergency room and involves the matter of life and death. Though one can hear many cases of the laxity of the medical department, this is one of them which is depicted to raise consciousness among the concerned authorities, or at least the reader could beware of it. The cartoonist particularly draws on the general practices of the medical department which could be hold responsible because of their mismanagement, and generally on the power and energy crisis in Pakistan for which the administration is liable.

Example 2

This comic strip addresses the issue of deficient infrastructure, particularly the poor condition of roads and sewerage systems. It draws on the carelessness and incompetency of municipal administration.

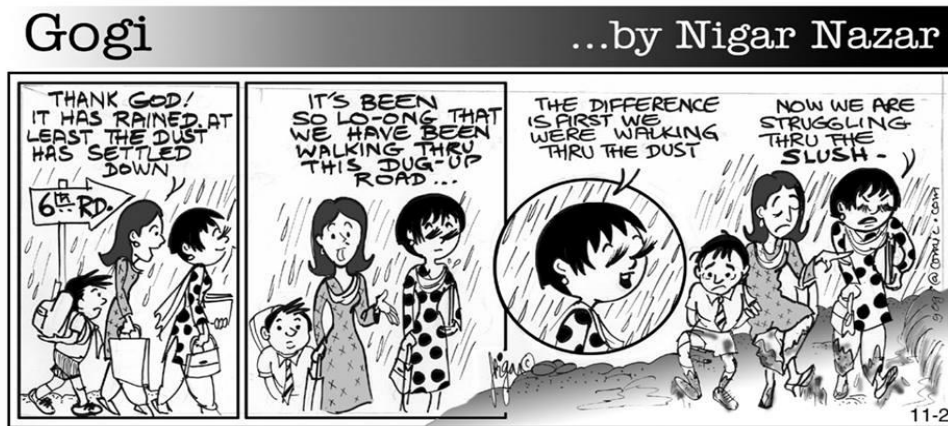


Figure 5 : Signpost of 6th road

b. Semiotic Analysis

The image shows a narrative structure, the objects shown are the signpost of 6th road, a schoolbag, books, and an office bag. The characters shown in the image associated with the objects are that of a schoolboy holding a school bag and two ladies one holding the books and handbag and the other with an office bag; they both look like working women coming back from their job. Thus portraying women and a child implicitly reveals the concerns of the artist for working women and children in particular, and the public in general. They are on foot which shows that they do not belong to the upper class those who can afford to get away from such nuisances; rather they symbolize common public and their distress.

The cartoonist intends to show the misery of the public while traveling on road. The sign of 6th road makes it more specific and points to the condition of roads in Rawalpindi, which are dug up for one or the other reason and left like this for a limitless time as well as the roads are shown as poorly constructed with bumps and dust.

Analysis of Text

The text is aligned with the images shown; it goes like, ‘Thank God! It has rained. At least the dust has settled down’, ‘It’s been so long that we have been walking thru this dug-up road...’, ‘the difference is first we were walking thru the dust’, ‘Now we are struggling thru the **slush-**’ The first sentence indicates the irritability with the previous situation when it has not rained and the dust was around, ‘Thank God’ point to the relief people have got. The second sentence demonstrates the slacked and floppy attitude of the government who in the name of developmental projects dug up the roads which never get completed and go on for years, thus creating more problems for the public other than the existing ones. The last two statements are culminating as there is no way out of this suffering, people are fated to go through it until the administration activates their energies and takes some positive, constructive steps.

Example 3



Figure 6: Recurrent motif in Gogi comic strips

c. Semiotic Analysis

The image shows three interconnected frames where the message of one is built over another; the recurrent motif in all Gogi comic strips is the character of Gogi as a spokesperson for the public. There are the figures of a schoolboy and Gogi discussing some matter, they look worried on their faces (as their facial expressions suggest).

The objects (signs) are a lollipop, and a school bag, the school bag is fore grounded to focus on its significance. Lollipop signals the class system, and school bag refers to the education system.

The schoolboy is shown holding the lollipop a sign of superfluity and tantrums whereas the school bag ‘full of books’ hints towards the absurdity of the education system where books and knowledge have got incongruent with each other loading the students of this age with more books and less knowledge.

Analysis of text

The text goes like this, ‘well Gogi if houseboy is sick, I can’t go to school today’, ‘But why Babloo?’ The linguistic part describes the image while making the situation clear. The concluding statement occurs in the last, ‘‘whose going to carry this big bag full of books’. The sarcasm is established by both the visual as well as linguistic elements. The satire is targeted toward both the education system as well as the existing power structures in society.

4.1. Discussion

Discourses are varied representations of social life essentially positioned differently, representing different positions of social actors and different ways of social life. CDA addresses the constitutive and constituted structure of discourse while enacting, legitimizing, reproducing, or challenging ideological and historical issues. Therefore, integration with social semiotics seems to be an effective method for the present study.

The lexical and semiotic choices affect the minds and the attitudes of the readers differently as the verbal and visual choices reveal the writer/artist's attitudes and the kind of interpretation she wants the reader to draw, and so forth. There is an intricate relationship between comics and power. The comic strip stories evidently tell the power of comics in appealing to readers and making an impact on them. However, there are a number of ways in which comics and power are intertwined, both in playing with or questioning existing power structures. There are markedly varied and complex ways comics emerge as a result of societal and cultural processes and critically contribute to modifying these processes which gives rise to the requirement of more advanced analytical tools for studying this art form.

Undoubtedly there are relationships between comics, ideology, and the prevailing culture. According to Riaz et al. (2022), “Media as an effective social and political sphere rationalizes debates and discussions of various issues emerging in society” (p. 3). Social media plays an important role in the creation, management, and enactment of meaning (Poulsen & Kvale 2018). Comics are both shaped by and contribute to shaping identities, communities, etc. Overall the studied comic strips criticize the lies, frivolous attitude, and incompetence of the government and also make the readers realize the current political conditions, as well as highlight points of administrative concern. This paper addresses the character of comic strips *Gogi* created by Nigar Nazar which are steeped in ideology. This comic strip series is a product of the current culture of Pakistan and the existing problems of political and administrative concern.

5. Conclusion

It is concluded that the cartoonist’s ideologies are prevalent in the studied *Gogi* comic strips, the ideological positioning shows resistance towards the inequalities, injustices, and power abuse of the authorities in the Pakistani socio-political context. Semiotic and linguistic resources are employed tactfully to create subtle humor as well as a strategy to resist and critique the practices of politicians and administration. The comic strips are steeped in ideology as they project the socio-political situation of Pakistan and the

prevailing injustice and anarchy and thus challenge the conventions of identity forced upon people through government, political parties, and administrative apparatuses.

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