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## **The Portrayal of the Effects of the Open-Door Policy (al Infitah) on Society as Shown by the Egyptian Cinema**

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The American University in Cairo  
School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

**THE PORTRAYAL OF THE EFFECTS OF THE  
OPEN-DOOR POLICY (AL INFITAH) ON SOCIETY  
AS SHOWN BY THE EGYPTIAN CINEMA**

A Thesis Submitted to the

Department of Journalism and Mass Communication  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

By Yara Hassan Shokr

Under the supervision of

Dr. Rasha Abdulla

May 2020

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To my parents: Thank you, for all your love and support. Thank you for never holding back a chance that would help me be a better person. Thank you for seizing every chance to support me, encourage me whenever am down, and for the tens of times you have taken care of my boys, so I can study or work. I love you with all my heart, God bless you my two lovely people.

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## ABSTRACT

The American University in Cairo

Thesis, Master of Arts, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication

Title: The Portrayal of the Effects of the Open-Door Policy (Al Infitah) on society as portrayed by the Egyptian Cinema

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The Open-Door economic policy introduced by El Sadat in 1974 did not only affect the Egyptian economy but had a direct impact on the Egyptian social hierarchy and social behavior as well. The portrayal of these effects on society as portrayed in the Egyptian cinema is the main focus of this study. The Egyptian filmmakers, as an independent voice, acted as a mirror to showcase the effects of this policy on the Egyptian society as they had witnessed it.

A list comprising a total of forty films was collected with the assistance of a number of filmmakers and cinema critics whom the researcher contacted in order to form the list of films to study besides delving into the literature. By using content analysis as a methodology, the researcher analyzed the framing of the main characters as depicted in Egyptian films produced from the mid-1970's to 2000, and that were presented as the consequence of *Al Infitah* policy on Egyptian society or (as being challenged by social and economic conditions).

## **Chapter 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The capacity the cinema has, as a medium, to portray our lives and narrate our stories makes it a powerful tool in mirroring our social reality. Filmmakers inject in their films their perceptions and visions that encourage the spectator to adopt those visions or be affected by them. The tools the cinema industry possesses from lighting, to editing to acting and sound effects, make the film an influential tool whose messages the viewers, in many cases, cannot escape. Portraying reality through the cinema lens is the aim of many filmmakers. Andre Bazin, the prominent French critic sees that the cinema has the ability to document human experiences in films. As a result; these films make the viewers an eyewitness for the stories and the events they have watched (Schoonover, 2012). This encounter with reality revives “humanism” in us in a way that changes our emotions to give us new points of view and new life perspectives (Schoonover, 2012). Since the introduction of the cinema in Egypt in the early 1900’s, using this medium to reflect on the reality of the society, its classes, surroundings, political conditions and economic nature was and still is highly practiced. Egypt as a country was among the first countries to craft cinema as an industry, and Egyptians produced generations of filmmakers that were very devoted to it and many of whom used the cinema to show their relationship with the Egyptian social, economic and political reality.

The French company Pathe constructed the first Egyptian cinema in 1906, (Shafik, 1998) and in 1932, the cinema industry in Egypt became stronger with the

introduction of sound films (Graham, 1997). The first national foundation for the film industry in Egypt (1934/1935) was led by the Egyptian economist Talaat Harb who founded Studio Misr (Shafik, 1998) aiming “to make Egyptian films about Egyptian subjects, literature, and aesthetics to be shown in Egypt” (Ghareeb, 1997, p.120). This act resulted in a major development in the Egyptian cinema, where, the following decade with the production of 345 films, a rapid movement ensued (Shafik, 1998). For the first time, the Egyptian cinema produced films that portrayed the true essence of the Egyptian culture and identity. As previously mentioned, for around half a century, most Egyptian plots and ideas had been influenced and dominated by the European culture then it is not essence of Egyptian identity as previously depicted (Shafik, 1998). Studio Misr gave the opportunity to a number of directors to address social and political pressing issues reflecting on the Egyptian reality such as women social status *The Sin*, Henri Barakat, political corruption *The Rebels*, Tawfik Saleh, Egyptian rural life *The Postman*, Hussein Kamal and *The Land*, Youssef Chahine, and the Egyptian military defeat in 1967 *The 1968 Trial*, Salah Abou Seif (Ghareeb, 1997).

This shift in the plots and the stories guided Egyptian filmmakers to try to portray the Egyptian social reality and their real living conditions. *Determination (Al Azima)* by Kamal Seliem was then produced marked as the first Egyptian film to show Egyptian real living and social conditions (Shafik, 1998). This film focused on real Egyptian social problems. Seliem depicted a problem, which many young Egyptians faced at that time: the choice between government jobs, or free enterprise. The film was not only characterized by its important subject matter, but also by an

astounding understanding of the function of the cameras and of the art of editing. The camera revealed the day-to-day problems, emotions, dreams and longings of the common man (El Naccashe, 1968). Ever since, social problems have become a main narrative plot in many Egyptian films

During the 60's, three major events influenced the Egyptian cinema: the nationalization of the Egyptian cinema in 1963 by Nasser's regime (Shafik, 1992), the establishment of the Egyptian High Cinema Institute that was mainly founded to graduate a new skilled generation (Gaffney, 1987) and the 1967 Egyptian defeat to Israel in Sinai. Each of those factors played a role in shaping the films' stories and the filmmakers' ideas and visions.

The June 1967 defeat created a common sense of failure among Arabs in general, hence Arab filmmakers found in filmmaking the right salvation to channel those feelings of disappointments and sorrow (Bouزيد, 1995). As a reaction to this military defeat, a cinema movement was formed in 1968 under the name of "Cinema Al Shabab" or The Youth Cinema and was also known as "The new cinema" to formulate a new identity of Egyptians. This organization, which gathered around 400 filmmakers and technicians from the industry, aimed at creating an authentic character for the Egyptian cinema. The filmmakers wanted to create a new cinema deeply rooted in contemporary Egypt. They refused the former control of the Egyptian cinema (authorities and wanted to reawaken the public and bring them to share their fight (Hennebelle, 1976). According to Samak (1977) this new cinema movement announced the following in its doctrine: "What we need is an Egyptian cinema, a cinema that records and studies the movement of the

Egyptian society and analyses its new social and political relations; a cinema that would discover and reveal the meaning of life for the individual in the midst of these relations” (Samak, 1977, p.14).

This newly formed fresh group of filmmakers faced and was challenged by extraordinary political and economic conditions in the 70’s that had resulted from the Sinai defeat in 1967 (Farid, 1992). It was hard for young Egyptian in general to live, fall in love and marry as there were no affordable apartments to live in, and nor good means of transportation to use. After the defeat, another series of events followed and was just as massive: the chaotic events and the protests of 1972 carried out by the students of the Cairo University against El Sadat rule and management of the 1967 military defeat, the Israeli war in 1973 and the peace treaty in 1977 (Farid, 1992). Then there was the introduction of the Open-Door-Policy (also known as *Al Infitah* policy, and translated to openness), in reference to Egypt being opened up to the West with a more liberal economy during El Sadat’s regime in 1974. This policy brought a new social and economic order that the filmmakers found to be a good means through which to react and express the social reality of the Egyptians.

According to Egyptian ex-President Mohamed Anwar El Sadat, “the economic policy of *Al Infitah* allowed the merchant sector of the middle and upper class to prosper, which resulted in hardship for the other sectors of the population” (Gaffney, 1987, p.69). Dramatic changes that were treated by cinematographers were taking place in the social structure (Gaffney, 1987). The new generation of Egyptian filmmakers, at that time, had to tackle the consequences of *Al Infitah* in



their films, which fought “materialism, egotism, and corruption” (Shafik, 1992, p.143), especially that El Sadat forbade the national press from showing any negative consequences of his economic policy, and gave orders that only positive achievements be shown. This has made films a strong tool of expression towards this policy (Hassan, 2006).

For instance, in the film entitled *Boat House Number 70 (Al Awama 70)*, Director Khairy Bishara refers to the period of the 70’s with all its dark sides through Ahmed Al Shazly, the protagonist. Al Shazly is a product of the general feeling of defeat that the Egyptians are shown in the film living after 1967. He has an identity crisis, is not sure of what codes of ethics to adopt and what culture to belong to or what to love and what cause he should rally to. This is due to fears of the futures’ uncertainties and the bad living conditions of those years (Farid, 1992).

This wave of reflecting on the new Egyptian state through the cinema continued with a series of films that closely detected the new social and economic order the 70’s brought to Egypt, especially with everything that the new proposed economic policy of El Sadat brought to Egyptian lives. Egyptian filmmakers documented the consequences of this phase consciously and were stills committed to the codes and doctrines of their Youth Cinema movement. In the following section of the Literature Review, a brief background on *Al Infitah* policy with its social and economic consequences will be listed. Later chapters will show how the Egyptian cinema portrayed Al Infitah policy and to what extent it was able to show those effects in comparison to the “reality”.

## **Chapter 2**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### **Open-door policy portrayal and the Egyptian cinema**

##### **Open-Door-Policy**

In one of the Egyptian ruling party conferences held in Aswan in January 1981, Mohammed Anwar El Sadat, the Egyptian President then, referred to the opponents of his economic “Open-Door Policy” as “parrots.” who continue to repeat the negative aspects and magnify the drawbacks of his policy without really comprehending the strategy and the benefits of this policy. He seemed confident of his decision to have the country adopt this economic model in 1975, a model quite different from what most Egyptians used to live in and believe in just one decade earlier. They were out of Gamal Abd El Nasser, a model that rallied for nationalism. Gamal Abd El Nasser, -El Sadat’s predecessor- had adopted a model which was a model of industrialization, of self-sufficiency discourse, of long speeches criticizing the West and its products and systems of values. It was also a time of defeat, a military defeat that challenged Abd El Nasser’s ideology altogether for many. The 1967 defeat came out as a living proof that maybe we, as Egyptians, are not very competent; maybe we are not what the political leading bodies were trying to make us believe we are.

In his article, from “National Bourgeois Development to Al Infitah: Egypt 1952-1992”, Ibrahim G. Aoude explains the differences between Nasser’s economic policies and those of El Sadat’s. For Nasser, the state had to be the main actor or player in the economy. Articles 117 and 118 (1961) or what Nasser named

the “National Chart” (1962), gave the state all the power to control the industries and nationalize any company they wished to. Those actions were designed mainly to empower the public sector, pursue capitalism, and improve the social status of the “national bourgeois” class that was loyal to Nasser and his regime. When Nasser nationalized foreign interests and over 227 companies, those benefits were mainly offered to his loyal entourage. This nationalization policy helped in increasing the Growth Domestic Product (GDP) from 13% to 18% in only 5 years. But the country’s political and economic status was challenged by the Israeli war over Sinai, and that made Egypt lose its air force in 3 hours and parts of its land to the Israelis. The financial losses that came with the war forced Egypt to enter an “attrition” war. Besides, due to the Israeli occupation, the revenues of the Suez Canal stopped and the Egyptian oil production declined by half.

Hence, the implementation of the Open-Door-Policy was El Sadat’s solution to the economic drawbacks he had inherited from Nasser strong claim without a source. The country had just come out of a war with Israel in 1973, followed by a peace treaty that acted as a closer step to the West and Westernization. Since 1971, El Sadat regime had started to implement economic reforms to attract foreign investments. Article 65 of the Constitution gave powerful guarantees to foreign investors without much concentration on their legal nature or the nature of the project (Abd El Khalek, 1981). Since then, El Sadat’s regime was keen to pass laws and codes to support foreign trade and importing to the fullest as well as encourage foreign investments profoundly. This occurred until 1974 when the “October Paper”, or what was later known as *Al Infitah* policy was introduced.

The “October Paper” suggests that Article 43/1974 shall “cure” the country of its degrading economic situation caused by military spending by opening the door to direct and private investments either from Arabs or foreign parties (Abd El Khalek, 1981). The Paper, consisting of seven main pillars encouraging and favoring the giving of unconditional incentives to foreign investments opened the door, for the first time, to the private sector. According to Article 3 of the law, the door was opened to the private sector to engage in “almost every field: industry, mining, energy, tourism, transportation, desert reclamation and cultivation, housing and urban development, investment companies, banking and insurance, reconstruction, contracting, and establishing consultancy firms” (Abd El Khalek, 1981, p.398). This paper also authorized the establishment of free trade areas where international companies became the main investors in “housing, oil, and tourism” (Aoude, 1994, p.11) and a number of foreign banks were introduced in Egypt (Aoude, 1994).

El Sadat announced in 1977 that the government would be ending subsidies on flour, rice and cooking oil, abiding to the World Bank’s conditions to stop the government’s basic food subsidization and cancel the public sector employee pay increases. These conditions were placed after El Sadat reached out to the World Bank to grant the Egyptian government a loan to support the economy (Abdel-Sattar, 2013).

Riots took place in a number of Egyptian cities, carried out mainly by the lower socioeconomic classes who attacked shops and targets that represent *Al Infitah* businesses. They shouted slogans such as “Thieves of the Infitah, the people

are famished” (Palgrave, 2019, p.138). The riots, which were later referred to as the “bread riots,” lasted for two days and resulted in the “killing of 160 people, where the government quickly deployed the army, and the reinstitution of the subsidies” (Palgrave, 2019, p.138).

### **Effects of *Al Infitah* Policy on Egypt**

In his book *What Ever Happened to the Egyptians* (1994), Egyptian economist Galal Amin said that Egypt suffered a “fever” of consumption after Al Infitah policy and quickly adopted one big “marketing culture” after experiencing a slow market growth in the 60’s, as Nasser’s regime provided the public with the essential commodities at lower prices, which toned down the need to be wealthy in general. Amin stated that more shops started to be built under residential buildings in Cairo and citizens started to dig for fortune to be able to cope with the rise in prices. This drive even heated up more by “the gradual reduction of government intervention for the protection of lower-income groups, and the flow of unprecedented wealth into the country from remittances from the Egyptian work force working abroad. The market system heated up and the drive to make a fortune by whatever means intensified.” (p. 171).

Amin also explained that the desire to be wealthy came with an ethical price tag many Egyptians were now willing to commit crimes and illegal actions for one more plot of land or another furnished flat. He said that teachers would charge their students dearly for private lessons, that public beaches, sporting clubs, Nile banks and parks became privately-owned which made them accessible only to those who

could afford to pay the fees. Hence, everyone seemed to strive for more and more wealth (Amin, 1994).

The desire for wealth and greed made many Egyptians denounce the concepts of nationalism, social solidarity and socialism. National products or locally manufactured products were threatened by the imported goods, which had reached more than 55% of the total goods in the market in 1975 (Salama, 2002). Besides, in spite of the fact that *Al Infitah* policy opened the gates for foreign investors to invest in big projects, and thereby increasing the employment rate, statistics showed that the workers and employees working for *Al Infitah* projects consisted only of 4% of the total labor force (Salama, 2002).

The emergence of a new social class consisting of the less educated members who worked in trade and in smuggling goods forced the society to accept the new social order and even introduced a new slang. Examples include the name of “Rabbit” for a million pounds. The name of “Rabbit” was chosen because rabbits reproduce a lot and the goal now being to produce more and more cash, “Pig” was used for a big car and “Pack” for money (Salama, 2002).

Another impact of *Al Infitah* policy on the Egyptian economy was allowing the establishment and operation of private banks. This constituted a financial reform that introduced foreign and private banks to the Egyptian market, whereas previously, in the 60’s, Nasser nationalized all banks and merged them into four major banks: The National Bank of Egypt, Banque Du Caire, Banque Misr and Bank of Alexandria. These controlled most of the funding of the projects, mostly national projects under the public sector, and followed strict lending regulations

(Moore, 1986).

This monetary reform allowed foreign banks to operate freely in the Egyptian market as they had the authority to choose which projects to support financially, and whom to lend money to without coordinating with the state on the importance of those projects to the Egyptian economy. This basically meant that any one can borrow money and any project can be financed as long as the bank managers agreed. By the mid 1983's, a total of 40 commercial banks had been established as joint ventures under Investment Law of 1974, together with 30 investment banks of which 20 were branches of foreign banks. Fifty-four percent (54%) of the money flow of those banks went to pay for financial services and private businesses and only 23% went to the Egyptian industry (Moore, 1986). Those powers that were given to the private banks allowed their managers power and political influence in Egypt. These managers were now active actors in the Egyptian credit system and the dollar exchange rate, since they could control the money flow as well as the loans for investors. This made private sector projects flourish over the public sector ones where "the state's raw economic power was being converted into tangible profits" (Moore, 1984, p.648).

Other Egyptians, especially those who worked abroad, started to lose faith in the banking services and preferred to invest their savings with new investment companies that started to flourish in 1985. Those companies were privately owned and did not work in accordance with the state's monetary regulations. They offered the investors high interest rates that, in no time, became a good alternative for people who wanted more money with no effort or real labor. This put pressure on

the Egyptian economy because of the absence of the necessary cash flow that national projects needed from the banks (Salama, 2002).

### **Portrayal of Al Infitah Policy in Egyptian Cinema**

In her book, *Portraying Social Success in Egyptian Cinema During the Seventies* (2006), Amina Hassan listed the social and economic effects that the Egyptian society had to deal with because of *Al Infitah* policy as shown in the cinema. She focused mainly on what would make a citizen successful in coordination with the new social and economic order. She analyzed three films that dealt with *Al Infitah* in the 70's: *Whom shall we shoot? (Ala Man Natlek Al Rosas)* (1975), *Mouths and Rabbits (Afwah a'la Araneb)* (1977), and *People at the top (Ahl El Kema)* (1978).

The three films related “success” only to “wealth”, even if the protagonists in those films had to commit crimes or illegal acts in order to reach their goals. Hassan explains that the social order that *Al Infitah* brought to Egypt challenged the ethical codes of Egyptians. For an Egyptian to be able to deal with inflation, with the consumption rate and high living standards, he could get involved in any act to be able to survive economically and socially. “Success” in these films became an individualistic act that was solely connected to the codes *Al Infitah* policy brought to the Egyptian market and was quite apart from the collective social welfare of the public. It became important for the individual to focus on his own self and well-being. Protagonists were depicted as selfish and unethical individuals to move upward socially in order to reach a better standard. Those protagonists later formed



what Hassan calls a “parasitic society”: a society consisting of smugglers, of real estate holders, of feudal lords who had, unethically, benefitted from *Al Infitah* open trade policy (Hassan, 2006).

Hassan suggested that films dealing with the *Al Infitah* period showed the high level of corruption, the poor means of transportation, the rise in consumption, the high inflation rate, and the high rate of emigration that the Egyptians were living through. These conditions helped, as well, in the formation of a new imperialistic social class, the “newly rich”, or “nouveaux riches,” that was keen to control lower social segments of the population and had the full support of the state because they helped in providing jobs and a living to the public (Hassan, 2006).

The new rich social segment is, as Malak Zaalouk explained, “a merger between fractions of the old traditional bourgeoisie who were restricted under Nasser and were once again revived with the open door policy, of fractions of the bureaucratic bourgeois born with the state sector under Nasser, and finally of businessmen performing new activities, and stepping in atlas of investment with the least risk and highest profits, namely commercial agents” (Shafik, 2005, p.278). This social class actually changed the structure of the cinema’s audience in the 70’s as a new class of “rich workers” and skilled craftsman substituted middle class families (Gaffney, 1987). This new audience eventually changed the style of actors starring the films and their appeal to suit their taste. According to Gaffney (1987), the stars were no longer the handsome men or idol figures but became fitting to the “average men walking down the street” (p.63).

In 1986, a study was conducted monitoring 10 films produced between 1980

and 1984 tackling *Al Infitah*. In it, the researcher found that the character most depicted to show the influence of this policy on Egyptians was usually a middle class highly educated citizen challenged to keep up with the new upper style of living that *Al Infitah* policy introduced in the country. The researcher found that filmmakers found in this character or protagonist a good example to clearly show the impact of this policy. These characters are usually shown as torn between their own codes of ethics and their desire to keep up with their social status i.e. in education or the public sector and wealth and they would have to either give up and follow the current practices or hold on to their principles and remain poor (Al-Nahhas, 1986).

In his book, *The Neorealism in Egyptian Cinema*, Samir Farid, a well-known Egyptian cinema critic, listed a number of films tackling *Al Infitah* consequences on the Egyptian society. For example, *Al Infitah* period is represented as a supermarket in one of the films of director Mohamed Khan. This film, as well, has the same title. It is a description of the effects the petrodollar had on the cultural life in Egypt, where everything comes with a price tag and can be sold or bought such as, even, education, love and ethics (Farid, 1992). In this film, Khan emphasized the effects of the consumerist culture, generated by *Al Infitah*, on how people speak, dress, and behave. He showed how wealth became a value in itself apart from education or ethics (Farid, 1992).

A series of films directed by Khan condemned the post-*Infitah* Egyptian society. For example, in *Dinner Date (Maweid Ala Al Ashaa'a)* (1981), the female protagonist seeks divorce from her husband, a wealthy businessman who had made

use of the open-door economic reforms and who had adopted an unethical code of honor and even had a readiness to kill. In *Gone and Never Came Back (Kharag Wa Lam Yaooud)* (1984) Khan portrayed the Egyptian countryside as a haven of peace where the true pure Egyptian culture flourished whereas Cairo's *Al Infitah* society was stigmatized with noise, consumerism, and corruption (Farid, 1992).

Atef El Tayeb, an Egyptian director, was concerned with analyzing the post *Al Infitah* period through his films. In *Love by the Pyramids (Al Houb Fawk Hadbet Al Haram)* (1986), Al Tayeb describes Egypt as a jungle where everything is primitive and is permitted and where everyone is an opportunist exploiting consumerism even at the expense of his or her physical desires, and where education is not a necessity and where the most important thing is wealth (Farid, 1992). In *The Master Beat (Darbet Maaleim)* film (1987), Al Tayeb tackles the corruption generated by *Al Infitah*, as we see a powerful businessman trying to save his son from execution in a murder case by bribing the judges and the police (Farid, 1992).

In *People at the top (Ahl Al Kimah)* (1978) film, directed by Ali Badrakhan and written by Naguib Mahfouz, a businessman is featured making his fortune by smuggling imported goods during the open-door policy phase in the 70's. According to Gaffney (1987), the film focuses on the changing social values and strategies for upward social mobility, and on gaining money and power regardless of legitimacy. "In this new moral order, white-collar crime is more acceptable than theft" (p.18). The film shows that under the current economic circumstances, it is impossible to lead a comfortable life without resorting to illegal activities (Gaffney,

1987).

In his film *The Wretched (Al Saa'alik)* (1985), Dawood Abd El Sayed, describes the icons of the open-door-policy phase in Egypt as “wretches”. The film explores the effects of the open-door-policy on the Egyptian citizen and his relationship with the society. “The majority of films presenting that theme linked the nouveaux riches to criminal practices and dismissed them morally by exposing their materialism and lack of the traditional sense of community... The end of the movie suggests that greed resulting from wealth will destroy friendship and solidarity” (Shafik, 2005, p.278).

*Sleepless Eyes (Ayoun La Tanam)* (1981), the plot focuses on the conflict among family members regarding the ownership of a workshop (property conflict). It also refers to the upward social mobility among technicians after the open-door policy was adopted and the shift of power from landowners to the technicians who are trying to climb up the social ladder (Farid, 1992).

Some filmmakers also used fantasy to express their reaction to this policy, and did not limit themselves to the topic of social drama. For example, in his film *Fangs (Anyab)* (1981), Director Mohammed Shebl named the social climbers and the bad role models such as plumbers, butchers, technicians, and landlords as Dracula’s who live on sucking the blood of others (Farid, 1992). For instance, in a scene where Dracula explains why he flew to Egypt to steal as much as he could since Egypt is a chaotic country with so much traffic and so many people, the director shows real-life scenes from the chaotic and crowded Egypt and the daily lives of Egyptians (Farid, 1992).



## Chapter 3

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### Framing Theory

Framing theory will be used to guide this research question. This study is about analyzing characters created by the filmmakers to portray the effects of Al Infitah policy on society, which is what framing theory is about. It is about extracting a part of reality and packaging it in a way that suits the filmmaker's belief in an attempt to impact the audiences' perception about this reality. To frame an issue is to present its "essence" in an organized manner (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989 as cited in Vreese, 2012). According to Entman (1993), frames can be examined and identified by "the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotype images, sources of information and sentences that provide clusters of facts and judgments "designed" to reinforce the theme under study" (p. 52).

A media frame has four main functions, which are to "define a problem, specify its causes, convey moral assessments and endorse remedies" (Entman, 2010). In his book *Frame analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*, the Canadian sociologist Erving Goffman introduced framing theory as frames that help individuals structure their thoughts which were first built by the context of the media frames they were exposed to and hold them in one unit (Crossman, 2019). It is argued that the first to introduce the framing theory is Gregory Bateson in 1972. He defined and focused on psychological frames as a "spatial and temporary

bounding of set of interactive messages” (Bateson, 1972, p. 197) that operates as a form of metacommunication (Hallahan, 2008). Frame as a word can be used to describe two things: a frame in communication, a media frame that presents an event in a particular form and a cognitive frame which the individual uses to evaluate a particular event in his mind (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

On that basis, framing became an important technique for people working in the media industry. It is a powerful tool in the hands of those who are keen to shape the public opinion realm of thoughts and actions; as to guide people on “how” to think about a particular subject. Despite this, in a number of studies, framing is used interchangeably with agenda setting. However, the main difference is the concern with salience. Agenda setting is concerned with what topics should be addressed in the public agenda, while framing is concerned with how to present these topics (Vresse, 2005). While producing their films and featuring their characters, filmmakers go through many choices on how to present the characters, how to have them speak, act, behave, as well as on the usage of words, the choice of background music, and the choice of the right lighting. All of these are techniques that the filmmakers use and select to frame their stories.

Scholars seem to weigh what constructs the framing process differently. For example, Gitlin (1980) defines frames as “persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation of selection, emphasis, and exclusion by which symbol handlers routinely organize discourse” (p.7). A study in 1992 conducted by Neuman, Just, and Crigler suggested that media frames “give the story a “spin,” taking into account their organizational and modality constraints, professional

judgments, and certain judgments about the audience” (p.120).

Media frames help in shaping public opinion. They are an extension of agenda setting, where some scholars place framing as the second level of agenda setting (Scheufele, 1999). This is a complicated process, which helps parties “sell” their ideas and ideologies to the public. In their book *“Image Bite Politics,”* Maria Elizabeth Grabe and Erik Page Bucy (2009) mention “through message-shaping and image-orchestration, employed with increasing sophistication since the introduction of television, politicians and their advisors continually battle journalists for frame control” (p.97). Describing politicians as “battling” journalist over frame control is not an overstatement. The parties that take part in shaping and constructing the media devices of framing make it a competitive arena for those parties in order for them to win the lead.

Besides politicians, there are a number of actors, such as social actors, organizations and social movements, who “sponsor” frame-shaping as well (Beckett, 1996; Gasmo & Modigliani, 1989). The control over the media frames is an indication of power because this control “registers the identity of actors or interests that compete to dominate the text” (Carragee & Roefs, 2004, p.7)

In addition to this sign of power, through media frames, interested groups can rally for their objectives; mobilize for their causes, and accredit their presence and influence in reality (Carragee & Roefs, 2004).

There are five elements that journalists consider during the framing process, which are: “social norms and values, organizational pressure and constraints, pressures of interest groups, journalistic routines, and ideological or political



orientation of journalists” (Scheufele, 1999).

But is the framing selection an objective process? Given all the above-mentioned factors, the answer is a clear “NO”. Edelman (1993) says that what builds the frame is “ideology and prejudice” (p.232). Hence, films, as a medium of expression, are full of personal biases injected by the filmmakers’ beliefs and ideologies. So, we cannot evaluate the frames used to show *Al Infitah* policy as nonnegotiable facts but as one of the aspects of the reality that Egypt lived and is still living today.

### **When Is a Frame Effective?**

There are dozens of news reports and media frames that media users are exposed to on a daily basis. A frame becomes effective when it is able to shape and change the perceptions of the media users. Many factors that help in achieving this target can be illustrated as follows: “A frame’s ability to dominate the news discourse depends on complex factors, including its sponsor’s economic and cultural resources, as well as its sponsor’s knowledge of journalistic practices” (Reyan et al, 1998, p.176). This means that the frame builders’ resources, skills, and social status are important factors deeply in the effect of the frame on the audience. Besides, the repetition of the media frame, its approach, its moral standard and emotional appeal are a set of factors that play a key role in the effect of the media frame (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

For a framing effect to happen, it must be stored in the individuals’ memories and retrieved in their casual discussions and social discourses (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Besides, the memory should be accessible where framing can work by

having people to believe that those thoughts they acquired for the media are strong and can be applied in reality (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

The recipients' personal traits, education, and socio-economic background also affects the success of the framing as well. For example, several studies found that individuals with less general knowledge are more prone to framing effects, since their thoughts are easier to challenge and shape (Kinder & Sanders 1990, Haider-Markel & Joslyn 2001). Other studies argue that knowledgeable individuals can still be prone to framing effects because they are better able to comprehend the media frame (Druckman & Nelson, 2003). Moreover, individuals with strong beliefs recognize information react with the information that best reconcile with their original beliefs." according to Chong and Druckman (2007). As a result, knowledgeable individuals tend to be more motivated to react and more engage with media frames, where they use the media frames they have been exposed to into their daily lives' discourses (Lodge & Taber, 2000).

Frame producers use the information they have collected to make their frames strong enough to create an impact on the users. When individuals are able to retrieve them from their memory while discussing similar issues in their daily lives, this is a sign of success of the impact that this frame made. Frame accessibility can last for a long time even within competitive thoughts and frames depending on the individuals' behavior and personal traits and on how this frame appeals to his/her own ideas and beliefs.

## **Priming Media Stereotypes**

The framing which media producers do while packing a media story can prime the receiver's cognition to interpret the message, in accordance to what they are constantly exposed to by the media in their daily lives. Priming is the effect of media text on people's judgments and behaviors (Bryant & Oliver, 2009). When media producers portray racial and social groups and gender, in a constant form, the media receiver shall adapt these presentations and later stereotype those groups. Stereotypes are standardized conceptions of people, primarily based on an individual's belonging to a category (usually race, nation, professional role, social class, or gender)" (Schweinitz, 2011, p. 5).

Lippmann (1992) argued that stereotypes are produced by culture that generations pass to one another, where they use stereotypes to minimize their definitions of their surroundings. Hardin & Higgins (1996) sees that "stereotypes exist in part because they are based in social consensus" (p. 61). This social consensus can be primarily built from the frequency and the intensity of the exposure of certain messages that later can affect the cognition of individuals (Bryant & Oliver, 2009).

In that sense, the way filmmakers frame their characters, class, and social groups can prime people's thinking into evaluating and defining them in accordance with the media frames and stereotypes they are presenting them through. Also, it is noted that framing itself as a process is based on selection that can lead to prejudice while showing facts and phenomena, hence the representation of social groups in cinema can be subject to the filmmakers very own interpretations that

they believe, which later shall lead the viewers to stereotype them in accordance to their portrayals in films.

### **Media Framing of Public Policy**

According to Baumgartner & Jones, (2009); McCombs, (2005) and Crow & Lawlor (2016)), “the media is a tool to measure policy agendas.” To frame a political strategy and tackle an issue or an event, media makers usually use issue-specific frames. An issue-specific frame focuses on a certain topic that filmmakers try to promote (Vreese, 2000). Media actors are presented as “powerful gatekeepers” who decide what needs to be added and what needs to be excluded from the agenda of the public (Graber, 2006, cited in Crow & Lawlor, 2016).

The elites of any society usually frame their surroundings, whether they are the political, economic and specific realities, through different media outlets, to encourage the public to behave and act in a certain way (Entman, 2010).

Baumgartner and Jones (1993) make the argument that the changing nature of policy images, shaped by elites in the media, leads to policies change rapidly and dramatically (Crow & Lawlor, 2016). What is meant by “frame” is the precise choice of a package, the wordings, visuals and quotes, which the elite wishes to let the public think about while tackling any issue that might be of public interest.

Hence, in this study the elite in any given society can include their educated filmmakers who have got a social vision and are provided with the needed tools and technical backgrounds to use their’ stories to convey social, economic and political realities in their films.

Public policy can be understood through a “social construction” of the population who can be perceived positively or negatively (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). This social construction is made of shared characteristics between a group of people in a society and “the attribution of specific values, symbols, and images to those characteristics” (Schneider & Ingram, 1993, p.34). According to the shift of frames that happens to the framing in any social segment, public policy shifts as well. For example, in a study conducted in 2013 to detect the framing of the poor in the US media from 1960 to 2008 and investigate how this framing impacts the US poverty public policy, Max Rose and Frank R. Baumgartner found that when frame shift, change of policies happen. For example, when the poor are framed first as dependent and then as defiant the public policy shifted from generous to stingy (Rose & Baumgartner, 2013).

The media impact the policy process in two ways: first, by highlighting topics of importance to the public, and second, by “framing and constructing narratives” to give sense and meaning to any given policy (Crow & Lawlor, 2016). A narrative consist of a setup with a set of characters such as that have or play different roles in a plot that usually has a moral or a message (Crow & Lawlor (2016). Governing happens through a direct and an indirect relationship with the media (Arnold, 1990). “Direct” refers to how the media covers policies and strategies proposed by political actors, and “indirect” refers to how it limits the options for the policy makers (Arnold, 1990). This relationship between the media and policy-making acts as the basis for the formation of public policy opinion. The process of media

framing (as a practice) helps in guiding the public policy's direction (Rose, & Baumgartner, 2013). Hence, media analysis is significant in the process of policy-making.

However, controlling media frames does not necessarily guarantee control over public opinion. Many of the studies conducted to test the impact of media frames over public decisions and ways of thinking showed that the effects, if any, are minor, and that the individuals shall still stick to their previous opinions that resonate with their culture and ideologies (Entman, 2010). The strength of any successful frame highly depends on the competitive environment it is presented in. This means that a frame is evaluated as effective and successful depending on how much competition it is receiving from different media outlets (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

In 1992, Neuman, Just, & Crigler examined the media frames that dominate the US news coverage, and they found that the most dominant frames are: conflict, economic consequences, human impact, and morality. Taking these four frames as a main base for another study, Semetko and Valkenburg in 2000 conducted a research to analyze five national newspapers and television stories during the Amsterdam meeting of European heads in 1997, where they added a fifth frame to the list: attribution of responsibility frame to their content analysis study. The researchers found that the most common frame used was the attribution of responsibility frame in the five Dutch papers they analyzed (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000), while in Neuman, Just, & Crigler study (1992), it was found that the US news media uses the conflict frame most commonly.

A human-interest frame gives an emotional edge to the event being discussed (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). A conflict frame concentrates on presenting disagreements between different entities. An economic frame focuses on the economic consequences of this event. The attribution of responsibility frame is “a way of attributing responsibility for [a] cause or solution to either the government or to an individual or group” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 96) while a morality frame focuses on the ethical edge of any given event or reality.

A content analysis study was conducted in 2012 to check what frames the German TV news programs use to support the intervention of the German government during an economic crisis, such as the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers bank in 2008. Quiring and Weber found they found that a cost-benefit frame was mostly used where those programs carefully explained the cost of governmental measures to contain the crisis as opposed to the benefits accrued from them. The second frame the researchers were able to detect was the context of the crisis itself. Through this study, the researchers were able to show that economic news where the main source of information during financial crises and they do play a role in the legalization of economic strategies (Quiring & Weber, 2012).

In a study conducted in Bulgaria to check the reporting of economic news during the election in the period between 1990 to 2009 and after analyzing 543 news stories from six newspapers, the researchers found that economic policies and the agenda of the newspaper shape the framing of the economic consequences of the story (Kostadinova, & Dimitrova, 2012). They found that the frame most used was episodic framing followed by the economic consequences framing in the post-

communist newspapers in the above-mentioned period (Kostadinova & Dimitrova, 2012).

## **Chapter Four**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Content Analysis**

This study uses the quantitative method of content analysis as the main approach to analyze 40 Egyptian films, which discuss *Al Infitah* policy from 1978 to 2000 based on what the researcher was able to collect from the literature and from contacting a number of filmmakers and film critics. Content analysis measures a variable in a systematic form shown in a mass communication medium (Berger, 1991 as cited in Macnamara, 2005). Through content analysis, the researcher in this study aims to detect the effects of *Al Infitah* policy on the society as portrayed in the Egyptian cinema through analyzing the characters depicted in films representing these effects. The selection of the parameters in which the researcher compiled the list of films was any given movie that was produced after the introduction of *Al Infitah* policy in Egypt in 1974 that discusses the social consequences of the implementation of this policy. The social consequences can be detected in the plot (the drama line of the film) and the narration of the main characters acting in the film. The main characters of the film should be representing the effects of this policy either positively or negatively.



## Population

The researcher composed a list of the population of films tackling the issue of the effects of *Al Infitah* policy on Egyptian society. The result was a list of 40 films. This list of films, which were produced between: 1978 to 2000, was formed using two methods. First, was the researcher compiled the names of all films mentioned in similar studies and listed in the literature review. Second, the researcher interviewed a group of 12 filmmakers and film critics who helped add to the list with all the films discussing Al Infitah policy that they could remember. The researcher kept interviewing filmmakers and critics until the list was saturated and no additional names were being produced.

### The contacts interviewed were:

1. Amir Ramsis, Scriptwriter and Director
2. Ahmed Saad, Cinema Critic
3. Waleed Seif, Scriptwriter
4. Ramy Abd El Razek, Cinema Critic
5. Magda Khair Allah, Cinema Critic
6. Mohammed Kinawy, Cinema Critic
7. Waleed Abou Al Soud, Journalist in Al Ahram Film Section
8. Khaled Mahmoud, Cinema Critic
9. Khaled Eissa, Cinema Critic
10. Entesar El Derdiry, Journalist (Former Editor –in-Chief of Al Nogoum Magazine)
11. Tarek Al Shinway, Cinema Critic
12. Wael Hamdy, Scriptwriter and Cinema Critic

### List of films used for the research study (Arranged by Production Year):

1. *Whom Shall we Shoot (Ala Man Natloulk Al Roasas)*, Tarek El Sheikh, 1975

2. *Be Aware, Ladies and Gentlemen (Entabhou Ayoha Al Sadda)*, Mohammed Abd El Aziz, 1978
3. *Al Bateneya*, Hossam Al Dein Moustafa, 1980
4. *People at the Top (Ahl Al Kema)*, Aly Badrkhan, 1981
5. *Date Dinner (Maww'ed Al Ashaa)*, Mohammed Khan, 1981
6. *The street football Player (Al Hareef)*, Mohammed Khan, 1981
7. *The Fangs (Anyab)*, Mohammed Shebl, 1981
8. *The Bus Driver (Sawak Al Autobis)*, Atef Al Tayeb, 1982
9. *The Disgrace (Al A'aar)*, Aly Abd EL Khalek, 1982
10. *The Lawyer (Al Avocato)*, Rafaat Al Mehey, 1983
11. *The Auger (Al Ghoul)*, Samir Seif, 1983
12. *Gone and Never Returned (Kharag Walam Ya'oud)* Mohammed Khan, 1984
13. *Don't Put off the Smoke (Hata La Yateer Al Dokhan)*, Ahmed Yehia, 1984
14. *The Vagabonds (Al Saa'leek)*, Youssef Maalouf, 1985
15. *The Employees (Al Mouwzafoun fel Ard)*, Ahmed Yehia, 1985
16. *Sharp as a Sword (Ha'ad El Seif)*, Atef Salem, 1986
17. *Love by the Pyramids (Al Hob Fawka Hadbet Al Haram)*, Atef Al Tayeb, 1986
18. *The Citizen Return (Awdet Mowaten)*, Mohammed Khan, 1986
19. *Good bye my Friend (Salam Ya Saahby)*, Nader Galal, 1987
20. *Hatem Zahran's era (Zaman Hatem Zahran)*, Mohammed Al Nagar, 1987
21. *The Master's Beat (Darbet Moulim)*, Atef Al Tayeb, 1987
22. *Sons and Killer (Abna'a Wa Katala)*, Atef Al Tayeb, 1987
23. *The Basement (Al Badroun)*, Atef Al Tayeb, 1987
24. *The Story of a half million dollar (Hekayet Nous Million Dollar)*, Saad Arfa, 1988
25. *Hend and Kamila's Dreams (Ahlam Hend W Kamilia)*, Mohammed Khan, 1988
26. *Al Mouwled*, Samir Seif, 1989
27. *The Death Penalty Pack (Kateebet Al Edam)*, Atef Al Tayeb, 1989
28. *Super Market*, Mohammed Khan, 1990
29. *The Emperor (Al Embarator)*, Tarek Al Erian, 1990
30. *The Era of Power (Asr Al Kouwa)*, Nader Galal, 1991
31. *Searching For Sayed Marzouk (Al Bahas An Sayed Marzouk)*, Dawood Abd El Sayed, 1991
32. *Ice cream in Geliem (Ice Cream Fih Geliem)*, Khairy Beshara, 1992
33. *Blood on the Street Road (Demaa'a Al Asphalt)*, Atef Al Tayeb, 1992
34. *Against the Government (Ded Al Hokouma)*, Atef Al Tayeb, 1992
35. *Why Lavender (Lih ya Banafseg)*, Radwan Al Kashef, 1993
36. *The Clever (Al Shotar)*, Nader Galal, 1993
37. *Mr. Karate*, Mohammed Khan, 1993
38. *The Forgotten (Al Mansy)*, Sherif Arfa, 1993
39. *The Knight of the City (Fares Al Madina)*, Mohammed Khan, 1993
40. *The Land of Fear (Ard Al Khouf)*, Dawooud Abd El Sayed, 2000

## **Unit of Analysis and Formulating Research Questions**

The unit of analysis the researcher analyzed is the character who is socially affected by *Al Infitah* policy either positively or negatively. The characters to be analyzed are of three categories: “Al Infitahi”, “the Challenged by the *Al Infitah* policy”, and the “Follower” of *Al Infitah*.”

“Al Infitahi” is defined as anyone acting in a leading role shown in the film as directly affected by the introduction of *Al Infitah* policy from the beginning of the film. They represent this social change brought by *Al Infitah*, and are connected directly to its economic system and represent its value system.

The character who is “Challenged” is defined as anyone in a main role depicted as being challenged by the new social order and refuses to follow it. The third character type, “the Follower” is defined as anyone in a leading role shown as adapting to the new social order and abiding by its conditions and practices even if these are illegal. Such characters are usually shown in the beginning of the film as challenged by the social conditions, but they soon realize that working in any *Infitah* businesses or cooperating with any *Infitahi* businessmen is the their best solution to improve their challenging social and economic conditions.

The researcher is mainly concerned with the key roles in the films where the impact on the society as a result of *Al Infitah* policy is clearly framed and discussed. The character’s background and personal traits are important areas of analysis to this research to allow the researcher to measure the development of those effects on the society created by *Al Infitah* policy. The researcher will not

focus on actors in secondary roles but only on the ones with leading parts in the films' plot and/or with direct relation to the effects of *Al Infitah* policy.

This study will also identify the dominant frame, which the filmmakers used while discussing the effects of Al Infitah on society. The films will be classified into the following five main frames: economic consequences, attribution of responsibility, morality, conflict and human interest. These frames will be examined through the scale, which Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) used in their study. The twenty questions used by both researchers were designed to help know how framing varied in the Dutch media outlet in their covering of the “Eurotop” meetings held in Amsterdam in 1997 (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). The researchers used nominal “yes” and “no” coding to measure each of the five news frames, which serves to increase the inter-coder reliability as well (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). In assessing the frames, the researcher will use the film as a unit of analysis.

The frames in Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) were identified using the following criteria:

#### Attribution of responsibility

1. Does the story suggest that some level of government has the ability to alleviate the problem?
2. Does the story suggest that some level of government is responsible for the issue/problem?
3. Does the story suggest solution(s) to the problem/issue?
4. Does the story suggest that an individual (or group of people in society) is responsible for the issue/problem?
5. Does the story suggest that the problem requires urgent action?

#### Human-interest frame

6. Does the story provide a human example or “human face” on the issue?

7. Does the story employ adjectives or personal vignettes that generate feelings of outrage, empathy, caring, sympathy, or compassion?
8. Does the story emphasize how individuals and groups are affected by the issue/problem?
9. Does the story go into the private or personal lives of the actors?
10. Does the story contain visual information that might generate feelings of outrage, empathy, caring, sympathy, or compassion?

#### Conflict Frame

11. Does the story reflect disagreement between parties/individuals/groups?
12. Does one party/individual/group/country reproach another?
13. Does the story refer to two sides or to more than two sides of the problem or issue?
14. Does the story refer to winners and losers?

#### Morality frame

15. Does the story contain any moral message?
16. Does the story make reference to morality, God, and other religious tenets?
17. Does the story offer specific social prescriptions about how to behave?

#### (Economic) consequences frame

18. Is there a mention of (financial) losses or gains now or in the future?
19. Is there a mention of the costs/degree of expense involved?
20. Is there a reference to (economic) consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action?

In this study, the researcher modified some of the wordings of the questions to fit the area of research, where the character in the films replaced the word “story” in the original study. She also removed two questions from the original study of Semeteko & Valkenburg: Question 6 as it is concerned with if the story added a human face to the issue, and since we are focusing on films, it is not applicable. The other removed question is question 9, as it is measuring if the story went into the private or the personal live of

the actors. Since the research is all about films carried out by actors, this question was not applicable as well.

### **Research Questions**

Based on the review of literature presented earlier, the following questions were formulated:

**RQ1:** What are the effects of Al Infitah policy on society as portrayed in the Egyptian cinema?

**RQ2:** What are the personality traits of the characters representing Al Infitah policy?

**RQ3:** What are the most dominant frames in the portrayal of Al Infitah policy in the Egyptian cinema: conflict, economic consequences, and attribution of responsibility, human interest or moral frame?

### **Operationalization**

#### **Character Type:**

**Al Infitah Policy:** It is an economic policy introduced by the late President Mohammed Anwar Al Sadat in 1974 and aimed at opening the door for foreign investments. The policy had tremendous effects on the Egyptian society both socially and economically as shown and explained in the literature review section.

**Al Infitahi character:** This is the character who is directly benefitting from the introduction of this policy. Infitah is usually represent the social and economic consequences and effects of this policy, either by mobilizing socially to the upper classes,

gaining more wealth, or being connected to the authorities and influential circles.

**Character challenged by Al Infitah policy:** This is a character depicted as being unable to fit in the new society brought by Al Infitah policy. This character can be shown as resisting the negative consequences of this policy and fighting the new social and ethical order brought about by Al Infitah policy.

**The Follower:** This is a character who decides to make use of the benefits of *Al Infitah* policy by starting/joining/creating an Infitah business. This character is shown in the films as, first, not belonging to the economic class where he revolves but, later in the movie, he submits to the temptations and benefits from this policy.

### **Effects of Al Infitah Policy:**

**The effects of Al Infitah policy on society:** This refers to the social impact and changes on Egyptian society generated by the implementation of *Al Infitah* policy. As listed in the literature review section, the effects can refer to the rise in consumerism, greed for wealth, upward social mobility of the less educated/less hard-working segments of the population, introduction of the newly rich class (*nouveaux riche*), as well as an increase in illegal actions and in corruption.

### **Frames to be measured in the study:**

**Human-interest frame:** This refers to framing the main characters in the film in an emotional light.

**Conflict frame:** This refers to framing the main characters in the film through conflicts and disagreements against other entities.

**Economic frame:** This refers to the economic consequences of this policy, meaning focusing on the economic consequences of Al Infitah policy as shown in the film.

**Attribution of responsibility frame:** This refers to attributing the responsibility of Al Infitah policy effects on society to either the government or an entity or an individual.

**Morality frame:** This frame focuses on the ethical edge of the film's main characters.

#### **The levels of education in the Egyptian system:**

**Educational level:** This refers to the character's educational level. The education system in Egypt is divided into: a primary stage (6 years of primary education), a preparatory stage (3 years), and 3 years of high school education. Egyptian high school education can either be the general certificate of Thanwaya Amma or certificate in a vocational or industrial field (Al Taa'leem El Fany).

Another type of schooling system managed by Al Azhar, an Islamic institution provides its own curricula and does not follow the Ministry of Education. However, the Egyptian Prime Minister supervises it. The Azhari education follows the same system: primary, preparatory and secondary levels. The Azhari schools are usually named as "Maa'hed" or institutes and their graduates usually enroll in Al Azhar University to earn their



bachelor degrees. Al Azhar university grants three levels of certificates: Bachelor degrees, Master degrees, and doctorate degrees.

### **Character Personality Traits:**

**Personality traits:** aspects that define individuals' personalities and code their behavioral patterns.

**Generous:** a person that is ready to give more of his/her finances or belongings to help and please the others.

**Stingy:** a person that holds back any financial help from the others, as they want to keep all of their financial assets to their own, even if they were depicted as capable and wealthy.

**Deceptive:** a person that has the ability to mislead the others and use false tactics and unethical means reach for their goals.

**Honest:** a truthful person who does not mislead the others, or misuse them. Also, it applies to those who refuse to lie, steal or commit a violation, because they are abided by their ethical standards.

**Lazy at Work:** a person that is shown not keen to work or encouraged to be productive in their profession.

**Spend long hours working:** a person that is shown working for excessive long working hours aiming at generating more income or because their job is demanding.

**Greedy:** a person who is shown concerned with gaining more wealth and power even if this would be reached by harming others.

**Stubborn:** a person that is shown entitled to his/her opinion and does not change their attitude on something.

**Selfish:** a person that is concerned with their own welfare and pleasure without bearing in mind the advantages of the others. He/she is only concerned with one self.

### **Film Genre:**

**Film genre:** A film category type that sets the narration in a specific tone.

**Comedy:** It is a lighthearted film with usually a happy ending and delightful events that generate laughter from the audience.

**Action:** This is a genre where the actors of the films are pictured as going through their lives and carrying on the film's events using physical and violent fights.

**Romantic:** In this genre, the story of the film is based on romance and passion between the leading roles in a film.

**Social Drama:** It is a “dramatic treatment of social issues” which encourages the audience to modify policies and improve their behavior (Training films, retrieved from <https://socialfilmdrama.com>)

**Fiction:** This is a genre based on an imaginary story or set of events that is out of the ordinary and does not have any relation to the actual reality of our daily lives.

**Thriller/Crime:** These are films that revolve around a crime or a mystery where the viewers become anxious as they are watching and are attracted to the suspense and the unknown in what they are watching.

**Tragedy:** This is a film with a sad ending and tackles the suffering of the main hero.

**Biography:** This is a film based on the life story of someone who is either alive or dead.

**Musical:** This is a musical genre that contains many songs where the plot of the story and the dialogue of the characters are conveyed through the songs' lyrics.

**Other types of film genres:** The researcher added this category in case one of the films to be did not fit any of the suggested categories.

**Time period of the movie:** This refers to the time in which the story of the film is taking place. If it is taking place in a time different from that of the production year, the filmmaker adds a text to notify the viewer that the film's events are taking place in a different date. The date can also be identified through the script. The clothing selected and the dialogue between the actors should enable the viewers to identify the time of the story. The researcher has added five categories for this question representing different decades starting from the 70's to the 2000's. Besides, there is an "other" option, which is added if there is a film going back and forth between different decades and years.

### **Social Class:**

**Social class:** the researcher shall apply the definition of Max Weber while detecting the social class of the studied characters. According to Weber, in order to stratify a social class, three components shall be noted: class, status and power (Weber, 2015; 1921). The researcher while coding the characters shall keep an eye on the social power of the character just as his/her financial status.

Class for weber is the economic status of the person; his/her status is determined by their popularity and honor within the community. Power is their "ability to get their way despite the resistance of others" (Weber, 2015; 1921).

**Lower Class:** shall be detected if this character is living on a scarce amount of resources, their income is limited and cannot provide them with their basic needs. They are presented as marginalized, with no power or influence in the society.

**Middle Class:** Characters that are not depicted as poor in the studied films, they are a working educated force that can be shown facing economic challenges, yet they have steady jobs and drive the economic force of the society. Their power is not significant and their status or prestige is driven from their productivity and not wealth.

**Upper Class:** characters that appear as powerful, wealthy and having a significant social status in the society.

**Violations:**

**Illegal acts:** violations that are considered crimes by law.

**Ethical codes:** the value system of a person that guides his moral actions.

**Speech style:**

**Vulgarity:** This refers to the practice of cursing and swearing while speaking. It can be used to offend another person, or as reaction to pain, in order to grab attention, to show informality, and/or express negativity (Pinker, 2007).

**Tactful:** the use of appropriate wordings, where the character shows cultural capital. Cultural capital is “non-financial assets that promote social mobility beyond economic means, such as education, intellect, style of speech, dress and even physical appearance” (Bourdieu & Gerwitz cited in Lucey, 2014).

**Clothing Style:**

**Flashy Clothing:** outfits that are meant to be dressed to show wealth and fashion.

**Classic Outfit:** traditional clothing that suits the common taste of the

community and fit their social class.

### **Research Variables**

Variables of the Film

Film Title:

Character Name:

#### **1. Year of production**

- a. 1971-1980
- b. 1981-1990
- c. 1991-2000

#### **2. Film Genre**

- a. Comedy
- b. Action
- c. Romantic
- d. Social drama
- e. Fiction
- f. Thriller/crime
- g. Tragedy
- h. Biography
- i. Musical
- j. Horror
- k. Other

**3. The time period the movie is set in**

- a. 70's
- b. 80's
- c. 90's
- d. 2000's
- e. Other

**4. Main Character Type**

- a. Al Infitahi person
- b. Person challenged by Al Infitah policy
- c. Followers of Al Infitah policy

**5. Age**

- a. Under 20 years
- b. 20-29 years old
- c. 30-39 years old
- d. 40-49 years old
- e. 50-59 years old
- f. 60 and above

**6. Sex of the Character**

- a. Female
- b. Male

## **7. Social Class**

- a. Lower Class
- b. Middle Class
- c. Upper Class
- d. Lower/middle Class moved upwards to upper classes
- e. Upper/middle class moved downwards to lower classes

## **8. Educational Level**

- a. Primary level
- b. Preparatory level
- c. Secondary level
- d. Azhari Education
- e. Bachelor degree holder
- f. Masters' degree holder
- g. Doctorate holder
- h. Student
- i. Illiterate
- j. Not mentioned
- k. Other

## **9. Profession**

- a. Governmental jobs

- b. Academic Jobs
- c. Workers and technicians
- d. Businessman
- e. Employees
- f. Holders of administrative jobs
- g. Holders of political jobs
- h. Doctors, engineers, IT, Lawyers, journalists
- i. Layman jobs then turned into businessman
- j. Artistic jobholders such as actors, painters, singers, songwriter, composer, director, and musician.
- k. Other

**A. Social background**

**10. Does he/she acquire upward social mobility because of Al Infitah?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not Applicable (N/A)

**11. Connection with upper class influential entities is the reason for the depicted character to acquire upward social mobility?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not Applicable (N/A)

**12. Hard ethical work is the reason for the character to acquire upward**



**social mobility?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not Applicable (N/A)

**13. Illegal acts are the reason for the character to acquire upward social mobility?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not Applicable (N/A)

**14. Inheritance is the reason for the character to acquire upward social mobility?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not Applicable (N/A)

**15. How does the character dress?**

- a. In flashy clothing
- b. In classical traditional outfits
- c. Other

**16. Language style used by the character**

- 1. Tactful
- 2. Vulgar
- 3. Other

**17. Does the character have his/her own set of words or codes to describe**

materialistic things? i.e. money: “rabbits:, cars: “pigs” , etc.

- a. Yes
- b. No

**B. Moral and Religious Status**

**18. Does the character show any kind of religious acts? i.e.: prays, fasts, gives alms to the poor for Al Zakaat, goes on pilgrimage?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**19. Does the character mention that he/she won’t commit an illegal/ethical act because they care about God’s retribution?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**20 Does the character refrain from committing illegal or criminal acts because of religion?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**C. Excuses the character lean on to commit illegal acts**

**21. Does the character manipulate Quran/bible verses to serve his/her causes?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**22. Do the characters explain or justify their illegal acts by the urge to become wealthy in order to cope with the high standard of living?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**23. Does a character justify his illegal activities because of family obligations?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**24. The character does not commit illegal acts.**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**D. The character personality traits**

**25. Is the character generous?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Does not show

**26. Is the character selfish?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Does not show

**27. Is the character stingy?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Does not show

**28. Is the character stubborn?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Does not show

**29. Does the character spend long hours working?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Does not show

**30. Is the character lazy at work?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Does not show

**31. Is the character greedy?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Does not show

**32. Is the character honest?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Does not show

**33. Is the character deceptive?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Does not show

**E. Social effects**

**34. What are the main challenges those characters are faced with in the film?**

- a. Having a decent education
- b. Gaining financial status
- c. Employment
- d. Marriage/Love relationship/providing for a partner or a family
- e. Residency
- f. Other

**35. How satisfied is the character shown with his/her social status?**

- a. Satisfied
- b. Unsatisfied
- c. Fluctuating

**36. What measures do the character take in order to improve their social status?**

- a. Working hard using legitimate means.
- b. Committing illegal acts
- c. Trying to be close from influential social circles
- d. Changing their current professions to jobs introduced or associated with  
Al Infitah policy
- e. Does nothing/surrender to his/her social status if they are unsatisfied
- f. They are satisfied
- g. Other

**37. How Ethical are these characters depicted?**

- a. Ethical
- b. Unethical
- c. Fluctuating

F. **Moral effects:** which unethical or criminal act does this character commit in order to elevate socially, in case they wish to?

**38. The character offers bribes to acquire social mobile upwards**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Unapplied

**39. The character commits murders in order to acquire social mobility**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Unapplied

**40. The character commits fraud in order to acquire social mobility**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Unapplied

**41. The character smuggles goods in order to acquire social mobility**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Unapplied

### **Variables of the dominant frame portraying *Al Infitah* policy**

#### **A. Attribution of responsibility frame**

**42. Does the film suggest that some level of government has the ability to alleviate the negative consequences of *Al Infitah* policy?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**43. Does the film suggest that some level of government is responsible for the issue/problem?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**44. Does the film suggest a solution to the negative consequences of *Al Infitah* policy?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**45. Does the film suggest that an individual (or group of people in society) is responsible for the negative consequences of *Al Infitah* policy?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**46. Does the film suggest the negative consequences of *Al Infitah* require urgent action?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

#### **B. Human-interest frame**

**47. Does the film use adjectives or personal vignettes that generate feelings of outrage, empathy caring, sympathy, or compassion that would make the audience sympathies with him/her even if they were committing wrong?**

- a. Yes

b. No

**48. Does the film emphasize how individuals and groups are affected by the issue/problem?**

a. Yes

b. No

**49. Does the film contain scenes that might generate feelings of outrage, empathy caring, sympathy, or compassion?**

1. Yes

2. No

C. Conflict frame

**50. Does the film reflect disagreement between parties-individuals-groups-the government?**

a. Yes

b. No

**51. Does one party-individual-group-government reproach another in the film?**

a. Yes

b. No

**52. Does the story of the film refer to two sides or to more than two sides of the problem or issue?**

a. Yes

b. No

**53. Does the story of the film refer to winners and losers?**

a. Yes

b. No

D. Morality frame

**54. Does the story of the film pass any moral message to the audience?**



- a. Yes
- b. No

**55. Does the story of the film make reference to morality, God, and other religious tenets?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**56. Does the story of the film offer specific social prescriptions about how to behave?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

E. Economic frame

**57. Is there a mention of financial losses or gains now or in the future?  
Costs/degree of expense involved in the film?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**58. Is there a reference to economic consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action in the film?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

### **Intercoder Reliability**

To check for intercoder reliability, a mass communication graduate student enrolled in the AUC master's program and who has finished the graduate research course coded 10% of the sample. The researcher calculated the intercoder reliability through Holsti's (1969) formula as follows: the total number of the coded decisions by the first and second coders

is referred to as N1 and N2, and M is the two coders' agreed coded decisions (Wimmer & Dominick, 2000):

$$\text{Reliability} = \frac{2M}{N1 + N2} \times 100$$

Total of the agreed decisions is: 256

Total number of coded decisions: 534

Reliability is: 95.8%

<b>Film</b>	<b>Agreed On Decisions</b>	<b>Total Number of Decisions</b>	<b>Reliability percentage</b>
Ahl El Kema	90	96	93.75%
Mr. Karate	55	58	94.8%
El Hareef	55	58	94.8%
Ded El Hekouma	56	58	96.5%

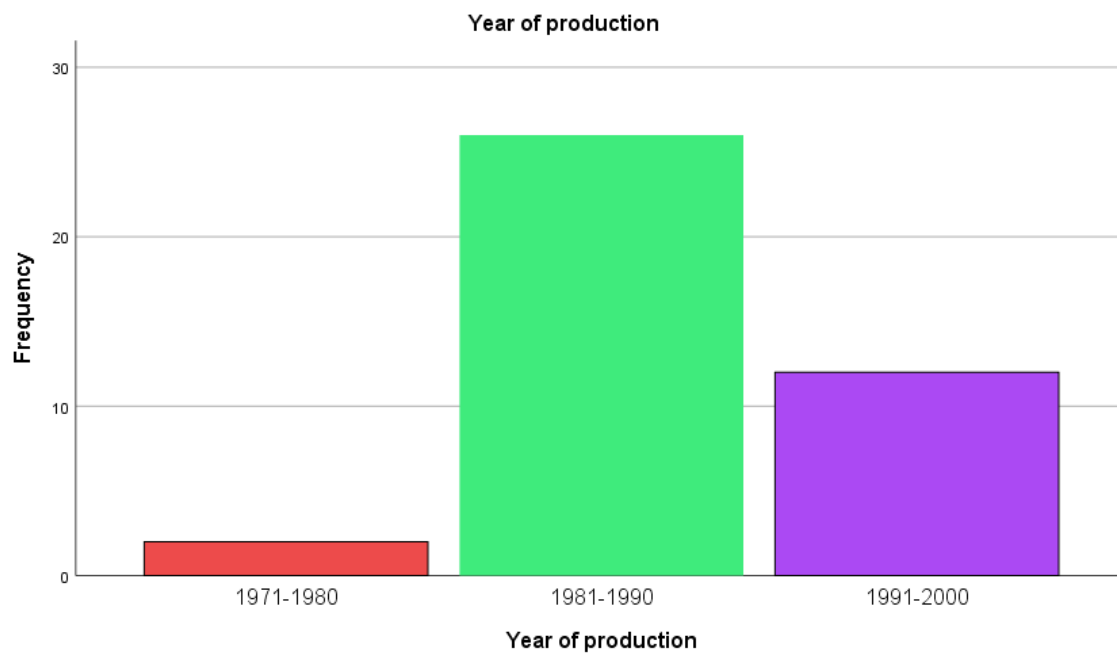
## Chapter Five

### RESULTS

The population of the forty chosen films resulted in sixty-one characters fitting the criteria of the research. Those were analyzed by the researcher using SPSS for Windows, version 26. The results are presented in this chapter.

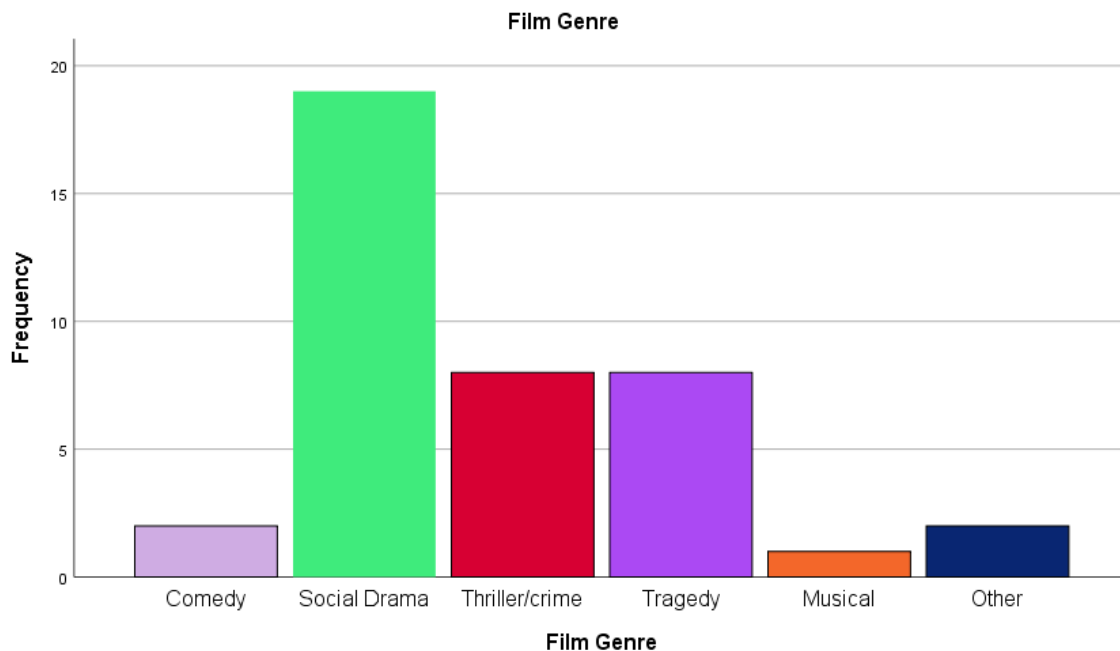
#### Description of the Film Population:

Graph 1



This graph shows that the period between 1981 to 1990 witnessed the highest number of film productions within the selection, as a total of 65% of the films were produced in this period. In the following decade, from 1991 to 2000, 30% of the total number were produced. Only two films were produced before the 1980's resulting in 5%. No films were produced discussing Al Infitah social effects after the year 2000, according to the interviewed cinema critiques, so the researcher did not add any past years after the year of 2000.

Graph 2



Almost half of the films analyzed (19 films) are categorized as “social drama,” in which is 47.5% of the total selection. Next are “tragedy” and “triller/crime” scoring 20% each, followed by 2 comedies scoring 5%. Two films were categorized as “Other” in the variables, as they were a mix of different genres, *Good bye my Friend (Salam Ya Sahby)*,

a black comedy plus action with a tragic ending as well as “Anyab”, a fantasy reflecting on social issues using horror scenes. Finally, one musical film represented 2.5% of the total number of films produced.

Table 1

*Time Period the Movie is set in*

	Frequency	Valid Percent
70's	5	12.5
80's	23	57.5
90's	10	25.0
Other	2	5.0
Total	40	100.0

Table one illustrates the different time periods the stories of the films took place in. The highest percentage was during the 80's, with 57.5%, followed by 25% in the 90's, followed by 12.5% in the 70's, and 5% falling under “Other” in which two films take place during two different time periods.

**RQ1:** What are the effects of Al Infitah policy on society as portrayed in Egyptian cinema?

The researcher wanted to examine the general representation of the society in Egyptian films through analyzing the portrayal of the different characters showing the effects of this policy on their lives.

These effects can be seen and measured through assessing their social status and economic condition. The researcher measured if those characters were shown satisfied

and comfortable with their economic living condition. Also, the main life challenges those characters faced were a significant area to see the day-to-day struggles of those characters as shown in the films. This area shall give an indication of the living circumstances and limitations Egyptians were to face after the implementation of this policy.

Some of the studies in the literature review section argued that social success after the implementation of *Al Infitah* was measured only by the degree of power and wealth that citizens were able to acquire. They argued that educational and professional statuses were of less value, what mattered after *Al Infitah* is gaining financial status to be able to cope with the rise in prices and the urge to consume, buy commodities and own property. Hence, in this study the researcher measured the most common depicted means, which the characters were shown using to improve their social status. The first part to look at is the general division of classes those characters were shown belonging to.

Table 2

*Character Type*

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Infitahi	19	31.1
Challenged	26	42.6
Follower	16	26.2
Total	61	100.0

As Table Two shows, the total number of characters analyzed was 61. The majority, at 42.6%, were characters Challenged by *Al Infitah* policy, followed by 31.1% characters

depicted as Infitahis, and the smallest percentage, 26.2%, went to the followers of *Al Infitah* policy.

Table 3

*Social Class*

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Lower Class	9	14.8
Middle Class	19	31.1
Upper Class	12	19.7
Lower class moved to upper classes	21	34.4
Total	61	100.0

Table Three illustrates the different social classes that the 61 coded characters represented. The largest number of characters was represented as those coming from lower classes and was able to move socially upward benefitting mainly from *Al Infitah* economic policy. This category represented 34.4%, followed by 31.1% depicted as belonging to the middle class, followed by 19.7% depicted as upper class citizens and finally 14.8% depicted as lower class. It is also worth mentioning that no character was represented as belonging to an upper class and having moved socially downwards.

However, most of the characters coded as “challenged” by *Al Infitah* new social order and economic condition, were shown belonging to the middle class segmentation, as shown in Table Four.

Table 4

*Character Type \* Social Class cross tabulation*

**Character Type \* Social Class Crosstabulation**

Count

		Social Class				
		Lower	Middle	Upper	Lower/middle moved to upper	Total
Character Type	Infithi	0	0	10	9	19
	Challenged	8	16	1	1	26
	Follower	1	3	1	11	16
Total		9	19	12	21	61

The middle classes in this study is defined as those who drive the working force of the society; they are shown as well-educated people with steady jobs yet facing some economic challenges. This finding resonates with Al-Nahhas study conducted in 1986, and referred to in the literature review section, where he found after studying ten films discussing *Al Infitah* social effects that the most depicted character in Egyptian cinema was usually a middle class highly educated citizen seen struggling to keep up with the new social order and the expensive style of living brought after *Al Infitah*. Hence, it shows that this pattern of representation was commonly used in different films, detecting



that the filmmakers found by framing the middle classes struggles and issues, that this way they shall be offering a better explanation of this policy's effects to the audience.

Table 5

*Does he/she experience upward social mobility because of Al Infitah?*

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	33	54.1
No	27	44.3
Not applicable	1	1.6
Total	61	100.0

Table Five shows that 33 characters out of the 61 characters coded did experience upward social mobility as a direct result of *Al Infitah* policy. The percentage was 54.1% as opposed to 44.3% who did not and 1.6% to whom this category did not apply, as they were shown in the films belonging to the same social status. Hence, the coded films associated upward social mobility with *Al Infitah* policy implementation, showing that those who represented this policy (*Infitahis*) or the (*Followers*) were on a better social status than those who did not. This reflects that *Al Infitah* economic conditions acted as a gate for many to improve their living conditions, yet it formed challenges for others. However, another reasons were coded in this research to detect if there are other reasons

that were portrayed in the films that would lead to upward social mobility after *Al Infitah* implementation as shown in the following table.

Table 6

*Reasons to acquire upward social mobility*

<i>Acquiring upward social mobility</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>
Hard ethical work	11	18%
Illegal acts	26	42.6%
Inheritance	2	3.3%
Connection with upper influential entities	31	50.8%

Table Six shows that 31 characters were able to improve their social status or protect it by being close from influential entities. Those influential entities as portrayed in the films where either influential characters inside governmental bodies or powerful businessmen who were able to support the coded characters to benefit from them. *In The people at the Top (Ahl El Keima)*, Zaghloul, the infitahi characters is seen as being covered by different governmental bodies who work in the free trade zone of Port Said to ease his illegal activities in smuggling goods. Another example, Marzouk and Barkat, are

featured as two friends in *Goodbye my friend* (Salam Ya Sahby) are shown socially elevating only when they partnered with Al Gayar, a big trade tycoon in the vegetable market they work in. Another examples were shown in the coded films were they characters worked hard to be part of political entities to be close to officials and decision makers to guarantee that their businesses are protected and to secure a cover for *them* in case of them committing illegalities. This can be seen in different films like *The Era of Pwer* (A'sr Al Kouwa), *The Vegabongs* (Al Saa'leeik), *Don't Put off the Smoke* (Hata La Yateer Al Dokhan) and others.

This shows that some of the coded films implied that in order for those representing *Al Infitah* policy to flourish their businesses, they usually needed a governmental and/or a powerful support for their businesses to survive. This also implies that there were high levels of corruption, since this support was shown in a number of cases acting as a cover for illegal businesses. A list with all the illegal businesses that Al Infitahis or the Follower characters were engaged in shall be discussed later in this section.

Nevertheless, coping with *Al Infitah* new social order formed economic and social challenges. The main challenge that the characters were confronted battling in the coded films is shown in the Table 7.

Table 7

*The main challenges the film characters were shown facing*

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Gaining Financial status	22	36.1
Employment	3	4.9

Marriage/love relationship/providing for a partner or a family	5	8.2
Residency	2	3.3
Other	29	47.5
Total	61	100.0

In this particular category, the researcher was trying to find the main challenges that those characters shown faced in the film. It does not mean that these were the only challenges faced but rather the main challenges that led those characters to pursue whatever paths they decided to take. Table Seven shows that 36.1% of the characters analyzed were shown fighting to gain better financial status. The main challenge faced was providing for a marriage or a relationship for 8.2% of the characters, followed by the challenge for employment for 4.9% followed by the challenge for housing for 3.3% of the total percentage, while none of the characters analyzed were shown as being challenged to have a better education.

Nevertheless, the “Other” category shows that 29 characters are depicted as having different challenges from the ones the researcher had provided. Those challenges varied from a desire for revenge, to the satisfaction of egos, and to the pursuit of an inheritance. The “Other” category reflected the views of 47.5% of the total percentage.

In the 40 coded films gaining a better financial status acted as the main aim for 22 of the coded characters. It was a common observation to see all character types (the Infitahi, challenged and the follower) trying to improve their economic condition or fighting to protect their wealth in case of Al Infitahis.

For example, *The Employees (Al Mowzfoun Fel Ard)*, the leading character who is

coded as a middle class, is shown struggling to keep up with the demands of his family, where he tries to occupy for more than one job, and when he fails, he decides to disguise as a beggar to collect more money to be able to educate his children and provide for his daughter's marriage dowry and demands. Another example is the leading character in *Sharp as a Sword (H'aad El Seif)* where a senior governmental employee is crushed by the expensive standard of living and barely can keep up with his family's demands, decides to work as an instrumentalist musician in the evenings in amateur bands to increase his income.

Table 8

*How satisfied is the character shown with his/her social status?*

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Satisfied	21	34.4
Unsatisfied	23	37.7
Fluctuating	17	27.9
Total	61	100.0

Table Eight shows that 37.7% of the characters coded are unsatisfied with their social status while 34.4% are depicted as satisfied with a total of 27.9% fluctuating between being satisfied to unsatisfied or vice versa. As shown in Table Eight Al Infitahis are the most shown as satisfied with their social statuses, while the least satisfied is the challenged characters who as mentioned before belong mostly to the middle class category as shown in Table Nine. An indication that the Egyptian middle class were challenged to living well and meeting their needs, despite being portrayed as educated

and employed in the coded films.

Table 9

*Character Type\* Social Status Satisfaction*

**Character Type \* How much is the character shown satisfied with his/her social status? Crosstabulation**

Count

		How much is the character shown satisfied with his/her social status?			Total
		Yes	No	Unapplied	
Character Type	Infitahi	16	1	2	19
	Challenged	2	19	5	26
	Follower	3	3	10	16
Total		21	23	17	61

Table 10

*Measures taken by the Characters to Improve their Social Status*

**Character Type \* What measures do the character take in order to improve their social status? Crosstabulation**

Count

		What measures do the character take in order to improve their social status?							Total
		Working hard using legitimate means	Committing Illegal acts	Being close to influential circles	Changing their professions to jobs associated with AI Infitah	Surrender	They are satisfied	Other	
Character Type	Infitahi	1	5	0	3	0	9	1	19
	Challenged	10	4	0	0	5	3	4	26
	Follower	0	4	2	8	0	1	1	16
Total		11	13	2	11	5	13	6	61

As shown in Table Ten most of the challenged characters (ten characters) found in working hard and being enrolled in a legitimate profession is their path for improving

their social conditions, while most of Al Infitahis were shown as content and satisfied with their social status as is, as for the followers (eight characters) it was detected that most of them who were coded in this category found in changing their current profession with jobs introduced by Al Infitah is their guaranteed path for a better economic and social condition, while not a single Challenged character decided to take Al Infitahi businesses to attain a better social status, which shows the anti stance those character had against this policy's economy. This shows that those who belonged to Al Infitah associated businesses were shown much more satisfied and in a better position.

A total of 13 characters were shown committing a legal violation to improve their social status; those characters were usually shown, as finding the legal means to climb the social ladder is useless and that committing an illegal act is a better way to improve their challenging living condition.

Table 11

*Legal Violations to Acquire upward Social Mobility*

<b>Violations to acquire</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
<b>Social Mobility</b>		
Offers bribes	10	16.4%
Commits a murder	10	16.4%
Commits fraud	23	37.7%
Smuggles Goods	12	19.7%

The most illegal act that the characters coded depicted in order to acquire social mobility was fraud at 37.7% as shown in Table 11. The next violation was smuggling at 19.7%, followed by bribery by 16.4 scoring the same as murder at 16.4. To clarify further, in *The Street Football Player (Al Hareef)*, Fares (coded as a Follower) is a poor man who works for a humble shoe factory and decides that there was no way for him to be able to raise his social status and increase his income except by working in the forgery of official papers and smuggling imported cars into the country. In *The Employees Among Us (Al Mowazfoun Fel Ard)*, Fayed Abd El Ghany (coded as an Infitahi) works in one of the Egyptian ministries and willingly forges the official papers of public plots of land and offers them to businessmen he knows and in return, he gets a big bribe. In the comedy film *The Lawyer (Al Avocato)* Hassan Sabenikh (coded as a Follower) partners with a drug dealer, Hassouna. They meet in prison where they agree to come up with an untrue story and testify in the court to be declared ‘innocent’. Sabenikh uses some of his family members to participate in this story and forces them to help him trick the court in return for them to receive a big sum of money. He agreed with Hassouna that he would get him out of jail, which actually happened, because of his cunning plan.

The following tables show cross tabulations of character type committing different crimes or legal offences. As shown, Al Infitahi character is the most likely to commit crimes. They are the most likely to commit fraud, murder, and bribery as well as smuggle goods compared to the other two character types.



Table 12

*Character Type\* Committing Fraud Cross tabulation*

**Character Type \* The character commits fraud in order to acquire social mobility Cross tabulation**

		The character commits frauds in order to acquire social mobility			Count
		Yes	No	Unapplied	Total
Character Type	Infitahi	11	7	1	19
	Challenged	2	18	6	26
	Follower	10	6	0	16
	Total	23	31	7	61

As shown in Table 12, Al Infitahi is the most likely character to commit fraud as opposed to the Challenged or the Follower.

Table 13

*Character Type \* Offering Bribe Cross tabulation*

**Character Type \* The character offers bribes to acquire social mobility Cross tabulation**

		The character offers bribes to acquire social mobility			Count
		Yes	No	Unapplied	Total
Character Type	Infitahi	7	10	2	19
	Challenged	0	18	8	26
	Follower	3	13	0	16
	Total	10	41	10	61

Table 13 shows that seven characters representing Al Infitahi were coded as offering a bribe to an official, a governmental figure, an influential person, or an employee to facilitate their businesses and protect it, while not a single character coded as challenged was seen offering a bribe.

Table 14

*Character Type\*Committing Murder Cross tabulation*

		The character murders in order to socially mobile upwards			Count
		Yes	No	Unapplied	Total
Character Type	Infitahi	6	12	1	19
	Challenged	0	20	6	26
	Follower	4	12	0	16
Total		10	44	7	61

Table 14 shows the same pattern in representation where Al Infitahi is the one committing the illegal violation, while the Challenged appears as much more ethical and clear on legal violations. As shown, no Challenged character was seen committing murder in the 40 coded films, while six characters representing *Al Infitah* and four characters coded as following *Al Infitah* did commit murder to acquire social mobility and protect their wealth. For example, in *The Vegabongs (Al Saa'leeik)*, Salah kills his best friend and work partner, Morsi because he wanted to stop working illegally. Salah seems unhesitant to protect his fortune and the reputation he built as a powerful

businessman and a parliament member to take the life of his only friend for the sake of his own welfare. Another example, Hema Al Aa'rag (shown first as a thief and then become a successful businessman) in *Al Moulid* kills three gang members and steal their money to start off his successful business in imports and exports; also, when a trade tycoon threatens the success of his business and form a threat to his reputation, because he is aware of his past, he kills him as well.

Table 15

*Character Type\*Smuggling Goods Cross Tabulation*

		The character smuggles in order to socially mobile upwards			Count
		Yes	No	Unapplied	Total
Character Type	Infitahi	4	14	1	19
	Challenged	1	18	7	26
	Follower	7	9	0	16
	Total	12	41	8	61

Table 15 shows 12 characters were shown smuggling goods, seven of which were coded as a (Follower) and four as (Al Infitahi) and only one character was coded as (Challenged). The previous tables show that the characters representing *Al Infitah* found in legal violations a quicker way to acquire social mobility. Also, some of the coded films did not punish those characters or put any blame on them, a sign that the urge to be wealthy justified the means which those characters decided to pursue to acquire social and economic mobility.

**RQ2:** What are the personality traits of the characters representing *Al Infitah* policy?

Filmmakers used specific frames to portray the characters representing this policy. The researcher examined the common personality traits, which the filmmakers assigned to each character type to see if there are common areas of representations that would lead the audience to stereotype those characters in reality.

The researcher assigned nine different personality traits to code each character's behaviors. The appearance of those characters and the culture they represented (the new culture introduced by *Al Infitah* [the new rich or the nouveaux riche]) is another area the researcher looked at. Some studies argued that the new class introduced by *Al Infitah* used speech codes to refer to materialistic commodities; this will be examined in this study as well. The researcher is to assess the non financial assets those characters used to promote their social mobility in terms of attire and outfits as well.

Thirdly, The new economic status resulting from the *Infitah* policy formed some challenges to the Egyptians' ability to survive as mentioned earlier. In an attempt to measure the morality and ethical stances of the characters in the films under study, the researcher needed to determine the justifications the characters used to commit illegal acts, as well as the factors preventing them from committing crimes and surrendering to temptations, such as religious values or ethical values.

The researcher started by examining the general descriptions and demographics each character was portrayed in. The following tables show the general representations in terms of age group, sex, educational level, and professions as shown in the 40 coded

films.

Table 16

*Age*

	Frequency	Valid Percent
20-29 years	7	11.5
30-39 years	30	49.2
40-49 years	10	16.4
50-59 years	9	14.8
60 and above	5	8.2
Total	61	100.0

Table 16 shows that 30 characters (49.2%), were shown in their 30's, followed by 6.4% depicted between the ages of 40 to 49 years, followed by the representation of 9 characters at 14.8% shown in their 50's, followed by 11.5% presented in their 20's and the smallest representation of 8.2% was 5 characters shown in their 60's or above.

Table 17

*Sex of the Character*

**Character Type \* Sex of the character Cross tabulation**

		Sex of the character		Count
		Female	Male	Total
Character Type	Infitahi	0	19	19
	Challenged	4	22	26
	Follower	3	13	16
	Total	7	54	61

The vast majority of characters, (54 or 88.5%), were males as compared to only 7 (11.5%) given to females. The roles, which the male characters played, were varied. They were seen playing the roles of Infitahi, the roles of those challenged by Al Infitah or the roles of someone who decides to adapt to this economic policy. Alternatively, women appeared either as a Challenged characters trying to survive the consequences of this policy or as a Follower. No Infitahi or influential business tycoons were represented as females.

Table 18

*Educational Level*

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Primary	2	3.3
Bachelor Degree holder	25	41.0
Doctorate holder	4	6.6
Student	4	6.6
Illiterate	3	4.9
Not mentioned	22	36.1
Other	1	1.6
Total	61	100.0

Eleven categories used to determine the educational level of the characters were assigned by the researcher based on the Egyptian educational system; but only seven categories were used in the coding, since there were no characters detected enrolled in these four categories: the preparatory, the secondary, Al Azhari and master degree holders.

Sixty-one characters checked for the seven categories: 41% were bachelor degree holders, 6.6% were students and another 6.6% had a doctorate degree, while 4.9% were illiterates. However, for the majority of the characters depicted, the education level was not mentioned or known in the selected films making a total of 36.1% of the 61 characters whose educational level was unknown to the viewer, with only one character having a vocational secondary school degree (1.6%)

Table 19

*Profession*

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Governmental	6	9.8
Academic	1	1.6
Crafters and technicians	2	3.3
Businessmen	14	23.0
Employees	4	6.6
Administrative	2	3.3
Doctors/engineers/IT/lawyers/journalists	6	9.8
Layman jobs turned into businessmen	6	9.8
Artistic	4	6.6
Other	16	26.2
Total	61	100.0

Table 19 shows the different professions the 61 characters in the 40 films were shown as having. The highest profession was given to the “Other” categories, since the roles in these films were mainly combining more than one job, or the actors were originally working in an illegal profession or were criminals but covering up their activities under another profession. The percentage of this category was 26.2%, followed by the

businessmen category at 23%, followed by 12.7% of characters shown as occupying layman jobs and then later turning into businessmen, followed by 9.8% shown as occupying government jobs, and another 9.8% for those working in the medical, engineering, IT, law and Journalism fields. Another two categories scored the same as well: workers and technicians at 3.6% and administrative jobholders also at 3.6%. The profession least represented or mentioned was academia where only one character was represented scoring 1.6%. No characters were shown as working in the political field.

The 40 films, which the researcher coded, had a number of common elements, one of which was showing Al Infitahi character as a businessman. Al Infitahi in the Egyptian film is usually a person that has no values, no ethics, is only after his own welfare and increases his wealth even if that comes with a high ethical price tag. Twenty-three percent of the characters featured were businessmen who ran big companies and were well connected in influential circles. They were usually smart, clever and did not care for ethics. What mattered the most was their fortune and own benefits. For example, in *Supermarket*, everything had a price tag, even humans. In the movie, Dr. Azmy, a doctor and businessman who has a big number of large investment projects built and supported by Al Infitah policy, advises Ramzy, the middle class pianist to “compromise” on morals in order for him to be a millionaire. He tells him that “people would sell their honor, family, even themselves for the sake of money.”

Al Adham Al Fayoumy is another Infitahi businessman in *The Era of Power (Asr El Kouwa)* who runs a number of big companies and violates the law. In one of the scenes, Al Adham says that the “Law is made for the weak”, and in another scene, he adds, “this is the era of power only.” In other scenes, the viewer sees that Adham believes



that life has no room for emotions and only personal welfare matters. However, there were a few examples that showed Al Infitahi businessman in a positive light like Fares in *The City Knight (Fares Al Madina)*. In spite of the fact that he was bankrupt after losing all of his money to one of the private funds and investment companies that were actually introduced by Al Infitah, he still works hard to pay an old debt, holding on to his values. Sayed Marzouk in *Searching For Sayed Marzouk (El Bahth Aan Sayed Marzouk)* is depicted as a kind Infitahi businessman who loves to mingle with the marginalized people from lower classes and offers them his belongings and own furniture just to make them happy.

The other profession that the filmmakers and scriptwriters usually assigned to the Infitahi character is a legitimate business that stands as a cover for an illegal business. The mixed jobs “Other” was the highest category coded at 26.2%. For example, Boray in *Al Batneya*, Hassouna Moharam in *The Lawyer (The Avocato)*, Zeynhoum in *The Emperor (The Emperor)*, Kamal in *The Disgrace (Al Aar)*, and Hema El Ar’rag in *Al Moulid* all have two running businesses, one out in the open, lawful and legal, and another real one that is actually the main source of their fortune and social status such as drug dealing, weapons smuggling and trading in the foreign currency black market.

The following profession belonged to those businessmen who used to work first in simple jobs and then were able to establish new businesses exploiting *Al Infitah* policy. The representation of this category is 9.8% of the total percentage. They were six characters in the forty films coded. For example, Zatar El Noury in *The People on Top (Ahl El Kema)* film is featured as a repenting thief who works as a help to one of the big Infitahi businessmen. Later, he succeeded in becoming a businessman himself and

smuggling imported goods. Another example is Morsi and Salah El Naggar in *The Vagabonds (Al Saa'leik)*, who were porters/helpers in the Port Said Free Trade Zone until they slowly turned into big businessmen and worked in the profession of smuggling goods. One of them joined the parliament to gain more influence and power; and due to his massive power and fear of losing what he had earned, he killed his own dear friend since this friend wanted to report to the police their illegal activities and clear their names.

On the other hand, the characters challenged by Al Infitah policy and who actually were the most coded in this research at 42.5% were usually depicted as middle class citizens working in government jobs or as employees, white-collar workers, and holders of academic jobs or low class citizens who worked in service jobs such as porters, car attendants, maids or were workers and technicians or held menial jobs.

Table 20

*How does this character dress?*

**Character Type \* How does this character dress? Cross tabulation**

		How does this character dress?			Total
		Flashy	Classic/traditional	Other	
Character Type	Infitahi	1	17	1	19
	Challenged	0	15	11	26
	Follower	2	6	8	16
	Total	3	38	20	61

Table 19 shows that the majority of the characters coded were shown dressed in classical, traditional clothing at 62.3% followed by 32.8% dressed in different styles and three characters were shown dressing in flashy clothing.

The flashy clothing is outfits that are meant to show wealth and fashion, and

despite it is mentioned in the literature review that there was a trend of consuming and showing wealth by owning more commodities, the vast majority of the coded characters were shown in traditional attires that suited the common taste of the community.

Table 21

*Does the Character have his/her own set of words or codes to describe materialistic things? i.e. money: “rabbits,” cars,” “pigs”*

**Character Type \* Does the character have his/her set of words or codes to describe materialistic things? i.e. money: rabbits, cars: pigs Crosstabulation**

Count

		Does the character have his/her set of words or codes to describe materialistic things? i.e. money: rabbits, cars: pigs		Total
		Yes	No	
Character Type	Infitahi	4	15	19
	Challenged	2	24	26
	Follower	7	9	16
Total		13	48	61

According to the literature review, a new set of words that the “newly rich” introduced to the Egyptian slang was to describe materialistic commodities. However, the vast majority of the characters coded were not shown using this language. Forty-eight characters at 78.7% did not use this language. However, only 13 characters or 21.3% of the characters were shown using this language as shown in Table 20.

Table 22

*How ethical are these character depicted?*

**Character Type \* How Ethical are these characters depicted? Cross  
Tabulation**

		How Ethical are these characters depicted?			Total
		Ethical	Unethical	Fluctuating	
Character Type	Infitahi	0	16	3	19
	Challenged	22	2	2	26
	Follower	4	8	4	16
	Total	26	26	9	61

The portrayal of the ethical standards of the coded characters show that not a single Infitahi character was coded as ethical. The 19 characters were always shown committing an unethical act. Even if it was not a severe legal offense, they were seen as lying, deceiving, and/or ready to harm others for their own interests. Only three of them were shown fluctuating between being ethical and unethical. This shows that the filmmakers usually portrayed Al Infitahi in a negative light, favoring the challenged characters, 22 of which were shown as abiding by their values and principles and would not dare oppose the government even if they were tempted to do so.

The three Infitahi characters who were shown fluctuating on this variable were framed mostly as unethical characters, but there were times during the film events where they were seen doing good deeds to help others. For example, Sayed Marzouk in *Searching for Sayed Marzouk (Al Bahths A'aa Sayed Marzouk)*, is depicted as a kind Infitahi businessman who loves to mingle with the marginalized people from lower

classes and offers them his belongings and his furniture. Still, when he kills a pedestrian by his car accidentally, he does not hesitate to frame another person.

On the other hand, 22 characters out of the 26 characters coded as Challenged appear as ethical. The challenged middle class sectors were shown as honest and ethical people who held on to their values and principles and would not dare oppose the government even if they were tempted to do so. In *The Employees Living Among Us* (*Al Mowzafoun Fel Ard*), Kamel Abd El Shakour is a middle class employee in a public contracting company who refuses to take a bribe to help big businessmen purchase public land plots at lower prices, despite his having three children with a huge list of demands. Abd El Shakour instead decides to beg in disguise on the streets to be able to afford paying for his two daughters' marriage needs and for his only son's tuition fees. Another character in *The Big Master Beat* (*Darbet Moualim*), Rafaat is a police detective who rejects a bribe from a big Infitahi businessman who wanted him to lie in court to save the Infitahi's son in a murder case. However, his son was guilty of having committed the murder. Talaat Osman, in *Sharp as a Sword film* (*Ha'ad Al Seif*), is an honest and clever government employee who refuses to receive a bribe from big contractors to help them purchase public plots at lower prices, and in order to face his financial challenges and limited income, he decides to play music in the evenings with a belly dancer.

Table 23

*Justifications to Commit Illegal Acts*

Justifications to commit illegal acts	Frequency	Valid Percent
Urge to become wealthy to cope with the high standard of living	28	45.9%
Family obligations	9	14.8%
The character does not commit illegal acts	27	44.3%

To measure the morality and ethical stance of the coded characters, the researcher coded the reasons the character used to justify their doings. A high standard of living was the reason mostly coded by 45.9% of the characters, as shown in Table 22. This was the main excuse the characters used to justify their illegal activities. For example, Eid is a thief (coded as a challenged character coming from a low social class) working in the foreign currency black market in *The Dreams of Hend and Kamilia* (*Ahlam Hend Wa Kamilia*) film. He justifies stealing and his urgent need to collect money and become wealthy by having to face the expensive life and providing for his little daughter. In *The Story of a half Million Dollar* (*Hekayet Nous Million Dollar*) film, Amer (coded as a middle class Follower) is shown complaining to his wife that they cannot travel anywhere past what they are living in in terms of finances and educating their daughter, because him as a CFO to one of the public companies cannot provide him with the needed money

to live comfortably. Hence, he decides to steal half a million dollars from the company in partnership with one of his friends.

Table 24

*Character Type \* Refraining from Committing Illegal Acts Cross tabulation*

<b>Character Type * The character does not commit illegal acts</b>				
<b>Crosstabulation</b>				
Count				
		The character does not commit illegal acts		
		Yes	No	Total
Character Type	Infitahi	3	16	19
	Challenged	20	6	26
	Follower	4	12	16
Total		27	34	61

On the other hand, 44.3% of the characters coded were seen as not engaging in any illegal acts. These characters were mostly coded as “Challenged” by Al Infitah policy as shown in Table Eight. The character coded as “Challenged” were shown as ethical with a strong sense of morality and were unwilling to be tempted into committing any illegal actions even if the challenges were many and their conditions seemed impossible to improve.

It is also worth mentioning that the source of this morality or immorality had nothing to do with spirituality or religion. As shown in Table 25, 54 of the characters coded did not mention religion or fear of God as a reason for not committing any illegal actions.

Table 25

*Character Type\* Refraining from Committing an Illegal Act because of God's Limitations*

**Character Type \* Does the character mention that he/she won't commit an illegal/ethical act because they care about God's limitations? Crosstabulation**

Count

		Does the character mention that he/she won't commit an illegal/ethical act because they care about God's limitations?		
		Yes	No	Total
Character Type	Infitahi	0	19	19
	Challenged	6	20	26
	Follower	1	15	16
Total		7	54	61

One character only was shown as quoting but really abusing and misusing a Quranic verse to serve an illegal cause as shown in Table 26. This character was “Kamal” in *The Disgrace (Al A'aar)* film where he used to quote Quranic verses to justify the fact that his dealing in drugs is not “haram” (religiously forbidden) stating that they are natural plants and that it was never explicitly stated in the Quran as being sinful.

Table 26

*Does the character manipulate Quran/Bible verse to serve his/her cause?*

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	1	1.6
No	60	98.4
Total	61	100.0



Table 27

*Character's Personality Traits*

<i>Personality Traits</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>
Generous	20	32.8%
Selfish	20	32.8%
Stingy	1	1.6%
Stubborn	51	83.6%
Spend Long hours working	36	59%
Lazy at Work	4	6.6%
Greedy	32	52.5%
Honest	28	42.6%
Deceptive	32	52.5%

The researcher wanted to investigate the personality traits the characters representing the effects of Al Infitah in the Egyptian films had. A list of variables was placed to try to determine the usual traits and see if there were common areas among the characters coded that the filmmakers used in presenting those characters. The majority of the coded characters were shown as being stubborn. This personal trait was not assigned to a particular character type but was shared among the three types that the researcher studied: Al Infitahi, The Challenged by Al Infitah, and the Followers or those who decided to follow Al Infitah businesses and new social order as shown in Table 27.

Table 28

*Character Type \* stubbornness Cross tabulation*

**Character Type \* Is the character stubborn? Crosstabulation**

Count

		Is the character stubborn?			Total
		Yes	No	Unapplied	
Character Type	Infitahi	18	0	1	19
	Challenged	19	3	4	26
	Follower	14	2	0	16
Total		51	5	5	61

Being stubborn was coded as a personality trait for 51 characters at 83.6%. The characters coded were shown either as holding to their own opinions even if they had been warned of the risks, or they did not care about the consequences of their actions or wanted to challenge the law or the people to reach their targets or as wanting to overcome the temptations and remain faithful to their ethical beliefs. The most coded characters that were shown as being stubborn were the challenged characters, who mostly were shown refusing the Al Infitah temptations fearing any ethical or moral compromises.

For example, in *Ladies and Gentlemen, Watch Out (Entabeho Ayoha Al Sada)*, Dr. Galal Fahmy is a middle-class philosophy professor shown fighting all temptations to increase his income despite being challenged to get married. Since his salary does not allow him to buy a flat for him and his fiancée. He is confronted by a contractor, Antar, who had started off as a garbage collector and who later becomes the owner of many residential buildings and farms. This contractor attracts Fahmy's fiancée with his wealth and succeeds in marrying her despite his long friendship with Fahmy. Antar represents as

well the newly rich social segment mentioned in the literature review section where it is stated that because of Al Infitah's loose economic regulations, a new social class was formed that was mostly not educated or skilled but clever in starting a business either legally or illegally. The new social class formed was, then known as the "newly rich" and they believed in nothing except power and wealth.

Deceptiveness was featured in 52.5% of the characters as shown in Table 27, then greed for 52.5%, followed by honesty for 42.6%, followed by selfishness and care only for own welfare for 32.8% as shown and only twenty characters coded were categorized as generous for 32.8% of the characters as well.

Calculating a chi-square tabulation of whether the character type differ in framing him/her as stubborn showed significance at  $p=.193$  as shown in table 29.

Table 29

**Chi-Square Test for Stubbornness \* character type**

			Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-Sided)
Pearson	Chi-Square		6.078	4	.193
	Likelihood Ratio		8.549	4	.073
	Linear-by-Linear Association		.044	1	.834
N of Valid Cases			61		

Table 30

*Is the Character Deceptive?*

**Character Type \* Is the character deceptive? Crosstabulation**

Count

		Is the character deceptive?			Total
		Yes	No	Unapplied	
Character Type	Infitahi	18	1	0	19
	Challenged	3	21	2	26
	Follower	11	4	1	16
Total		32	26	3	61

As shown in Table 30, Al Infitahis were shown as the most deceptive from the coded characters. A total of 18 characters, out of the 19 Infitahi characters, were shown comfortable in misleading others and/or governmental entities to increase their personal gains. They were shown as having the ability to withhold their true feelings from others to attain their goals. On the other hand, 21 characters coded as Challenged were shown as honest and truthful.

For example, Hatem Zahran, in *Hatem Zahran's era (Zaman Hatem Zahran)* is a businessman who comes from a middle class family living in Port Said. The values and beliefs that his family holds on to are socialist in nature. Hatem escapes the military service during the 1967 war and travels to the US to make a fortune. He returns to Egypt after Al Infitah policy implementation aiming to start a cosmetics factory. He seems to be jealous of his late brother, an Egyptian soldier, who had died in the 1967 war. He tries to have the blessings of his father who works as an academic professor but his father objects to his doings and sees him as an opportunist who pushes people for more consumption and offers them unnecessary products. Hatem is shown as a deceptive character that is

ready to step over the people who love him if they were to harm his welfare. He is clever, and can manipulate any one to make them serve his plans.

Calculating a chi-square of whether the character type differ in framing him/her as deceptive proved to be significant at  $p=.000$  as shown in table 31.

Table 31

Chi-Square test for Character type\*Is the character deceptive?

### Chi-Square Tests

		Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-Sided)
Pearson	Chi-Square	33.246	4	.000
	Likelihood Ratio	38.806	4	.000
	Linear-by-Linear Association	3.507	1	0.61
N of Valid Cases		61		

Table 32

*Is the Character Greedy?*

### Character Type \* Is the character greedy? Crosstabulation

Count

		Is the character greedy?			Total
		Yes	No	Unapplied	
Character Type	Infitahi	16	2	1	19
	Challenged	4	19	3	26
	Follower	12	3	1	16
Total		32	24	5	61

A greedy person is defined in this study as someone who is chiefly concerned with gaining more wealth and power even at the expense of others' benefit and welfare. 19 characters coded as Challenged were shown as not having the urge to gain more wealth, as opposed to 16 Infitahi characters who were depicted as greedy.

Despite being shown unsatisfied with their social status generally, the Challenged characters did not appear as being greedy or materialistic. They wished to have adequate income with no financial challenges to be able to live comfortably. They were shown as not concerned of attaining excessive wealth and power.

As for the Infitahi characters they were shown as wanting more wealth, even if that means harming others. Al Gayyar in *Goodbye my Friend (Salam ya Sahby)*, Al Dandarawy in *The Basement (Al Badroum)*, and Fahmy Al Kashef in *The Auger (Al Ghoul)* represent greedy businessmen who increase their fortune because of the implementation of Al Infitah policy. They are shown as cheaters, and as cunning exploiters of the people's needs. For example, Al Gayyar deprives the market of vegetables to be the only in control and to manipulate the prices. Al Dandarawy is a contractor who cheats on building materials to save money which results in the collapse of a building and the death of those living in it and Fahmy El Kashef trades in expired food products and mentions in the film that he does not care about people's health or well-being and that he is capable of selling anything even if it was "sunlight."

Calculating a chi-square test of character type and framing him/her as greedy proved to be highly significant at  $p=.000$  as shown in table 33.

Table 33

**Chi-Square Tests**

		Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-Sided)
	Pearson Chi-Square	25.896	4	.000
	Likelihood Ratio	28.342	4	.000
	Linear-by-Linear Association	.491	1	.484
	N of Valid Cases	61		

Table 34

*Does the Character spend long hours working?*

**Character Type \* Does the character spend long hours working?**  
**Crosstabulation**

Count

		Does the character spend long hours working?			Total
		Yes	No	Unapplied	
Character Type	Infitahi	8	0	11	19
	Challenged	18	4	4	26
	Follower	10	2	4	16
Total		36	6	19	61

Despite the fact that 19 characters coded as Challenged were seen as not satisfied with their social status and meeting financial limitations as mentioned before, they were seen as working more and spending excessive working hours or even working two jobs to

increase their income. As indicated in Table 34, 18 Challenged characters were coded for spending long hours in their jobs, while Al Infitahis who were coded as satisfied with their social statuses earlier, are not seen as spending many hours working. This shows that the films depicted increasing one's income, as having nothing to do with the amount of time one would devote to their profession. Rather, the type of business one works for is shown in the films as what determines one's economic income and social status.

Calculating a chi-square test of whether the character type differ in framing him/her as spending long hours working proved to be significant at  $p=.028$  as shown in table 35.

Table 35

Chi-Square test for Character Type \* Is the character Portrayed as Greedy

### Chi-Square Tests

			Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-Sided)
	Pearson	Chi-Square	10.844	4	.028
	Likelihood	Ratio	12.264	4	.015
	Linear-by-Linear	Association	3.314	1	.069
	N of Valid Cases		61		



**Table 36**

*Is the Character Selfish?*

**Character Type \* Is the character selfish? Crosstabulation**

Count

		Is the character selfish?			Total
		Yes	No	Unapplied	
Character Type	Infitahi	14	2	3	19
	Challenged	0	23	3	26
	Follower	6	7	3	16
Total		20	32	9	61

Table 36 shows that only two characters of Al Infitahis were not coded as selfish, while 14 out of 19 characters were seen acting selfishly and caring only for their own benefit. On the other hand, no Challenged characters were seen as selfish, 23 of the coded characters were seen bearing in mind the others' well being while pursuing their life decisions and paths.

Ah Infitahi was usually portrayed as a person who is only after his/her own welfare without regard to any ethical limitations. For example, Assad Yakout, in *The Forgotten (Al Mansy)*, is a big tycoon who tried to push his assistant Ghada to engage in a sexual relationship with one of his partners as reward for him to finalize a big business deal. When his assistant objected and escaped, he forcefully brought her back to his partner, not minding or caring for her consent, he was only after his own benefir, acting selfishly in every level, only for Ghada to be saved by a poor employee, Youssef Al Mansy, who had met her by chance.

Calculating a chi-square test of whether the character type differ in framing him/her as selfish proved to be highly significant at  $p=.000$  as shown in table 37.

Table 37

Chi-Square test for Character Type \* Is the Character Selfish?

### Chi-Square Tests

		Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-Sided)
	Pearson Chi-Square	31.719	4	.000
	Likelihood Ratio	39.725	4	.000
	Linear-by-Linear Association	3.545	1	.060
	N of Valid Cases	61		

**RQ3:** What are the most dominant frames in the portrayal of *Al Infitah* policy in the Egyptian cinema: conflict, economic consequences, attribution of responsibility, human interest or moral frame?

The researcher looked at the media frames the filmmakers used to portray the social effects of *Al Infitah* policy in their films to further complete the picture of how the messages were delivered. To answer this research question, the researcher coded the film as a whole as the unit of analysis to examine the dominant frame those films used to convey their messages. The coding will therefore amount to 40 films and not to 61 characters as shown in the previous tables.

The researcher looked at five media frames (conflict media frame, economic consequences media frame, attribution of responsibility, human-interest frame, and moral

frame) using the scale developed by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000). The coding was conducted as a binary yes/no on a series of factors underlying each frame. The results of the coding are shown in Table 38.

The results indicate that the most dominant frame, which the filmmakers used to portray the effects of *Al Infitah* policy, was the human-interest frame. All of the 40 films coded contained scenes of outrage, empathy, caring, sympathy and/or compassion. The human-interest frame, as defined in this research, is framing the film characters in an emotional light. The conflict frame followed this, where filmmakers usually showed an ongoing conflict between two characters or an individual and the government. This conflict led to an exchange of accusations on whom to carry the responsibility of the negative consequences of *Al Infitah* policy. Hence, the third frame that the filmmakers used was the attribution of responsibility, which shall lead the viewer to assess who is to carry the responsibility of the negative living conditions resulted from *Al Infitah*. This ongoing conflict and exchange of blames was usually presented and portrayed through a dialogue of moral advice to reveal the right doings of each party and the moral justification of the three different types of characters coded in this study. This was followed by the morality frame, which the filmmakers used to pass judgments to the audience on *Al Infitah* policy and its societal effects. And finally, although *Al Infitah* is an economic policy, discussing the economic consequences of *Al Infitah* seems to have been the least important frame to the filmmakers.

Table 38

*Frame Dominance*

Frame	Frequency
<b>Human Interest Frame</b>	
Do the main characters use adjectives or personal vignettes that generate feelings of outrage, empathy, caring, sympathy, or compassion that would make the audience sympathize with him/her even if they were committing something wrong?	32
Do the main characters in the film emphasize how individuals and groups are affected by the issue/problem?	33
Does the story of the film contain scenes that might generate feelings of outrage, empathy, caring, sympathy, or compassion?	40
<b>Conflict Frame</b>	
Does the story of the film reflect disagreement between parties-individuals-groups-the governments?	35
Does any party-individual-group-government reproach another in the film's story?	21
Does the story of the film refer to two sides or to more than two sides of the problem or issue?	26

Does the story of the film refer to winners and losers?	39
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### **Attribution of Responsibility**

Do the main characters in the film suggest that some level of government has the ability to alleviate the negative consequences of Al Infitah policy?

Do the main characters in the film suggest a solution to the negative consequences of Al Infitah policy?

Do the main characters in the film suggest that an individual (or group of people in the society) is responsible for the negative consequences of Al Infitah policy?

Do the main characters in the film suggest the negative consequences of Al Infitah require urgent action?

### **Morality Frame**

Do the main characters of the film send any moral messages to the audience?

Does the story make reference to morality, God, and other religious tenets?

Does the story of the film offer specific social prescriptions about how to behave?

### **Economic Frame**

Is there a mention of financial losses or gains now or in the future?  
Costs/degree of expense involved in the film?

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Is there a reference to economic consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action in the film?	8
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### **Factors Measuring the Human-interest Frame:**

To assess the usage of the human-interest frame in the coded films, three factors were measured: the emphasis in which the individuals and groups were shown affected by the issue in the films, the scenes portrayed in the films that might generate different feelings and emotions, and the personal vignettes the films shown that would push the audience to sympathize with the character even if they were committing wrong.

The 40 films studied all contained scenes that generate feelings of outrage, empathy, caring, sympathy or compassion. All of the characters coded were in scenes where they expressed their emotions and feelings towards the conflict they are going through or presented in the film. Besides, the films coded used adjectives or personal vignettes to generate emotional feelings of outrage, empathy, caring, sympathy, or compassion that would make the audience sympathies with the depicted characters even if they were committing something wrong.

For example, in *The Auger (Al Ghou)* film, Adel kills Fahmy El Kashef at the end. Adel (a middle-class journalist coded as a Challenged character by Al Infitah) is seen as an ethical character throughout the film who fights Fahmy El Kashef's; who is coded as an upper class Infitahi, intentions to get his own son out of a murder he had committed by bribing the witnesses. We see that Al Kashef exploiting the needs of the poor by giving them money to keep quiet, as they are the family of the murdered who also comes from a

very poor family. Throughout the film, we see that Adel is very keen on backing the law that he is totally against the way the big businessman exploits the needy and that he is against the trade monopoly and the greed that comes with excessive wealth. However, by the end of the film, we see that Al Kashef was able to get his son out of prison using his own power and tricks, and actually imprison Adel. This makes Adel see and believe that no law would support him and he has to stand for his own rights after being subjected to that severe injustice, so he decided to kill Al Kashef, taking revenge for all Al Kashef's victims.

The same way of punishing the greedy tycoons is used in *Whom Shall We Shoot (Al Man Natlouk Al Roasas)* film Moustafa Hussein, the socialist journalist kills Roushdy Abd El Kader, the head of a big contracting company. The latter is a symbol of Al Infitah policy as well because instead of taking full responsibility for the collapse of one building, he imprisons Moustafa's friend, an employee in the same company and forges the official papers to make Moustafa's friend fully responsible for the collapse that killed all the residents of this building. Viewers are led to sympathize with Moustafa, who kills a cheater and a murderer with no integrity and principles. And throughout the film, we see how Moustafa Hussein was abused in prison for his communist/socialist beliefs and that he believed that the means of production and all production facilities should be shared by everyone and not be the exclusive property of the rich people only. Worth mentioning that *Whom Shall We Shoot* (1975) is the first film to discuss Al Infitah policy social effects, where it directly accuses Al Infitah for all the corruption and social struggles, Egyptian are facing. The title of the film points fingers on those responsible and clearly judge that those who caused this mess, from the point of view of the filmmaker, deserves

to die!

The previous examples were cases where the main hero was usually presented in a positive light and had high ethical stances and firm moral beliefs to which he sticks, but later commits a crime for several reasons as explained above. Therefore, despite committing this crime, their stories generate feelings of emotions that might help the viewers sympathize and forgive them for what they did. Also, the messages of those films indicate that the high level of corruption of those who represent Al Infitah might push those who are challenged by this policy to take matters into their own hands and punish the Infitahis all by themselves for all the corruptions and crimes they committed. This also shows that the characters who were coded as challenged denounced or lost hope in the government to create the needed balance and punish those guilty.

### **Factors Measuring the Conflict Frame:**

Another dominant frame in representing Al Infitah portrayal in films was the conflict frame. To measure the conflict frame the following variables were studied: if the story of the film assigned losers and winners during the film events, if individuals, groups and government reproach one another in the film, the level of disagreement of those three entities and who are the two sides shown representing the conflict.

Most of the films coded show some level of disagreement between parties, individuals, groups and the government. Conflict frame is defined in this study as framing the characters through the conflicts and agreements with or against other entities.

The films show some level of disagreement between either parties and individuals or groups and the government or between individuals and representatives of the Egyptian



government. Also, the films studied did show some scenes where an individual or a group of people reproaches the government for their conditions or vice versa. Similarly, a representative of the government can be shown blaming individuals or groups for their wrongdoings or their abuse of *Al Infitah* policy. In *The People on Top (Ahl El Kema)* film, a police detective blames the newly rich and selfish exploiters for the bad living conditions Egyptians are witnessing. The same source of blame was also presented in *The Beat of Master (Darbeit Moulim)* film, where we see a police detective blaming the same social class for all the high prices and corruption the country is passing through. The vast majority of the films coded always framed the winner or the loser in the main conflict being depicted in the film.

#### **Factors Measuring the Attribution of Responsibility Frame:**

The attribution of responsibility frame was defined in this research as attributing the responsibility of *Al Infitah* effects on society to either the government or to an entity or to an individual. The frame was measured through examining the following variables:

The majority of the films coded did not suggest that some level in the hierarchy of the government had the ability to alleviate the negative consequences of *Al Infitah* policy. On the other hand, the films coded blame either an individual or a group of people in the Egyptian society for the negative consequences of *Al Infitah* policy. In spite of the fact that those characters did acknowledge the negative consequences of the policy, the vast majority did not mention that those consequences required any urgent action.

### **Factors Measuring the Morality Frame:**

Another frame that dominated Al Infitah portrayal in Egyptian films is the morality frame, as it was shown that moral messages were passed to the audience of the film. The morality frame was measured by coding the following variables:

In this study, the morality frame focuses on the ethical edge of the films' main characters. For example, Hassan, in *The Bus Driver (Sawak Al Autobis)* was depicted as a humble bus driver trying to save his father's big workshop from closing down by trying to borrow money from several people, some of whom were his sisters. The film shows how everyone, in the family and otherwise, seemed absorbed in their own lives and were not keen to help their father, except for Hassan. The latter was shown as honest and caring about his father's legacy and not wanting him to lose his shop. In his journey, Hassan fights the greed and selfishness of his siblings and tries to work hard, day and night, to be able to save money to pay off his father's debt. Hence, in this film, the main character presented to the viewers a good model of a son with a good value system.

The main characters in the films studied offered some sort of advice on how to behave during those times either in order to survive the ordeals or to overcome the obstacles they were confronted by in the films. These pieces of advice were not limited to moral ones but some of them were about how to be manipulative and clever in dealing with the negative consequences of Al Infitah policy even through illegal ways.

A direct moral message can be found in *The Vagabonds (Al Saa'laik)* film, where Mona, a female character condemns the belief that Salah, the Infitahi, has enough money to buy anything. Salah is shown to be in love with her and sees that she should accept because he can afford a lavish life for her; but she directly asks, "Why do you believe that

money shall bring you everything you seek?” By the end of the film, we see that Salah denounces his excessive wealth and starts to change his perception that power and wealth are everything especially that they were not adequate enough to bring him the love life he had always dreamed to live, so he states that “money is a source of fear and humiliation”. According to him, once you are very wealthy, you will always be controlled by your greed and fear that this money will disappear one day.

### **Factors Measuring the Economic Frame:**

In spite of the fact that *Al Infitah* policy is an economic policy, the economic frame was the least featured frame in the films studied. The economic frame focuses on the economic consequences of the event. The economic consequences frame was measured through coding for these two variables: if the film mentioned the cost of expenses involved and if the film referred to an economic consequence when an action is pursued. Most of the films coded did not refer to any economic consequences of pursuing or not pursuing any action towards *Al Infitah* policy.

The main characters in the films did not determine any losses or gains in the future using economic figures or terms. Hence, the framing of *Al Infitah* economic consequences were not used much while portraying the effects of this policy. This could be due to the fact that films lean more on drama, characters’ conflicts and emotions instead of showing mere economic facts. This was demonstrated in the results of the previous frames, where framing the characters in an emotional light (human interest frame) and focusing on the different characters disagreements (conflict frame) were quite dominant in presenting *Al Infitah* social effects.



## **Chapter Six**

### **DISCUSSION**

Egypt witnessed a revolution less than a decade ago in 2011 against the economic, political and social status millions of Egyptians have been living through. It is important to study the origin of the policies that caused the wide gap between classes and created a dual society where one segment is wealthy and the others are very poor and in need. This study can act as a tool for social and media observers to understand the media played in framing Al Infitah policy debate.

In 1974, former Egyptian President Mohammed Anwar El Sadat introduced a new economic policy, the effect of which still prevails today on the Egyptian society. The policy, calls for opening up the Egyptian economy to foreign investments and loosening up the control of the government on national industries. Through this policy, Egyptians were able to buy and use many foreign products to which, previously, most of them had no access. Foreign banks spread quickly steadily becoming a good source for businessmen who needed loans to expand their businesses and their bank accounts. The free trade zones were launched, foreign goods replaced Egyptian ones, and privatization of the main means of production of the country became a common practice.

This economic policy did not only affect the Egyptian economy but had a direct impact on the Egyptian social hierarchy and social behavior as well. The effects caused a big rise in consumption among the citizens in the society; hence, wealth became the main aim for many. This challenged a large sector of the

Egyptian society who tried to cope with the new changes. The middle class experienced a downward shift in its standard of living since everything had become more expensive than ever before (Amin, 1994).

Few studies have examined how the Egyptian cinema portrayed the effects of Al Infitah policy on the Egyptian society. They were more of observational studies or commentaries highlighting a number of films each time. Hence, this made it a good opportunity to examine all the films dealing with this area of research in order to fill the gap using the correct academic tools. The study does not aim to evaluate the Open-Door policy; yet it aims to evaluate the portrayal of the new social order resulting from the *Al Infitah* policy from the Egyptian filmmakers' perspective.

Furthermore, having a coherent and thorough study that shows those effects from the point of view of independent filmmakers is as a good reference for policy makers for what happened and possibly still happening to Egyptians ethically, socially and politically when challenged by high rates of consumption and loose unprotected economic policies. The hope is that policy makers may consider adopting better policies in the future.

It is important to note that the filmmakers, especially in the early years of introducing Al Infitah policy, acted as the main source of analysis and critique for this policy, since El Sadat had prevented any national news media from criticizing the policy (Hassan, 2006). Hence, the filmmakers in this sense acted as media gatekeepers to how this economic policy be framed and communicated to the public. They precisely used the "packaging" and the narrative, in which this policy to be portrayed through and framed by. Crow & Lowlor (2016) argue that "constructing narratives," offer meaningful

explanation to any given policy. This process of coverage a specific policy and policymaking shall help in guiding the public opinion about the policy under coverage (Rose & Baumgartner, 2013). Hence, the frames in which the filmmakers used to portray the effects of Al Infitah policy on the Egyptian society might guide people's perceptions and influence the people's decisions when evaluating this policy.

The researcher believes that the filmmakers of the coded films classified the Egyptian society pre-*Al Infitah* into two very distinctive sub-groups, they are very connected and interrelated, but way too different in terms of their ethical standards, goals and means of reaching for their goals. The filmmakers usually favored those who refused to abide by *Al Infitah* social order, and showed them as ethical, strong and entitled to their value system. There was not a single Infitahi character coded as ethical, while 22 characters out of the 26 Challenged coded characters were seen as ethical, honest and stubborn in terms of holding to their ethical codes and value system.

The coded films showed Cairo as a city consumed by foreign products, eaten up by a huge rise in consumption where the urge to be wealthy and powerful is the main drive or threat for the depicted characters. Galal Amin in his book *Whatever happened to the Egyptians* (1994) stated that everything in Egypt seemed to have a private access: sports clubs, beaches, and fine property. The enjoyments in life in general were exclusive to societies belonging to *Al Infitah* businesses. This was clearly seen in the coded films where Al Infitahis are comfortable being the owners of properties and means of production, usually depriving the other classes of sharing with them their wealth. The middle and lower classes were portrayed as striving to cope and living well to at least attain simple life goals like marriage and providing for a family.

This huge gap between these two sub-groups of society created a big tension that would lead those in lower classes to seek revenge from the big Infitahis. The coded movies show cases where a well-educated, supposedly ethical (in most of the film events) middle class citizen intentionally kills big Infitahis, after becoming so angry at their corruption and unjust doings. Those characters, despite being murderers, are shown in an emotional light and their actions are justified, because the viewer gets so absorbed by the level of corruption Al Infitahi is shown committing. These characters are shown desperate for the Egyptian government to support them or punish Al Infitahis for their greed and corruption, a clear signal that the lower classes are boiling of anger from the injustice in the distribution of wealth and the level of corruption and immorality Al Infitahis were shown pursuing.

Filmmakers stereotyped the characters affected by Al Infitah into specific roles through out the coded films. They assigned specific frames that remained stable from film to film. The Infitahi represented the greed, the immorality and opportunism, while the Challenged portrayed honesty and ethics. The audience sees *Al Infitah* constantly in a negative light. The Egyptian filmmakers framed Al Infitahi as a selfish person who despises the lower classes and intentionally marginalizes them. Assad Yakout, in *The Forgotten (Al Mansy)*, calls the lower classes “insects” in the film. He believes that the lower classes are envious of the rich and cannot compete with them. Al Adham Al Fayoumy is another Infitahi businessman in *The Era of Power (Asr El Kouwa)* who runs a number of big companies and violates the law. In one of the scenes, Al Adham says that the “Law is made for the weak”, and in another scene, he adds, “this is the era of power only.” In other scenes, the viewer sees that Adham believes that life has no room for



emotions and only personal welfare matters.

Also Al Infitahis and the Followers of *Al Infitah* in almost all of the coded films are rarely shown as succeeding in earning their fortune lawfully. They are usually seen engaging in some sort of an illegal activity to expand their wealth or improve their social status. Only three characters among the coded population were not shown committing illegal acts, while the remaining 16 characters portraying Al Infitahi committed crimes. Fahmy Abd El Hady is a businessman in *Don't Put off the Smoke (Hata La Yateer Al Dokhan)*, was able to escape poverty by trading in drugs and taking cover for his illegal business from his legal consultation bureau. Fahmy is shown as a character envious of the rich and determined to take revenge from his wealthy friends because they used to make fun of him and never offered to help him when they were studying together at the university. Fahmy is shown as, for example, cunningly planning to send one of his friend's family businesses into bankruptcy. Later, he runs for parliament to gain more power without caring about the needs of the people who had actually elected him.

The researcher can confidently state that most of the coded film framed the characters in a simple one-dimensional frame. There were no layers for each character. The character was usually either good or ethical the film's entire events, or he/she represents evil all the way. This simplistic stereotypical representation may harm ethical businessmen in reality. When none of the businessmen representing *Al Infitah* in the 40 films coded in this study, this might create a pre-judgment that any businessman is a corrupt, a thief, or a murderer that usually he did not or would have been able to succeed as such except after engaging in some form of an illegal business.

Filmmaking as a form of art and as a medium is all about passing visions and

narrating stories. Films conveying specific media frames would affect peoples' judgments in evaluating *Al Infitah* policy. The four functions of any media frame as defined by Entman (1992) is first to define a particular problem, determine its causes, pass moral judgments, and suggest solutions to the issue. To a very big extent, this was what the filmmakers did. They framed *Al Infitah* as the main cause for a suffering Egyptian society full of ills and obstacles. Through the characters depicted in the stories, the filmmakers passed moral statements and emotions that might push the viewer to adapt a specific judgment. Nevertheless, not every film offered a solution to the problem as the role of films as an artistic endeavor is not always to offer solutions, but rather to show parts of reality and package it in the form of a story to affect people's emotions and cognition.

Framing the coded characters as such can guide the viewers to evaluate the social effects of *Al Infitah* policy in a specific realm that agrees with the filmmakers' presentation. Hence, by using their tools in story telling and through filmmaking as a media platform for communicating their message, the filmmakers can help shape public opinion. As shown in the study, there was a clear stereotypical presentation that connected *Al Infitah* with greed, immorality, opportunism and committing illegal or criminal acts.

The researcher of this study sees that one of the explanations of this constant negative framing of *Al Infitah* can be traced to the origins and background of the filmmakers themselves. As stated in the results chapter, 65% of the coded films were produced between the periods of 1981-1990. The filmmakers of this generation were highly influenced by the socialist Nasserite ideology, since their childhood and

adolescence were spent during his ruling. Moreover, this generation of filmmakers witnessed the defeat of 1967 and was crushed by its results, which might have magnified a feeling or a need for them to see a better social and economic status after passing this defeat. Instead they witnessed an economic policy that “opened the door” for foreign investment, that was not based on the nationalization and socialist ideology that Nasser was rallying for. This could be one reason why they might have developed a negative stance against *Al Infitah* policy and was only able to see its drawbacks.

One of the main social effects that *Al Infitah* policy was a direct result for is the formation of new societies, one of which was what was referred to in the literature review as parasitic society (Hassan, 2006). Hassan stated that this society consisted of smugglers, feudal lords, and real estate holders who used *Al Infitah* policy uncontrolled investment incentives greedily. Another society that was introduced by *Al Infitah* is the formation of the newly rich or the “nouveaux riches.” Gaffney (1987) argued that the new rich segment that was formed of rich workers and skilled craftsman were able to substitute the Egyptian middle class families after *Al Infitah*.

This social result is consistent with the filmmakers framing of these new societies, as they portrayed the social class change and the threat the middle class would be in. In *Love by the Pyramids (Al Houb Fawka Hadbet Al Haram)* film, Aly Abd El Sattar, a middle class employee predicts that the big families in Egypt would be, later in the future; coming from the working class, overshadowing the educated middle class, since they were the ones who had become better off in terms of power and wealth after *Al Infitah*. A similar origin of the newly rich class was shown in several coded films: Morsi and Salah in the *The Vagabonds (Al Saa'leik)*, Al Dandarawy in *The Basement (Al*

*Badroum*), Zaatar Al Noury in *The Pople at the Top (Ahl El Kema)* and Boray in *Al Bateneya*.

Another description that was mentioned in the literature review section was that those new societies had special language in which they used to code materialistic items i.e. naming big cash of money as rabbits. Nevertheless, the researcher found that 48 characters out of the 61 coded characters did not use this language. This indicates that the language of coding materialistic items was present but not as generalized as it was mentioned in the literature review. The researcher of this study thinks this happened, because this study coded more films than the previous studies concerned with the same area of research, hence the observation made by earlier researchers maybe was based on a limited number of coded films, but here the population is bigger, so it indicates that this use of language was not as common as they suggested in their studies.

*Al Inftah* in Egyptian cinema had a human face. It was portrayed through people's lives, instead of stating economic activities and mere facts of the economic consequences of the implementation of this policy. This was not of a surprise to the researcher, since filmmaking is a form of art and expression, which tells stories those viewers, will connect with. Filmmaking totally plays on the senses of the audience and affects their cognition and emotions using many elements like good scenes, music, verbal narration with strong effective sentences and quotes, lighting and settings that all relate to the audience's senses and feelings.

What mattered and counted was the direct effect of *Al Inftah* on the people living and their realities. The researcher has seen Challenged characters of lower classes expressing their deep wish to work abroad, being really desperate to cope with the expensive price

tags and with unemployment. The direct impact of *Al Infitah* policy on employment was not portrayed in numbers and statistics, but in a character who can be seen suffering of his/her limited resources, sharing with the viewer his/her emotions of despair and confusion, sometimes denouncing nationality and a sense of belonging to his/her country, and all of what he/she is aiming at is a humane opportunity to live well.

This again resonates with the human-interest frame as a dominant frame, which the filmmakers used to portray the social effects of *Al Infitah*. Portraying the array of emotions of the characters and their struggles and intentions was the main focus of the filmmakers.

### **Limitations of the study and Recommendations**

One of the main challenges that faced the researcher is compiling the list of films that discussed the social effects of *Al Infitah*. The two sources were previous writings and contacting cinema critics, meaning that there is a possibility that the list is not complete or comprehensive.

The second challenge was the lack of proper literature. Most of the previous studies were not academic research but rather literary critiques and opinions.

Hence, it is highly recommended that similar academic studies take place to further investigate these issues. Also, it is highly recommended that a future study be conducted on the audience themselves to check how such films affected their perceptions and cognition about *Al Infitah* as a policy.

## CONCLUSION

The Egyptian society after *Al Infitah* implementation is shown in films as a challenging environment for the middle and lower classes. The films show that the most pressing issue was the ability to financially provide for the family obligations or the expensive living standards introduced by Al Infitah. The Egyptian society is shown as connecting social success to the ability to have more fortune and power. The two character types, Al Infitahi and The Follower, are shown as much more satisfied with their social statuses.

Acquiring social mobility and gaining financial status are associated with committing crimes and legal violations, mostly committed by Al Infitahis in the films. The filmmakers framed the Egyptian society after *Al Infitah* as a difficult society that is striving to live properly and enjoy the basic needs in life. The challenge *Al Infitah* formed on the Egyptian society and the high prices and the rise in inflation and consumerism in general pushed the people to have a deep need for wealth.

*Al Infitah* society as shown in the films does not value except the person's financial status and fortune. Moreover, the intensity in which legal violations were shown committed show that the Egyptian society after *Al Infitah* did not frown much upon those who committed crimes, as some of the coded characters were not blamed or punished in the film events, but rather shown as enjoying their wealth and feeling happy with their social power.



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## Appendix

### Film Synopses

#### ***Whom Shall We Shoot (Ala Man Natlounk Al Roasas) (1975)***

A thriller where we see a young journalist Moustafa Hussein kills Roushdy Abd El Kader, the head of a big contracting company in the beginning of the film. Later, we know that Hussein committed this crime to gain revenge for his friend who used to work as an engineer in the same company and Roushdy frauds the official paper to make Moustafa friend appears as if he is the only responsible for the collapse of one of the company's residential buildings.

#### ***Be Aware Ladies and Gentlemen (Entabhou Ayoha Al Sadda) (1978)***

A social drama is focusing on the battle between wealth and ethical principles. The film shows how an uneducated person, Antar who started off as a garbage collector, is able due to become a rich contractor and owns a number of farms and residential buildings. This was due to his twisted tactics in recycling garbage without registering his business in government institutions such as the tax authority to avoid paying taxes. The film shows how everyone admires his wealth and eventually works for him except for the philosophy professor, Dr. Galal Fahmy who refuses to accept him, because he refuses the value system he is presenting. Dr. Fahmy appears as a financially challenged professor who is not able to get married. He strives to collect the needed money to buy an apartment. His only salvation is Antar who accepts to sell him an apartment at a lower

price on condition that he help Antar's son get over his problem at school. We notice that Antar's son suffers from an inferiority complex because his school friends bully him because of his father's previous job as a garbage collector. Antar's solution to the problem is encouraging his son to show off his wealth but Fahmy tries to explain to the little boy that nothing is wrong with him as long as his father is an honest and productive man. But this is not Fahmy's real belief. The beginning of the film, Antar thinks that Dr. Fahmy's sister is single and proposes to marry her, but Dr. Fahmy refuses and reminds him of the low class he belongs to, and that there is no way his educated family would allow such a marriage. Dr. Fahmy later on becomes a psychologically disturbed person when he loses his fiancée to Antar, whom she accepts to marry because of his wealth.

### ***Al Batnya* (1980)**

Warda is a belly dancer who gets pregnant after having an affair with Fathy, the son of Al Akkad, the biggest drug dealer in Al Bateneya neighborhood in Cairo. Al Akkad refuses to let Fathy marry Warda, kidnaps Warda's son and informs her that he is dead while he was alive and living among Al Akkad family. Warda advances in her career and gets connected with influential and wealthy businessmen. With one of them, she decides to bring one of Fathy's sons from another marriage to kill him in revenge, but she later discovered she had killed her own son. The film shows the connections and the dirty business of drugs in Egypt during Al Infitah years and reflects on the tycoons and big families who engage in legal businesses as a cover up to their corrupted dealings in drugs.

***People at the Top (Ahl El Kema) (1981)***

The film tackles the social and economic effects of Al Infitah policy on the society in Egypt through three main characters. Zaatar El Noury, who starts off as a thief then by working on importing illegally, he becomes rich and is socially accepted. The second character is Zaghloul Rafaat who owns an exporting and importing company and who is well connected to influential businessmen and police figures that always help him get away with his violations and his smuggling activities. The third character is Mohammed Fawzy, the police detective who refuses to support or share in any immoral or criminal activities if this would make him live at a better standard financially and socially. The film sheds light on the smuggling tactics the traders use to get away with their imports and shows how the police gives cover to the traders to be able to smuggle their goods. The film completely blames the government for the high prices, for unemployment, for emigration, for low salaries and for housing problems. The film repeatedly shows that these problems are a product of Al Infitah policy. The characters of the film show that the most important thing is wealth and that poverty can kill everything and anything. The film ends with the failing Mohammed Fawzy, the ethical and dedicated figure, who despite him being fully aware of how vital wealth is for life, he still refuses to submit to temptations. He is portrayed as the only loser, where Noury becomes a well-respected guy high up on the social ladder and Rafaat getting away with his crimes and remains in his prestigious position.

***Date Dinner (Maaw'ed Al Ashaa) (1981)***

Nawal is forced to marry Asaad after he had raped her and her parents don't mind since

he is wealthy and well connected. Nawal tries to escape the confined and boring life with Assad, but he never allows her to start a new life even after they got divorced. Nawal agrees to go back to him but only to kill him by poisoning his favorite meal. While they were having dinner, Asaad suspects there is something in the food, so he orders Nawal to eat as well, hence both die while having dinner.

***Fangs (Anyab)* (1981)**

This is a fictional film showing a couple trapped inside Dracula's house for one night, but succeed to escape.. In the film entitled "Anyab", Dracula represents the struggles and the economic constraints that face any young couple wishing to marry. The film shows the same character that plays Dracula playing other roles as a doctor, a technician and a contractor in an attempt to show how Al Infitahi class misuses and abuses the middle class who cannot afford to pay the high prices dictated by the Al Infitah policy.

***The Bus Driver (Sawak Al Autobis)* (1982)**

Hassan Sultan drives a public bus and faces a big financial problem when his father's workshop is subject to a shutdown because of tax evasion. Hassan tries to collect the needed money from his elder sisters, but nobody can help either because they cannot afford to or because they don't want to give up any part of their savings.

In his attempt to save his father's workshop, Hassan is confronted with the ugly reality of his sisters' husbands who, despite the fact that they are rich because of their successful businesses, refuse to give him any money. Besides, Hassan's wife refuses to help him,



because she feels that her family deserves their money rather than his extended family. The film shows how Hassan's generation is devastated by the Israeli military defeat in 1967. All of his friends are depicted as unfortunate or as fleeing the country to be able to have better job opportunities. Hassan himself used to serve the Egyptian military yet his economic status is not good or even satisfactory for him.

Most of the film's characters are opportunists and those who are wealthy are either deceptive or work illegally, i.e. drug dealers. The film ends when Hassan loses everything. His wife asks for a divorce, his own son leaves with his mother, his father is dead and he sells his taxi which he used drive in the evenings to increase his income and to get the money needed to pay for his father's workshop.

He ends up as a desperate person who is very angry at his country. This shows in the closing scene when he aggressively hits a pickpocket swearing at everyone while the national anthem is playing in the background.

### ***The Disgrace (Al A'aar)* (1982)**

Three brothers find themselves forced to finalize a big drug deal their late father had agreed about. They are forced to commit this crime fearing poverty since their father had spent all their money to buy this big amount of drugs. The brothers fail to preserve the drugs. As a result, one of the three brothers commits suicide, and the other two suffer psychological shocks.

### ***The Street Football Player (Al Hareef)* (1983)**

This is a social drama reflecting Cairo during the early Al Infitah years, where we can see the invasion of imported products everywhere, the significance of wealth and the hard times the lower classes were living through. We see Fares, a street football player who gambles at night through playing football and works in a workshop in the morning. Fares seems unsatisfied with his financial status and tries to cooperate with an old friend to smuggle goods in order to increase his income and escape poverty. The film ends when Fares gives up football and decides to work harder to secure his son's financial future.

***The Lawyer (Al Avocato)* (1983)**

Hassan Sabaneikh is a cunning lawyer who is able to save one of his clients from being convicted in a trial using several tricks but in one of the trials, he gets imprisoned for a month because he had insulted the court. In prison, he meets a drug dealer who offers to help him get out of prison in return for a big sum of money. However, Sabaneikh decides to scam Hassouna out of this deal to take his fortune, but he gets imprisoned again and decides to find another person to manipulate.

***The Auger (Al Ghoul)* (1983)**

The son of a wealthy man, El Kashef, hits a barman with his car after he refuses to help him engage in a sexual relationship with a belly dancer. El Kashef succeeded in kidnapping the belly dancer and hiding her in one of his farms to prevent her from testifying against his own son.

Adel, a young journalist, knows that El Kashef's son is the killer because he saw the barman leaving with him after he had finished working for the day. Adel is able to release

the belly dancer yet EL Kashef bribes her not to say the truth; and therefore, El Kashef's son is released from prison. Adel, who is faced by all of this injustice, decided to kill El Kashef in his own big company in front of his own employees.

***Gone and Never Returned (Kharag Walam Yaou'd)* (1984)**

Atteya is a middle-class government employee facing a serious problem getting married to his fiancée because he cannot afford to buy an apartment. They have been together for 7 years, and his mother-in-law advises Atteya's fiancée to stop seeing him, so he would be cornered and work harder to get the money needed to go ahead with their marriage.

Atteya decides to leave to the countryside to sell a small piece of land he had inherited from his late father. There he meets Kamal's family, a pleasant family who is living a quite happy life. He falls in love with Khayraya, Kamal's daughter, who represents beauty and calm away from Cairo, a city represented in this film as a very chaotic city, full of pollution, noise, crimes and social problems. He then decides to leave the city and remain in the countryside to work on his land instead of selling it.

***Don't Put-off the Smoke (Hata La Yateer El Dokhan)* (1984)**

Fahmy is a poor college student who is intimidated by the wealth of his university friends. He asks for their help to pay for his mother's operation but they all refuse. As a result, Fahmy decided to become rich and take his revenge from each one of them, even if he would work in illegal businesses.

Fahmy becomes a well-known lawyer and a parliament member and becomes able

to fight each one of his old friends and cause them harm, but he dies in the end aching from an old disease he had caught in his village when he was young.

***The Vagabonds (Al Saa'leeik) (1984)***

Two friends, Salah and Morsi, start off as two young wretches who work at anything around Alexandria trade port. They will not stop at anything as long as it will bring them money even if it is unethical or illegal. Morsi is jailed after hitting someone with his car, and Salah find himself responsible for Morsi's wife and little son.

After he is released from prison, Morsi is out in the world determined to become a filthy rich business tycoon under any circumstances. Salah supports his friend in all of his plans. They start off as drug smugglers until they collect the needed cash to start a big company for imports and exports.

Morsi decides to partner with a big Infitahi businessman, AL Dakhlawi, so they are allowed to trade on a bigger scale and thereby increase their profits. Morsi hints that this is their only way to survive the competition. If they had not accepted this partnership, their business would stop and they would become poor once again.

The film shows that even if Al Infitah policy promises to create an open market where everyone has a fair chance to work, the reality is different, where every businessman has a limit that he/she cannot exceed except after having cover from influential figures who have political power.

The film ends with Morsy killing Salah who had objected to Al Dakhlawi's orders and had plans to control him. A moral message, which shows that the desire to be wealthy can erode everything, even dear friends with whom there, was an unbreakable

bond.

***The Employees (Al Mouwzafoun Fel Ard)* (1986)**

The film lists the differences between the financial condition of public employees in the 40's and their current financial status in the 80's. The film shows how the public employee in the past was able to provide well for his family and how his social position was respected and honored by everyone. Four decades later, everything seems to have changed, when this same employee is not able to afford the expensive price tags on everything, which make him tempted to accept bribes or commit managerial illegal acts to increase his income.

Nevertheless, Kamel Abd El Shakour refuses the many temptations to violate government codes in spite of the fact that he is being challenged to buy his daughters what they need in order to marry.

Abd El Shakour later decided to disguise himself as a beggar to increase his income, a strategy that he sees as legitimate instead of consenting to bribes and to money earned illegally.

The film shows how Al Infitah policy increased the gap between classes, and badly affected the middle class, which has no means to live better except through begging on the streets.

The film shows the rise in the financial status of the workers who seem to be able to live more comfortably than the other classes such as those who hold academic jobs. Besides, the film sheds light on the corrupted deals Al Infitah tycoons sign with government officials to increase their profits and facilitate their business.

***Sharp as a Sowrd (Ha'ad El Seif)* (1986)**

A middle-class family consisting of 5 members suffers from their limited financial resources. The father who holds a prestigious position in one of the Egyptian governmental ministries is not able to provide the money his family needs. One of his daughters is at the Faculty of Medicine, the other is about to marry and his son struggles to get into the college he is dreaming of because his father can't help him financially.

Their economic condition gets better when their father decides to play an instrument in an oriental band with a famous belly dancer. The film focuses on the two different worlds and how being educated and ethical cannot guarantee a comfortable life. The father's choice causes conflict in the family, as they see their father's new profession negatively affecting their social status. However, their father asks them to be grateful to what he is doing for them and that he is sacrificing himself only to meet their long list of demands.

The film, as well, sheds light on how wealth has become the most important factor in the Egyptian society. It also sheds light on the prevalence of corruption, the high prices plus the growing number of religious women wearing the "hijab". The film has a happy end when the family finally honors the father and gladly accepts his new job, which they see as a sacrifice for them to afford a better life.

***Love by the Pyramids (Al Hob Fawka Hadbet Al Haram)* (1986)**

Ahmed Abd El Sattar is a law graduate in his late twenties who suffers from sexual

frustration. Abd El Sattar sees that the best solution to solve his problem is through marriage, yet due to his limited financial resources, he is not able to fulfill his wish. He meets a colleague of his, Ragaa for whom he works and who decides to challenge the traditional marriage obligations of dowry and owned property and marries her without their families' notice. Later, their families learn about this marriage, after Aly and Ragaa are arrested because they showed public affection by the Pyramids. The film ends with Aly and Ragaa taken to jail, a sign that Egypt had become a big jail for young people and their dreams.

Aly is depicted as an angry and pessimistic middle class citizen who is not able to meet his basic needs because of the economic status the country's passing through. Hence, he keeps on searching for an opportunity abroad hoping that this would help him get out of his miserable life.

Ahmed Abd El Maksoud is the total opposite of Aly, He is an uneducated plumber who is able to provide for himself and marries Aly's sister without any challenge or difficulty. The film shows, through Abd El Maksoud, that education is of no worth as long as money is there.

Aly's best friend, Abou Al Azm, decides to date old women and trade sex for money to be able to afford a better life.. The film scans a number of social and economic problems such as bureaucracy, corruption, absence of ethics, poor economic conditions of the middle class and how Al Infitah policy had made a certain class very rich quite apart from the others in the society.

***The Return of a Citizen (Awdet Mowaten)*** (1986)

Shaker is the elder brother of four siblings who arrives to Cairo after working in the Gulf for 8 years. He returns full of hope to start a new life and live happily among his family. He gets disappointed when he finds that each of them has different ideas with which he does not agree. The social changes seem to be a heavy burden for Shaker to cope with, so he decides to return to the Gulf.

***Hatem Zahran's Era (Zaman Hatem Zahran) (1987)***

Hatem Zahran, a doctor who studied and started a good business in the United States, returns to Egypt to build a big cosmetics factory. Zahran is depicted as a greedy and shameless person, who cares only about his wealth and his own welfare. He is jealous of his late brother Yehia, who got killed in the 1973 war, because his family had always treated Yehia better and appreciated him more. Hatem tries, by every means, to show his father that he is better than Yehia and more successful, yet they don't approve of his values and style of living.

The film accuses Al Infitah economic policy of being an unfair system that promotes consumerism and class division. It shows that the Al Infitah policy allows the presence of opportunists and where education and social values are of no importance versus wealth.

***The Basement (Al Badroun) (1987)***

Oum El Khier is a widow who strives to raise her three kids and works as help in one of the buildings of Al Dandarawy, a big businessman. When her children become older, they aspire to a better financial condition but through different means. The older



sibling, Rokaya, dates Al Dandarawy and leaves her family the middle son, Youssef, works for a blind singer and the youngest is a college student who lies to her colleagues about her family and makes them believe she comes from a wealthy family.

Al Dandarawy is jailed because one of the buildings he had constructed collapses; but when he is out, Om El Khier kills him because of his affair with her daughter especially that her son, too, was determined to kill him; so she decided to do this to save her son from prison.

***Sons and Killers (Abna'a Wa Katala)* (1987)**

Shaykhoun, a bartender, decides to marry Dalal, the wealthy belly dancer in order to steal her jewelry, as he wanted to purchase the bar that he was working for. Dalal cannot forgive what Shaykhoun had done to her even after giving birth to two boys. When he is imprisoned because he had hidden a criminal in his bar, she divorces him. Shaykhoun gets out of jail, kills Dalal and takes over her apartment and fortune. He, later, becomes a wealthy weapon dealer.

***Good bye my Friend (Salam Ya Saahby)* (1987)**

Marzouk and Barakat meet by coincidence and help each other commit illegal acts to make a living. They form a partnership with Batta to work in the vegetable trade. The old market tycoons confront them, but they are able to pass through and win big business deals, one after the other until they start a big import and export company. One of those businessmen becomes jealous and kills Barakat on his wedding night, which forces

Marzouk to kill them all and be imprisoned in the end.

***The Master's Beat (Darbet Moulim)*** (1987)

Shaker Kinaway's son kills his mother's boy friend. Kinaway is a powerful businessman who works in contracting and smuggles weapons but he finds himself required to save his son at any cost. He tries to partner with everyone he could in the government and legislative entities to ensure that his son will be not be convicted for this murder. The film shows that everyone Kinaway had contacted accepted to cooperate and help him in his unethical cause, except for Refaat, a middle-class police detective who refuses a generous bribe from Kinawy and decides to abide by the law despite being in dire need. His wife could be killed if he did not fulfill Kinawy's wish.

***The story of a Half Million Dollars (Hekayet Nous Million Dollar)*** (1988)

Amer, a middle class citizen lives happily with his family but faces some financial constraints. He gets tempted by an old friend to steal half a million dollars from the company he works for, given the fact that he would receive a certain amount in return. The deal is to exchange the real dollars with false ones and put them in the company's case.

Amer agrees hoping to be able to secure a better financial future for his daughter, but a college student called Hussein steals Amer's car while the fake dollars are in it. Hussein gets imprisoned for three years; he then tries to convince Amer to confess to the fact that the bag was not his in order to clear his name. When Amer refused to do so, Hussein killed him.

***Hend and Kamilia Dreams (Ahlam Hend W Kamilia)*** (1988)

Hend and Kamilia are two domestic helpers who are crushed by their difficult economic and social conditions. Hend meets Eid who works in the foreign currency black market. Eid is imprisoned for his illegal activities but before going to prison, he hides a big sum of money in the backyard of Kamilia's house. Ahlam, their daughter, finds the money while playing. The two ladies then decided to ditch their hard life and live in luxury, but a taxi driver notices the amount of money that they had on them and steals it.

***The Death Penalty Pack (Kateebet El Edam)*** (1989)

Ezz el Rregal, a banker who lived in Suez during the Israeli war, gets convicted in a murder case: he is accused of killing a group of patriots who had formed a resistance group against the Israelis. He is also accused of stealing a big amount of cash allocated for the Egyptian army.

Ezz El Regal gets out of prison determined to clear his name; he meets with a police detective and a journalist and discover that Farag Al Akta'a'a big Infitahi businessman, had committed this crime and stolen the money.

***Al Mowled,*** (1989)

Ibrahim Al Arag, a poor thief meets by chance a woman who works for a gang smuggling foreign currency to Greece. Ibrahim tricks the gang and kills them all in order to steal the money and start off abroad. He returns to Egypt as a successful and wealthy

man but the big head of the gang had remained alive and planned to take back the money Ibrahim kills the big head and decides to work in development projects to help the people and become a better person especially that he discovered he had been kidnapped when he was little and that his parents are good people.

***The Search for Sayed Marzouk (El Bahas An Sayed Marzouk) (1990)***

The film focuses on an introvert character called Youssef who tries to get out of his socially secluded life and meet new people. He gets introduced to Sayed Marzouk, an old wealthy businessman who enjoys mingling with the marginalized working class. Youssef gets trapped in a criminal case because of Sayed. He is then obliged to escape and clear his name.

***The Emperor (El Embarator) (1990)***

Zeinhom, a drug dealer, covers his illegal trade by having a number of companies working in different legal businesses. The government suspects the source of this fortune and starts a series of investigations, but Zeinhom gets out clear from all the accusations he is confronted with.

Zeinhom kills his previous boss and marries his mistress hoping she would become pregnant and they could start a family together. However, his wife seems to be miserable after finding herself always lonely and being neglected by Zeinhom who seems to be absorbed with his business. She becomes a drug addict, and Zeinhom suspects she is having an affair with his best friend. She commits suicide and Zeinhom is killed in the end.

***Super Market*, (1990)**

The film shows how consumerism has become “high” in the Egyptian society, where everything has a price tag. An interesting relationship starts between Dr. Azmy, a successful surgeon and businessman, and Ramzy, the pianist, when the latter categorizes Dr. Azmy as a role model and wishes to become as wealthy. Ramzy is depicted as disappointed by everyone around him because everyone is willing to give up on his values to become wealthy. Even Amira, his childhood friend, who seemed happy and satisfied with her social status, preferred to get divorced from her husband because he was seeking money only, and she decided to change her principles and date Dr. Azmy because of his financial and social status.

***The Power Era (Asr El Kouwa,)* (1991)**

The film is about two rivals, Al Fayoumy and, Al Morsy, who compete over big business deals. Their relationship is full of violence and one of Al Fayoumy’s sons kills the cousin of Al Morsy, but Al Fayoumy succeeds in getting his son out of the court by bribing one of the witnesses into lying.

Al Morsy seems fine with Al Fayoumy’s son getting out of this trial but in order to remain silent, he asks to partner with Al Fayoumy in one of his big drug deals. Al Fayoumy refuses and under severe distress, he gets hospitalized. Amina, Al Fayoumy’s daughter, decides to confront Al Morsy and keeps her father’s fortune by tricking him on several fronts.

***Against the Government (Ded El Hokouma,)* (1992)**

Moustafa Khalaf is a corrupted lawyer who works in compensation claims but in many cases, when he wins a case; he actually steals the cash and never gives it back to the victims. Khalaf decides to become a better person and correct his past mistakes when he discovers that his own son from a previous marriage and whom he was not aware of becomes paralyzed due to a school bus accident while going on a school trip.

Khalaf keeps on fighting with everyone around him from fellow lawyers, to influential businessman and government bodies to bring to court ministers whom he believes hold direct responsibility to this accident.

***Ice Cream in Geliem (Ice Cream Fih Geliem)* (1992)**

Seif is an aspiring singer who tries to prove himself in the singing industry. In his journey to become a famous singer, he meets several characters: a lyrics writer who has a leftist ideology; an owner of a production house; an opportunist who tries to use Seif's talent and a wealthy businessman who takes away Seif's fiancée. The film discusses the new trends introduced to the Egyptian society in the 90's starting from fashion and music and besides, highlights how money and wealth have become the most important factor in this society.

***Blood on the Street Road (Dema'a 'Al Asphalt)* (1992)**

Abou El Hassan, an ethical and honest government employee in one of the Egyptian courts is accused of stealing an important file. His older son, Sanaa who is working for

the UN, comes back to Cairo to try to help his father in his trial. Sanaa discovers that his younger brother had stolen the file. He discovers as well that his younger brother is a heroin addict who works for a drug gang. His brother was responsible to sell a big amount of drugs but instead he consumed it all and this made the drug dealers chase him for the money. Hence, he decided to steal the file to sell to those involved in the case in order to get the money needed to pay back to the gang. Sanaa also discovered that his younger sister had become a prostitute in order to be able to afford a high standard of living and pay for the education of their little siblings.

***Mr. Karate*, (1993)**

The film discusses the problem of unemployment. We see through Salah how an educated man who lives in the countryside is deprived from any proper opportunity to have a good job. Salah leaves his home place and goes to work in a garage in the city. He gets bullied from everyone around him and therefore he decided to learn Karate to be able to defend himself. However, he breaks his leg in a car accident and is unable to continue to learn Karate.

The film shows that most of the people who live in the city are corrupted opportunists, while those who live in the village are innocent and defenseless. Salah finds himself trapped in a drug smuggling case and gets confronted by a big drug tycoon. Later, he decided to leave the city and go back to his village and cultivate his land peacefully.

***The Forgotten (Al Mansy)* (1993)**

Youssef Al Mansy, a poor employee working in an old railway station finds himself

obliged to protect a beautiful lady whose boss wants her to engage in a sexual relationship with his partner at work in order to set a big deal. Assad Yakout, an Infitahi big businessman is depicted in the film as a selfish and unethical person who values fortune only. Youssef succeeded to save the lady and went back into an imaginary world he had created for himself in order to escape his hard living conditions.

***The City's Knight (Fares Al Madina)* (1993)**

Fares finds himself forced to return an old debt to one of the big businessmen in the black market of foreign currency that he used to work with in the past. The film is about the journey Fares goes through between old friends and previous colleagues to collect and borrow money to pay to this influential businessman. The film discusses the shaky condition of some of the businessmen and shows the corruption and illegal means they pursue to expand their fortunes and bank accounts.

***Why Lavender (Lih Ya Banafseg)* (1993)**

A group of friends suffering from their social and economic conditions live together in a poor apartment and try to increase their income by having a small musical band that performs only in weddings. In the morning, they work on a food truck and in the evening, they perform in the weddings. Ahmed's old neighbor falls in love with him while his friend Sayed loves her. Another woman also falls in love with Ahmed, but his friend Abbas marries her not knowing of her love for Ahmed.

Ahmed does not care about anything except leaving the slums so he aspires to work with his old friend, Aly Bouby, who had left the slums in the past and was able to move



upward socially. But at the end, Bouby gets killed and the old friends of Ahmed stand by him and continue to sing in weddings.

***The Clever (El Shotar)* (1993)**

A well-known actress is convicted of treason after the death of her husband who used to work for the Egyptian military. The film shows her background story and how she was able to become a big star after being a poor belly dancer. The film focuses on the corrupted business of providing the Egyptian military with poor facilities and poorly equipped airports during the 1967 war. These corrupted tycoons later become big Infitahis.

***The Land of Fear (Ard El Khouf)* (2000)**

Yehia El Mankabawy is a policeman assigned to mingle with drug dealers under a false identity. The plan is to turn Yehia into a real drug dealer to make the drug dealers believe that he had really turned into one. The minister of the interior fires him and gradually, he starts to engage into criminal acts until Yehia becomes confused between his two identities and can no longer identify himself either as an innocent citizen on a mission or a criminal who now enjoys killing and smuggling drugs.