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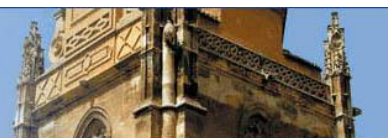
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ABSTRACT

The theme of the margin turned into the focal point of many studies because it is fertile and reflects the vivid reality at many aspects. This approach attempts to cover the manifestations of the margin in models of the Arab cinema and takes two paths. The 1st discusses the cultural approach and its position in the traditional literary criticism, and the 2nd is practical and covers the manifestations of the margin in chosen cinematic models.

Key words: theme; margin; approach; cultural; cinematic; Arab.

INTRODUCTION

Postmodernism aimed at drawing attention towards the boundaries that had been neglected for a long time due to the constraints and concentrations of modernism. In a particular time, these concentrations turned into a big lie that damaged a big part of humanity and the values of man. Thus, it is not strange that the human self gets fed up with all the sharp quotes that were sacred; which Nietzsche covered in his writing. The center approaches failed in answering many big questions and increased the human sufferance, as they brought about two destructive and deadly wars. In this regard, the theory of strata that was promoted by modernism through the center and margin binary opposition had a hand in these wars and excluded many concepts and notions on behalf of big narratives and quotes that neglect the details and specificities. Thus, little narratives imposed by the postwar human crisis emerged and were incarnated in Frankfurt School thoughts and principles that attempted to provide a different approach to modernism through many underminings, mainly that modernism per se was tailored according to the European ego and that it is impossible to generalize it as a human project that embraces all the humans with their different trends and backgrounds.

The approaches of Frankfurt School had big effect on undermining many modernist approaches, mainly the inclinations of the elite that is aware about the crisis of the modernist human. In this regard, the majority is far from these transformations. Thus, it was necessary to transfer this image to the bottom, what shall be later known as the margin. The emergence of the image and its manifestations in the cinema, later, had a pivotal role in enshrining new transformation and founding approaches that attempted to focus on the excluded margin. The Arab world was not isolated from the effect of the image, as the cinema, since the foundation of Egypt Studio in 1935, covered the scattered edges of the existence and restructured the roles through enshrining the value of difference. Besides, the camera focused on many neglected roles of the marginalized parties who had been silenced by modernism, such as the poor, the woman, and the blacks.

This paper shall shed light on the margin in some models of the Arab cinema and on its path towards the center. Besides, the paper shall reveal whether the incarnation of the margin is limited to the character, or exceeded it to other positions.

1. The text from the cultural approach perspective

It is not fair to neglect the role of the literary criticism -in all its impressionist, contextual, and system phases during long cultural phases- in providing readings that focused on the aestheticism as a trend that undermines the silly reading. However, we must also reckon that the literary criticism only considered the textual formations as linguistic formations made up of signs, not an event that conveys the environment culture and systems. In the context of postmodernism, the procedural tools of the literary criticism shall not be the key to decoding the texts, as these codes are merely a shadow to what is hidden and a rhetorical tip to pass an implicit content in the subconsciousness. Thus, the cultural criticism as a different procedure after the structuralism aimed at questioning the texts based on the implicit theory of systems because it starts from the ground that the text is a cultural event resulting from the struggle of the everlasting systems. This can be proved by the emergence of the “Maqama” during the Abbasid Era when the phenomenon of beginning emerged as a cultural phenomena. Thus, the quote of the dual author appeared, as he is the direct author and the cultural subject.

Based on this, can we exclude the literary criticism under the pretext of deficiency? This shall be a flagrant violation of the postmodernist principles that call for difference and complementarity, far from exclusion. Thus, why cannot the literary criticism stand together with the cultural approach in a complementary scene, where the two take advantage of each other? In other words, the literary criticism needs the cognitive environment that is the pillar of the cultural approach, while the latter needs the strictness and experimentation of the criticism without scarification of the method, and the mechanisms of revealing language. In this vein, revealing the secrets of the system –the big part of the cultural criticism- is a subsequent phase of disclosing the linguistic game. It cannot be achieved without the procedural tools of the literary criticism. Hence, we are no more obliged to say that the cultural approach is merely an anthropologic or psychological study that lacks the aestheticism, unless it is twinned with the literary criticism. This is neglected now by the cultural critiques, as they mix up the cultural approach to the text as an approach that is concerned with the text aestheticism, and the cultural studies that cover the psychological and social environment that is centered in a given geography.

2. System anatomy

The cultural criticism considers the linguistic games rhetorical tricks that embody the most dangerous systems that center in the dark areas of the subconsciousness. The strategy of disclosing the systems, starting from language, is the quest of ancient references that nurture the collective consciousness with various loads. Consequently, these references must neither be compatible with the author aspirations, nor contradict them. This leads us to question Abdullah al Ghedami's notion of "al Kobhiat". The system is not the cultural criticism; rather, it is its biggest part and the target of the cultural approach disclosure. It got the lion's share of the criticism focus, regardless the fact that many approaches do not distinguish the cultural analysis of the text and the cultural studies, as previously mentioned.

It is natural that the system is part of a purely philosophical context, as it is the offspring of the criticism repudiation of its productivity after the penetration of the linguistic thought by the philosophy. Nevertheless, this concept managed to blur with the various textual contexts through successful conceptual biases that paved the way for invading the cultural analysis. Mayada Abu Nassih sees that the system is the constellation of the accumulations of the views and big quotes that interrelated in vague relations. This goes with what we find in the lexicons about the system, as they agree on the existence of a whole where parts with different backgrounds and fates coexist.

In the same regard, Dhafer Siter al Allak introduced the system from a social perspective, saying that it is any meta, where a set of big social references struggle and represent various intellectual trends of a different human communities. This view, that is influenced by Talcott Parsons, makes the starting point of the system extension towards other scientific fields after it had so long been imprisoned within the philosophical concepts, thanks to the successive failures of the literary criticism and to its ability to blur and fuse with many scientific contexts that have different natures, including the literary criticism. In this vein, it managed to adapt with it and to take a special shape regarding its role, not existence.

Thus, the system is like the pot because it is the motive for the text production and is embodied inside its linguistic signs. The creative writer does not express the immediate feeling within himself; rather, he responds to the dictates of an old system made by accumulations of different references, called the system. In this regard, the system is not only the motive for the text; rather it brings about, later, a counter-system. Here, we must ponder this important detail for the success of the cultural approach. The counter system must not be absolute, as it is not counter unless it is a real opposite reaction, because the system may result from the subconsciousness to justify it. This is known as the system pretext, not the system, even if it contains most of the features of the system.

3. The practical chapter

Based on the theoretical chapter, we shall compare some models from the Arab cinema, which celebrated the margin. However, we must first shed light on the concepts of the margin and the center. Many views see that the center is a set of transcendences that manage the existence, such as the institution, the authority, the sacred, the hegemony, the presence, the ego, the self...etc; which means that the margin is the total opposite of these values. Thus, the concepts of margin and center are not related to a specific context, as they manifest in all the life aspects; economy, society, politics, culture...etc. They are among the global binaries that reflect the existentialist struggle. They may, even, exchange roles with the change of the data and events, as seen in the political struggle between the ruler and ruled through coups, the economic struggle between free capitalism and communism, and the penetration of feminism inside the society. Thus, we shall see the effect of the margin on the existence, and its various manifestations in the image.

4.1 The penetration of the character by the margin in the movie "Toyor al Dhalam"

The movie was written by Wahid Hamed to reveal the hidden scenes of the regime in Egypt. The movie introduced a different image of the margin that had so long been depicted as the deprived poor that has to accept

the authoritarian practices and dictations. In this regard, the movie introduced a different image of the margin that resembles the image of the totalitarian regime through various characters. The character "Fetehi" is a lawyer endowed with a high intelligence that helps discover the legal gaps. "He spends days defending the little cases, such as ethics, cattle theft, disputes between neighbors, the alimony cases, the divorce, etc and facing a strong stubbornness". Fetehi waits for a chance, as confessed to his colleague Ali. Then, the chance comes and he takes a big public opinion case, instead of his silly colleague Shawket, and gets 100000 pound that paves the way towards power. Later, he turns the director of the corrupt minister campaign "Roshdi al Khayyam", who has no chance to win the elections.

However, the success of the corrupt minister was a giant leap for "FetehiNawfel" who represented the margin towards the power. Then, he marries a business woman to launder his money. Besides, the prostitute Samira become his financial support after he had defended her prostitution accusations. He provides her with the legal security needed to run all the illicit transactions and, even, suggests that the minister marries her to ban any counter leaks about their relations. "On the other hand, Ali Zenati is another margin who seeks the center, but far from the authority. Thus, he chooses to be a member in an opposition party with religious inclinations; he represents the counter character of Fetehi". It is important to point to the transactions between Fetehi as a margin who turned into a center and Ali as a margin who turned into a strong political party supported militarily and threatens the regime.

Another turning point in the movement of the margin is when Samira, as a margin that helps the other margin Fetehi, gets caught and reveals to the recipient, the authority, and the ruler, the other side of Fetehi who got into corruption; however, Fetehi was prepared for this. Fetehi had made a customary marriage contract between Samira and the minister and had written all the transactions in the name of Samira and denied leaking the import information. Then, he recognizes that Samira is a wife of minister and that she must be complimented in all the occasions. Subsequently, the authority discovers that Ali Zenati is part of criminal actions to revenge for the party prisoners. Inside the prison, the plot the movie aims at appears. It is about analyzing the political game of the totalitarian states that is based on two principles.

The first is that "the authority allows the margin to move according to its rules and to get advantage of its rewards if it serves it well, regardless its good or corrupt nature because the ethics is not part of the politics". The second is that "the movement of the margin radically change when it turns into a center, as it has to exercise the exclusion that had been practiced against it to maintain the interests of the system it lives inside. Thus, the slogans, be them religious or patriotic, are no more than a tool that paves the way for the center. Hence, we are in front of a renewable center, not a margin that climbs the ladder to serve the margin it came from". This take manifests in the role of Fetehi's father, who misuses his son's authority to take bribes from the villagers for different purposes.

4.2 The penetration of the event by the margin in the movie "Al Postaji"

The movie is by Yahya Hakki. It tells that Abbas, the mail carrier, is taken to work in "Koum al Nhal" village, which suffers illiteracy. There, Abbas is treated badly by the villagers and finds relief in spying on the letters of the villagers. During his usual spying on the letters, he falls upon a letter by a girl called Jamila to her boyfriend Khalil. Consequently, he decides to follow their story and read their letters. He read that the girl got pregnant from her boyfriend who was refused by her father when he wanted to marry her due to strange norms. Thus, the girl decides to make abortion lest the father kills her for violating the honor of the family in a closed society. What matters here is that Khalil, Jamila's boyfriend, sent her a letter promising saving her. However, Abbas lost it and did not deliver it. Unfortunately, Jamila is killed in the end.

"The recipient in the movie watches many margins, including Abbas who lives an anarchy under life pressures and the villagers (the biggest margin) who are illiterate and closed people living by deeply rooted old norms such as the honor, manhood, the sacred, and witchcraft". The camera of Hussein Kamal realistically depicted the village, the streets, the architecture, and the discussions that have no relation with civilization. However, the focal margin in the movie is the event, as Yahya Hakki and Hussein Kamal introduced through the event/margin a strong message to the regime, which focuses on the elite, telling about the murder of a girl because of the neglect of a mailman and of his loss of a letter between a couple, "no civilization that respects itself may neglect any component, regardless its nature, mainly the employee who depicts the labor stratum. It is a vision emerging from the Marxist dictations, as clear"

The political elites lost a lot because of countering the elites that should have participated in decision-making, as the political parties aim to reach the authority, the intellectuals must enlighten the public opinion, and the labor stratum represents the wealth of the civilization. In this regard, the exclusion of these components under different pretexts brought about violent waves and counter totalitarianism; in other words, counter patters that exercise the same authoritarian practices. These systems are more dangerous when they have religious bases, mainly in the societies that believe in the sacred and respect its teachings, just as we saw with the Arab Spring that paved the way for many religious elites towards power, which later adopted violence when they were excluded and lost interests. The message of the film is the acceptance of the different other, taking advantage of

its experiences, and criticizing it based on knowledge. In other words, the movie calls for coexistence and using the difference for enriching the world, not for destruction.

4.3 The margin and the religion in the movie “al Mowatin al Masri”

The movie tells the story of the mayor “Abd al Razzak al Shershabi” who restores his lads after the agricultural reform by the nationalization law by President Abd Nassir. In the light of the joy, the mayor receives a letter summoning his son for the military draft and, under the pressures of his fourth wife, he helps his son avoid the military draft. Then, he funds a falsification process that takes another boy “Masri” instead of his son, after extracting papers showing that his son is “Toufik”. In this context, Masri accepts to impersonate the son of the mayor after promises to employ his father “Abd al Mawjoud” and giving money to end poverty. Then in 1973, a war starts, where Masri/Toufik dies. However, before his death, he tells his colleague about his real origins to guarantee the pension of his family. Consequently, a huge falsification affair is disclosed. The movie raises many big questions, such as the nature of openness that prevailed after the Nassirist communism that promoted free education and big projects, and served the margins; this openness was an abomination against the margin. Besides, the movie asks a question that obliged the openness authority to review many practices. The outrage was about to blast with the “Thieves Upheaval” in January 1977. The question is about who passes and gets rich on the detriment of the simple Egyptian citizen who died in the war. Toufik, the son of the mayor, did not pass the way; however, he became rich and his father is called the father of the martyr. Besides, he receives a martyr’s pension and is called for homage. On the other hand, the real father, Abd al Mawjoud, remains a poor servant. The important question of the movie is the religion and martyrdom that became a relative value in the movie, after it had been sacred, “do we consider anyone who dies as a martyr?” According to the movie, many so-called martyrs and patriots are just opportunists who took advantage of the chances. This is a strong sign to the objectification of man and the end of his humanity, as he is no more than papers for the authority; a birth certificate, a death certificate, a marriage contract, etc.

5. CONCLUSION

Upon this study, we conclude that the cultural approach is fatal and imposed by the postmodernism and the collapse of the big narratives, as the modernist methods approached the texts from the linguistic structure, not the culture. The system is not the cultural criticism; rather, it is its big part. We cannot imagine a successful cultural approach based on a misunderstanding of the system detail because the text in fact is the outcome of an old system that makes a counter system. Besides, the margin theme drew the attention of the scholars and turned into a fertile ground for approaching many topics in sociology, politics, and economics. In addition, it shaped many concepts, mainly the authority and the intellectual, which got the lion’s share of the contemporary human thought. The margin lurks behind many masks in these studied works, from the character, to the event, to the sacred. This proves that the concept of the margin is flexible and can create biases inside many scientific fields and co-exist with their concepts. Moreover, the image has an effect on the human, as its absence creates vacuum in the world. Therefore, it is no wonder if we call this era “the image era” because of its role in the human awareness.

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