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## **A-Guidelines for the reading of the report:**

-References to literary pieces are followed by (page, n° in actual publication, doc n°, page n° in the photocopied document, as I have manually renumbered most documents)

-References to films that are analysed and for which you are provided with visual documents are easy to find since they both bare the title of the film. In the filmography the number used for each film is the number used in the visual material you are provided with.

-When abbreviation is used it keeps the first words of titles

-Doc.12 is not printed but is sent to you by mail accompanying report since it was sent to me courtesy of the translator before publication and should not be used or distributed in any way without a special permission from her and her publishers.

-To obtain quality copies of the films that you may need as discussed previously, I have to have your support, i.e. official contacts with, el eza' wal television, the Alexandria library and competent persons. On my own I only get mediocre copies and some very interesting material is not accessible. We should sit and discuss a strategy.

-Likewise we should sit (after you read the report and see the films) and discuss who is it that I should interview and how to direct the interview. Your official support will be of a necessity. If you still wish to have interviews

-Including relevant material on TV series and traditional stories that deal with Cairo Cemetery is another long term project and requires as much time as spent on that research.

-The same when it comes to study of filming and set building related to the cemetery, it needs more time and could never have been done before gathering the information and observations gathered in the present report.

-I rely on you to recognize the different locations in the films, it is not in my competence to do it

-For the sections about location and censorship in the movie industry I have relied on many different sources that you find in the filmography.

## **B-Documents to be consulted along the reading of the report**

- Doc.1: Shakawi el masry el fassih
- Doc.2: The comedy of death, in *Dictionary of Modern Arabic Literature*
- Doc.3: 'Atabat El-Bahgat
- Doc.4: El Lass wal Kelab
- Doc.5: Bedayah Wa Nehayah
- Doc.6: The Old Man in *Dictionary of Modern Arabic Literature*
- Doc.7: The Clock in *Dictionary of Modern Arabic Literature*
- Doc.8: Dreams as Seen by a Blind Boy in *Dictionary of Modern Arabic Literature*
- Doc.9: The Open Door in *Dictionary of Modern Arabic Literature*
- Doc.10: Ana La Akzeb Wa Lakenni 'Ataggammal
- Doc.11: The Theocrat
- Doc.12: The Colours of Infamy
- Doc.13: Al Nouzoul Ila El Bahr
- Doc.14: El Sakka Mat
- Doc.15: La Reine Chagarat el-Durr
- Doc.16: Goha El Massry
- Doc.17: Roba'iyat Salah Jahine
- Doc.18: Aziz Wa Aziza/ One Thousand Nights and One Night
- Doc.19: The Story of the First Kalandar
- Doc.20: Cairo : The City Victorious
- Doc. 21: Waqa'i' El Sinema El Masreyah
- Doc.22: Discussions with Salah Abou Saeif
- Doc. 23: Realism in Arabic Cinema
- Doc.24: Le Caire et le Cinéma Egyptien des Années 80
- Doc.25: Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians
- Doc.26: Egyptian Popular Arts
- Doc.27: La Cité des Morts Le Caire
- Doc.28: Sayyed Darwich
- Doc.29: History of Censorship on Egyptian Cinema
- Doc.30: History of Censorship on Egyptian Cinema
- Doc.31: History of Censorship on Egyptian Cinema
- Doc.32: Sinema Na'am Sinema La'

## Across Cairo's Cemetery Through Fiction

"...there is a relationship between the physical form or structure of urban environment and the perceptual and cognitive processes of individuals. The "images" that are formed are the result of a two way process between the observer and the environment." R. Francis. Cinema integrates these two dualities and restitutes its own, a double perception, the films' perception on one side and the spectators' perception on the other side. This perception results from a practical experience of the city and the imaginary it creates as well as a cultural influence.

*In Ville et Cinéma*

Let us go on a journey across Cairo's Cemetery through Cinema and Literature and discover how novelists and film directors wove together reality and fiction to create an image of the capital's historical burying grounds. Let us explore how those artists may be lifting the mirror up to the psyche of a society and thus revealing something of what the Capital's historical cemetery stands for in Egyptian collective thinking.

Our observations will be focused on work produced mainly between the 1930's and the first decade of year 2000. Nevertheless we will notice that a great amount of the pieces dealing with the subject of the cemetery were produced between the mid 70's and the early 90's and that a lot of them were mainly concerned with the social crisis. Our first concern will therefore be the cemetery as a living space for the poor and the impoverished. After that we will take a look at the anxiety generated by the very nature of Cemeteries and most specifically the very nature of Cairo's cemetery.

But fiction did not only concern itself with the cemetery as a community, on the contrary it also tried to reflect on the rituals of death and how the living physically deal with it. It will be interesting for us to take a look at that restored function of the cemetery, and what purpose it serves in fiction.

At this point it will be time to look at those whose spirituality, intellectuality, inner struggles, force out of the city, those who for reasons other than material have to settle inside the burial grounds or at its edge. The cemetery then turns into a revolving point around which the stories unfold to discuss human duality; philosophical and spiritual questions are explored, the tombs forming a canvas allowing reflection to deepen for it offers a juncture between what is tangible and what is not.

The history of cinema involves different phases where filmmakers for technical or artistic reasons had to either make the choice of filming on location in natural environments or using studios and set. As Egypt's film production has undergone and is still undergoing censorship, as this censorship was often concerned with how to represent Egyptian society in an honorable and appropriate way, it is easy to imagine that filming outdoors did provoke strong reactions and that filming inside the cemetery cannot be taken for granted. Following that we will be taking a view of different locations as they appear in the moving pictures and in literary texts. Finally the dialogues used in films to refer to the cemetery and life there, some of the terminology employed in novels will offer threads into grasping how the mysterious world of the cemetery maybe perceived by those who are not regularly involved with it.

## I-Cairo 's Cemetery and Social Drama (No Other Place To Go)

"Réalism is not the strict reproduction of reality, but the vision, the critical outlook of an artist on society"  
In *Le caire et le Cinéma égyptien des années 80*

It goes without saying that there exists a huge gap between what one can actually experience or observe out there in 'real' life so to say and how writers and film makers choose to portray that life.

What it is interesting for us here is not to find out how faithful fiction is to Cairo's Cemetery and the urban fabric it has become. What is interesting is to observe how preoccupied the Egyptian society is with the economic and social crisis, how it perceives the peculiar phenomenon of increased population within burial spaces. Through analysis of fiction material dealing with that subject we can talk about mapping the unconscious of a society: we get a sense of the way it envisions a certain situation it cannot fully grasp, how it maybe identifying with certain cases and the potential solutions it may offer to solve problems. If the authors cannot be said to be holding the mirror up to life to depict it as it exactly is, at least we can say that they in a way they hold the mirror up to our collective mind to exorcise some of what goes on in it.

The central point of the authors here, from what we observe, is not to offer criticism nor analyze what actually occurs in the cemetery community although that might be suggested, but to portray life there in an attempted realism and thus to reveal corruption and malfunctioning in society at large. Then what takes place in the cemetery is presented as a consequence of a deficient system.

### 1/The City of the Dead Welcomes the Living

"Habiter est le trait fondamental de l'être." M.Heidegger

When the poorest of the poorest cannot survive in the city, when they become homeless, the final solution, the ultimate shelter, is sometimes the cemetery. To illustrate this we will use three novels, as strangely enough this point seems almost untouched by film directors. They do, somehow, faintly suggest it but never boldly deal with the subject. In films we tend to enter the cemetery with outsiders with whom we can identify. Sometimes we vaguely come across the dejected, those who belong to this 'other' world, but the stories does not dwell on them.

Ben Salim Himmish, in his novel *The Theocrat*, makes the reader share the misery of Mass'oud, the slave who has to hide on top of a tomb covered by dirt and branches as if he was dead. While in his hiding place Massou'd notices the most incredible event: the invasion of the cemetery by masses of miserable people who come to settle between the tombs and make the graveyard their city (p38, doc.11, p4).

Shakawi El Massry El Fassih deals with a family for whom life in jail is much better than life in a tomb. It seems that for that family, fallen in the most extreme misery, even death might be better. When they are arrested and imprisoned they can't help but notice how much better is a cell than a tomb, in spite of the loss of freedom (p713, doc.1, p19).

Two of the main characters of Gamil Ateya Ibrahim's *Al Nouzoul Illa El Bahr* refer to the cemetery's inhabitants (they are two of them themselves) as "worms". They grew up there in a community of dejected people, managed to get an education and to find homes outside, in the

city itself, but still seem to believe that the ones who grow in the cemetery will never be able to get it out of their system(p6-7, doc.13,p1-2).

After taking a close look at these examples it indeed seems much more delicate, due to the very nature of both art forms, to express such radical thoughts in a film than in a novel.

## 2/ The Collapse of the Fittest.

A few examples reveal the incapacity for the ones we might call the “fittest” to survive in their habitual environment. They end up having to join the cemetery’s living community. The ones identified as the fittest are the individuals that seem to be the most equipped to succeed in modern society’s struggle for survival. Though they are not from the upper classes and are far from being rich, they are somehow privileged. They are well educated and have become respected professionals, they enjoy a family life, a social network and we do have indications that up until the start of the story they have had a relatively comfortable life, all their needs being fulfilled. The corrupted system forces them into the Cemetery. As we can see, the authors’ criticism here does not target the cemetery as a community but a system incapable of protecting even its most positive working force.

A strong social consciousness seems to rise in the 80’s and a deep concern with overpopulation and the future of the housing system. Cinema reveals society’s preoccupation with these issues through some interesting examples.

Karakon Fil Shari’ is a social drama unveiling the traumatic experience of a modest but successful engineer whose building collapses. After many attempts at finding compensation from the landlords and the appropriate ministries, after searching for an affordable alternative, after seeking shelter at relatives, he finds no other choice but to settle in the tomb of his father with his wife, two children and mother. His wife is a schoolteacher and he is an engineer, they belong to the middle class. The filmmaker gives us many indications that this family does not belong in the cemetery yet it turns out to be the only place they can afford.

Madafen Mafrousha Lil Egar is another similar example, it is rich with details of all sorts on life in the cemetery. In that case it is a corrupted landlord who wishes to get rid of the tenants to build additional floors. With generous bribes to the competent authorities he manages to have a whole family kicked out. Although the father is a successful government employee he cannot find a solution and the family becomes homeless. They end up in a filthy hotel, which they quickly have to leave for even this filthy hotel becomes too expensive. The corrupt landlord runs a housing agency within the cemetery, not only does he rent lands and buildings outside but he also sublets tombs. He happens to be a tomb guardian as well. The family composed of the employee, his young sister, his wife, and his son settle in the ornate tomb of an aristocratic family.

El Sha’a Min Ha’ El Zoga portrays the story of a newly married couple. They manage to get a decent flat. When problems arise between the couple, the young woman’s mother convinces her to stay in the flat no matter what ; being a mother, by law she is entitled to it. The film reveals the difficulty in finding a flat, and the absurdity of a system that, trying to be respectful of women rights, has no regards for men’s rights! In that particular case the woman is better off, her parents are well to do and she could live with them; as for the man he really has no one and no place to go. He ends up settling in a tomb in the cemetery and still finds it too expensive, although like in the two previously mentioned examples he is a hard working educated professional.

Our last example is a novel and slightly different for it deals with the intellectuals of society and the way the system can persecute and finally reject its elite, almost treating them as it treats outlaws. The novelist Albert Cossery portrays, in *The Colors of Infamy*, a famous writer and intellectual who has no other place to shelter him but the family mausoleum. His satirical out look on society alienates him and has even caused him incarceration. His intellectual activities do not provide for his basic needs within the city of the living, he has no choice but to join the City of the Dead (Doc.14,p...).

### 3/ A Confrontation between Parallel Worlds.

When the fully acknowledged and positively active members of society are suddenly forced into retrieval in the Cemetery a whole World is revealed to them and by extension to us, readers and viewers, a World that we are ignorant of, a city within the city, with its own rules and intricate urban fabric. At this point the fiction work seems to become a pretext for a confrontation between the outside World and the inside World somehow symbolized in the confrontation between the living and the dead inherent to life on burial grounds. Major questions are then raised: is it possible for these two opposite worlds to cohabitate? How to protect one's self and understand the rules of the new games? How to mentally and socially adapt to a new language? New habits? New dress codes? But also very interestingly the preconceived ideas and prejudices of those who arrive for the first time in the cemetery community, and through theirs, ours as well, are explored, head on, and sometimes brutally challenged. We are shown, in different manners, some of the original dwellers of the cemetery through their daily interactions with the protagonists.

*Karakon Fil Shari'* deals with that confrontation from the moment the family sets off for the Cemetery. So far they have been using taxis and public transports, but we see them reach the tombs in a donkey cart, this being the first sign that they have to adapt to the new lifestyle! Then they push the door of the tomb and are greeted by a man who seems to be from a very different background and who has turned the funerary room into a fully equipped apartment. It seems that a whole world is revealed to the astonished family and the head of the family has to find a way of dealing with the occupant. When they seek help at the police station it is agreed that they must share the space with the strange man. Living with the dead at first seems to be the biggest preoccupation but it turns out that it is living within a very tight pre-established community that causes more trouble. Likewise in *Madafen Mafrousha Lil Egar*, at first the family finds it difficult to sleep amongst the tombs but very quickly it turns out that the real trouble is being accepted and fitting in the cemetery without changing values and habits. In both movies the "horma" of the women have to be fought for. In *Madafen* it is clear that the pretty, refined wife has to change her language and she suddenly begins adopting a more "grass root" intimidating tone and vocabulary. She changes her dress code, goes to the cemetery market in similar garments as the ladies of the neighborhood. In *Karakon* the father spends time with his "flat mate" and even smokes shisha and hangs around with the men for the first time. As for the government employee in *Madafen* he goes as far as smoking hash and enjoying it tremendously as well as spending evenings with the men enjoying the services of a baladi belly dancer. His wife starts accepting the visits of the owner of the tomb who has to cross the living space to go and recline by his relatives' graves and they end up chatting and drinking tea by the tombs. The young sister befriends one of the torabies, and at the end of the film the little boy wears a gallabeya and seems quite integrated. It is when they attend a wedding at the cemetery that the whole situation is crystallized: The wedding is loud and joyful with dancing and singing, a life celebration ; meanwhile a funerary procession advances. The women of the family have fun, the irony of the situation hits them and they burst out laughing. In *Madafen* we are secretly thrilled to note that the family ends up

integrating the community, learning its rules and in a way even feeling, through the lenses of the filmmaker, that there is more goodness and logic within the cemetery than elsewhere in the city. In that particular example the new comers, and through them the viewers, have to rethink prejudices concerning that 'low class' community. Let us add that the young sister eventually manifests the desire to marry the torabi. In *El Sha'a min Ha' El Zoga* the confrontation between the two worlds only happens through the juxtaposition of scenes where we see the wife alone in the comfortable and spacious flat and her husband sitting on the floor in one small room with the tomb guardian. In the TV movie *Ana La Akzeb Wa Lakeni Atagammal* we can say that the authors are essentially preoccupied with this confrontation. In the outside world, the student is brilliant and not only on equal foot with his fellow students but even higher since he is so educated, intelligent and hardworking, his love for a well to do and beautiful colleague is never compromised, on the contrary it is encouraged. The coming together of the two worlds is extremely violent, in fact it appears as a violation of privacy, since the student is seen without seeing. His potential father in law attending a funeral sees him finishing the burial procedure with great familiarity and in full gear. In fact a quite important hint has happened earlier in the story when the student goes on a visit to the famous writer he admires, he doesn't know yet that the writer is his girlfriend's father. He stops in front of the building and meticulously cleans his shoes. Later we will come to understand the gesture. We are also presented with a great sequence where we see, through simultaneous shots, the two students getting ready for university in their respective environments. These shots clearly intend to reveal the gap between the young man and the young woman. Strangely they seem to draw an interesting parallel and what I personally get out of them is the sensation that, in spite of the physical environments and the financial situations, the two families have very similar values, habits and ties. More than the different social status, it is the close relation with the dead that the young student has that appears to be the main source of discomfort for his girlfriend and her father; this is shown on the father's expression as he looks at the young man squatting, digging, sprinkling dust and water on the tomb dressed as a toraby. As for her, when she ends up visiting his family, she holds the 'death bread' with disgust and cannot eat it although the place is spark clean. In the original short story, Ihsan 'Abdel Qodous, the writer, ends up saying that she visits the family as if she was a tourist or a high society lady on a charity duty (p139, doc.10, p14). In the novel *Shakawi El Masry El Fassih*, there is a comic paragraph where the American lady- who is a perfect Arabic speaker searching for actors from the torab for a movie about the torab-is talking on the phone while the cemetery dwellers wait in her office. They overhear her phone conversation, a terrible dilemma about how she might spend the evening and just through them overhearing such a conversation the two worlds come together in a gigantic and sarcastic clash (p241, 244-245, doc1,p13-15). Another passage deals with the protagonist walking through the maqaber, he comes across a colored television and hears one of the presidents speech talking about the greatness of Egypt, the wealth of the country and the freedom at last obtained! (p105,doc.1, p8)

In *Al Nouzoul Ila El Bahr* two ladies from the cemetery are recruited for walking on parts in a soap opera on TV. They are hired and dragged with geese, chicken, sheep to the TV studios, washed, dressed and made up. One of the ladies, a professional wailer, attracts attention for her beauty, once in her new outfit and persona. This first and unexpected immersion into the limelight shifts her perception of herself and her living environment and catalyses her dissatisfaction with her living space (p77-79,p82-83,doc.13,p8-12).

The three protagonists of the film *Ganet El Shayatine* lose a friend, when they visit his family and discover his original life style they are impressed but clear minded about the destructive family ties in that upper class uptight environment. They do not show sign of respect for it, nor once do they seem to regret their own life, on the contrary. They live in

complete ostracism, they can indulge in a life of drugs alcohol, prostitution and total hysteria in a logic of their own. They don't even seem to acknowledge the world around them. The movie Sarek El Farah shows a similar case where in fact, through out the film there is almost no outside intrusion, the whole community is self sufficient and seems oblivious to whatever is outside. No wishes are expressed for a real change in life, only a better life within the community itself.

#### 4/Dwelling Spaces.

Through thorough descriptions in novels and detailed images in movies, we are introduced to several environments and we can admire the variety of improvised habitats the cemetery dwellers can enjoy. We leisurely observe the different structures, hoshs, funerary complexes, actual tombs, visitors rooms. We are given an incredible range of living spaces and we start to guess that the hierarchy that rules the outside world exists within the Cemetery as well, we understand that even amongst the Arafa dwellers there are different social classes. Dwelling space in the cemetery, just like in the city at large, can reveal the place one occupies on the social ladder.

Little by little life is normalized in the cemetery and in spite of a certain amount of incongruous incidents it becomes clear that the difference between outside and inside is often but superficial.

#### a-Domestic Life

The TV movie Ana La shows us the space arrangement of the tomb where the student lives with his mother and father. It is clean and well organized. He has his room and his private desk, just like any student living in an apartment with his family or maybe even more since he has some privacy. The couple has a well furnished bedroom: a brass bed, two big wooden closets. There seems to be a kitchen or an equivalent: we see the mother coming out of a space with the kitchen wires. The hosh becomes a dining room, everything is clean and sober, well organized. The family appears to have a rather comfortable and structured life. The image conveyed is far removed from the grim vision one might have of a family crammed in small dirty tomb struggling to survive.

In Madafen the tomb of the aristocrats where the family settles is lavish, all marble and ornaments, it is very spacious and has a huge, green courtyard, a real kitchen. It is furnished like a middle class apartment. The lady cooks in the courtyard, under the trees, she drinks tea by the monumental cenotaphs. If it was not for the omnipresence of death (and a rat) and the psychologically disturbing idea they are actually living on burial grounds they would be satisfied and we may start envying them. When they are suddenly kicked out by the Hosh keeper, they find shelter at the other toraby's dwelling place. We discover yet another standard of living. The tomb where he lives is narrow, run down and dark, no ornaments quite. El Sha'a Min Ha', shows us the dejected homeless husband settling in a small room in the tombs, sleeping on a tiny rug on the floor. The poor professional wailer in the novel Al Nouzoul Ila has a small 'esha' in a hosh where she sleeps on the ground(p112-113,doc.13p13-14). The tomb in Karakon Fil Sari' is unusual ; It has a huge wooden door reminiscent of a stable door, no courtyards and apart for the cenotaph that we see on the left corner of the main room it feels like a small village house. In the film Hob Fil Zenzana the lovers, two runaway ex-convicts, hide inside a grave in the modern unused cemeteries, apparently in Madinet Nasr. They have a small rough bed and a small tabliya. Their living space is in fact underground, where the dead will be buried. The camera swipes the space and we read the inscriptions on the walls : 'male' , 'female' , clearly indicating it is a burial

chamber. It is for us a good way of comparing the old tombs with the new ones: the new, as depicted here all geometrically shaped, identical, no courtyards, no ornaments, no vegetation, no visiting or living space, and so it seems, no tomb guardians living there.

The movie *Sarek El Farah*, although clearly taking place in or around the cemetery, shows us a community living in self-made *eshash* in what seems to be a compromise between a village and a romanticized slum. No tombs amongst them, no funerary structures within their 'village'. The intellectual of the novel *the Colors of Infamy* is relieved for the tomb of his family is sober and not luxurious at all which protects him from the suspicion and the gossips of his neighbors (doc.12). The comedy *Saye3 Bahr* takes is shot in Alexandria, but still it is interesting to notice that the wise man acting as the conscience of the hero lives in a cemetery of a completely different sort. It is a huge and out of time room out of space, like a *Ali Baba's* cavern, it is situated underground, the light shines from above, there is an eerie atmosphere and a rather imposing cenotaph is there in this below ground room. Can we imagine that there is another burial space even deeper in the ground?

### b-Social Life

A very detailed account of social life in the torab is given in *Madafen Mafrousha Lil Igar*. The head of the family attends men's gatherings, they indulge in soft illicit activities (smoking hash, drinking) they enjoy belly dancers and musicians. The lady goes to the market where she is first introduced to her neighborhood, the whole family attends a wedding as special guests. The only cemetery dwellers we see in the film *Ana La 'Akzeb* are the small kids who play outdoors and run after new visitors and cars, and eventually very few members of a funerary procession. No neighbors are shown, no gatherings. In the film *Hob Fil Zenzana* the whole place seems inhabited it even feels that the tombs are not in use yet. The film *El Goa* shows us a group of women reaching the empty alleys of a cemetery, it gives us the feeling of a social gathering taking place in the cemetery but not by cemetery dwellers, we also see the matchmaker trying to create a couple between the cart driver and one of the ladies. The visitation scene of that film reminds us of descriptions of the cemetery by historians and travelers and how it was said to be the only outing of women (doc.20, p1-2). If we accept the idea that *Sarek El Farah* is taking place in the cemetery, we see the area organized as a real popular alley, people living outdoors, tending for their needs helping each other, the ladies chatting, fighting, chickens, geese, children playing, a very busy life with strong social links. The atmosphere of *Sarek El Farah* can be compared with the general atmosphere in the novel *Al Nouzoul Ila El Bahr*.

### c-Survival and finances

*Madafen Mafrousha Lil Igar* and *El Sha'a Min Ha' El Zoga* reveal that the new cemetery settlers, although they may come from a higher social background than their neighbors, show signs of finding the rent too expensive. For the *Ana la Akzeb* family, the hints given about the cost of living are that the mother has to work as a house maid and a washerwoman, that her son cannot afford his own shirts and therefore 'borrows' the shirts that his mother cleans, the mother is happy with a vegetable dish filled with meat given by her mistress and the father does not seem to have a *sabi toraby*, his son, in spite of his academic life, has to help him. In *Madafen* the father seriously considers casting his principles aside to start drug dealing so that he can finally envisage a decent life. As for his sister, a medical student, she engages in corpses and body parts smuggling as a side business to earn pocket money. The toraby that they have befriended is himself involved in drug deals and corpse smuggling and initiates them. The ex-convicts in *Hob Fil Zenzana* work on construction sites, both man and woman,

they help build new tombs in the modern cemetery. Again an ambiguous setting for the movie *Leh Ya Banafseg* where a couple lives in a mud structure in what seems to be a little deserted hill within reach of the cemetery, they indulge in dubious activities to subsist: In one sequence we see that they have stolen a donkey, painted it in a different color to sell it over again.

In the novel *Shakawi El Masry* a whole family of cemetery dwellers fallen in misery decides to actually “sell it self” for it is all it has left (p56-57,doc1,p5-6). The different members will put themselves on display in Al Tahrir square. The Novel *Al Nouzoul Ila El Bahr* deals with a doctor who used to be a cemetery dweller and has set up his clinic in the qarafa, he does not take money from his patients who are described as the poorest of the poor(p154, doc13,p17). One of the characters, a young man who used to be a cemetery dweller constantly improvising ways of grappling a few pounds, dies of cancer and has no money for burial and no family, the community improvises a tomb for him within a saint’s shrine. *Sarek El Farah* shows us the door keeper of a very luxurious funerary complex taking a bribe to bury a vagabond in one of the lavish tombs. The mavericks of *Ganet El Shayatine* unscrew the golden teeth of their deceased friend to sell them, one of them even arranges a deal to sell the body to medical students. In the novel *Dreams Seen by a Blind Boy*(doc.8,P1-2), a mother takes her blind son to the arafa to read Qur’an to the visitors in exchange of a few coins.

What preoccupies a film director? Describing? Noticing?  
Informing? Warning? Denunciating? Explaining? Touching?  
Fascinating? Having fun?

In Ville et Cinéma

## II- Fiction: A Mirror to Inner Fears and Fantasies.

The Cemetery with its Mysterious life and its specific layout seems to the outsider a place where the most reprehensible behavior can take place. The novice imagines it to be a lawless land. Anguish linked to death, corpses, secluded places, cohabitation with the dead may induce an overactive imagination. Thus the respectable, good thinking citizen, eventually feeding on a few isolated “hawadeth”, seems to become extremely creative in describing or envisioning the horrors that take place within the qarafa.

### 1-Dirty Life (rules of good behavior do not apply)

Goha was walking by a cemetery.He saw a dog urinating on a tomb.Goha got angry and started shouting at the dog, he was just about to beat it when the dog barked at Goha in such a threatening way that the scared man backed up and gently apologized: "Forgive me sir, if I had recognized you, I would not have dared treat you in such a disrespectful manner!"

In *Goha El Masry*

*El Nouzoul Ila El Bahr* shows one of the main characters defecating in the middle of the day against a tomb, on the other side of the tomb a well to do doctor passes by. While defecating, the character shamelessly plays a joke at the doctor, pretending to be a spirit (p47, Doc.13,p6),. There is actually a lot of concern about defiling the dead by relieving basic needs within places of burial. To the outsider the cemetery seems to be a place were defecating and urinating, anywhere anytime is possible.And what about this Goha joke, were Goha sees a dog urinating on a tomb? (doc.16, B)

### 2-Drugs

In the movie *El Batneyah* the bier hides cocaine, the funeral procession is a mock one. Because it is difficult to doubt the veracity of a funeral, quite impossible to actually verify what is inside a bier, because one needs a toraby to get down to the actual burial chamber in a tomb it seems very convenient, with the complicity of the toraby himself, to hide illegal substances in a shroud and then a tomb.

The head of the family in *Madafen Mafrousha Lil Igar* ends up smoking hash on a regular basis and drinking alcohol, both activities he had never experienced before living in the cemetery. He is on the verge of getting involved in drug deals.

### 3-Corpses and body parts dealers

*Ganet El Shayatine* shows us a young maverick secretly trying to sell the corpse of his deceased friend. In *Madafen Mafrousha Lil Igar* the dealing in corpses and body parts is a main feature of the plot. The young medical student who has settled in the cemetery with her family starts to deal with a toraby, first in what seems to be wrapped arms and legs and then in an entire body that we see the toraby dig out and carry surreptitiously. The student is seen at her faculty collecting money to purchase the “merchandise” and then delivering her purchases to a friend’s flat.

### 4-Illicit love and sex

In the novel *Al Nouzoul Illa El Bahr* the wailer has intercourse with the bus driver, although she hides in her hut and tries to be discreet about it, it is clear that most of her neighbors will know. We also discover that she and one of her neighbors have been having an adulterous relationship. The wailer is a single woman, a widow whose only child died and therefore she is considered cheap and easy (p106-113, doc13, p13-16).

In the movie *El Goa*, the rich lady arranges a private appointment in her family tomb with a man of her choice, they get intimate in the seclusion of the cemetery.

In the film *Al lass Wal kilab* the prostitute takes her customer inside the cemetery and they start the intercourse in the car. In *Ganet El Shayatine* sex takes place in the cemetery with the two prostitutes, it is clear that they have regular intercourse with the protagonists but we also see one of them make out with a customer from outside. *Al Abwash*, the movie, shows a mob taking a young bride and her groom to the cemetery. There they know that they can rape her without being disturbed. In *Sarek El Farah* a one-night stand relationship takes place between the protagonist and a prostitute he has befriended in the desert, in the vicinity of the cemetery.

### 5-Danger for the pure

Again the example of *Al Abwash* where a young bride and a groom are kidnapped and forced into a tomb is very poignant. We have seen this young couple evolve in previous sequences and have appreciated how in love they are, how innocent and over protected they are.

We see them heading towards the matrimonial flat before the consumption of their marriage, suddenly they are stopped and dragged by force into the most secluded and scary place, a place the young couple seem to know nothing of yet, a cemetery. There they will undergo a terrible and irreversible fate. Here it seems interesting to notice a version of the same story, produced around the same time where the mob finds the young couple in the deserted and therefore dangerous *Moqqatam* and takes them to an ancient run down *hammam*.

In both *Madafen* and *Karakon* the respectable family head is corrupted by life amongst the cemetery community, they both drink, smoke, take drugs and indulge in activities they had never experienced, clear indication that by living in the cemetery their purity is compromised,

in Madafen the father even considers getting involved with drug dealing. The lovely lady in the same film is confronted to the keeper of the hosh where she and her family have found shelter, he tries to force her into cheating on her husband with him and threatens to kick them out if she does not comply. The young medical student in the same film starts becoming a corpse smuggler, and towards the end of the movie finds no objection in wedding her accomplice: a drug and corpse dealer himself.

## 6-Ghosts

Ghosts and spirits are not mentioned very often. Three examples deserve to be considered. The recent comedy Karkar ends with a shot where the main character, who happens to be dead, gets out of his tomb and scares his relations as they are all saying the fatiha in front of his grave. In the film Alb El Leil, the protagonist is in the cemetery with his mother when, a child, head covered in black, pretends to be a phantom and scares him. This sequence is followed with another one where he discusses Afarits and Jinni with a schoolmate. Finally in a 1934 movie called Oyoun Sahera, a dead man 's spirit rises and speaks to his ex-lover, as she reclines over his tomb, explaining how she can manage to bring him back to life, which she eventually does. Although it seems there not many ghosts and spirits appearing in fiction, history reveals that there is common belief in their connection with the graveyards (doc.20, p3-4).

## III-Cairo's Cemetery recovered primary Function

I passed a tomb among green shades  
Where seven anemones with down-dropped heads  
Wept tears of dew upon the stone beneath.  
I questioned underneath my breath  
Who the poor dead might be  
And a voice answered me....  
The Thousand Nights And One Night

Cairo's cemetery has triggered so many controversies and studies due to its history, topography and multifunctional nature that we often forget the fact it is first a place where citizens bury and then visit their dead. The latter being the accepted function of all cemeteries World wide, when we come to observe the sophisticated phenomenon of Cairo's burial grounds we can quickly forget its primary function and make the mistake of overlooking it to concentrate on what seems more peculiar and intriguing.

Fiction does not cast aside rites of burial and visitation, on the contrary it cleverly uses the rich potential of those rites to unfold crucial dramatic elements, add value information to the story and carry the plot forward.

### 1/Burying the departed

"Soit le lieu est signifié (...) par l'exhibition d'un élément (...) emblématique (...)  
soit le lieu est montré. Il en est donné une image qui fait vue sur, qui propose un regard."  
In *Le caire et le Cinéma égyptien des années 80*

In some situations the funerary procession is only a pretext to take us into the graveyard in order to discover a concealed action. The movie Al-Abwash uses the procession to uncover the rape and murder that took place in the dead of the night amongst the tombs. The procession is not credible: There are very few members, the bier seems quite light as opposed to the description in the novel Al-Nouzoul Ila El Bahr where the writer insists on several occasions on how heavy it is to carry the body and how the bearers have to keep switching. It

is also impossible in Al-Abwash to actually notice the professionals who should be present and make for a real burial, Only the carrying of a coffin, the line made by the mourners and the incanted “God is alive” give indications as to what is taking place. The dramatic function of the procession is to reveal the crimes that have taken place in the secluded cemetery. The burial place can be seen as symbolizing the destruction of innocence and security for the young bride and the dead end her life has brutally reached. Once more, the movie Al-Batneyah uses the cemetery to conceal and then reveal crime. In that case the procession is not what I may call a semantic procession as it was in the previous case ( i.e. a procession which function is not to depict a real procession but to say that it is a procession), but a mock funerary procession orchestrated by drug dealers to cover their activities and hide their merchandise. We hear incantations of the usual “Allah Hay”, we see the carried bier, and this time we do have a gravedigger and more members that seem to have different roles. Very quickly we are faced with the knife that opens the shroud and the white powder is revealed. As police intervention is quick to happen, once again we are dramatically thrown back to the reality of the graveyards: “a place where life ends and death starts”, which is exactly what will happen to the dealers, arrested there, another dead end. The movie El Sakka Mat revolves around the dichotomy between life and death and the fear humans can have of dying but also of living. We attend a real funeral , the hero is burying his dear friend. The shots offer us a clear account of the procession, the mourners, the condolences, the readers, the wailers, the grave being dug and opened to receive the body. The description is detailed , the camera lingers on the different elements in an attempt to make us enter the heart and mind of the main character, to give veracity to his anguish. The open tomb reveals the inner feelings and troubles of the protagonist, it reminds him of the death of his dear wife as her face appears to him on the grave like an inaccessible image. This burial brings forward his trauma. Our presence in the cemetery is completely legitimized by the death of one of the protagonists, by the essence of the movie, and by the fact that the hero’s direct confrontation with burial constitutes a turning point in the plot. We also have a description in the eponymous novel (p239-243, doc14, p13-17). If we go back to the movie El Batneyah we witness another use of the cemetery as a burial place but in an ironic way: a disagreement rises between two of the drug dealers. One of them digs a grave for the other one and pushes him in menacing him of ending his life if he does not surrender. In the film Sarek El Farah, the hero, following the death of one of his community members and close friends, leads the procession to a monumental tomb where recline leaders and noble men. Bribing the doorkeeper he gets his friend buried in a sumptuous tomb. Once again the tombs are used both in their primary function but also symbolically. The lavish structure where the poor, old and sick man is buried shows what he represents for his community but also clearly indicates that no matter where one resides above the earth, no matter what kind of structure is erected on ones final Abode, in the end the earth in which people are buried is the same, there is no hierarchy amongst the deceased, as Salah Jahine expresses so well in quatrains (doc.17, B). The procession that leads the deceased to “his” grave in Sarek El Farah is a very “informal one”, it is essentially composed of the community members without distinction of functions. Both men and women are dressed in everyday clothes, no suits, nor mourning gowns. The novel “Al Bedayah Wal Nehayah” is very interesting in that it starts with the death of a man and the gathering of his nuclear family to organize the burial. We take a fascinating dive into the main character’s psyche as he cogitates on how shameful it is that any one should see the miserable tomb in which his father will be buried. How unacceptable it is that his father has never thought of purchasing a burial site worthy of his family to which external visitors could be taken with pride. The tomb is what remains of a deceased on earth and therefore reveals his/her status and the status of the family(p13-15, doc.5, p1-4). Al Nouzoul Ila El bahr has the clearer most elaborately depicted funeral. What is very interesting is the fact it is the cemetery

community that uses the cemetery in its burying function (very much like the previously mentioned example of the film *Sarek El Farah*), they scrupulously respects the rites of burial (look at doc.25, 26, 27) The minute description of the ritual allows the author to convey the depth of the feelings the cemetery dwellers have for the dead doctor.(p148-155 doc13,p21-28), Madafen Mafrousha Lil Igar offers us a great sequence where a funerary procession advances through the cemetery as a wedding takes place within the cemetery and here in these simultaneous actions we are exposed both with the essential function of the cemetery and the social phenomenon it has become in the book *Popular Arts in Egypt* there is a paralele between wedding rites and funerary rites (doc.26,p2). The novel *The Open Door* uses the cemetery as a battlefield. Egyptian nationalists are hiding and fighting from there, they are being bombarded by the tripartite forces. Again we are reminded of the function of the cemetery as the final abode, as the freedom fighter fall to their death amongst the tombs. The novelist Latifa El Zayyat brings extremes together when she has a lady give birth in a tomb during the fight. She uses the cemetery's essential function to suggest that in spite of death there is always new birth, life taking over(doc.9). Khairy Shalaby in *The Old Man* has a retired government employee reveal his obsession with removing the body of his wife from Cairo's cemetery where he feels it is indecent to let her rest since the cemetery is invaded by the homeless. He wants her "safely" buried in an appropriate tomb in Port Said(doc.6). Al-Batneyah's dancer and prostitute is victim of infant kidnapping. The father of the genitor of her child kidnaps the baby and by leaving the infants clothes stained with blood, makes the desperate mother believe her child has been killed. She takes her child's bloody clothes and buries them in the cemetery, between the tombs, digging a whole in the sand with her own hands. Here we see the importance of a specific burial place. She did not choose just any spot in a deserted land or a garden, she had to properly mourn her dead infant and therefore had to proceed with her invented ritual in the right place, the actual place where the dead are indeed buried. A place where one assumes she will be able to visit the "dead infant". It is also interesting to look at the process that goes on when death occurs before the funerary procession starts and reaches the burial grounds. Revealing this process gives information on the deceased and its family. In the movie *Ma'ali El Wazir* the minister has a nightmare in which he sees himself dead in his coffin. As a dead man he is able to interact with his family, see their reactions and understand that they actually want to be rid of him. They are only interested in the financial benefits of his death. In the novel *The Comedy of Death* the faithful servants rob the dead master, steal whatever they can. Every one of them wants something and the one that has only managed to get an old pair of tattered shoes is not ashamed to bluntly complain during the procession itself.(doc.2)

AY AY is the most satirical as it is built around a professional funerary procession follower, much like El Sakka Mat's mewassalati. Having retired for old age, he dreams of a dignified funerary procession as dignified as the processions he used to honor with his presence. His surname being El Wazir, The Minister, a mistake leads to his corpse being mistaken for a wazir's and he ends up having the honors he always wished to have, to the jubilation of his family who follows the grandiose procession carried forth by happiness. In the novel *The Clock*, a man dreams it is the funeral of his brother and that he is jealous of the honors given to his sibling(doc.7). The daughter who lost her too absent father, in the movie *Ganet El Shayatine*, spends a fortune on the funeral, deciding that if hers was not a father to be proud of when he was alive he would be in death. She is also very concerned with the way to announce the news of the death in the newspapers and spends time analyzing how the others do it as to find the most appropriate formulation. Although the family is Christian, it would be completely realistic to imagine a similar situation amongst a Muslim family.(doc.20,p4, about death notices)

In Ana La 'akzeb Wa Lakenni Atagammal the famous writer and father of the heroine attends a burial and discovers that the brilliant student whom his daughter loves is also a toraby, he sees him grave digging. Once more funerary rites work as dramatic catalysis. I shall end this paragraph with the masterpiece Al-Momia. Though the movie Al Momia does not take place in Cairo but in Upper Egypt and although the Cemetery we see is quite atypical. The movie starts with the death of the patriarch, the leader of the tribe. We witness the procession and the rituals around the grave. This burial leads to a major revelation concerning the activities that have enriched the tribe. Here profanation of tombs is a main concern: it is the riches found in pharaonic sepultures that constitute the tribe's wealth. When some descendants condemn such activities and refuse to join in, intrigues and feuds start. Al-Momia can be regarded as a reference in terms of fiction and cemetery. It portrays the everlasting relationship the Egyptians have with their dead, the importance of the burial rites, and reflects on the profanation of burial ground. This profanation, in a more contemporary and down to earth way, becomes a concern when one starts analyzing the tombs as a place of living: with daily needs being fulfilled there, old tombs being clandestinely reopened to receive new bodies. But more blatant is the constant menace of government plans to eradicate Cairo 's old cemetery, to use what is now graveyard to satisfy entrepreneurship, building apartments and luxury hotels. That profanation can be compared to the one in Al-Momia since, in both cases, the finality is lucrative and to the benefit of a lucky minority. Al-Momia somehow seems to suggest that our land, all of it, is the burial ground of our ancestors and should be honored as such.

## 2/ Visiting the departed

The novel Dreams of a Blind Boy, depicts a blind little boy who reads the Qor'an to the families who visit their dead. El Goa takes us across the cemetery with a group of women who are going to spend sometime near the family tombs, it does look like a real expedition and the women are on their own driven by a carter, the sequence reminds us of Al-Maqrizi's chronicles concerning women and the cemetery (doc.20, p1-2), p. Later in the same movie the rich lady gives a love rendez-vous in her family tomb. Although her first purpose is not to visit her dead relatives, still we do see her reclining near the grave in a position reminiscent of a stereotyped praying posture. The place is clean and all marble and ornament and she is completely alone, she does not carry anything although there is a garland of pink flowers and green branches near the cenotaph. 'Alb El Leil offers a case of a widow visiting the grave of her beloved husband with her son. The lady is extremely modest, she sits cross legged on the dust in front of the grave, on her left hand side there is a "sabbar", and she moves forward and backward in a rhythmical movement similar to the motion of Qor'an readers although she does not use formulaic sentences nor holy verses, she simply speaks to the deceased, sharing her sorrows and worries as if he was still alive. On the side is seated a man who could very likely be the hosh keeper, he does not do or saying anything, slightly seated behind her is her son who does not join in any action or ritual, he just looks around.

Although the movie Shafika Wa Metwalli does not take place in Cairo, it is still interesting to look at the shot where Shafika goes back to her home village and visits the tomb of her grandfather. We see her there in the cemetery and then leaving the cemetery, she stands on what looks like a hill and in the background we see a rather big tomb, we also see a tree that could be a Sycamore tree ; in the novel The Clock, the narrator dreams and from a sycamore tree that appears in his dream he knows that the dream takes place in a cemetery. In Madafen Mafrousha Lil Egar a last descendant of an upper class family feels compelled to visit the family tomb almost everyday. He disturbs the family who has settled in that tomb, pays rent and is struggling to deal with the grave as a conventional home. On the one hand we are faced

with a man visiting his deceased but that situation brings forth the reality of those who live in a tomb and have to adapt to the double function of their habitat. As mentioned before every instance of dead visitation weaves value information into the narrative.

### 3/ Veneration of personal heroes

"Elle fut une esclave lettrée, érudite et artiste  
Elle fut une femme ravissante, attrayante et enjouée  
Elle fut un épouse aimante fidèle et jalouse  
Elle fut une reine ferme, déterminée et compétente"  
Muhammad Sa'ïd Al-'Ariân,  
Chagarat al-Durr

The choice of such a title is based on the importance that certain public figures have on individuals in Society. How intimate their relationship becomes with each and every one and how they become part of their history and may have a significant symbolic role at certain times of their lives. Sitt El Mulk (doc.11, p9-10), Chagaret El Dorr (doc.15), Gamal Abdel Nasser ( doc.20, p4), Om Kalthoum (Om kalthoum Museum, see a video of her funerals), Abdel Halim Hafez, and more recently Soad Hosni or Ahmed Zaki, can be considered somehow national heroes. We need only to remember their funerals or the reactions triggered by their death and how the bier was followed by huge crowds to the final Abode. A representation of that veneration of public figures and how there are turned into heroes is omni present in the movie *Leh Ya Banafseg* where a blind and mediocre singer imagines the late Abdel Halim Hafez to be his artistic mentor. Although Abdel El Halim is no longer, he seems to accompany the singer through each step of his life. When the blind pseudo artist has a major recording session to go through he goes on a visit to Abdel Halim's grave. The Tomb is clean and quite imposing reminding us of a shrine with inscribed marble. A big picture of the deceased reclines against it, in the background two youngsters stand, they seem to be fans' of Abdel Halim. The protagonist and his friend approach with veneration and sit by the grave in an attitude remindful of someone visiting a dear and much respected relative or a saint.

### 4/ The professionals of the Arafa.

The Arafa professionals are those who are brought to the cemetery to exercise a professional activity directly linked to death, its rituals and obligations whether they actually live there or not.

#### a-The toraby

In *Ana la akzeb*, the father lives in spacious funerary complex he seems to be the toraby of the area in charge of the burial within several hahwashes, his son is well trained and temporarily taking over the heavy duty of the paternal job. We see other examples of torabia but not with such detail. In *Madafen* the toraby has access to tombs but we only briefly see him close or open the torba. In *El Batneya* the procession is fake so the toraby must be an accomplice since the bier is hiding illegal merchandise.

#### b-The hanouti and body preparation

*El Sakka Mat* features the hanoutiya "coffee shop" where they can be hired to proceed with the preparation of the body and the death ritual, we have an explanation of the hanouti in doc.23, p3. The film *Shahatine Wa Nobala* starts with a flood that turns out to be an overflow of the water used to wash a body before getting it ready for burial ; we only see lower legs of

the deceased from knees to feet and backs of women dressed in black, according to Popular Arts in Egypt(doc.26), this representation is quite erroneous. Ganet El Shayatine gives a very precise rendering of the body preparation, the scene takes place in very dim light, but we can see how that they wash the deceased, dress him in brand new clothes, even get a dentist to fix his broken teeth. The dead man is a Christian and it is worth wondering whether an identical procedure could take place in a Moslem family under identical circumstances, if we refer to doc. 26 the assumption is realistic.

#### c-The hosh guardian

Is the Hosh keeper always involved in the death rituals? In many of our examples he is either the one who rents the room (Shakamin Hak El Zoga), or guards the tomb (Sarek El Farah, 'Alb El Leil) we do not see him directly involved with the dead. In Ana La Akzeb the family men seem to be both guardians of hosh and torabia, the same goes for Madafen. In any case there seems to be an ambiguity between the two functions: Hawsh keeper and torabi, is it the same profession?

#### d-The Qor'an readers

Dreams of a blind boy portrays a very young blind Qor'an reader, In Al Nozoul Ila El Bahr the readers have a choice place in the procession, they also belong to the decision makers as in where the body will end(p.149-155, doc.13, p22-28)

#### e-The mowasalati or metayebati

Is an example that we see in El Sakka Mat. They are referred to as the the enfendeya, they were a tarboush and a black suit, they gather in a particular coffee shop "Ahwat'el Effendeya", located right in front of the hanoutiya shop, where they can be hired, they recite verses, moving along with the procession, incensing and praising the deceased. They accompany the dead and soothe the pain of the remaining family with heart felt pain, hence these two ways of naming them: mowassalatiya, metayyebati, In the eponymous novel there is an elaborate description given by one of them (p174-185, doc.14, p1-11).(also a ref. In doc.21 and 22 )

Ay Ay deals with a man whose job can be compared with the mowassalati-metayyebati job. Edward Lane in Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians names the profession differently, for him they are the Yemeneeyeh(doc.25).

#### f-The naddaba or me'adedda

The wailers are found in Al Nouzoul Ila El Bahr, wailing on both sides of the processions and creating a "rhythm of pain that freezes the air"(p149-155,doc13, p21-28). One of the novel's characters is a professional wailer living in the cemetery, she came from the country side and had to leave her rural environment for she had wished to be a professional dancer. She has inherited the sophisticated craft of wailing from the women of her family(p82,doc.13, p11).

It is quite thrilling here to compare that female character and Sayed Darwish's melody of the "Naddabat and 'awalems"(doc.28). 'awalems and dancers are hired to bring joy to weddings and the comparison between weddings and funerals seems relevant (doc.26,p2), this same

document as we can see actually makes a distinction between the naddaba and the wailer so does Galila El Kadi in *La Cité des Morts*(doc.27)Finally, Edward lane describes the wailers work in his previously mentioned book (doc.25). When the death of the Mewassalati occurs in the film *El Sakkamat*, we do spot some wailers, improvised or professionals, they pull their scarves and slap their faces looking out from the surrounding buildings.

#### IV-Cairo 's Cemetery and the Spiritual World : A refuge from life itself.

Proximity with the Other World, the presence of shrines, mosques and mausoleums, the geography of the place itself gives the Cemetery a spiritual and symbolic dimension that has proved very inspiring to some authors. The place then becomes a protagonist, a focal point. By choosing a location in the qarafa the filmmaker and writer guide our reading and understanding of what can be the essence of the work, avoiding over explanation and lengthy descriptions.

##### 1/Religious figures, Saints and Sanctification

In the movie *Chased by the Dogs* and the eponymous novel the Sheikh who advises the hero seems to dwell in a Khanka<sup>3</sup> very close to the cemetery, the words of the sheikh are very ambiguous and are always remindful of our human condition. The location of his residence is very logical as it refers to the fact he is liberated from his worldly needs, elevated to spiritual life.(p18-19, doc.4, p1-2). The protagonists of the movie Sarek El Farah constantly seek answers to their questions by visiting the shrine of a saint they call Sidi Abou El Alamat. The process is quite simple, the erring devotee touches and kisses the shrine, tell his or her story and asks a question requiring a clear positive or negative answer. When this is done he or she waits, if a sign comes the answer is positive, no sign is a negative answer. In one instance the answer comes as a pigeon defecating on the protagonist's head, which fills him with satisfaction.

The novel *Al Nozoul Ila Al Bahr* gives us the opportunity to witness a real case of sanctification. When the doctor dies, all the residents of his area of the cemetery, full of love and gratitude for him, accomplish the funerary rites, the prayers, carry the bier to the tombs. The atmosphere is one of great loss, aw and love, at one point the bier seems to lead the procession. After being very heavy, it becomes extremely light, almost flying on its own, then it stops right in front of a Zawya where is buried a blind saint. This is the place the doctor's body has chosen as burial ground, by this post-death but not posthumous action the doctor becomes a saint. (p149-155, doc.13,p21-28). sLane mentions a similar fact with a very different ending, they trick the deceased and bury him where they wanted(doc.25)

##### 2/Refuge (for the mystics, the mavericks, marginals, those rejecting society and the corrupted system ; final refuge in irreversible situations)

###### a-Mystics, sages

As we have seen previously the sheikh in *Chased by the Dogs* lives at the edge of the cemetery in a kind of no man's land between the living and the dead. Although he is not in the cemetery per se the cemetery is in his sight. In spite of the fact that the film *Saye<sup>3</sup> Bahr* takes place in Alexandria, it is interesting to notice that the sage who acts as the conscience of the troublemaking hero lives in an underground tomb which he never leaves. Although the metayebati in *El Sakka Mat* is far from being a saint or a real sage and does not live in the

cemetery, he can easily be considered a philosopher, a wise man whose outlook on life requires a proximity with the graveyards ; both in the novel and the movie he appears to have fought his fear of death through direct contact with the dead and his professional acquaintance with the graves have led him to an edonistic life. In Madafen Mafrousha Lil Igar it is interesting to notice that life in the cemetery has resulted in more wisdom for the family members. Although none of them can be regarded as sages nor mystics but it seems that fiction sometimes attempts to tell us that living with an eye on death gives us more opportunity to enjoy and appreciate life for what it really is.

#### b-Intellectuals

One of our intellectuals, the hero of Ana La, highly suffers from his life in the cemetery. He bears it as a disfiguration he has to correct, like some model with a prominent nose would have to go through plastic surgery. He compares himself to a woman using make up, going to a hair dresser to look more beautiful. In spite of the fact the young man bears his background like a hidden scar, we can easily imagine that he has intellectually and philosophically benefited from it. He studies psychology and is brilliant at it, his double life seems to provide him with insight and distance and practically speaking his isolation from social circles seem to have provided him with time to study different idioms to a point where he can read certain books in their original languages. Another self-made intellectual, the protagonist of Al Nozoul Ila, has a very cynical, though tender, outlook on the cemetery community. Nevertheless his growing up there seems to constitute the essence of his thinking. He pities the graves dwellers and very often refers to them as worms. In the same novel, a doctor who has grown up in the cemetery and managed to grow out of it closes his clinic on the Nile to open another one inside the qarafa. He goes back to his roots and gives up life amongst the elite. This choice seem to make him happier and a better person(p154,doc.13,p19).

In the novel Sakawi El Masry, the writer and intellectual feels responsible for his cemetery family and we as readers get the feeling that he values his position as an insider who has pursued an education and enjoys life outside. He understands the mechanisms of both communities and is able to throw a bridge between them. He seems to become the speaking voice of his cemetery family(p36-39, p56-57, doc.1, p1-6)

In the Colors of Infamy, we could have imagined the intellectual to have chosen another place, or at least to have spent a short while in the cemetery, but in fact for various reason he comes to appreciate his life there, it even seems to feed his intellectual activities(doc.12)

In the film Al Lass Wal Kelab the man who visits the prostitute's flat overlooking the tombs in order to rent it expresses to the land lady his fascination with the landscape. He proudly explains it by referring to artistic temperament.

The protagonist of Shahatine Wa Nobala' is an intellectual whose mind is far too brilliant to accept society's corruptions and discriminations. At the beginning of the movie we see him living in a run down wekala, the garbage collector's trajectory to the street where the wekala stands gives us clear indication that the dejected intellectual lives very close to the cemetery. Whether cemetery dwellers by choice or by fate, the previously mentioned example bare in common complex personalities that make the cemetery essential to their beings. Though it might not always be clearly stated, some of them appear to find peace and unity in the cemetery, while others, though sometimes loathing it, benefit from that kind of life in various ways.

#### c-Criminals as "mystics"

Some criminals live either at the edge of the cemetery, in a kind of no man's land or take refuge amongst the tombs to indulge in their activities or to escape the law.

The novel and movie *Al-Lass Wa'l Kelab* make very clear choice of the cemetery or the borders of the cemetery as being the ultimate place for the outlaws to survive or die. The prostitute has a somewhat decent home overlooking a landscape of tombs, when the hero gets out of jail he can only find shelter at her place. In several instances in the movie we spot the landscape of tombs in the background or we see the hiding hero gazing at it through the window. The novel offers a very clear insight into his mind ; as he is alone, looking out the window he almost finds release in the sight of the tombs(p80,doc.4,p5). In the movie he defends himself in front of a mock tribunal made of dead men, the only ones who may listen and understand. He will eventually end up hiding from the police in a mausoleum and meet his end there ; one way of suggesting a strange sanctification or referring to his mysticism.

The film *Ganet el Shayatine* starts with three friends losing an older friend and somewhat mentor. From the very first shots we see that we are not dealing with the most conventional group of people. From the way they act and interact, it is clear that they use drugs and alcohol, they seem to always be in a secondary state, they laugh hysterically, their dialogues reveal the life they lead and the personality of the deceased. They found the deceased in a coffee shop in the cemetery where it appears that they live in ostracism, according to their own rules. The dead mentor's identity is little by little revealed: he is a well to do society member with a traditional family who abandoned conventions to lead a free life with a bunch of mavericks: Three vagabonds and two prostitutes. All shots take place at night (the few day time shots are shot in an artificial darkness, see doc.32) and only silhouettes of monuments give indications of the location. *Hob Fil Zenzana* takes us into a deserted modern cemetery where a couple of runaways hide. They are ex-convicts, have suffered great injustices and unfair imprisonment, they are running away from corrupted millionaires who want to exterminate them, the lady hides an illegitimate pregnancy a strange parallel to be established here with *The Story of the First Kalandar in The One Thousand and One Nights*, where it is an incestuous love that is hidden and in a sumptuous tomb as opposed to *Hob Fil Zenzana* but the movement, the descending in a kind of "inferno" is strikingly similar (doc.19). The examples above mentioned are compared to mystics although in the eyes of society they are outlaws. They have a disillusioned outlook on society and cannot be considered venal unprincipled criminals. They all ended up becoming criminals because they could not fit in. They are the victims of a materialistic system and somehow underwent self- sacrifice. They seem to live at the edge, a life very close, in its refusal of hypocrisy and unethical comfort, to the life of renouncements lead by mystics. This ambiguous status necessitates an equivocal setting, a setting in between two Worlds: The physical and the spiritual.

#### d-Victims and martyrs

The wailer of the novel *Al Nouzoul Illa El Bahr* is described as rather young and beautiful. She was talented in dancing and would have loved to become a dancer. Following the rejection of her family she had only one choice: To become a naddaba as she had naturally inherited this skill and the verses linked to it by the women of her family. She left her native village and the logical place for her to go was the cemetery, her working place. She lives in a rudimentary hut in the cemetery and sleeps on the ground.

She can be regarded as a victim; rejected by her family and incapable of exercising her passion she had no other refuge. She dreams of a better life elsewhere and when for the first time she is offered a chance to appear on TV, cleaned and given proper clothes, she attracts all eyes. She becomes conscious of the fact she could have known a better fate.

The family in Shakawi El Masry El Fassih is described as the poorest of all, they own nothing and can hardly find food anymore. They are the rejects of society and even within the cemetery's community have no place and can't find a way of surviving. Within the hierarchy of the cemetery community itself they seem to be the lowest. They end up being arrested for they try to sell "themselves" in Midan Al-Tahrir.

The Novel The Open Door offers the cemetery as a shelter for freedom fighters, the ones who try to protect their country from attacking enemies and invaders. The cemetery becomes a battlefield where patriots fall to their death as martyrs. In a way their presence in the land where the ancestors are buried symbolizes their martyrdom, their will to die for their people. Many of them fall to their death as they fight.(doc.9)

In the novel The Theocrat, Massaoud the slave is despised and feared. Not because of a reprehensible behavior but simply because of his dark skin and what is described as his ugly face. In the eyes of his surrounding only an evil and dangerous creature can be "that dark and that ugly". Victim of his physical appearance he finds refuge amongst the dead, the ones who will not judge him and persecute him, in the only place where he will not have to see himself in other's eyes and discover the fear that he inspires.(p35-39, doc.11, p1-5)

## V-On location

### 1-Filming on location

Although filming on location seems to be a relatively recent trend in film making, it actually was a feature of the early history of Cinema. The reason was simple enough : there were no studios and artists had to handle their craft in an experimental way. The first studios appear around 1922 and they are created by Mohamed Bayoumi, still they are not big enough and do not have the capacity or expertise to create landscapes nor elaborate outdoor environments. In 1918 the silent film Madame Loretta is filmed in the street. In 1927 Leila is shot in the desert, the same year sees the Zoo filmed in Cairo's Zoo by Mohamed Karim who in 1930 directs Zeinab entirely shot in the Egyptian countryside with real peasants as actors. Around the same time another film is shot in the Egyptian countryside, Taht Dok El Amar. As opposed to Zeynab, Taht Dok El Amar does not show a "rousseauist", romanticised approach to the rural environment but reveals it with its misery and daily struggles.

The Movie Ouyoun Sahera, seen as one of the first Arab attempts at Science Fiction, is mainly filmed outdoors(doc). In 1934-35 the film The Queen Chagarret El Dorr is Egypt's first historical film and is partly shot in the historical area of Al-Azhar.(doc.21,p1)

The fact that for a while many scenes of quite a few films could only be shot on location makes early cinema an important reference source and give it a documentary value.

Around 1935, Talaat Harb opens Studio Misr to organize production with the help of the Egyptian Bank that he founded in 1919. But it is mainly after the second World War that there is an increase in film production and that several studios are constructed. In 1955 the state takes an interest in providing help, facilitating the launching of studios and encouraging film production. So taking a look at those directors who, at times when they could have benefited from studios, deliberately filmed outside, can provide precious information on the possibilities of filming different locations in Egypt, the different spaces that were accepted and the way of handling them. Salah Abou Seif bases three of his films on "hawadeth" and he films in the actual places where these hawadeth occurred. The case of two female murderers who killed young women in Alexandria is the source of inspiration for his master piece, Raya Wa Sakina produced in 1953. An assassin in a rural village makes for the movie Al-Wahsh produced in 1954, and 1957 Al-Futtuwa is inspired by a scandal amongst the corrupted vegetable and food dealers to keep a monopoly on the prices and the merchandise. When Salah Abou Seif does

not film outdoors he spends enough time in the different areas to record every detail and re-create the setting in the most realistic way in the studio.

In 1952 Youssef Chahine shoots scenes of *Sera' Fil Wadi* in the temple of Karnak and Bab El Hadid in Cairo's central station. With Hayat Aw Mot, in 1954, Kamal El Cheikh creates a piece of anthology by taking the viewer across many streets of Cairo revealing the city's atmosphere and using its natural light. Though these films reveal scenes of Egyptian life we are still far from imagining a movie revealing too many grim realities and actually showing deteriorated and filthy aspects of the capital. The realities lived by the protagonists are cruel but the city as shown is still to a great extent beautified, humble environments and life in popular quarters slightly areas romanticised. We have no similar examples shot in the cemetery, the only one that comes to mind is a 1962 production, *Al-Lass Wal Kelab* directed by Kamal El Cheikh. *Al-Lass Wal Kelab* shows a deserted cemetery, with mosques, shrines and mausoleums, no tombs are clearly shown, no ahwash. When in the prostitute's flat, the open window constantly evokes the presence of the graveyard without bluntly revealing it. Even when the prostitute takes her costumer to the cemetery, it is only suggested by the ambience we do not see the graves.

Between filming completely outdoors and recreating a space in a studio, there is a third solution : Some directors chose to work on location but they re-arrange, refurbish the space. This is what atef salem does in 1967 in his film *Khan El Khalili*. He uses the actual market but has a set designer re-arrange the shops, the streets to create an atmosphere specific to the film. Another in between solution is to mix outside locations and studio reconstructions, which was the choice made by Ali Badrakhan in his film *El-Goa* produced in 1985. The film creates a coherent topography by mixing a studio alley with shots in Gayer Anderson's House by the Ibn Touloun Mosque and shots trough the cemetery.

These techniques of creating cinematographic space is quite relevant for us since this is mainly what we notice of the social films shot later on in the cemetery: *Madafen Mafrousha Lil Egar*, *El Sha'a min Ha' el Zoga* or *El Zenzana* where we do get the feeling that the tombs are specially rearranged. We can in those instances almost speak of real locations becoming set. A last example is *Sarek El Farah*, where the director gives us indications that the action may be taking place in inhabited parts of the cemetery. The area where life unfolds before our eyes is a set built on location, the camera gives us clear geographical indications from which we can make our mental puzzle and get an idea of where the action takes place. *Karakon Fil Shari'* is a clear set trying to reproduce tomb but without accuracy, it is more the idea of a tomb. We notice the same in the TV sitcoms, *Hadith El Sabah Wal Masa'* and *'Alb Mayyet*. It is only around the late seventies beginning eighties that there is a real conscious movement from the film directors to get out to the streets, it may be connected with the economical crises: there is less money for film production and the costs of studios increase. But it is certainly born out of a desire to use the city as a central point, sometimes as the main character of the film. This trend is embraced by several directors. It managed to give an image to places that seemed to have no image and it gave birth to characters that were never seen before on the silver screen since they belonged to these occulted environments. Cinema was in a way taking off Cairo's 'nikkab' and allowing all citizens to see their naked city.

Mohamed Khan in *Darbet Shams*, 1978, shows for the first time a very raw Cairo. In 1/2 arnab he takes us through old Cairo, construction sites, useless meters of huge pipe lines, the Aquaduct, we can not help but remember Jules Dassin's *Naked City*. Khan's film *Vengeance* counts 70 shots of Cairo, *Ahlam Hind We Camilia* reveals *Matariya* and *Masr El Gedida*. What is fascinating in Khan's work is that he may from one film to another use the same locations, the same views revealing the same buidings, his films then become a document on the evolution of the city. We witness a real transformation of the urban environment from one film to the other as is so appropriately explained in *Le Caire et le Cinema Egyptien des*

Années 80. Mohamed Khan claims he never wished to film in forbidden spaces, like military land and in habited parts of the cemetery. In his later production, Clefthy, he shoots in the new Madinat Nasr cemetery.

For Ouyoun La Tanam Ra'afat El Mihi creates a mechanics workshop under the Sixth of October Bridge ; the workshop is a facsimilé but the surrounding is real.

In his movie Lil Hob Kessa Akhira the same director chooses an island on the Nile and re-writes the script to suit the environment.

This school in film directing can be compared to sitespecific work in the performing arts where the piece has to fit a given space, the space is not transformed to adapt to a pre-conceived performance. Although some films deal with Cairo's cemetery, we are yet to experience a similar movement in the history of filming in the Cemetery. A way of filming where the story is created for the space, where the space is used as it is with its specificity, real community and atmosphere. Is such an expectation realistic? Are the government and public opinion ready for that?

## 2-Censorship on Cinema and how it may affect filming in the Cemetery

Heavenly religions should not be criticized. Heresy and magic should not be positively portrayed. Immoral actions and vices are not to be justified and must be punished. Images of naked human bodies or the inordinate emphasis on individual erotic parts, the representation of sexually arousing scenes, and scenes of alcohol consumption and drug use are not allowed. Also prohibited is the use of obscene and indecent speech. The sanctity of marriage, family values, and one's parents must be respected. Beside the prohibition on the excessive use of horror and violence, or inciting their imitation, it is forbidden to represent social problems as hopeless, to upset the mind, or to divide religion, classes, national unity.

Egyptian law of censorship 1976 in Viola Shafik Arab Cinema

The introduction of Cinema in Egypt was quickly followed by a strong censorship. Censorship even affected silent films mainly targetting eroticism, the portrayal of foreigners and the Egyptian upper classes, ruling powers, religious issues and the image of Egypt ; which somehow did not change much over the years. In 1926 Youssef Bey Wahbi was forced into dropping out of a German-Turkish production that was to relate the life of the prophet. The film was to be shot in Egypt, with Egyptian actors and Youssef Bey Wahbi was to impersonate the prophete himself. The reactions were so strong against it, not only in Egypt but in all Arab countries, that the famous actor was asked by the Ministry of Interior to abandon the project, which he did. Around 1927, Ma'asat El Hayat, a film starring a dancer called ifrinjiya was banned because it contained erotic dances. About a year later the film Awlad El Zawat suffered terrible criticism and was forbidden after a first showing for it was said to give a decadent and negative image of Europeans and the Egyptian upper crust. The film Leila with Aziza Amir was filmed in the desert in 1927 and related the life of a young bedouin women. Aziza Amir was strongly criticised for her choice of theme and the setting of the movie. Why was she showing such a retarded and degrading image of Egypt, when Cairo was so full of modern and sophisticated places showing a high degree of civilization? Aziza Amir had to publicaly apologise and promised to make it up in her next production. One sequence was forbidden, it showed the bedouin family eating on a traditional tableyah.

Two other relevant examples are Zeinab, by Mohammed Karim and Al-Azima by Kamal selim, for like Leila they reveal to which point the Egyptian intelligensia was, very early on, proccupied with the image of its home country and desired to be counted amongst the most

modern and civilized societies: Certain areas and certain aspects of the culture were not to be filmed since they were not giving an honorable image of the country.

Zeinab was filmed in 1930 in the actual Egyptian countryside and some of the actors were real peasants. Only needs to be said that the countryside was cleaned, the cattles were actually washed and the fellahine were given sandals, shoes and clean clothes. The original writer of the story, Hassan Bey Hikal congratulated the director on showing the countryside not as it is but as it ought to be. As for the film *Al-Azima*, 1937, it can be considered the pioneer in social realism in Egypt and elsewhere. Although the film is shot in studios, a real alley is faithfully reconstructed with depictions of everyday scenes. As the main action takes place in the foreground, characters that seem to jump out of a real popular alley appear in the background, immersed in their daily routines.

In 1936 all the producers rejected the film for its location and subject matter, the reactions were violent. It was not a theme worthy of this wonderful art form introduced by the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. Kamal Selim had to produce the film himself.

In 1946 Kamal El Telmessani's *Black Market*, *Al Souk El Soda* provokes similar reactions mingled with a certain fear for it revealed a corrupted system.

In respect to our subject of filming in Cairo's Cemetery it is easy to see the obstacles that arise from such reactions against filming in bedouin, peasant or popular environments and to imagine that it would take some time for any artist to endeavour in such an enterprise, at least in a realistic way. We do know that 1933 *Oyoum Sahera* was shot outdoors and includes at least 2 or 3 cemetery scenes. But this is a work of fantasy considered one of the first Arab attempts in Science Fiction and does not touch upon Egyptian social and cultural realities. The previous examples deal with specific cases and the reactions they triggered, let us now take a closer look at the official censorship.

In 1914 censorship is officially established by the palace and the British Embassy, the Ministry of Interior is in charge of its application. The main rules are 'no attacks or critics against foreigners, government employees, religion, no depiction of workers or peasants, no representation of any socialist position, no criticism of past nor present monarchies, film makers have nothing left but night clubs, rich homes, palaces and "rousseauist" environments. In 1928, an decree n° 42 specifically mentions the necessity of showing the "true image of Egypt" and therefore, amongst others, contains a clause preventing foreigners from filming any degrading image of Egypt and its people. In the early 30's in his book entitled *The Dawn of Cinema*, Mahmoud Khalil Rashid vehemently insists on the necessity of forbidding foreigners from filming filthy Egyptian areas and the lower classes. Even Ahmad Badrakhan, one of the main film makers himself, in his 1936 book legitimizes censorship, and discusses the same sensitive issue-What can and what cannot be filmed-with very similar views ; he Justifies filming in upper class environment by advocating the very nature of cinema and the necessity to depict beautiful, attractive scenes. 1947 sees another important decree still very strongly against the depiction of poverty and oppression. It is forbidden to show poverty, workers fighting for their rights, expressions of freedom, sex or death. In 1948 there is a new law from the English Imperial rulers to restrict what was called political-revolutionary films, this law forbids the depiction of social cruel realities in order to avoid social upheavels. These laws remain in action for about 30 years, though some rules may slightly change from time to time, the 1947 "arêté" remains extremely restrictive. The struggle for independence and the growth of nationalism encourages patriotic and independantist subjects but political issues become even more sensitive and the authorities guide film production towards propaganda rather than uncovering and discussing fundamental issues.

An important example is *Za'er Al-Fagr*. A first projection in 1973 is forbidden because of the disrespectful image of Egypt, more interesting for us is the second projection in 1975 and the

missing parts. The censored sections are very eloquent and touch upon the cemeteries probably for the first time (doc.30).

A crucial point for us is that in decree 1947 it is clearly mentioned that no biers should appear in films and decree 1976 forbids death rituals, funerary processions and burials.

It is good to notice that there was some flexibility in the application of these laws otherwise it would have meant forbidding *Yaoumeyat Na'eb Fil Aryaf* and *El-Sakka Mat* (doc.30). The 1976 decree removes restrictions on filming popular areas and miserable villages. Space seems liberated from censorship but not from self-censorship and fear of informal censors. But according to contemporary film maker Mohamed Khan, regarded as the reference in filming outdoors, in spite of the 1976 decree, permissions are required, a list of locations have to be handed to the censors and every single location approved. Restrictions are in vigor when it comes to military lands and inhabited parts of cemeteries.

Since 1984 censorship does not forbid any film but demands to ban films come from journalists, individuals, corporations, public figures and religious figures or those who claim to be. In the 80's and 90's cinema is the hostage of the public space. We are faced with informal censors, either they fight against a deteriorated image of a professional body (*Al Avocado*, *Al Fourn*), to protect moral values (*Lill Hob Qessa Akhira*), religion (*Al Mohagir*) or, as always, the country's image. These attacks can go as far as court and prosecution.

Now-a-days, though censorship on location seems more flexible, cinema falls victim to public opinion, misplaced patriotism and last but not least, the Arab Market. Since the rights of video movies and TV films are pre-sold to Saudi Arabia and Gulf countries, rules on production become strict and producers have to comply with them for financial reasons. The laws of these extremely conservative countries appear to be even more restrictive than inside censorship. If we take a look at doc. 31 we have a clear picture of the pressures faced by Egyptian film makers.

These few facts throw some light on our list of films. Let us only point out that only one of the over 21 films contains real original cemetery dwellers, there is not even a detailed reconstruction of cemetery life to be compared with previously mentioned films like *Al-Azima*. The films that deal with the cemetery as a dwelling space picture a virtual environment (even when filmed on location) and it is clear that what we have in front of our eyes is what the film maker wants to say about the space and its environment rather than what actually is there. We can easily imagine that this way of proceeding, filming outdoors in the actual setting but rearranging the space and avoiding showing actual inhabitants is in some cases a way of by-passing censors. Only in the case of *Ana La Akzeb*, do we have a family of long time dwellers represented. But even this family is a torpid family and not a dejected family settling in a run down tomb and leading a miserable life. Where are those miserable homeless people that are said to have sheltered in the cemetery and live under poverty line? Most of the time we are presented with someone from another background having to accidentally spend time as a cemetery resident. Nevertheless cinema has clearly benefited, in our subject matter from the late 70's laws since such films could actually be made. Filming misery is a sensitive issue in Egypt but it is always possible to hide difficult realities behind the evidence that poverty exists all over the World. Cairo's Cemetery in its specificity englobes many issues that make shooting there even more delicate, it touches upon too many taboos at once: Death, sex, religion, poverty, corruption it seems to contain all the restrictions that appeared through out the history of cinema and therefore when it is meaningfully done, it requires a great amount of subtlety.

### 3-Documents surveying the use of space and location in literature and Cinema

#### a/ Literature

-One Thousand and One Nights, The Story of the First Kalandar, complete description of one tomb and the underground chamber, Doc19

-One Thousand and One Nights, The Story of Aziz and Azizah, how the visitor engraves verses on marble and wishes to build a dome, Doc.18

-Al Nouzoul Ila El Bahr, a thoughtful description of the itinerary of the procession, p149-155

-'Atabat El Bahga, description of the birds' market, entering the cemetery and the calm there in spite of the surrounding noise and crowd and the Friday flea market, (doc.3)

-The Open Door, description of the space where the freedom fighters are hiding and how they are assailed from above, doc.9

2/ For films refer to plates: 1-21

## **C-Conclusion**

When it comes to Cairo, fiction has succeeded in giving very clear images and atmospheres to most areas. Literature and films have been able to create a virtual map of the Egyptian Capital. But the cemetery seems yet to remain an ambiguous space : is it part of the city or is it still to be considered off the borders? Do we integrate it in our mind's map? In *Le Caire et Le Cinema Egyptien des Années 80* , Marie-Claude Bénéard does not situate it in the map of the filmed city (doc.24)...

It seems that Cairo's historical cemetery has so far only been used as an idea rather than a real location with specific features. It seems it was not yet given full body ; a tangible character that would make Egyptian cinema goers and passionate readers feel acquainted to it, like they may feel acquainted, sometimes intimate with parts of Cairo that they have never been to, like a "cinéphile" will feel intimate with New York City even if she/he has never been. For that to occur, should the cemetery become one of the main features of the capital and little by little take its deserved place in the Caireen mind or should it be considered a city of its own and be dealt with as such? Speaking about Cairo, Marie-Claude Bénéard refers to a "flexible space", an "elastic space" , "a space in a constant state of transformation". Definitely we can apply this definition to Cairo's cemetery, like Cairo it is extremely unique, formed of contrasting spaces but at the same time it is souple, multifunctional, ever changing. This contributes to the fear and fascination it inspires and makes it a most inspiring location, yet to be fully invested, for creative minds.

## D-Appendix

Threads to follow for documentaries:

- **Ibrahim El Mugui**, *Cairo as it was Never Seen Before*, 1975
- **Jocelyne Saab**, *Egypt la Cité des Morts*, 1977
- **Nader Hilal**, *Lam Ya3ud Ahadoun min huna/ No Body Comes Back From There*, 2008

Threads to follow concerning TV series:

- Hadith Al Sabah Wal Masa'*
- 'Alb Mayyet*

People who may be contacted for interviews or further information:

- Tarek El Telmessany**, director of photography for a lot of the films
- Ossama Fawzi**, film director of *Ganet El Shayatine*
- Samir Farid**, film critic and film collector
- Rafiq El Sabban**, film critic
- **Yasser Abdel Latif**, Script writer for: *Lam Ya3ud Ahadoun min huna*  
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- Nader Hilal**, director of the same documentary  
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- 19- **Osama Fawzi**, *Ganet el Shayatin* (1999-2000)
- 20- **Kamal Al Sheikh**, *Al Lass Wal Kelab/Chased By the Dogs* (1962)
- 21- **Atef El Tayeb**, *'Alb El Leil* (1989)
- 22- **Mohamed Khan**, *1/2 Arnab* (1982)#°
- 23- **Raafat el Mihi**, *Ouyoun La Tanam\** (1981)
- 24- **Ahmad Galal**, *Ouyoun Sahera\** (1934)
- 25- **Ahmad Galal**, *Shagaret El Dorr\** (1935)
- 26- **Hosam El Din Mostafa**, *Tair Al Sama/Sky Bird* \*(1988)/
- 27- **Nagdi Hafez**, *Al raqessa Wal Hanouti /The Dancer and the Undertaker\** (1992)
- 28- **Nasser Hussein**, *Khali Balak Min Azzouz/Beware of Azzouz/\**(1992)
- 29- **Tewfik Saleh**, *Yawmeyat Na'eb Fil Aryef\**(1969)
- 30- **Mohamed Karim**, *Zeynab#*, (1929 and 1951)
- 31- **Kamal El Cheikh**, *Hayat Aw Mot#* (1954)
- 33- **Wedad Orfi & Istefan Rosti**, *Leyla#*(1927)
- 34- **Shokri Madi**, *Taht Do' El 'Amar#*(1930 & 1932)
- 35- **Atef Salem**, *Khan El Khalil#*(1967)
- 36- **Kamal Selim**, *El Azima #* (1939)
- 37- **Tewfik Saleh**, *Darb El Mahabil#* (1955)
- 38- **Mamdouh Shokri**, *Za'er El Fagr\**(1973)
- 39- **Samir Seif**, *Ma'ali El Wazir°*(?)

#Indirect connection with cemetery

\*Cemetery Scenes but I could not find them, information based on readings

°Watched but no video material present in the report

23-38 No Video material information based on readings

