

Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Egyptian Political Movies: Framing Social Justice in the Movie *Ahl El Kemma* (Cream of the Crop)

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Abstract

Nascent research is conducted on the advancement of discourse analysis in film to include different modes as images, sound and text. This study is focused on how images are embedded within texts in an audio-visual medium such as cinema to highlight political messages; it also seeks to broaden our understanding of politics beyond a relatively narrow conceptualization of the "political" through studying non-traditional discourses such as cinematic discourse. The aim of the study is to develop a systematic approach to film analysis to examine political nuances in film. The method adopted in this research is Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) focusing on embedding visuals, audio, and text in the film to examine how a political meaning can be conveyed through the interaction between those different modes. Drawing on the multimodal discourse analysis literature, different modalities will be studied to understand how those modes interact in the cinematic discourse. The film, "Cream of the Crop", is selected as an example to examine how political meanings in film can tackle the cinematic representation of the notion of social justice. This study contributes to the vast array of literature on the multimodal discourse analysis of films by focusing on political dynamics within them.

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Introduction

The process of filmmaking, from beginning till end is inherently political, starting from writing the screenplay till producing the movie, choosing the crew, editing the movie, showing of the movie and critique on the film. Cinema plays an important role in disseminating political ideas and has the ability to affect society and as well as the decision-makers. Filmmakers have a vision about political and intellectual issues and debates which are screened and visualized. In Egypt, there was a big discrepancy between two views of governmental policies either through approving governmental policies or criticizing them. Sometimes filmmakers approved governmental policies to propagandize them either based on convincement or as hypocrisy. Film is therefore a field of struggle between filmmakers and decision-makers. The main question this article seeks to address is: "how has a film been a site of contestation between the

ruling regime and opposition in Egypt around the definition of political concepts and values?" Films alert against the excesses in the society and warn against the danger of some violations and discrepancies in the society. Relying on the concept of social justice, different visions of several Egyptian artists will be displayed through this study

This study seeks to broaden our understanding of politics beyond a relatively narrow conceptualization of the "political" through studying non-traditional discourses as the cinematic discourse. Moreover, the study is a contribution to a new trend in political theory that recognizes film as an important source of political thought by excavating and elaborating upon the role of film in shaping political meanings that influence citizens and decision-makers. Films also can be considered as heuristic media to understand hidden truths shaping

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political existence. Moreover, films are one of the most accessible cultural products to the public across class, age, educational background, and location.

The argument of this study stems from the fact of studying political concepts as images and how the screen is a medium for artists to display their perception of political notions such as social justice. Social justice is a key concept addressed in political cinema and the portrayal of the dominant and the recessive classes in Egyptian society and the relation between classes has been a significant theme. All films can be viewed through the lens of class; hence, one is compelled to specify what role it plays in a particular kind of film ([Armbrust, 2011](#))

Social justice can be defined as just treatment, an equal share of resources, and satisfying the needs of the individuals. There are various definitions of social justice, therefore I will focus on a specific definition of social justice linking it to distributive justice that means distributing goods, services, jobs among the whole society according to their contribution to the society and what they deserve according to what they contribute. Social justice means distributing advantages and burdens equally. David Miller presented his definition of social justice by linking it to another concept which is "Desert". The concept of the desert means simply that the student who studies deserves high marks and the thief deserves punishment.

Other thinkers elaborated on the meaning of social justice or the justice of a social scheme as depending essentially on how fundamental rights and duties are assigned and on the economic opportunities and social conditions in the various sectors of society. The primary subject of justice is the way in which the major social institutions distribute fundamental rights and duties and determine the division of advantages and burdens. (Clayton and Williams: 2004) Social justice, defined simply, is assigning rights compatible with duties and defining the appropriate division of social advantages. In this article, social justice is linked to the concept of "desert" and the just distribution of goods and services and the article tackles how social justice as the desert is framed in the film "Cream of the Crop" ([Cream of the cropped movie: 1981](#)).

Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Political Movies

Political discourse is not confined to the institutional field of politics, parliamentary discourse, election campaigns, programs, and speeches but is open to other discourses either linguistic or visual discourses that can be considered political entailing power relations ([Machin and Van Leeuwen: 2016](#)) Film is a multimodal discourse and multimodality can be defined as the interplay of various auditory and visual semiotic resources that create meaning. Claims or arguments expressed by multimodal texts cannot be described as identical or equivalent to those expressed verbally. The arguments mentioned in the movie can be considered audio-visual arguments ([Wildfeuer: 2018](#)). The different modes interact together through the medium of film. Those audio-visual arguments can be direct or indirect as there are subliminal messages in movies. Multimodality means taking into consideration the different modes like images and text. Here the different modalities will be studied to understand how those modes interact in the cinematic discourse to send political messages.

The framework of multimodal discourse analysis can be used to analyze political meanings in cinematic texts as multimodal discourse analysis first and foremost analyses semantic meaning, thus it tackles the interplay of the various resources. Multimodality can be described as the integration of different semiotic resources in multimodal texts and communicative events via rhythm, composition, information linking, and modal density or intensity. The notion of multimodality emphasizes that a multiplicity of semiotic resources is used for the meaning-making process. Multimodality stresses that there is coordination and integration of meanings realized by the different co-present semiotic resources so that the final meaning is created from their co-integration ([Weimin: 2010](#)).

The methodological approach adopted is a multimodal discourse analysis of movies as movies are multimodal discourses. Discourse analysis of movies is different as it involves analyzing the composition, lighting, character orchestration, plot, angles, music and motion. The film seeks to send a message using different modes as décor, accessories, direction, composition, voice, music, editing, and

character analysis. Meaning construction in multimodal discourse is vital. Meaning in film, as is commonly assumed, arises out of the dynamic interplay of images, sounds, gestures, music, etc. ([Wildfeuer: 2012](#)) A number of questions could be raised based on this interplay: How does meaning come through in films and how it is possible to make sense of the various resources in movies? Films carry cogent political messages, sometimes inherent in the film either direct or indirect messages. The visual sphere should be understood as an essential part of the public sphere. Through film, the private sphere has become politicized and has gained a new social dimension. Messages are no longer kept in a literary bottle but are visualized and constantly imposed on the mind.

The trend in studying political discourse is through the analysis of images, but which is not entirely detached from, a mainly text-based discourse of political science ([Jeandré: 2016](#)) Additionally, the political image can reveal features of the political which the textual canon cannot or will not. Attending to the political image will ground political theory, represent the political more fully, and even serve as an occasion for philosophical reflection on the political by a wider audience than theorists ([Vandiver: 2016](#)).

Multimodal discourse analysis is a non-traditional method to analyze discourses. It can be differentiated from content analysis as it emphasizes the study of context along with the text. It is nevertheless a qualitative method focused on situating the text in light of the socio-economic context.

In the *Grammar of Visual Design* Gunther Kress & Theo van Leeuwen, the basics of multimodal discourse analysis are highlighted. The analysis is based on two main principles: First: Communication is multimodal by nature, Second: Every mode plays a role in the communicative process.

They describe three meta-functions to analyze movies. The first meta-function is the interpersonal function of language. It tackles the role of relationships of individuals in social interactions. For example: eye contact, body language and social distance are emphasized. The second meta-function, textual meta-function, visual modes are analyzed, the relation between foreground and background and the relation between colors in the image, the relation between elements are organized within the

cadre. The third meta-function, Ideational Meta-function focuses on the intellectual content to be delivered related to the intellectual framework of each person. It herein focuses on the content function of language ([Kress and Van Leeuwen: 2006](#)).

Politics in the Egyptian Cinematic Discourse during the 1980s

Cinema played a huge role in the Egyptian political scene throughout different historical junctures in Egypt. It was a tool to fight against colonialism and corruption. In the 1980's Egypt witnessed a new Realism movement linked to the post-1967 generation of filmmakers who participated in the student movement that questioned the corruption of new businessmen and the economic policies of Anwar Sadat. Significant directors from this movement such as Atef El Tayeb's *Sawwaq al-utubi* (*Bus Driver*, 1982), Mohamed Khan's *Zaugat Rajul Muhim* (*Wife of an Important Man*, 1987) (Al Kassim : 2017). and also Ali Badrakhan who directed several movies as *Al Go'a* (*Hunger*, 1986) and *Ahl El Kemma* ([Cream of the Crop](#), 1987). The period of the seventies and eighties of the twentieth century witnessed shooting several movies concomitantly with the adoption of open door *Infitah* policies by Sadat. Social justice was visualized and screened in various Egyptian movies at this time period as it was tackled as a vital theme during the adoption of those economic policies.

The Post-October war context of filmmaking was dominated by *Infitah* – the "Open door" economic policies of President ElSadat. Social fragmentations and materialistic excesses of *Infitah* became the primary political preoccupation of the latter half of the 1970s and the decade of the 1980s. The open-door policies were applied after "the October paper" was declared at that time that presented the new economic policy of *infitah* which initiated economic pluralism and that influenced the social and political arena afterward. A series of economic procedures were implemented in the years following the October war that made political pluralism an indispensable matter. Then according to the law (43) year 1975 the foreign and Arab capital law was issued, allowing the private sector to start the processes of export and import and the commercial authorization for foreign companies were issued and tax

exemptions were announced to encourage them to invest. As a result, capitalist development took place in some sectors and new classes raised and new interests that need to be represented in the political regime which contradicted with the policies of the socialist system itself. The philosophy of *infatih* is against the socialist policies that were in favor of narrowing of the gap between societal classes through transforming part of the income of rich classes to poor classes. *Infatih* is based on economic prosperity that grants an opportunity for each individual in the society to increase his/her income and in a large degree and compensating the poor and lower classes through increasing its income from the increase in the public income for the whole society and not through transforming of income between classes in the society. Economic prosperity at the same time leads to a great increase in the income of some of the groups in the society and this leads to the emergence of groups that have great economic powers and this should give it political power that suits with economic interests and power. President Sadat had a different vision of applying social justice that is different from the socialist policies adopted by Nasser since the application of the July socialist decisions. He envisioned that decreasing the governmental restrictions and control over the market, will lead to economic returns for the whole society.

"Cream of the Crop" (*Ahl El Kemma*) was one of the movies that portrayed Egyptian society at this critical moment. This film is considered one of the sharpest political films of the 1980s that discussed the tensions within the middle class and the lower classes. The film features smuggling and corruption that was an important theme at the era of *Infatih*. It stands as a political intervention that reflected the new political & socio-economic landscape. *Infatih* era was a new atmosphere with all the struggles and the film depicted corruption, deception, and valorization of the new rising classes by illegal means.

The film's message is direct that open-door policies will help in the rise of some marginalized people who live alone in an island to be part of the community opening their own shops. There is social exclusion of certain classes as the class of pickpockets. They live alone in an island and have similar traits and qualities. They are searching for living well and can work in any job to live. They shifted from pickpocket to smuggling because they will get good money.

They could make use of all the opportunities that was available to them during the era of *infatih*.

Framing Social Justice in Cream of the Crop *Ahl El Kemma*

"Cream of the Crop" is the translation of *Ahl El Kemma* and it expresses the film's plot. The film revolves around the struggle between classes in the society to be the best class or the people at the top or *la Crème de la crème*. The movie belongs to the movement of neorealist movies and socio-political movies and was inspired by *Infitah* open-door economic policies as mentioned before. The film is based on a story written by Naguib Mahfouz which is an imaginary story, but it seems to be based on a true story as it is quite related to the Egyptian society at that time. It offers a brilliant allegorical argument and it articulates with a series of Egyptian movies at that time alarming against the excesses and violations in the Egyptian society. Cream of the crop investigates the dynamics of the Egyptian society moving from socialism to open-door policies, at that time the Egyptian society witnessed severe and critical changes in the socio-economic system through the change of state policies. It dramatized the smuggling crisis in the society and the rise of low classes in the society along with the worsening of the middle class.

The Egyptian society at this historical moment was in the midst of change. It was easier to move from one social class to another. This trajectory was a movement of people from the working class to the middle class. Sociologists often describe this movement as *embourgeoisement* which can be defined as the process of moving up to middle-class. *Infatih* vulgarians were flourishing at the expense of hard-working citizens. Social justice coincides with the concept of social progress and how classes change in society. The idea of social change is clear in the movie through the rise of low classes by illegal means.

Social justice was a major theme and a high value sought by the different governments. In all political periods that Egypt passed through either through adopting socialist policies or capitalist policies, filmmakers still were occupied by the value of social justice and distributing rights and duties among the population. Some of them adopted socialist revolutionary thought that refused injustice while

other filmmakers thought that it can be a genuine part of the society that we can't revolt against and others thought that this thought doesn't achieve justice. The reason why "Cream of the Crop" movie was chosen as it was an alarm against the danger of applying the open door policies on the social system. There was a shift in state policies from socialism to capitalism that led later to privatization and changing the organizing laws of the economic activity and establishing some of the companies that are not owned by the state.

The Plot

Ahl El Kemma movie (1981) for the film director Ali Badrakhan is based on a short story written by Naguib Mahfouz which deals with problems that raised with applying open door policies. The film predicted social change in the society. It raises questions and discusses challenges tackling social justice. Several questions are raised: Who are the cream of the crop? How did those people raise in the society? Which paths did they take?

Filmmakers condemned corruption taking place in the public and private sectors especially the new corrupted forces in the society as the customs' employees, and how the government accepted their presence. The film attributed this corruption to the new economic policies that led to the rise of some classes with no education or knowledge or skills to the top of the society. The film portrays society as a pyramid or a hill and is divided into three main classes; the high class, the middle class, and the low class. People contest to be on the top. The new state economic policies led to a change the balance of forces in the society. As a result of *infitah* policies, a number of classes ascended, and they became part of the middle and higher classes.

The plot revolves around a young pickpocket who seeks to rise socially in no time making use of the *Infitah* atmosphere, in order to overcome his harsh economic circumstances and the restrictions of the government on pickpockets. He starts a rapid journey to become at the top of society through smuggling goods from the free zone in Port Said. The main conflict is between the cop and the thief when he knows about the love affair between his niece and this thief.

The main characters of the movie are:

Mohamed Fawzy, the cop, is known for his integrity and honesty. He is married and has two girls. His sister and niece live with them in a small

apartment after his sister's husband dies. He is very poor and doesn't have anything except his own salary. He fixes the chair in his house because he can't pay for the carpenter. Despite this fact, he reveals corruption and seeks integrity and approves the government policies, and works according to the laws and regulations. He is against rebellion and approves the status quo. He also refuses the marriage of his niece to several men, one of them is a decent man who is a graduate of the faculty of law but doesn't have money. The other is a smuggler who has been working as a pickpocket.

Al Noury, the pickpocket, criticizes the government and state leaders and seeks to rise to be from the cream of the crop. He becomes a smuggler and later he seeks to become an honorable guy. He saw no problem if he committed some mistakes and this will lead him to develop himself and reach a good position in the society. He also becomes able to marry *Seham*, the girl he loves. She's not rich, he doesn't marry her to develop in the society, like many other men do. But because she's honest, kind, educated, beautiful and honorable.

Mohamed Zaghloul, the major smuggler, appears to be a religious man and an honorable businessman. All the time, he is carrying a rosary to show that he is religious. When the pickpocket robs his wallet, this happens when he was in a mosque, so he seeks to go to mosques to appear religious. He donates money to charities. He has this pious look to appear religious but at the same time commits all the illegal actions.

Seham, lives with her uncle after her father died. Suddenly confronted with poverty when the father, her sole support, dies unexpectedly, the family's middle-class respectability and conformity can only be supported on the backs of her uncle. She couldn't continue college and had to work as a telephonist getting a small salary enough for transportation to go to work. She is treated in a bad way from her uncle's wife. She wants to get married as soon as possible to get out of her uncle's home. She is attracted to *Zaatar Al Noury* because he is a handsome wealthy guy whose money will feel her safe and protected.

The main conflict occurs between the three models: *Mohamed Fawzy*, *Zaatar Al Noury* and *Mohamed Zaghloul*, the cop, the pickpocket and the smuggler. First, *Zaatar Al Noury* cooperates with the cop by being able to get back the wallet of *Mohamed Zaghloul* then the cop asks *Zaghloul* for a job opportunity for *Al Noury*. The *Al Noury*

works with Zaghoul to be able to live well and quit pickpocketing. He then learns new skills to be a smuggler and ascend in the society. The debate is between what's legal and illegal. Though they were both illegal but after infitah policies, smuggling became legal. So the societal norms changed and this created a status of anomie in the society. Individuals are no longer consistent with the values and norms of the society as a whole and the line between individuals is no longer clear. There is an acute disjunction between the different goals and opportunities of the society members. Here there is a tendency in the society to accept deviant behaviors, the alternative ways which were illegal became legal and those means became the only means of achieving economic success (Ritzer and Goodman: 2004).

The first scene depicts an encounter between Zaatat Al Noury and Mohamed Fawzy, the pickpocket and the cop. The scene starts with each one accusing the other, the thief being accused of pickpocket and the cop being accused for working for the government which is a thief in another manner through imposing taxes on people and leaving the people with no money or good services. The conflict arises between the protagonist and antagonist that have different mindsets and opposing values and ideals.

Then Al Noury becomes a smuggler as previously mentioned. He loves Seham and wants to marry her. She accepts even after knowing that he is a smuggler as he represents salvation for her and the only way out of poverty. The crowd claps and is happy for this marriage between Seham, a symbol of bureaucracy, and Al Noury, a symbol for thieves and smugglers. The crowd is a symbol for the people who are clapping for the present and the future which is unknown. The cop at the end walks away against the mainstream of the people not knowing where he'll reach but he holds on his ideals. For Mohamed Fawzy, the cop, Zaatat El Noury is just a thief even if he looks as the notable gentleman or the notable bey *Al Beih El Wageh* as soon as he knows about the love affair between Zaatat and his niece Seham. When Seham knows that Zaatat is not merely a businessman but a pickpocket she leaves him but he tells her that she mustn't leave him as he didn't choose to be a thief but was driven to be a thief because of hunger. Mohamed Zaghoul, the smuggler then proposes to Seham but she refuses as she tells her uncle "*Zaghoul is a covered thief and Zaatat*

is an uncovered thief, that's the only difference between them" though her uncle is a bit skeptical about him he tells her there is no evidence against him and that he is a religious man who knows God. This shows how Egyptian society dealt with the issue of appearance as the most important thing is how people appear not what people are. Seham is very frank, she is in love with the thief and smuggler and she knows that marrying him is the only way out for her to live a decent life.

Ali Badrakhan mentions that he changed the end of the story *Ahl El Kemmaby* Naguib Mahfouz. At the end of the story, the cop forgives Zaatat el Noury for all his faults but Badrakhan on the contrary sees that this ending is not suitable to the current circumstances in Egypt. As though the cop is frustrated after he is sent to Assiut. In the last scene, Seham marries Al Noury because she believes that she is 27 years old and if she doesn't get married she'll struggle from spinsterhood, she is very realistic and realizes that the only way out of the economic deterioration trap is to marry the smuggler who announces later that he quitted being a thief and a smuggler. Seham moves in the last scene inside the market with a smile on her face. She looks back to her uncle as she knows he is correct and honorable, but she cannot continue in this struggle. The marriage of Al Noury to Seham shows how bureaucrats will ally with the new emerging class.

The film portrays class struggles and sheds light on social changes in society and how classes are shaped. Religion as a factor of social change is apparent as Mohamed Zaghoul, the smuggler, has a pious dressing and appearance. It is clear throughout the movie that it not only focuses on Al Noury as an individual but a class of pickpockets and a network of interests so one someone in the network rises, he takes his colleagues with him. The film also sheds light on a number of bad guys as *Shawkat* who is one of the big shots in the ministry of interior who abuses his position for personal interests, *Bishara Afendi* who is a custom employee known for taking bribes. The civil registrar who takes bribes, Galilawho is a pickpocket who now has a shop that sells foreign goods, embassies' employees who work in smuggling abusing their positions, policemen who abuse their positions to get apartments from the government with low prices, and state officials who ease smuggling of foreign goods.

Selection & Transcription of Data

Analysis of the movie will cover the following items: a brief description of the movie, discussing its' production, distribution, exhibition of the film, genre identification, brief synopsis of the film, and a detailed description of selected scenes of the movie. Transcription of movies is done through selecting several shots. Transcribing the selected shots is presented in a tabulated format. The transcriptions consist of several sections: Image track, audiotrack, place and time. Image track consists of: Visual Shot, Narrative description of the scene, Camera technique, lighting used, composition, framing, while in the audio track we will focus on the dialogue.

Description & Rationale of the Scenes Selected for Analysis

Scenes selected show the debates concerning social justice in Egypt. In this article, eight scenes have selected that show how the different modalities interact to send political messages.

Omitted Scenes by the Censorship Committee

The Ministry of Culture's *censorship authority* was founded to track any excesses in movies that affect national security in Egypt or if the film carries any values against the main values of the society either sexual messages, extreme religious views or political views. Mainly this censorship authority tracks the main three taboos in movies and traces if there are excesses related to: sex, religion and politics.

As for the "Cream of the Crop" movie, a censorship committee was formed to watch the movie after it was filmed. It called for omitting the following scene and this one was omitted. The scene is about Zaatat Al Noury who puts money in the drawer of one of the employees working in the identification card. This scene showed how employees are bribed in the civil registry. Furthermore, the censorship committee called for omitting the shot of informing Ezzat El Alily that he will be sent to Assiut as a result of revealing smuggling of goods without permission of importing foreign products ([Censorship authority report: 19/4/1981](#)). Also, they sought to delete the scene of the cop interrogating with the cop: when the cops get a phone call from a higher political officer that Zaghoul will be sent to another interrogator who will set him free.

Also, they called for omitting the sentence of *big shots* the influential people who finish the papers for you ([Censorship authority report: 21/4/1981](#)).

One of the censorship committee members wanted to omit the billboard of "years of prosperity ahead of us" as he considered it as sarcasm against the new economic policies adopted in Egypt. In addition to calls for deleting this statement. In a conversation between Al Noury and Mohamed Fawzy, Al Noury says "This is the different between me and them, they were able to ride on the boats of the government". They also called for erasing the sentence of Al Nouri to an assistant of Mohamed Zaghoul "What is the need of the customs, does the government in need of more money, or it's just decreasing the chances of poor people". Moreover, they called for deleting "You are an officer and you buy an apartment for us as other officers do" said by the cop's wife ([Censorship authority report . 26/3/1981](#)).

Findings

After analyzing the scenes, it can be clearly estimated that the director favored direct messages. In some movies, directors favored sending indirect messages by writing a phrase in the beginning or the ending of the movie that the events don't relate to the current circumstances in Egypt, or by changing the jobs and names of the corrupt people, tackling a topic in another time period not showing that this happens in the present. Directors sometimes favor this approach so as not to criticize the government directly and get into trouble. But as *Naguib Mahfouz* was a well-known novelist and had several official positions in the governmental associations, it was not easy to criticize him or repress his ideas and thought even if it contradicts the mainstream views of the government (Badrakhan: 18/2/2017).

As discussed above, the cinematic work of Ali Badrakhan proposes a form of audio-visual practice that attempts to analyze the concept of social justice. It is an intellectual & political endeavor to discover the dynamics of social stratification in Egypt including the rising classes. The film herein is an effective mode of political inquiry unraveling social justice. The film was coherent and carried a direct message without mentioning symbols. The filmic content unfolds to present political ideas. The film as a medium

reflects political ideas but differently from other media.

The importance of the movie stems from the fact that it tackles the relation between different classes and how social change takes place. The film transcends time as this social change happened several times in Egyptian history. It tackles the social changes in the Egyptian context and deals with a number of problems as: existence, injustice and corruption. It shows how certain classes are able to rise in the society and affects decision-making. The film shows that the big shots or the people in power abuse their position that they reached by illegal work and as a result of smuggling goods without paying customs.

Film in Egypt played a big role as a political discourse that was anti the hegemonic practices of the state or anti the state official discourse. Even though there are restrictions on the traditional political public sphere, cinema as a different audio-visual medium having different characteristics was able to send messages because of the different nature of its' discourse.

"Cream of the Crop" movie raised a series of questions: which social classes will ascend to the top? Which social classes will decline? Who deserves to be on top of the society? What are the market and state policies that will determine the cream of the crop? In this movie, Mahfouz's realism is at its best. He was able to pinpoint the social change taking place in the Egyptian society. It is a clear criticism to the open door *Infatih* economic policies. The film dealt with how new societal groups were able to acquire wealth and prestige. It criticized corruption which is done openly, and the government knows and could show the conflict between the new rising classes and the majority of people who are poor. The dominant classes are now the classes of *nouveau riche* or the people who acquired wealth newly. It tackled the rise of low classes in society by using illegal and unethical means.

The findings support the theory of multimodality and highlight the potential of the moving image to convey multi-layered meanings. The director uses the background to reveal some messages as he used the billboards in the opening scene. Also, the choice of location sends a meaning in some scenes as the scene between Al Nouri and Seham at Cairo tower.

Social Justice in the Aftermath of the 25th of January Revolution

Social justice was framed by linking it to the concept of desert showing that applying the new economic policies in Egypt led to a social change in the society. It showed also how social justice is linked to the distribution of goods and services. The best goods and services and privileges are not given according to people's education, honesty or inheritance of wealth but given to the *nouveau riche* or the new classes which acquired wealth normally through smuggling and theft. The film sheds light on various levels of power and hegemonic control within the discourse of film. It tackled the conflict between two classes, the *nouveau riche* and the rest of the Egyptian society. The *nouveau riche* class is comprised of smugglers and pickpockets which emerges in the society at the era of corruption and become "La crème de la crème" or the cream of the crop.

Social justice was framed as a zero-sum game as a contestation between two ideals and themes embodied in two characters; the thief who represents the new rising class willing to ascend in the society. It is a new class emerging from the socio-economic change. The movie ending showed that those policies will dominate and it will be hard to confront them as the cop is sent to Assiut, in upper Egypt because he is seeking to reveal the smugglers' policies while the government and decision-makers refuse this and approve the presence of smugglers.

Overall filmmakers at this era portrayed social justice through criticizing the policies that aimed at increasing social polarization and the gaps between the rich and the poor as the result of *infatih* policies.

Other films that tackled the same theme are "The Investigation is still ongoing" 1979, "The Bus Driver" 1982, "The Beast" 1983, "Love over the pyramid plateau" 1986, "Sons and Killers" 1987, "Kamilia and Hend dreams" 1988, "Factory Girl" 2014.

Throughout the 1980s and the 1990's, several movies tackled social justice especially with a focus on the effect of Open-door and neo-liberal policies on social class.

For example "The Bus Driver" (1983) tackles the idea of social change and consumerism focusing on the effect of *infatih* policies on a middle-class family. The protagonist is a bus driver who belongs to the middle class. His father

faces bankruptcy and the driver is struggling for a living. The film begins by the driver ignoring a thief robbing one of the passengers in his bus. The final scene is exactly the same scene as the opening scene but the difference is the reaction of the driver who catches the thief and is no more silent.

Love on the pyramid plateau (1986) addresses the problems facing the middle class educated youth to get good education, job opportunity, decent living and marriage. The main character is Ali, the faculty of law graduate, who wants to marry his colleague Ragaa but fails to get an apartment. His sister, who is well educated, gets married to an uneducated plumber who is very rich.

The sons and killers (1987) movie addresses the upbringing of youth in the era of *infitah* by showcasing different examples. One of them is a university lecturer who is against his fathers' behavior and actions and the other is typically as his father who is a gun dealer. The university lecturer is very decent and falls as a prey to the Islamist movements as he is very decent.

Two Girls from Egypt (2010) film discusses the effect of socio-economic policies on the rise of spinsterhood in Egypt.

The Factory Girl (2013) showcases class conflict within the factory. Hayam is a worker in a textile factory. She falls in love with her supervisor. He enjoys her attention but doesn't love her. She goes into a lot of trouble as a result of her pure love. She faced injustice because she's from a lower class. Hayam faced social injustice because of two main reasons, being poor and being a woman.

Nawara (2015) describes the dynamics of social changes in the aftermath of the revolution and the opportunities for youth. Every day Nawara goes to work. The camera shows her everyday trip from the poor alleys to the luxurious villa. She works for an ex-minister who was working with Mubarak. As a result of the revolution, the ex-minister and his family escape and leave the villa in the gated community for Nawara to take care of. Nawara finds it as an opportunity to live in a nice place and to escape poverty. But she was accused of theft with her fiancé and sent to prison. So the film tries to send a message that there is no way out of poverty and misery.

Those films showcased how social justice is manifested in Egypt and that it remains a call for Egyptians who chanted "Bread, Freedom and Social Justice".

Appendix

Shot



Short Description

The film starts with showing advertisements of new goods in the street. Those advertisements are on large billboards that are set in downtown Cairo and were shot in the real locations in Al Opera Square and Mohamed Farid Square. The billboards also carried slogans as "Years of prosperity ahead". (Badrakhan : 2016)

Dialogue

No dialogue. Camera cuts between the billboards and the cop's face. The cop is astonished while watching the the billboards. This amazement and the cuts signify his refusal to become an integral part of this society. Several shots in the same sequence show the confrontation between the cop and the new consumerist era in Egypt.

Lighting

Daylight

Composition

Focus on Mohamed Fawzy's face to show the amazement expression on his face.

Angles

Close up

Location

Al Opera and Mohamed Farid squares.

Shot



Short Description

The scene shows the power of Zaghoul in the market and how he uses all the illegal tactics and strategies to be the winner all the time. This character appears to be religious all the time as an asset to do business and impress people. He is putting the Holy Quran in his office in very clear place and the camera is emphasizing it. It is put on his safe. The scene is a conversation between Al Noury and Mohamed Zaghoul and Zaghoul thanks Al Noury for his help and gives him a good reward for that.

Dialogue

Lighting

There are nearly no shadows on the screen. The shot is very bright and clear which makes us feel that we clearly understand this character.

Composition

Zaghoul is sitting at his office. The Quran and the safe next to him add to his power and the way he is sitting also makes him appear powerful.

Angles

Close up

Location

Mohamed Zaghoul's office

Shot



Short Description

In this scene, Zaatat Al Noury meets Seham over the Cairo Tower and explains to her his ambitions and asks her about her ambitions.

Dialogue

Al Noury : I want to become one of the comfortable people *the big shots* who control the market with their hands.

Seham: I don't have this same ambition; I am not capable of that. All what I dream of is a reasonable living. A house with children. When I was young, I thought that the world will be beautiful, and I could achieve all what I want. Suddenly my father dies, and our circumstances deteriorate.

Zaatar Al Noury: And will it be important if you study ? Now education is not important, everything is moving with engaging in illegal and unethical activities.

Lighting

Cairo light in the morning. Talking in the day light is a good timing for Al Noury and Seham to speak frankly about what they aim at and their ambitions.

**Composition
Angles**

Medium shot.

The camera is focused on Al Noury .Seham is looking at him.

Location

Cairo Tower. Choosing this location which is the tallest structure in Egypt. Their presence on this tower signifies that they will try to be on top of the society.

Shot



Short Description

Mohamed Fawzy visits Al Noury in his new shop.

Mohamed Fawzy : With an astonished look ... All of this from where?! From commerce?!

Zaatar Al Noury: I am now from the big businessmen . Only one operation can shift you from one world to another world.

Dialogue

Mohamed Fawzy : And God repented to you and you shifted from pickpocket to smuggling.

Zaatar Al Noury : This is commerce and it is legal commerce . We are in the era of *infatih* now and we are working in the light and the government is standing there protecting us. I became an honorable guy and my new identification card proves this.

**Lighting
Composition
Angles
Location**

Daylight.

Medium shot

Zoom in and out on Mohamed Fawzi, Zaatar Al Noury and Galila .

Zaatar Al Noury's shop in Libya market.

Shot



Short Description

Zaatar Al Noury and Seham meet at the pyramids . The scene begins when Seham tells Al Nouri that I knew you were a pickpocket .

Dialogue

Zaatar Al Noury : I grew up and I found myself a young boy in the street . I didn't find in front me except fear and hunger. But when I found the opportunity I tried to reform myself for you.

Lighting

Seham : I hate you, I hate myself and I hate the whole world .

Composition

Daylight

Medium shot with two persons on the screen. Al Noury is holding a Zup bottle in his hand symbolizing consumerism and the entry of the new foreign goods to Egypt.

Angles

Medium shot

Location

Pyramids.

Shot



Short Description

Seham refuses to marry Mohamed Zaghoul because she knows that he is a smuggler and she is not in love with him . Her uncle, the cop wants her to marry him as there is no evidence that he is a thief.

Dialogue

Seham to Mohamed Zaghoul : I escape from a thief to marry a big thief ?! Zaghoul is an uncovered thief and Al Noury is a covered thief.

Lighting

The light is set on the actresses faces and the curtain also is a source of light in the frame.

Composition

The three ladies in front of Mohamed Fawzy. Mohamed Fawzy's wife and sister are backing Seham and agree with her decision to marry Zaatar Al Noury because Seham is afraid of spinsterhood.

Angles

Over the shoulder shot .This shot is framed from behind a person who is looking at the subject. The person facing the subject should usually occupy about 1/3 of the frame. This type of shot establishes empathy with whoever's shoulder it maybe as well as establishing the distance between the character and what he or she is observing.

Location

At Mohamed Fawzy's house.

Shot



Short Description

Seham knows that Al Noury was a pickpocket and a smuggler but she insists on marrying him and they meet at the free zone in port-said so he can show her the shop that he bought for her so that she can start her own business.

Dialogue

Zaatar Al Noury : Your uncle is poor because he is honorable but he thinks I am a criminal and an unethical person which is untrue . Princes and beys before they became princes and beys were thieves.

Seham : Oh ! This is a great idea!

Zaatar Al Nouri : I made from pickpockets property owners and this couldn't have taken place except with a revolution or a miracle.

Seham : These are great ideas .

Lighting

Daylight

Composition

A conversation between the actor and the actress. It shows dominance of Al Nouri over Seham because he is standing as a teacher and she is sitting listening.

Angles

Extreme long shot.

Location

Port Said free zone

Shot



Short Description

Mohamed Fawzy meets another police officer who informs him that he is sent to Assiut because the government doesn't want him to follow the

Dialogue	big shots or the smugglers. He was sent to this city in upper Egypt because he wanted justice to prevail and he was against smuggling and corruption. The Police officer: You are sent to Assuit . Mohamed Fawzy :is amazed and doesn't reply and just takes the paper with the decision that he sent to a very far area from Cairo, the capital . Away from his wife and young daughters.
Lighting	Dark shot with only few colors, white, grey and black.
Composition	Two actors on screen.
Angles	Over the shoulder shot
Location	At the police department

Tables Showing the Transcription of the Eight Scenes

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