



The Importance Of The Caricature Art Of The Artist "Naji Al-Ali" In Simulating The Palestinian Cause Read A Sample Of His Satirical Drawings

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Abstract:

This research aims to highlight the importance of caricature and its role in simulating the reality of the Palestinian people and their suffering at the hands of the Zionist coloniser. The Palestinian artist "Naji Al-Ali" expressed the Palestinian cause through his satirical drawings at the end of the last century. His work has re-emerged to remind audiences of the past, especially in light of the recent destruction wrought by Israeli forces against the oppressed people of Palestine since October 2023, manifested in some of the most horrific acts of genocide in history. Through a mixture of sarcasm directed at the international community and its blatant failure to alleviate the suffering of unarmed citizens, and a tone of sadness and grief at the oppression of the weak, his drawings articulate the artist's outrage with an extraordinary paradox and a refined artistic performance that appeals to human emotions. They reflect the Palestinian pain and depict the betrayal of the Palestinian cause by international and Arab entities.

Keywords: Art, cartoon, expression, journalism, Palestinian cause.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Interest in the art of satire, commonly referred to as cartooning, has increased significantly and is of great importance in the global media, especially in print formats such as newspapers and magazines. This art form increasingly attracts audiences by appealing to the naked eye and competing with various journalistic genres, including news, features and various types of articles. It focuses on critiquing social, political, cultural and economic issues, staying abreast of contemporary events and presenting them through a critical lens, often with a sense of irony, regarding ongoing events, phenomena and problems that occupy local and international public opinion, all condensed into a single caricature.

Despite the apparent simplicity of these drawings, often resembling mere doodles, their meanings are profoundly significant, touching the essence of truth and penetrating the depths of reality, summarising it in a uniquely humorous format. Caricature has an immense power to express the events around us, which are dictated by various

phenomena. It is essential to highlight the role of the caricaturist, who plays a decisive role in translating what we observe into drawings through the creative expression of his hands. The cartoonist can only manipulate the emotions of his audience if he possesses an awareness derived from his understanding of the political and cultural landscape, as well as his artistic talent and ability to depict reality as dictated by his imagination. There are many artists, but not all of them can convey messages to different audiences unless they provide implicit, coded messages that can be interpreted according to the cultural level of the individual.

2. Problem of the study :

Cartoons are known for their ability to evoke laughter and create an atmosphere of pleasure and comfort among the viewers, even if only for a brief moment. However, their humorous nature does not diminish their effectiveness as a tool for conveying information about the environment to the audience. Consequently, the interest in caricature has increased among media institutions that want to appeal to the emotions of public opinion, especially in the context of significant censorship of both written and spoken words.

When caricature is combined with a mass medium such as a newspaper, and when it is distinguished from the amateur drawings circulating on social media, the art of satire becomes more capable of informing, guiding and expressing the public's concerns, while at the same time facilitating communication between its creators and the public. The humorous image, through this medium, becomes a rich media content that rivals the importance of various journalistic genres present in newspapers on a wide range of topics. Caricature thus possesses qualities that make it one of the most effective and powerful means of expression.

The era in which we live is marked by fluctuations in the global political scene and a media blackout on various current issues, driven by the politics of international balance. This situation has struck at the very heart of humanity and has revived the spectre of evil reminiscent of ancient times, especially the wars and tragedies that afflict nations. A prime example is the ongoing Palestinian issue and the suffering of the defenceless people of Gaza following the "Aqsa Flood" on 7 October 2023. This event has surpassed all expectations and revealed the horrific massacres perpetrated by Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, who has killed and displaced more than two million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. According to experts and international observers, these acts constitute some of the most egregious crimes against humanity in history, compounded by the deafening silence of the international community, which has confined itself to mere condemnation.

In this context, human rights defenders and people of conscience around the world have condemned Israel's violations of international law. Celebrities and journalists have also denounced these violations, despite the restrictions imposed by certain regimes on freedom of expression on the Israeli side. The press has played a crucial role in this issue, capturing live scenes despite the challenges it faces, resulting in numerous journalists being targeted in an effort to erase evidence of the crimes committed and hide the truth..

This situation reveals a stark double standard in the treatment of current affairs, such as the condemnation of the Russian attack on Ukraine, in contrast to the appalling silence surrounding the Israeli destruction, which involves the killing, displacement and starvation of innocent civilians, including children and women. Given the difficulties of media coverage due to this duality of standards, satirical cartoons have played an essential role in conveying the anguish and pain of the resilient citizens of Gaza, escaping

the censorship imposed by some countries when discussing the Palestinian issue, particularly certain Arab regimes.

The scenes depicted are at times ironic, at other times outraged at the humiliation and degradation of the Arab nation. Caricature has documented the tragic moments in all their details, presenting remarkable paradoxes that invite reflection through a unique humorous lens, capable of stirring the world's conscience and mobilising public opinion to uphold international agreements.

In this document, we want to explore the art of satirical cartooning as practised by some Arab artists who have taken up the brush to express their inner thoughts through a distinctive aesthetic that critiques negative and hidden aspects. Through simplified and precise scribbles, they convey their ideas to the public, each according to their artistic skills and boldness in dealing with phenomena and events, presenting them in a satirical style infused with humour. In this way, we will try to respond to the proposed problem:

What role do the cartoons of the artist "Naji Al-Ali" play in representing the Palestinian cause in a way that contrasts entertainment with deep pain?

3. Concept of Caricature Art:

Caricature, or satirical drawing, is one of the oldest art forms and plays an important role in expressing the struggles of individuals within society. It deals with many issues and problems prevalent in nations, presenting them in a light-hearted manner, not without humour and wit, often relying on suggestion and surprise. Below are some definitions of caricature to clarify its meaning:

3.1 Linguistically:

The term "caricature" comes from the Latin word "caricate", which has four meanings: to fill, to perceive, to load and to exaggerate (Shawqiya Hijras, 2005, p. 30). Some trace the term "caricature" to the Italian word "caricure", which means to load something beyond its capacity, implying exaggeration (Ashraf Mahmoud, Sherif Darwish, 2001, p. 242). Caricature refers to drawings that exaggerate faults and is synonymous with "satirical drawings" in Arabic. It is an art that depicts individuals with a degree of exaggeration and ridicule, with the aim of amusing and criticising, often incorporating written text within the caricature.

3.2 Terminology:

Caricature is defined as a form of thought that provides an internal perspective of the artist or author, allowing them to see things through their own lens and express their opinions about them (Shawqiya Hijras, 2005, p. 30).

Cartooning is also defined as a satirical art form that evokes laughter while addressing the problems we face. It has been used in social and political criticism because of its ability to create an atmosphere of joy and amusement. The term is used because it encourages ridicule in its treatment of the issues at hand, using humour to engage the audience. As a result, caricature is often found in newspapers and magazines, where it addresses both positive and negative phenomena in a creative and satirical manner, relying primarily on artistic skill (Amal Saad Metwally, 2006, p. 193).

It can be seen as a sensitive and lively camera that captures and reflects events, whether sad or happy, social or political, public or private, depending on the artist's perspective and the specific issue being commented on, such as poverty, war or peace. The artist

focuses on the idea and gives it meaning. This idea is in line with the observation of the researcher Suzy Levy: "Caricature is the art of aggressive drawings that reflect extreme energies; it is also a political, social and psychological publication that uses words in the form of titles or captions included in the drawing" (Suzy Levy, 1994, p. 62).

Meanwhile, the researcher John Grand Carteret stated that "caricature is a weapon to provoke laughter, achieved by pointing things out in a biting and thorny way, but it is also a means of study and observation that helps to provide accurate records of different historical periods; it serves as a tool for social satire" (John Grand Carteret, 1988, p. 11).

4. Historical roots of satirical art :

The term "caricature" is said to have Italian origins, meaning to load something beyond its capacity. It was first used by "Mossini" in 1646. In the 17th century, "Gian Lorenzo Bernini" introduced satirical drawing to the French public when he travelled to France in 1665, where he was a skilled sculptor and caricaturist.

However, the origins of satirical drawing can be traced back to the ancient Egyptian civilisation over three thousand years ago. The art form was also prominent among the Assyrians and Greeks. Some researchers argue that the Egyptians were the first to use satire in their drawings to achieve their goals of ridicule and incitement against rulers or any oppressive authority. They used animals and simple symbols to express their views on those in power, relying on the inversion of truths and the depiction of moral paradoxes, while maintaining the realism of the drawings and shapes, all designed to provoke laughter. For example, an artist might depict a massive animal perched on a bird's nest high in a tree, or a bird struggling to climb a ladder, as a commentary on the upheavals of the times.

This art form also appeared in Greece, as mentioned by "Aristotle" and "Aristophanes", through a figure called "Bousthene" or "Buzon". He was an illustrator who made humorous and satirical drawings of prominent personalities of his time and presented them to the public. He was even punished several times for his satire and eventually killed for it (Talal Fahd Al-Shashaa, 2011, p. 21).

As this art form became more established, especially in the media, it eventually spread to the Arab world.

In Arab journalism, "Yaquub Ibn Sanu'a" is recognised as the first to use caricature in the Arab world, publishing his newspaper entitled "Musliyyat wa Mudhikat" in 1878, which depicted the political upheavals in Egypt during the reign of Khedive Ismail and Tawfiq.

In Saudi Arabia, artists such as 'Ali Al-Khurgi' and 'Mohammed Al-Khunayfir' emerged, while in Syria 'Abdul Latif Madini' made his mark. In Palestine, "Naji Al-Ali" became prominent, a close friend of the poet Ahmed Matar, with whom he collaborated on many works (Sulaiman Muhammad Al-Shabana, 2009, p. 47). In Algeria, the artist Ayoub gained recognition at the Algerian newspaper "Al-Khabar", together with Bakhalifa at "Al-Shorouk Al-Yawmi".

5. Characteristics of Satirical Art (Caricature) :

Caricature is inextricably linked to the phenomena of laughter and humour, both on a philosophical and psychological level. It is emotionally linked to perception and feeling, serving as an "expression of human pain that humiliates or comforts others". It defines the targets of its satire, and in the absence of such targets, it becomes a space where

individuals escape from their kind and their own limitations” (Nour El-Din Al-Nadi, 2006, p. 92).

Caricatures are characterised by their twisted approach to presenting the truth, characterised by biting bitterness and exaggerated mockery. They influence human behaviour by highlighting the flaws in human nature, thus redefining the status quo and promoting a new perspective that leads to alternative behaviours. All this is conveyed through a humorous drawing that confronts the individual with his or her shortcomings. As (G. Gautier) has aptly noted, “When a publication compiles images by daily newspaper artists, we can acknowledge that a single drawing can convey what an entire editorial might express, or even more. The image in question is the journalistic drawing, an art form as old as journalism itself, and thus a solid historical legacy” (G. Gautier, 2006, p. 121).

The visual language, with its array of signals, movements and symbols, significantly accelerates the reception of messages compared to traditional articles. Irrespective of the audience’s understanding of the drawing’s meaning or their reading level, “the visual grasping and comprehension of journalistic drawings require very little time. One might think that reading is instantaneous, and that its effectiveness derives from the speed with which it is read. Complexity is only used to give meaning to this reading, often turning it into satire - for example, the depiction of several microphones in front of a politician at a press conference. In this case, the drawing benefits from a quick eye capable of quickly navigating a pre-structured space” (G. Gautier, 2006, p. 128).

This creative visual reflection transforms the vast external space into a snapshot that surprises the audience with a scene full of significant markers and suggestive energy. This prompts the recipient to engage in a cognitive production of the disturbing reality, capturing the absurdity and exaggeration inherent in the caricature, often to the point of humour.

6. The psychology of caricature :

Caricature is closely associated with sarcastic thinking, as the artist often portrays characters in an exaggerated, grotesque and absurd manner. This exaggeration highlights flaws, making caricature synonymous with satirical drawing. It is “an artistic expression through drawing that addresses a specific issue in a sarcastic style, breaking the monotony of realism and rebelling against it. It enhances or diminishes certain aspects of a drawing in a way that is humorous and mocking, while maintaining the essence of the overall form. We see it manipulating the realism of objects or mixing the characteristics of living beings to achieve a certain goal” (Talal Fahd Al-Shashaa, 2011, p. 19).

Thus, the value of satirical caricature lies in its humour and comedic sensibility, which disrupts the dullness of reality and instigates change for a particular cause. It also deepens the sense of contradiction between what is hoped for or expected in reality and what actually happens. This discrepancy makes the paradox an essential component of the caricature, exposing the seriousness of current events.

7. The philosophical dimension of irony and its relation to caricature :

Irony and paradox are fundamental tools in satire in general and in caricature in particular, as the ancient concept of irony is intertwined with the beginnings of philosophical debate. Associated with the philosopher Socrates (c. 470 BC), irony encompasses various concepts such as dialogue irony, Socratic irony and the Socratic method. The Greek word “eironeia”, from which the European term is derived, described

a manner of speech used by a character in ancient Greek comedy known as “eiron”. Thus, irony emerged as a style of speech among actors in the Greek theatre, with the ironic character typically concealing his mockery by various means.

The Socratic method is based on two elements: irony and generation, with the aim of trapping the interlocutor in a contradiction. Socrates pretends to be ignorant and asks the speaker questions that cast doubt on his statements and lead him to conclusions that reveal his contradictions. Finally, the speaker admits his ignorance (Lahmil Al-Hajj, 2001, p. 291). This establishes a sarcastic dialogue with tricks that hide more than they reveal.

Socratic irony is characterised by questioning while feigning ignorance. It serves as an effective intellectual tool for clarifying the ideological atmosphere in ancient Greece, a necessary step for purifying souls and exposing faulty arguments, according to author Abdul Aal Abdul Rahman (2004, p. 74). Socrates’ irony is fundamentally rooted in his central tenet: “Know thyself”. He believed that if a person returned to the simplicity of his nature - if he understood what he really was - he would remain innately good. No one is evil by choice; all wrongdoing stems from ignorance mistaken for knowledge. This reflects the moral rationalism of Socrates, who used irony to awaken the dormant truths in his followers (Roni Eli Alpha, 1992, pp. 562-563).

For Socrates, however, debate and sarcasm had a negative function, as Jean Lacoste noted, which manifested itself in “catharsis” (Jean Lacoste, 2001, p. 21). This confrontation with, and purification from, the faults of the self is what laughter can achieve; we laugh at our own trivialities, which may not have seemed trivial at the time they were committed.

Despite Socrates’ contributions to this discourse, the importance of Plato’s (428-348 BC) theory - known for its idealism - on laughter has also been noted. His ideas are considered to be “the first theoretical model or basis for ambivalence theory”, which posits that humour arises from our recognition of conflicting or contradictory emotions (Shaker Abdul Hamid, 2003, p. 76). Laughter is used to highlight mistakes and expose contradictions, a concept that is vividly illustrated in caricature.

Thus, the interplay between Socratic irony and Platonic thought provides a rich philosophical backdrop for understanding the mechanisms of satire and humour in cartooning, revealing how these elements can provoke thought, critique societal norms and ultimately challenge the status quo.

Some philosophers have gone so far as to define humans as “laughing animals”, just as others have characterised them as “talking animals”. It is likely that the convergence of these two human traits - laughter and speech - is not a mere coincidence, but results from a deep connection between them. If humans are the only beings capable of speech (or thought), we can attribute both qualities to that distinctive ability known as intelligence (Shukri Muhammad Ayad, 1994, p. 125). The characteristic that distinguishes humans from animals is laughter, and the author links this unique ability to intelligence, suggesting that it is an intelligent response for a living being to interact with its external world through laughter. This raises questions for thinkers: how do we laugh, why do we laugh, and what does laughter mean?

For many thinkers, laughter is not just an action; it is a subject of study that has led to the study of comedy, especially in its natural context. They “sought to explain laughter as an event produced by nature in man. In other words, these thinkers believed that the sources of humour are inherent in nature, and that the researcher seeking to explain

laughter must uncover the natural causes that produce our laughter” (Jeanson Francis, 1950, pp. 27-29).

Laughter is fundamentally a corrective and reparative act; it is intended to cause embarrassment. It is intended to make the person laughed at feel uncomfortable. Society avenges itself through laughter for the freedoms it has been deprived of; laughter does not achieve its purpose if it is characterised by friendliness and kindness. Consequently, Bergson gives laughter a reformatory dimension, seeing it as a means of correcting mistakes and shortcomings, and as a method of placing the subject of laughter in an embarrassing position, thereby avenging those whose freedom has been infringed.

Therefore, satirical drawing deliberately aims to use humour to correct societal flaws. The function of satire allows it to “constantly attack the rigidity of thought, character and behaviour and strive to make the characteristics of society more flexible” (Fawzi Ma’arouf, 2005, p. 128). From this perspective, argumentation becomes a more appropriate mechanism for its purpose, reinforcing the idea that “satire is an effective weapon in argumentation. When we ridicule someone, we are implicitly saying that he has made a mistake that deserves punishment. The one who is ridiculed is the one who deserves to be punished by laughter; satire serves as a punishment for violating an accepted norm, a way of condemning deviant behaviour that we do not consider serious or dangerous enough to warrant more violent means. According to Perelman and Tyteca, “satire is a form of quasi-logical argumentation” (Perelman and Tyteca, 1976, p. 276). This is because the argument to be conveyed is fundamentally derived from reality, and the correction of social ills does not require force and violence to bring about change, but rather intelligent thought.

For this reason, the sender must express his message in various indirect ways to avoid direct confrontation with the recipient and instead make him feel inadequate after receiving the message. The “inferiority complex is the sincere assertion that the person is not at the required level, that he is incompetent and will be condemned as such, or that he is an object of ridicule or a target of satire” (Roger Moukiali, n.d., p. 100). This is what allows satire and irony to work together to instil doubt in the recipient, encouraging them to think differently about what is happening. This creates a nuanced meaning that is not understood by everyone; the language of coding and signalling is understood only by the discerning.

This humorous social criticism helps to release the sender’s anger and frustration about current events, while also serving as a means of confronting individuals with their shortcomings. The ironic distance in the act of communication allows the speaker to conceal his or her intentions, and the audience’s attempt to decipher the message becomes a source of great amusement, stimulating sustained attention to the discourse and encouraging continued concentration, reflection, and ongoing dialogue. It is for this reason that caricatures are admired by many readers, who derive pleasure from trying to decipher the humorous and enigmatic images.

It seems that caricature has a wide audience; cartoons are loved by children and adults alike. Different emotions such as joy, fear, hunger, anger and playfulness can be perceived with a kind of innate engagement. However, experience has shown that the ability to understand expressions increases with age, depending on the level of maturity, and is limited in younger audiences. This suggests that the ability to distinguish between fear and greed is linked to a system of expectations and cultural frameworks that have developed at earlier stages in the history of the visual arts. What confirms that iconic signs

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are not always as expressive as we assume is that they are often accompanied by written text. No matter how easily recognisable they are, they still present a degree of ambiguity (Umberto Eco, 2008, pp. 48-49).

The components of a cartoon - the characters, the caption, the commentary, the background and the signature - intertwine to create a complete image that provides the immediate meaning related to the issue the message is intended to address. No one can deny the effective role played by satirical drawing in documenting events that embody everyday reality with all its significant details. Any commentary written or denounced about the drawing is merely an attempt to convey ideas to the reader in different ways, to encourage him to recognise the content of its message.

8. The art of satirical drawing and political issues :

Political cartooning, the most critical form of satirical art, expresses current political attitudes through drawing alone or through a combination of drawing and dialogue. It addresses both local and global issues and flourishes in times of heightened political contradictions and tensions.

Political cartooning does not provide news, but rather offers an opinion on a political event or action. This may stem from the cartoonist's personal reflections or be in line with a newspaper's editorial line, resulting in satirical and pointed illustrations. These artworks draw their material from political events, depicting political figures, elections, presidents, parties, wars, international conflicts and racism. This type of humorous drawing is considered to be a powerful weapon that portrays a long struggle and resistance in times of political crisis.

Political issues are one of the main focuses of caricaturists, as they are essential for dealing with current national events. It is important that the caricature is contemporary and relevant to current issues. In general, political cartoons are characterised by their specific timing in relation to the subject of the drawing. For example, the Iraq-Iran war took place and ended within a specific timeframe, as did the Iraq-Kuwait war. Even within a single political event, changes continue to emerge, such as the evolving aspects of the Palestinian issue (Talal Fahd Al-Shashaa, 2011, p. 147).

Palestine continues to suffer under the weight of Israeli occupation, and the contributions of the great artist Naji Al-Ali to his homeland and his sacrifices for his cause are significant. His artworks resonate with the essence of a blood-stained homeland and capture the suffering of the Palestinian people under the oppression, injustice and tyranny of the occupier for many years.

9. The satirical art of Palestinian cartoonist Naji Al-Ali:

Naji Al-Ali's satirical and ironic drawings often seek to reclaim the lost freedom of the individual. They serve as a powerful expression of silenced voices in the face of truth, particularly through his character Handala, who has become a symbol of resistance and defiance deeply rooted in the hearts of supporters of the Palestinian cause. This child, perpetually turned away from the world with her hands tied behind her back, embodies profound disappointment and deprivation, and represents the essence of loss. Handala is the child who never grows up, immortalised as a stumbling block for those who deny the land of Palestine, and the bitter fruit of a struggle as hard as bile for those who feel the weight of the issue.

The name of this character transcends the death of Naji Al-Ali, as later artists have preserved it, ensuring that it remains a towering memory, linked to a name chosen with great insight. Handala, engraved in the Arab-Islamic memory, is “an old Arabic name steeped in heritage”. In particular, there are fourteen companions whose names begin with ‘Handala’. There are also five scholars who bear the name. In Arab history, Handala holds a prestigious position; Handala ibn Malik was the most honoured of the Tamim tribe, nicknamed ‘the Generous Handalas’. Naji Al-Ali deliberately named his character after this storied name to symbolise fierce resistance and unwavering opposition. Handala is depicted barefoot, wearing patched shorts and a stained shirt, with dishevelled hair - a reflection of Naji’s own struggles and a representation of his homelessness. He is the exception, made to bear witness to the era of land usurpation.



The first satirical drawing shows a mother caring for her son, whose body is completely wrapped in bandages, lying in a hospital bed with a severed leg. The mother cannot hold back her tears as she counsels her son, creating an irony between her words in the caption and her actions. The caption reads: "It's a shame to cry on the day of Eid, my son." This implicit, coded message reveals a people who fabricate joy to hide their wounds and misery, a nation whose children alone bear the weight of defeat and disappointment, yet dream of an Eid that brings the joy of victory. Handala, positioned off to the side, watches the scene, witnessing the horrors of his usurped land while dreaming of triumph.



The second cartoon depicts the self-satisfied Arab attitude, where the caption and the image create a stark contradiction. With a sarcastic tone, it brilliantly exposes Arab regimes gathering around tables overflowing with sumptuous food and drink to show

solidarity with the children of Palestine who are dying of hunger and thirst. They discuss the Palestinian cause while spending millions on a single meeting, presenting a biting irony that highlights the disconnect between their lavish gatherings and the suffering of Palestinians who endure oppression and despair. Meanwhile, Handala observes the large fruit platter and laments the state of the Arabs.



The third satirical drawing resembles a small comic strip in which Handala expresses his admiration for an article written by a journalist on democracy and the freedom of peoples. In contrast, the picture shows the journalist absorbed in writing at a small round table, illustrating the miserable conditions in which journalists live. Handala asks what tomorrow's topic will be, to which the journalist replies that he is writing his will, accompanied by exclamation marks that highlight the bizarre situation that awaits anyone who dares to speak the truth, and the inevitable end that follows: death.



The fourth cartoon shows three people representing their respective countries. One figure is a Zionist, depicted with a helmet adorned with the Star of David to signify their identity, accompanied by the famous phrase they believe belongs to them: "God's chosen people". An arm embracing this figure from a distance appears to be American, labelled "the deceived people of God", with the expression in the figure's eyes reinforcing this notion.

In a particularly ironic twist, the head of the third figure has no helmet, a symbol of protection, and hollow, astonished eyes. A tree is drawn, specifically representing Lebanon, but symbolically referring to Arabs in general, marked by the description of "the

confused people of God". This juxtaposition heightens the satirical irony: a people who believe themselves to be righteous and self-aggrandising versus a people who resort to various tricks to keep the Zionists at their beck and call.

Contrast this with a people who cannot raise their arms, who lack even the most basic means of self-defence (the helmet) as a sign of helplessness, weakness and submission. They are a people who do not forge their own weapons, who remain at the mercy of their enemies, confused and powerless. They have become a spectacle for a child waiting for change, reduced to a mere joke among men.

10. Conclusion:

This is a brief glimpse into the work of this revolutionary Palestinian artist who left behind a rich legacy of satirical art that bore the weight of his cause. His cartoons captured the events of the Palestinian resistance at the end of the last century, expressing themes of oppression and tyranny through the character of Handala. This figure played a pivotal role in articulating a firm rejection of the Zionist occupier who had usurped his land, while also criticising the complacency of Arab nations and the social indifference of Arab states, often adorned with overt normalisation.

Al-Ali's work aimed to confront individuals with their responsibilities towards a cause that goes beyond Palestine alone; it represents the honour of the Arab nation. Through humour and ironic contrasts, he vented the anger and tension that intensified as he observed his usurped land from afar. His art became a means of conveying messages of hope for an imminent change that was not afraid of silence. The power of the imagery, combined with poignant commentary, created a precise expression of the realities on the ground.

Naji Al-Ali's works resonate with the present and reflect an unchanging situation, as his cartoons continue to express the pain of Palestine and echo the concerns of the Arab nation, which has suffered humiliation and degradation. Through his drawings, the artist has succeeded in reflecting and articulating the tragedies of the Palestinian people, especially in light of the failure of all initiatives aimed at achieving peace in the occupied territories.

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