

prof. Ewa Machut-Mendecka

Picturesque Egyptian cinema (based on film adaptations)

The Egyptian cinema from its beginnings in the end of 20th of the last century has depicted the Egyptian reality with its problems and figures. It has included many forms and directions - from realism to magic realism. The figures are individualized and in the same time represent social structures and moral standards. The literature is an endless source of subjects and motives, film makers in Egypt willingly reached for novels and stories. The film adaptations can be regarded as the interesting genre of the Egyptian cinema and they are successful in presenting novels and stories.

Egypt may be proud of literature of the outstanding writers deeply and diligently analyzing problems of their country. The film adaptations animate the literature and popularize it among large circles of recipients. These adaptations present pictures of villages and cities, social and political changes in Egypt, wars and conflicts in the last century. The subject of life in the villages has been popular, rather ignored by the writers until the Arab Renaissance at the turn of 19 and 20th. The presented villages were poor but mutinous fighting for the better future in course of the socio-political changes. They are showed as tragic in the same time, especially crucial for women. An example is the film *Dua al-karawan* ("The Call of the Curclew"), which play is set partly in the town and partly in the conservative village. This film is related to the outstanding Egyptian figures: based on the novel (under the same title) of the great scholar Taha Husayn and directed by famous director Henry Barakat.

The villages from the film adaptations is also magic with their beliefs and rituals and living near to the nature. The pictures of the Egyptian cities are emerging especially from novels by Nagib Mahfuz (Egyptian Nobel Prize winner), author of *The Sulasiyya* ("Trilogy"), devoted to the socio- political changes of Egypt in 20th century, the development of modernism, great problems and popular entertainments of Egyptians. They attract with the magic climate of Cairo, among calls of muezzins for prayers, active life of the streets, stories recited by traditional narrators and smoke of shishas. The Egyptian cinema shows the pictures of the great events of the 20th century, first of all of the Naser Revolution (1952) depicted many times, encouraging the fight for the better future and then being discussed and criticized. The adaptations and generally the Egyptian cinema concern the other great subjects, first of all the wars of 1967 and 1973 years as well as the so called Arabic spring - the revolutionary

movement in Egypt of 2011. Picturesque Egyptian cinema offers the large knowledge of Egypt and is a source of aesthetic experiences.