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Image Analysis of Online News Coverage of the 25th January Egyptian Revolution

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Abstract

Media discourse is considered a good example of how different modes of communication are employed to produce meanings which construct ideological representations of events and situations. The study seeks to investigate the role of images in media discourse as an important mode of communication in constructing different representations of the events of the Egyptian revolution. Over the last two or three decades a revolution has taken place in the area of communication, and particularly in media. The images of news events have come to play an increasingly central role in the discursive practices of media channels whether they are printed newspapers, online newspapers or TV news programmes. The effect of this revolution is that language has lost its position as the central mode of communication, whereas, other modes such as visual, music, gesture,...etc., have become dominant. Thus, multimodal texts have increasingly come to dominate the sphere of social communication. There emerges the need to explore the role images play in influencing our perception to and reaction towards different events. Adopting Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) theory of multimodal discourse analysis, the study attempts to analyze the visual structures used in media discourse in order to construe different representations of the revolution. The study adopts a visual analysis of the online news of Egyptian and Arabic media that report on the 25th January Egyptian Revolution during the period from 25th of January till 11th of February 2011. Particularly, it examines ten images accompanying the news stories selected from the coverage of four major news networks: Alahram electronic gate as representative of state media on one side, and Alwafd electronic gate, Alyoum7, and Aljazeera network as representatives of oppositional media on the other side.

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Introduction

Mass media play a crucial role in how we look at the world by providing us with pictures of the world and people that exist beyond our locality. They are a window on the world thus, their influence in the modern world should not be underestimated. It is obvious that media constitute a powerful ideological apparatus that influences our knowledge, beliefs, social relations, and social identities. It has the power to shape governments, parties and political events. Thus, we can say that media have moved from the representational function to the constructionist one. They not only represent realities, but constitute them, as well.

Online media has emerged as a rapidly developing discourse environment with rich multimodal and visual resources available for analysis. The rapid development of computer networking technology over the past two decades, has resulted in the rise of online newspapers, because major media corporations have recognized the value of the internet and have begun establishing news outlets online such as BBC and CNN networks. Online media differs to a great extent from any other type of public media because it is characterized by: first, presenting rich hypertexts that include a variety of non-text media content such as images, audio, and video, and second, interactivity as they allow the readers/viewers to become more actively involved in the text rather than being passive observers. Besides, the internet technology is more efficient and less expensive than print media when it comes to both volume of text and the saturation of visual content it can provide- which makes it the medium with greater multi-modal potential than any other. Thus, Images in online media take a dominant role, serving as the core of

the discourse and the primary, rather than secondary mode of meaning. As technology allows visuals to be transmitted more efficiently, at less cost and in greater amounts than ever before, internet media is allowing a more thoroughly visual semiotic to develop. This kind of new media gives rise to a new kind of discourse that depends on different semiotic modes. Thus, it becomes important to propose an approach which could investigate the kinds of meanings these images construe in media discourse, the ways in which they do so in their discursive context, and the implications of this for our understanding of semiosis and its evaluation in new media .

Objectives of the study

The increasing popularity and dissemination of television, the internet and other media sources which depend on rich hypertexts have created the impetus for the analysis of multimodal texts. Thus, the study aims to investigate the efficiency of the multimodal discourse analysis approach in analyzing different multimodal texts of news discourse. The study seeks to explore different modes of communication that have emerged recently besides language such as: the visual mode. This is achieved by analyzing the visual content of the news discourse reporting on the events of the 25th January Revolution in Egypt.

Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

- 1- How are the events of the 25th January Revolution and the revolutionists represented non-verbally in different media channels?
- 2- How do visual representations of the revolution and the revolutionists reflect the dominant ideologies of each media network?

- 3- How do some media channels demonize the revolution and how do others legitimize it through visual modes?

Literature Review

One of the first and most influential works to employ a functional perspective to analyzing images is O'Toole's (1994), where he adapts a variation of the same trifunctional framework (referring to three semantic metafunctions) as originally used by Halliday to construct his Systemic Functional Theory. Drawing in part on theories of visual art (and thus introducing concepts such as the Gestalt), O'Toole's framework is detailed to a similar level of detail as SFG, thus proving highly effective and providing a starting point for other theorists to build on.

Machin and van Leeuwen (2007) analyze how photographic images can be searched for the concepts they express, rather than for the people, places and events they record and document. The visual expression of concepts by means of staged photographs has, of course, long existed in advertising, but now it also extends to the editorial content of newspapers and magazines, where we traditionally expect 'records of reality'. Machin and van Leeuwen argue that "images of this kind are globally distributed and used. As a result, visual language becomes demonstrably more homogenized, generic and limited in its iconography" (p.167). Finally, they explore the kinds of concepts that can be expressed with this new visual language and found that the positive values of contemporary corporate discourse dominate: freedom, creativity, innovation, determination, concentration, spirituality, well-being, and so on.

Ross (2008) conducts a study to analyze visual patterns and strategies used within two sets of documents on weapons and forces of the Iraqi conflict published by the CNN (1998) and BBC(2003) respectively to accompany news coverage of the war. The study applies a comprehensive methodology for functional analysis of

visuals. In addition, it draws upon elements of CDA. The study emphasizes that a variety of strategies have been used by BBC and CNN to distance the viewers of these documents from suffering and violence, and to align them with coalition's position in the conduct war by presenting aesthetically-appealing images of coalition forces. Ross states that "the results of the study suggest that predominant patterns found throughout the text are used to produce favourable portrayals of coalition weapons, unfavourable portrayals of Iraqi weapons" (p.207).

Lirola (2008) explores the main strategies used to make meaning in different multimodal texts related to immigration. She investigates the way in which each semiotic resource is used to create meaning. She adopts Halliday's (1994,2004) theories of SFG as well as Kress's (2000,2001,2006) theories of visual grammar in order to analyze a number of multimodal texts related to immigration. These texts belong to a local newspaper in Spain called *Alicante*. She observes that the language and images of each text are organized in a specific way to create special meanings and to transmit a negative image of immigrants. She asserts that the objective of the multimodal texts analyzed is to show that immigrants are not like the majority group, and that they cannot be like this group of population. She concludes that "these texts have power to influence beliefs, values, social relations, social identities and knowledge of the world in general and of immigrants in particular" (p.396).

Knox (2009) presents an analysis of image language in an online newspaper using tools from systemic functional semiotics as well as Martinec and Salway's image-text relationship theory. The article presents an analysis of the thumbnail images used in reporting hard-news stories in the *Sydney Morning Herald Online*. The article investigates what kinds of meanings these images construe on online newspaper home pages, the ways in which they

do so in their discursive content and the implications of this for our understanding of semiosis in new media. In addition, Knox examines the relation between thumbnail images and accompanying text on the *Sydney Morning Herald Online* and finds out that every thumbnail portrays a social actor and they are all decontextualized as they are not overly connected to the verbiage. He adds that these thumbnails "exploit the expanding boundaries of graphology and punctuation in language, and extends the possibilities for the expression of linguistic meaning in written text" (p.165-166).

Abousnougua and Machin (2011) apply MMDA approach to examine the way that war monuments infuse our public physical spaces, and therefore our internal mental spaces, with discourses that legitimize war. The research uses MMDA to investigate the British war monuments, from early in the twentieth century and later in the twenty-first century. The paper aims to analyze the way that designers draw on a range of semiotic resources in order to communicate particular discourses that signify certain ideas, identities, and values through these structures. Abousnougua and Machin propose that these monuments "are part of our everyday semiotic landscapes, and as they contribute to the spatial order they also place specific discourses in our daily lives that help to shape the background moral order" (p.175). They find out that these monuments are commemorating war instead of criticizing it.

Theoretical Framework

Based on social semiotic theory and stemming from Halliday's (2004) systemic functional grammar (SFG), Multimodal discourse analysis (MMDA) has become an important new field of study of human communication and interaction. MMDA is concerned with the analysis of visual communication as a social semiotic in all varying forms. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) emphasize that "language and visual communication can both be used to realize the same fundamental systems of meaning that

construe our cultures" (p.19). Thus, multimodal analytical frameworks enable the explication of the tri-functional meanings constructed in both visual and verbal semiosis. It suggests that visual representation as a form of communication also creates three simultaneous strands of meaning. The first strand of meaning correlates with Halliday's Ideational metafunction and is called **Presentational** or **Representational** meaning. This refers to the ways in which images represent particular experiential information. It is concerned with meanings, as Lemke (2002) states, "which present some state of affairs" (p.304) in terms of processes, participants, relations, events and circumstances. Similar to Halliday's Interpersonal metafunction, **Modal** or **Orientalional** meanings, as Lemke (2002) refers to, "indicate to us what is happening in the communicative relationship and what stance its participants may have to each other and to the presentational content"(p.304). The **Compositional** meaning correlates with the Textual metafunction and refers to the meanings construed through the particular ways in which visual is constructed.

Presentational Meaning: (Ideational):

Experiential meaning is constructed in language through the system of transitivity which realizes meanings regarding how actors engage in certain actions with particular goals and circumstances. In visual representations, similar experiential meanings regarding participants and processes are realized but through different means. **Participants** in visual constructions are the meaningful and prominent elements or objects represented in the field. Participants can be human or inanimate. The objects or elements functioning as participants are distinguishable through salience resulting from differentiation in colour, prominence, distance, and framing. In addition, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) distinguish between two types of participants: interactive and represented. **Interactive Participants** are those involved in some communicative act. They are the image producers and the viewers, whereas **Represented**

Participants typically function as the subject matter of the communication. They are the participants represented in the image. They call the represented participants "volumes" or "masses"(p.48). Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) perceive volumes as "distinct entities which are salient (heavy) to different degrees because of their different sizes, shapes, colour, and so on" (p.49).

Visual representations are mainly classified into narrative representations and conceptual representations. Narrative representations involve action, reactional, mental, speech, and conversion processes. They also involve actors engaged in some sort of activity and they realize meanings similar to that of the Material, Verbal, Mental and Behavioural linguistic processes, whereas Conceptual representations realize meanings similar to those of the Existential and Relational linguistic processes. Conceptual representations involve processes which are classificatory, analytical or symbolic. Each structure is tackled in detail in the following section.

I.- Narrative processes

Narrative representations are realized by real or implied linear connections called **Vectors** between participants. Vectors distinguish narrative processes from conceptual ones, as narrative processes always have one, but conceptual processes never do. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) refer to this fact as they state that "narrative processes are realized by their vectoriality" (pp.59-60). Vectors are the real or implied trajectories of specific narrative processes which can be realized by eye contact, a pointing finger, the throwing of a ball, ...etc. The **Actor** is another constituent of the narrative structure and it refers to the participant whom the vector departs. Actors are often the most salient elements in the image through size, place, contrast against background, colour saturation, and sharpness of focus.

Narrative images may contain secondary participants called **Circumstances**. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) define them as "participants which could be left out without affecting the basic proposition realized by the narrative pattern, even though their deletion would of course entail a loss of information" (p.72). For example, locative circumstances relate other participants to the setting. This requires a contrast between foreground and background which can be realized by a number of ways: i) the participants in the foreground overlap and obscure the background. ii) the setting is drawn in less detail. iii) the setting is more desaturated in colour. iv) the setting is darker than the foreground or lighter. Tools which are used in action processes are represented as circumstances of means and they may constitute the vectors which realize the action process.

The narrative structures are realized by various types of processes such as: action processes, reactional processes, mental processes, ...etc. These can be distinguished on the basis of the kind of vector and the number and kind of participants. The following section investigates the different types of processes.

a) Action processes:

There are various actional realizations depending on how participants are oriented to each other in terms of vectorial connection. A **Unidirectional Transactional** action is realized wherein a Vector connects two participants, an actor and a goal. **Bidirectional Transactional** actions are realized by two participants connected by a dual direction Vector that is usually connecting interactors. The representation of two people discussing current events would be a Bidirectional Transactional action exemplified by a dual direction Vector realized by gaze or eye direction. In other words, a Bidirectional Transactional action is one in which two participants are interacting continuously back and forth. A Non-transactional action is realized wherein a Vector emanates from a represented participant but does not connect with

any immediate goal. For instance, the depiction of a runner travelling along a road would realize a **Non-Transactional** action where the Vector is realized by the direction of movement but does not connect to any immediate goal. They are equivalent to intransitive verbs in language.

b) Reactional processes:

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) define reactional processes as those realized by vectors "formed by an eyeline, by the direction of the glance of one or more of the represented participants" (p.67). In such case, the participants that constitute the structure are: the Reacter and the Phenomenon. The **Reacter** is the participant who does the looking and must be human and the **Phenomenon** is the participant at whom the reactor is looking.

c) Speech processes and Mental processes:

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) define Speech and mental processes as those realized by a special kind of "vectors which are thought and dialogue balloons that connect drawings of speakers and thinkers to their speech and thought" (p.68).

d) Conversion processes:

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) define conversion processes as those which "form a chain of transformational processes" (p.68). This results in emerging a third kind of participant, a participant which is the goal to one participant and the actor to another. This kind of processes are common in representing natural events. An example of this kind of process is the illustration of the food chain in biology books.

II- Conceptual processes:

Conceptual processes are realized through classificatory, analytical and symbolic representation instantiating meaning of a taxonomic nature. Conceptual processes typically ascribe particular values to represented participants based on the allocation of

attributes and the realization of classificatory membership. Represented participants are usually explicitly posing or existing in some generalized static form because the experiential content realizes timeless and inanimate attributive or existential meaning. For instance, fashion advertisements often make use of conceptual processes through the representation of participants and the attributing of desirable qualities such as confidence, attractiveness and poise. The following section is dedicated to explaining various processes the realize the conceptual representations.

a) Classificational processes

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) define classificational processes as processes which "relate participants to each other in terms of a kind of relation, taxonomy; at least one set of participants will play the role of participants with respect to at least one other participant, the subordinate" (p.79). They distinguish between two sub-types of classificational processes: Covert Taxonomy and Overt Taxonomy. In **Covert Taxonomy**, participants are distributed symmetrically across the picture at equal distance from each other. On the other hand, **Overt Taxonomy** does not include equal participants, instead there is a superordinate which is connected to two or more participants (subordinates) through a tree structure.

b) Analytical processes

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) define analytical processes as "processes [that] relate participants in terms of a part-whole structure. They involve two kinds of participants: one carrier (the whole) and any number of possessive attributes (the parts)" (p.87). The defining characteristic of the analytical process is the absence of vectors and the absence of compositional symmetry. It is the most elementary option in the visual representation system. Analytical visuals have low modality. The representation of depth is reduced. Colour is restricted to a reduced palette and background is left out or only sketched in lightly. Photographs can be analytical,

too as in the case of fashion shots or of advertisements which give detailed description of the product or of press mug shots of politicians and other newsworthy persons.

c) Symbolic processes:

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) define symbolic processes as they are processes "about what a participant means or is" (p.105). Symbolic processes are classified into two sub-types: the first is the **Symbolic Attributive** where the process includes two participants: the Carrier (the participant whose identity is established) and the Attribute (the participant which represents the identity itself). The second is the **Symbolic Suggestive** where the process includes one participant only; the carrier and the symbolic meaning can be realized by a number of ways such as colour, focus, or lighting.

Oriental Meaning (Interpersonal):

Multimodal texts also instantiate interpersonal meanings about participant relationships and the way ideational content is exchanged. Thus, the second metafunction involves two levels of analysis: first, the interaction between the represented participants of the image and the viewer and second, the credibility of the message conveyed by the image and this can be investigated on the basis of modality markers in the image itself. The next section explains these two levels of analysis.

I. Interaction

Similar to the ways in which lexico-grammatical patterns and punctuation signify interactive speech acts like commanding or questioning, the facial expression, gaze and location of represented participants instantiate similar interpersonal meanings. The relationship between the represented participants and the viewer is established through a number of factors such as the gaze, distance, and perspective.

a) Gaze

Represented participants make contact with the viewer in various ways instantiating specific interpersonal relations and roles. The gaze of the represented participants can refer to the relationship between the depicted participant and the viewer. This relationship can be either a demand or an offer. When the represented participants appear to look directly at the viewer they seem to engage the viewer in some kind of exchange. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) refer to this relationship of demand as "images want something from the viewers- wants them to do something...or to form a pseudo-social bond of a particular kind with the represented participant" (p.118). The represented participants demand through penetrating eyes, strong gesturing requests goods and services with pleading stares and subtle smiles. On the other hand, offer visuals address the viewers indirectly. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) define the offer image as "if offers the represented participants to the viewer as items of information, objects of contemplation, impersonally, as though they were the specimens in a display case" (p.119).

b) Social distance

Distance also plays an important role in establishing the interpersonal meanings expressed in any representation. The size of frame and distance of represented participants establish certain social relations. A detailed "close up" portraying distinct facial features often signifies an intimate or personal relationship, since this is the way we see close friends and family. A medium shot cutting the body off around the waist typically implies a social relationship or someone who might be an acquaintance. A long distance shot suggests a more impersonal relationship. Thus, distance operates as an interpersonal factor establishing certain social relations between represented participants and viewers. This

results in viewing some participants as friends and others as strangers and thus creating an in-group and out-group.

c) Perspective

Perspective or the point of view has to do with the subjective attitude towards the represented participants. Jewitt and Oyama (2001) refer to the perspective as another factor establishing interaction between participants and viewers. Perspective instantiates important power relations between viewer and the represented participant. This is realized through the selection of a certain angle. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), the image can have either a frontal or an oblique point of view. "The difference between the oblique and the frontal angle is the difference between detachment and involvement" (p.136). The oblique angle implies a certain detachment between participants and viewer and that the participants are not considered as part of our world. Whereas, the frontal angle implies a personal engagement, because the participants are facing the viewer, and thus are considered part of our world.

The camera height is an important means of expressing power relations. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) assert that "a high angle, it is said, makes the subject look small and insignificant, a low angle makes it look imposing and awesome" (p.140). If the represented participant looks down at the viewer, this signifies that the participant has power over the viewer. An eye level gaze suggests equality, and the participants looking up at the viewer suggests that the viewer has power over the represented participant.

II. Modality

According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), In linguistics, modality refers to "the truth value or credibility of (linguistically realized) statements about the world" (p.155). Similarly, visual modality refers to the ways in which representations range on a

scale from real to unreal or fake. However, as Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) point out, "what is regarded as real depends on how reality is defined by a particular social group" (p.158). Each group determines what is considered real or true according to its own set of values or beliefs. Thus, the system of modality belongs to the interpersonal function rather than the ideational because it produces shared truths which arise from the values of the group. In linguistics, modality markers are auxiliary verbs like may, must, and will and their related adjectives and adverbs like certain, possible, and probably. Visually, modality is realized by a number of modality markers which determine how close representations correspond with how the naked eye would see the represented scene or object. These modality markers are: colour saturation, colour differentiation, colour modulation, contextualization, representation, depth, illumination, and brightness.

Compositional Meaning: (Textual)

The third metafunctional property of visual semiosis is typically referred to as the compositional meaning of any event. The compositional meaning of a visual is similar to the textual metafunction in linguistic analysis. Compositional meaning refers to the ways in which the visual elements are organized and composed into a unified whole in terms of information value, salience and framing. It is realized through three interrelated systems:

a) Information value:

Information value refers to the placement of individual elements within the overall pictorial space. As discussed in Jewitt and Oyama (2001), in societies which use roman script, the typical reading of any text is from left to right and top to bottom. This left to right structure creates a Given-New structure in which given elements are presented before the introduction of new information. This system has been applied to the reading of visual imagery as well. Thus, in the overall pictorial space, the left side typically holds

elements that are understood as Given or something the reader knows, whereas New elements are provided on the right.

The vertical orientation of information is also pertinent in terms of information value. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) explain the information value of top and bottom and distinguish between two sections in the image: top and bottom which they give the terms; Ideal and Real. They define them as "some of the constituent elements are placed in the upper part, and the other different elements in the lower part of the picture space or the page, then what has been placed on the top is presented as the ideal, and what has been placed at the bottom is put forward as the real" (p.186). The Ideal is the idealized or generalized information. The Real includes the actual representation, more specific information or more practical information about the ideal entity.

b) Saliency:

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) refer to saliency as a system that "can create a hierarchy of importance among elements, selecting some as more important, more worthy of attention than others" (p.201). Saliency can be achieved by a number of factors as: size, sharpness of focus, colour contrasts, perspective, and placement in the visual field.

c) Framing:

Framing refers to how elements are represented, as either belonging together or as being explicitly separate. Specific framing techniques connect, disconnect or partially connect elements of a composition together instantiating particular meaning about classification and orientation to each other. Frame lines are conventionally used to isolate different elements in a composition signifying some particular difference in meaning or classification, whereas all elements combined within a specific frame typically share some quality with each other, whether it be membership to a

group or parts of a whole etc...the stronger the framing of the element is, the more it is presented as a separate unit.

Analysis

The study examines ten images accompanying ten news texts. Five images are selected from Alahram's coverage, and five images are selected from the coverage of the oppositional media. The study begins with examining the images posted on Alahram electronic gate during the period from 25th of January 2011 till 11th of February 2011.

Alahram news

The analysis shows that the majority of the images posted on Alahram network belong to the conceptual structures, particularly the symbolic type. four images out of five fall in this category and only one image falls in the category of the narrative structure.

i. Symbolic Attributive processes:

The analysis shows that two images lie in this category: the first one posted on 26th of January and depicts Habib Aladli, Minister of Interior in Mubarak's regime, and the second image posted on 2nd of February 2011 and depicts Mubarak giving his first speech.



Fig.(1)



Fig.(2)

Both images include two participants: the carrier and the attribute. The carrier is Aladli in the first and Mubarak in the second, while the attribute is the flag of Egypt in both images. The flag symbolizes Egypt and by attributing Mubarak and Aladli to the flag, their identity is enhanced to be that of Egypt itself. This is the ideational message conveyed by both images: Mubarak, as well as his man Aladli, are Egypt. Both participants are presented as permanent elements as the flag of Egypt. The flag does not appear in the background of the image because it is not used as a circumstance, it is used as an equivalent to Mubarak and his minister as they are placed side by side. In the first image of Aladli, the photo of Mubarak is presented in the background as a circumstance; It refers to the regime to which Aladli belongs.

The presentational meaning of both images serves to depict each figure as an emblem of the country. Mubarak's image is used to enhance Mubarak's status as the president who ruled Egypt for 30 years. Therefore, he has become a symbol of the country as the flag itself and he has the right to continue in his rule till the end of his life. Aladli's image presents him as a power icon who could keep his position as the minister of interior in Mubarak's regime for fourteen years.

ii. Symbolic Suggestive processes

The analysis shows that two images lie in the category of symbolic suggestive processes which comprise only one participant. The first image is of the building of the journalists syndicate posted on Al-Ahram website on 26th of January 2011 and the second image is of Antonius Nagib, the bishop of the catholic church, posted on 3rd of February 2011.

The two images under analysis represent the type of symbolic suggestive processes. Each image includes only one participant which functions as the carrier. Image no. (3) includes

only one inanimate participant which is the building of the journalists syndicate. One notable element about this image is the absence of any human entity. Although the headline of the news story accompanying the image reports on protestors in front of the journalists syndicate, the image depicts only the location where the protestors are supposed to be found. This indicates the network's desire to defocus on the negative actions taken by the security forces by not presenting them visually because the images of arresting the protestors may arouse either the reader's anger towards the government or his/her sympathy towards the protestors. Therefore, Alahram just presents the journalists syndicate which symbolizes freedom and authority because journalism is said to be the fourth estate and one of the important pillars of democracy in any country. This has the effect of reassuring the reader that the government is protecting the values of democracy and freedom in the country.



Fig.3

The second image includes one human participant as Antonius Nagib who represents a religious figure. This figure is presented in the news stories to comment on the events or to give some statements. He is represented as the sayer of the verbiage realized by the verbal texts. Thus, the image does not depict the events that take place, instead it depicts the sayer who reports the events or comment on them. Presenting this participant in a symbolic suggestive structure, which corresponds to existential processes, in such a decontextualized static fashion is considered a strategy of symbolic objectivation, in which the person depicted is not offered as an individual but rather as an emblem or a symbol. He is considered as a representative of a larger group that of the Christians in Egypt. The presented figure is trying to persuade the viewers to accept Mubarak as a president till he finishes his presidential term and not to protest against him. He exemplifies a figure of authority that is supposed to be credible and believable. Besides, presenting such religious figures. as Nagib has an emotive function which is to stimulate the viewers to form a social bond with these participants. This shows that Alahram network is trying through its coverage to create public opinion against the revolution.



Fig.4

a. Narrative structures

The analysis of the images posted on Alahram website shows that only one image out of five fall in the category of narrative structures which is characterized by the presence of vectors emanated from actors to perform some kind of action. These vectors construe actions, events or processes of change. Narrative structures are dramatic as they represent some sort of a narrative or a story. The actor is the participant from whom the vector departs. This image belongs to the type of Non-transactional process.

Action Non-transactional processes

The category of non-transactional processes comprises only one participant. The image which belongs to this category is the one posted on 2nd of February 2011. This image represents the camels attack on the demonstrators in Tahrir Square which is known as 'the camel battle'. The image includes three essential elements: the process, one participant, and the circumstance element. The participant included here is the actor, as the Vector emanates from the represented participant, but does not connect with any immediate goal. The vector is realized by the direction of the movement of the horses.



Fig.5

The main participants in the image are those people on the horses, they are depicted as being engaged in a non-transactional action which is expressed verbally by an intransitive verb that does not involve a goal. Thus, the other people who appear in the picture (the demonstrators) are depicted as circumstantial elements. In some cases, choosing to represent an entity as a circumstance rather than a participant is considered an ideological choice. The demonstrators are backgrounded in the presentation to downplay the consequences of the action done by the actors to them and to minimize their role. Thus, they become merely a part of setting, but they have no interactive role. Presenting those people as riding horses with the smile on their faces evokes an image of chivalry and nobility in the viewers' minds. One notable thing about this image is that the demonstrators in the background are de-individualized as they are presented as a group. However, the three participants on the horses are presented as individualized social actors.

Orientational meaning

It involves the analysis of the interaction between the represented participants and the viewer. The relationship between the participants and the viewer is established through a number of factors: the gaze, the distance, and the perspective.

Gaze

The gaze of the represented participants is one of the important factors that reveals much about the relationship between the viewer and the participants. As for the images of the conceptual structure, the analysis shows that two of the represented human participants look directly at the viewers' eyes. These participants are: Mubarak, and Antonius Nagib. On the other hand, only one of the represented human participant is not engaged in a direct eye contact with the viewers, Aladli .

Mubarak (fig.2) is depicted looking directly at the viewers' eyes. Thus, imaginary vectors are formed by the participant's eyelines connecting the participant with the viewers. Therefore, contact is established on an imaginary level. When the represented participant looks directly at the viewers, the image falls in the category of demand images. Here, the represented participant demands something from the viewer. Demanding usually suggests power and authority. Thus, Mubarak is depicted in the image as a powerful ruler that still has the validity to command the people. The concept of offer and demand is related to the concept of speech act. Here Mubarak appears to be performing a speech act of commanding his people to stop protesting against him.

Also, the religious figure, Nagib fig.(4) looks directly at the viewer, performing a demand speech act. As it has been mentioned before, demand implies power and these religious figures exercise some kind of power over the people due to their spiritual influence. He is demanding the demonstrators to stop protesting and listen to Mubarak's speech. Besides, he is smiling at the viewer and this evokes a feeling of intimacy between the participants and the viewer. Thus, the viewer is asked to enter into a relation of social affinity with him

In the image of Aladli (fig.1), the represented participant does not look directly at the viewer's eyes. No direct contact is established between Aladli and the viewer. Thus, there is a sense of disengagement between the viewer and the represented participant. Since, the human participant does not address the viewer directly by the eyes, this image belongs to the category of offer type. Aladli is presented as offering some kind of information. He is giving an account of how the demonstrations have started. He is giving a statement and is expecting agreement on it. Presenting Aladli as newsworthy source that has credibility and validity to give an account of the events and impose his own views enhances his image

as a powerful figure in Mubarak's regime. Aladli appears to be performing a speech act of offering information as a credible newsworthy source.

As for the images of the narrative structure (fig.5), the analysis shows that all the represented human participants in the narrative structure do not look directly to the viewer. Thus, all the participants in these images perform an offer act. All the represented participants are depicted as they offer some information to the viewer. The participants here are subjects of information to the viewers as they are the protagonists of the story which the narrative structure reports. This is appropriate to the nature of the narrative structures because they represent some kind of action. Thus, the participants are offering the viewers some information through the incident they dramatize.

a. Size of frame

The size of the frame can be taken as proxy for the social distance between the viewers and the represented participants. As for the images of the conceptual structure, the analysis shows that all the images range from close to medium close shots. This allows the viewer to get associated directly with the represented participants. All the figures depicted in images no. 1,2,4 appear till the shoulder or the waist, the viewer can distinguish their facial features. This reveals their individuality as well as their personality. Aladli, Mubarak, and Nagib are presented in close shots and this reveals the desire of the network to present them in terms of the 'in-group'. This is considered as one of the persuasive tactics the network uses to direct the viewers to identify with certain groups.

In the image of the building of the journalists syndicate (fig.3), the viewer is asked to get associated with the building of the journalists syndicate as something belongs to his/her world. Although it is an inanimate entity, it is represented as being so close

to the viewer's world. This reveals the network's desire to make the viewer identify with buildings and inanimate symbols rather than people. The accompanying headline is reporting about arresting protestors who sparked riots in front of the syndicate. Thus, by presenting the building in a way so close to the viewer, Alahram wants to cultivate the idea that the security forces are protecting the country which is represented in state buildings and facilities and thus, direct the viewer's sympathy towards the state represented in buildings and establishments not towards the protestors in the streets.

As for the images of the narrative structure, the analysis shows that the protestors are always depicted in long shots. This implies detachment as they are depicted as being strangers to the viewers or as the 'out-group' that does not belong to the viewers' world. In the image of the people riding horses (fig.6), the analysis shows that the people riding the horses are brought close to the viewer while the demonstrators are kept at arm's length. This close up to the people riding on horses allows the viewer to see the details of their faces and their expressions and reveals their individuality and personality. This means that they are represented as though they belong to "our group". On the other hand, the demonstrators are presented at a distance as if they were strangers. This has the effect of viewing them impersonally, as types rather than as individuals or as the "out- group".

b. Perspective

This involves the selection of an angle or a point of view of the image which implies expressing subjective attitudes towards the represented participants. in terms of horizontal angle, the image is either taken from frontal or oblique angle. As for the images of the conceptual structure, the analysis shows that the orientation of all the represented participants is frontal to the viewer. All the images are photographed from a frontal angle as the photographer has

aligned himself with the represented participants. Frontal angle always implies involvement. Aladli, Mubarak, and Nagib are presented to the viewers in a way to show that they belong to the 'in-group'. Even in the image of the building of the journalists syndicate (fig.3), the viewer is asked to get involved with the building rather than with what really happens in front of it. This strategy enhances the idea of presenting anyone who belongs to Mubarak's regime as an 'in-group' to the viewer.

In terms of vertical angle, all the images of the human participants are at eye level and this evokes a sense of equality between the represented participants and the viewer. This is appropriate to the context and the verbal text here, as these figures are represented persuading the viewers to accept Mubarak's speech and stop the protests. Only the image of the building of the journalists syndicate (fig.3) is taken from low angle. The viewer is placed in a low position while the building towers high above the viewer. This indicates that the represented participant in the image which is the building has power over the viewer. Conferring such power on a building indicates the desire of the network to engage the viewer with the state buildings and property as symbols of the country rather than the people who are protesting in the streets.

Compositional meaning

a. Information value

On the horizontal axis, information value is structured from left to right following Given and New pattern. According to our Arabic orthography, the given and new pattern should be from right to left. Therefore, what is known to the viewer is placed on the right side and this is called the Given and the key message is placed on the left side and this is called the New. Applying this pattern to the images of Aladli and Mubarak (fig.1&2), the Given elements in both images are Aladli and Mubarak and the New element in both images is the Egyptian flag. Presenting Mubarak and Aladli as the Given

implies that they are well-known to the viewers. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) state that "the given is presented as commonsensical and self-evident" (p.181). The Egyptian flag is presented as the New or the key message that the viewer has to pay attention to. Though the Egyptian flag which symbolizes Egypt is not considered as something problematic or arguable, the idea of equating Mubarak and Aladli to the flag by placing both of them side by side is contestable.

Along the vertical axis, information value is structured from top to bottom following ideal and real pattern. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) state that "the upper section tends to make some kind of emotive appeal and show us what might be, the lower section tends to be more informative and practical showing us what is" (p.186). In the first image of Aladli (fig.1), the image of Mubarak occupies the upper part of the image and Aladli occupies the lower part. Thus, Mubarak is idealized or presented as something general while Aladli is presented as the real element. This supports the idea that the media have always tried to propagate throughout Mubarak's era that Mubarak is perfect, but the government has its own failures. In the second image of Mubarak (fig.2), the logo of the Egyptian presidency is placed in the upper section of the image while Mubarak is placed in the lower section. This supports the idea that Mubarak is still the real president of Egypt.

b. Salience

According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), salience can create a "hierarchy of importance among the elements, selecting some as more important, more worthy of attention than others" (p.201). As for the images of the conceptual structure, Mubarak and Aladli (fig.1&2) are considered the most salient elements in both images due to their size, as they are the largest elements in both images, and the place they occupy in the foreground.

Presenting Mubarak and Aladli as the most salient elements in both images highlights their representation as powerful figures who still have control. This also reveals that the message conveyed by both images is about Mubarak and his statesmen not about the Egyptian people and the protests.

As for the image of the narrative structure, the analysis shows that the image of the horses (fig.5) is organized in a way that focuses the viewer on the people riding horses who entered Al-Tahrir square. This is accomplished through salience. By examining the picture, we can see that the most salient element is the "horses". This is established through their central position within the frame of the picture and through their size. Giving such importance to the horses emphasizes their responsibility for the actions taken in Al-Tahrir square. The horses are presented as the real agent of dispersing the protestors and this denies any human responsibility for the action.

Oppositional media coverage

The study examines five images accompanying five news texts posted on Alwafd gate, Alyoum7, and Aljazeera network during the period from 25th January till 11th February 2011.

Presentation meaning

The analysis shows that all of the five images posted on those networks fall in the category of the narrative structure with its two types of processes: transactional processes and non-transactional processes.

Narrative structures

i. Action-Transactional processes

The analysis shows that three images out of five lie in the category of the transactional processes. Most of these images cover the confrontations between the demonstrators on the one

hand and the policemen or Mubarak's supporters on the other hand. The first image is the one posted on Alyoum7 website on 26th of January 2011. The image exemplifies using violence by the policemen when dealing with the demonstrators.

The image includes four elements: the actor, the goal, the process and the circumstance. The actor is represented by a group of policemen wearing helmets and holding canes and shields. This group belongs to the central security forces that can be distinguished by their black suits and are known for fierceness and violence. The goal is represented by a group of protestors. Three of the protestors are brought to the foreground of the image and they are: two young men and a child. The presence of a child in this violent scene is very symbolic and implicative. It asserts the fact that the protests include all the classes and categories found in the Egyptian society and reflects at the same time the brutality of the policemen as they are prepared to treat everyone harshly even a little child. The process of attacking is realized by vectors that emerge from the policemen's stretched arms with canes towards the demonstrators. The circumstance is formed by a number of demonstrators at the background who appear to be dispersed by the policemen and trying to run away from them.



Fig..(6)

The third image is the one posted on Alwafd electronic gate on 3rd of February 2011. The image accompanies a news story reporting on thugs attacking the demonstrators in Tahrir Square. The structure comprises four main elements: the actor, the process, the goal, the circumstance. The main actors are represented by the camel and the one who is riding it. There are two other subsidiary actors in the image that are represented by the two men pulling the horse.



Fig.(8)

The process of attacking is realized by vectors that emanate from the camel's leg and the direction of the cane in the man's hand. There are other vectors that emerge from the other two actors' hands towards the camel. The goal is represented by one of the demonstrators who is kicked by the camel and is lying under it. One notable thing about the man that represents the goal is the presence of a camera hung around his neck. The camera implies that he may not be one of the demonstrators but a reporter. The circumstance is represented by the group of the demonstrators at the background of the image who are trying to run away and one of the thugs holding a cane and marching towards the camel. The image exemplifies the

violence used by Mubarak's supporters when they broke in Altahrir Square in order to attack the demonstrators.

ii. Action-Non-transactional processes

The analysis shows that two images lie in the category of non- transactional processes. The first image which belongs to this type is the one posted on Alwafd gate on 26th of January 2011. This image accompanies a news story about how the police dispersed the demonstrators. The image includes only one participant which is the actor. The actor is represented by a policeman holding a gun and directing it towards a goal that we cannot see. The process is expressed by the vector which emerges from the policeman and realized by his outstretched arm and the gun pointing towards the goal. The demonstrators are absent from the scene in order to focus the viewer's attention on the fact that the policemen use guns to disperse the demonstrators.



Fig.(9)

iii. Action-Bidirectional process

Bidirectional processes involve two participants playing both roles the actor and the goal. In such kind of structure, each participant plays now the role of actor, as well as the role of goal. Bidirectional process is used to indicate communication between the participants of the visual. There is only one image that falls in this category which is the one posted on Aljazeera network on 26th of January 2011 and represents the first day of the demonstrations. In this image, the main participants are a line-up of policemen on one side and one of the demonstrators on the other side. we can distinguish two represented groups who are engaged in some kind of relation. They are engaged in a facing relation. The facing relationship between the represented participants is realized by vectors formed by the direction of their standing facing each other.



Fig, (10)

The policemen are standing fully armored with helmets and shields and protected by the police vehicles on one side and one of the demonstrators is standing alone raising his hands holding a placard in a challenging way on the other side. Each participant represents the actor and the goal at the same time. The policemen are on alert to face the demonstrators and the demonstrator is challenging the policemen by facing them. The circumstance in the image is realized by the police armored vehicles that line up behind the policemen. This gives insight into the unequal battle the demonstrators have to undergo with the policemen. The two sides are represented facing each other. The image emphasizes the relationship between the participants within the visual rather than a relationship between the represented participants and the viewer. The facing relationship between the represented participants is realized by vectors formed by the direction of their standing facing each other.

Orientational meaning

a. Gaze

In most images, the represented participants are not looking directly to the viewer. Thus, these images fall in the category of the offer type. The viewer is invited to observe what the represented participants are doing. All the images under analysis are of the narrative structure which represent some kind of action. The offer type is appropriate to the narrative structure as the viewer is invited to observe the action the represented participants are doing.

b. Size of frame

The analysis shows that the protestors are always depicted in the oppositional media networks close to the viewer while the policemen are depicted far away from the viewer. For example, image (fig.6) which represents the confrontations between the policemen and the protestors, the protestors appear in medium close shots as they appear till the waist while the policemen in both

images appear in long shots that show their full figures. Long shots always imply detachment and indicate that the represented participants are represented as strangers or 'out-group'. On the other hand, depicting the protestors in close shots is considered a strategy to get the viewer involved with them and viewing them as part of his/her world.

c. Perspective

In terms of the horizontal angle, the images (fig. 7&10) are taken from a frontal angle which implies involvement as the viewer is invited to engage himself with the participants. Thus, the protestors are shown as part of the viewer's world. One notable thing about these images is the back view of the protestors. Thus, the viewer sees the scene from the perspective of the protestors. Ideologically, the viewer is positioned on the side of the protestors. Literally, the viewer is positioned behind the protestors. This perspective promotes sympathy with the protestors.

The images no. 8 & 9 are taken from an oblique angle. In image 8 Mubarak's supporters who attacked the protestors are photographed from an oblique angle, while the protestors at the background are depicted from a frontal angle. This means that the photographer has aligned himself with the protestors not with Mubarak's supporters. Thus, the protestors appear as something we are involved with, while Mubarak's supporters appear as something that does not belong to our world. The same applies to image 6 which represents the policemen dealing with the protestors. In this image, the protestors are depicted from a frontal angle which indicates involvement. However, the policemen are depicted from an oblique angle which indicates detachment. The protestors are represented as 'in-group', but the policemen are represented as 'out-group' and do not belong to the viewer's world. In image 9, the policeman holding the gun is depicted from an oblique angle to enhance the idea of portraying the policemen as 'out-group'. The

policy of portraying the protestors as 'in-group' and the policemen as 'out-group' reflects the political situation of the oppositional media and reveals these networks siding with the revolution against Mubarak's regime.

In terms of vertical angle, image 7, which depicts the protestors tearing Mubarak's photo, is taken from low angle. The viewer is placed in a low position while the protestors who are tearing Mubarak's photo tower high above the viewer. This indicates that the represented participants in the image have power over the viewer. Aljazeera network attempts to emphasize the superiority and the power of the protestors to foster the idea that they have the ability to impose their own will and oust Mubarak from power.

Compositional meaning

Information value

On the horizontal axis, the analysis shows that in the oppositional media's representation, the protestors are always presented as the Given and the policemen are presented as the New. The protestors are presented in the images as the commonsensical element, while the policemen are presented as the debatable element. This is revealed in the organization of image no. 6 as the policemen are placed on the left side while the protestors are placed on the right side. Image no. 10 has a special type of organization as the represented participants are not arranged from right to left. The participants are arranged symmetrically into two groups to represent the facing relationship. The participants are divided into two clusters with a space area between them. In image no. 10 the two clusters are not balanced as one protestor is facing a line-up of soldiers, yet this configuration is ideological to reveal the valor of the protestors.

Along the vertical axis, In image no 7, Mubarak's photo is placed at the top of the image, while the protestors are placed at the

bottom of the image. According to the information value of top and bottom, Mubarak's photo is represented as the ideal and the protestors are represented as the real. Mubarak's photo symbolizes Mubarak's state with all the false promises of prosperity and welfare. However, the photo is torn and burnt by the demonstrators. It has become corrupted and distorted like Egypt under Mubarak's rule. The protestors represent the real people of Egypt who no longer believe in Mubarak as an idealized entity. Thus, presenting Mubarak's distorted photo at the top conveys the meaning of a fallen idol. On the other hand, the protestors are presented as the real power that inspires the Egyptian people.

a. Salience

The analysis shows that some elements have been selected to be more salient than the other elements in the same image. In image 7, we find that Mubarak's torn photo is the most salient element. Mubarak's distorted photo is salient due to its placement at the top of the image and due to its large size. The policeman who is firing the gun is salient due to its central position in the image and its perspective as he is placed in the foreground of the image. The salience of the camel and horses in image 8 is established through their central position, size, and specific cultural factors, as they look out of place in the setting of the visual. The appearance of camels in the scene is considered bizarre because camels are not used as a means of transport in Cairo, so it is unusual to see camels in the streets. Thus, the camel is the most eye-catching element in the composition due to its peculiarity.

These elements are selected to be salient because they are considered more worthy of attention than others. Mubarak's distorted photo is important because it indicates the end of Mubarak's era. The policeman firing the gun is important because it draws the viewer's attention to the violence used by the police. The camel is an important element in depicting the people who attacked the demonstrators as uncivilized and barbarous ones. Thus, every

element is made salient to perform some ideological function in the visuals.

Findings and conclusion

The systematic examination of the visual structures of the news at various levels that are carried out demonstrates that the political position of each network is clearly reflected in its news discourse. The selected networks represent the events in terms of US Vs. THEM dichotomy. They employ various visual strategies to represent the in-group positively and the out-group negatively. In the case of Alahram network, it is the regime's side that belongs to US whereas the protestors side belongs to THEM. The other networks' coverage is ideologically similar to Alahram, but they differ in US Vs. THEM categorization as the protestors belong to US and the regime belongs to THEM. The US Vs. THEM ideology can be traced in various levels the visual analysis.

Beginning with Alahram network, the news discourse of Alahram provides a good example of advocacy media that adopts a kind of apologetic ideology towards Mubarak and his regime as the network persists in defending them throughout its coverage of the revolution. From the beginning, it is obvious that the network adopts a pro-regime rhetoric that represents Mubarak as a glorified and revered figure. It is apparent throughout the news discourse of Alahram that they seek to portray Mubarak and his regime in a more positive, legitimate and appealing light as well as to assert the power of his regime. on the other hand, they strive to represent the protests as chaos that worries the government officials and threatens the national security. Thus, Alahram network acts as a propaganda tool to empower Mubarak's regime or as a vehicle through which the regime gets his own views across.

The image of Mubarak as the legitimate ruler of the country is enhanced visually by portraying him and the figures who belong to his regime in conceptual structures. These images fall into the

category of the symbolic structures which either depict the identity of the presented participant or confer some attributive meanings to him/her. Images 1&2 which represent Mubarak and Aladli placed side by side with the flag of the country equate both figures to Egypt. Since the flag is a symbol of Egypt, the identities of both figures are enhanced to be that of Egypt itself. Thus, each figure is presented in a symbolic way as an emblem of the country. This serves to reinforce Mubarak's status as the ruler of the country, and supports the idea of maintaining his position as the leader of the country.

At the Orientational level, the network employs several techniques to establish a relationship of association between the viewer and Mubarak's regime. Distancing is considered as one of the persuasive techniques the network uses to direct the viewers to align with Mubarak's side. The analysis shows that all the participants that belong to Mubarak's regime are presented in close and medium close shot images that allow the viewer to distinguish their facial features. This has the effect of building an intimate relation between the viewer and the represented participant which leads to creating a sense of proximity with these subjects as they are suggested to be favourable to the viewer's interest.

On the other hand, the pattern of distancing is used to distance the viewer from the protests which involve scenes of violence and from recipients and agents of this violence. The effect of distancing is to disengage the viewer with the protests and the protestors and to position the viewer outside the immediate context of protests. This strategy serves to give the viewer a sense of security suggesting that this security is best protected by the regime that he/she is supposed to align with.

At the compositional level, Mubarak and his statesmen are presented in the position of the Given element in the images and

they are given salience and prominence as outstanding figures. This serves to introduce them as commonsensical figures that are not the subject of argument. Moreover, Mubarak is idealized in image 1 by placing his photo in the upper part of the image. This reveals how the network is still depicting Mubarak as the Egyptians' idol.

Regarding the other case of the oppositional media which is exemplified by the news discourse of Alwafd, Alyoum7, and Aljazeera, there is a contradicting set of ideologies that dominates the discourse of these networks. While Alarharm network adopts the ideology of legitimating Mubarak's regime, the dominant ideology of the oppositional media is based on delegitimizing this regime. This is achieved through exposing the abuses of the regime and highlighting the violent practices of the security forces that belong to this regime towards the protestors. On the other hand, they give legitimacy to the protests and the protestors by representing the events of the revolution from the point of view of the protestors and sympathizers with the revolution. They also try to shed light on the legitimate demands of the demonstrators who are calling for their civil and political rights.

The power of the protestors as well as the illegitimacy of Mubarak's regime are asserted in the visual structures of the news stories. at the presentational level. The coverage of the oppositional media is represented by images of narrative structures that narrate the events of the protests and suit the context of revolution. Most of these images cover violent confrontations between the protestors on the one hand and the security forces or Mubarak's supporters on the other hand. These violent scenes not only serve to condemn the brutality of Mubarak's regime and highlight its illegitimacy, but leads to the agitation of the public opinion. Moreover, the presentational meaning of the images sustains the ideology of resistance by depicting the protestors as heroes who stand up for democracy and people's rights. This is achieved through the

symbolic representations of the protestors, for example, in image no.10 which portrays one of the protestors standing alone raising his hands holding a placard, and facing a number of policemen standing fully armored. These images reinforce the meaning of resistance and depict a heroic image of the protestors who fight in an unequal battle; however, they exhibit much courage and resolution.

At the Orientational level, it is evident that distance plays a significant role in shaping the orientation of the viewers in the discourse. Patterns of perspective and size of frame play a vital role in creating alignments. In the case of the three networks, viewers are encouraged to align with the protestors by depicting them close to the viewer, while the policemen are depicted far away from the viewer. It is evident that frontal perspectives and close shots which reveal articulated facial expressions help to build favourable relationships between the viewers and the subjects of the discourse. This sustains the ideology of resistance that underlies the discourse of the three networks.

At the compositional meaning, the ideology of resistance is manifested in the remarkable organization of image no. 10 where the participants are arranged symmetrically into two clusters facing each other; however, they are not balanced as one protestor is facing a line-up of soldiers. This has the effect of emphasizing the meaning of challenge and resistance. Moreover, the ideology of the illegitimacy of the Mubarak's regime is expressed in the compositional meaning of image no.8 where Mubarak's distorted photo is idealized by placing it at the top of the visual structure. This depicts an image of a leader that lost his popularity and legitimacy and has become like a fallen idol.

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