

Self-Fashioning and The Human in European Consciousness in Ahmed Saadawi's Frankenstein in Baghdad and Joe Sacco's Footnotes in Gaza

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Abstract

This paper, Self-fashioning and The Human in European Consciousness in Ahmed Saadawi's Frankenstein in Baghdad and Joe Sacco's Footnotes in Gaza, explores the intricate narratives of human rights, otherness, and orientalism from a postcolonial perspective. Through an analysis of Saadawi's and Sacco's works, the study showcases the representation of these themes in Frankenstein in Baghdad (2018) and Footnotes in Gaza, providing a critical evaluation of the interplay between human rights discourse, secularism, and the orientalist narrative in occupied countries.

The study incorporates Talal Asad's insights on secularism and the historical conception of humanity to analyse the portrayal of these concepts in the chosen literary works. In Frankenstein in Baghdad (2018), Saadawi illustrates Iraq's fragmented post-colonial identity through a character that embodies the shattered identities forged under colonial dominance. Meanwhile, Sacco's Footnotes in Gaza (2009) offers a multifaceted view of the Israeli colonization of Palestine, highlighting the human dimensions often disregarded in Western narratives.

This paper conducts a comparative analysis to illuminate how both works defy orientalist narratives and provide valuable perspectives on the intricacies of identity, humanity, and the impact of war. The study endeavours to connect theoretical frameworks with literary representations, thereby enriching our understanding of the political, cultural, and human rights concerns interwoven within these narratives. Ultimately, this research aims to present a fresh outlook on the East-West dichotomy in ongoing conversations about human rights and settler-colonialism.

Keywords

Human rights, otherness, orientalism, secularism, dehumanization.