ESTABLISHED AND OUTSIDERS IN THE CONTEXT OF NATIONALISM AND ISLAMOPHOBIA IN EGYPTIAN CINEMA

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ABSTRACT

The study focuses on the depiction of Islamophobia and nationalism in Egyptian cinema. The investigator conducted a thematic analysis by extracting seven research papers that elucidate the evolution of Egyptian cinema. Three themes through the data extracted have been identified: nationalism representation in Egyptian cinema, Islamophobia depiction and its influence in Egyptian cinema, and the intersection of Islamophobia and nationalism in Egyptian movies. The investigation further revealed how filmmakers navigate societal complexities, fostering dialogue and shaping perceptions. Also, the study focuses on Egyptian cinema's role in promoting empathy, challenging stereotypes, and shaping the discourse. By having creative expression, movie makers contribute towards a compassionate and inclusive society that paves the way for understanding and social change.

Keywords: Nationalism, Islamophobia, Egyptian Cinema, Egyptian Movies, Egyptian Films.

INTRODUCTION

The Egyptian movie industry, widely recognized as one of the oldest and most powerful film industries in the Arab countries, has always played an important role in influencing Egyptian and Arab society and their attitudes (Bajuwaiber, 2023). It was formed in the early 1900s and has developed many films that mirror the society, politics, and culture of this nation. For decades, Egyptian cinema has been providing both entertainment and substance, and the latter has often raised debates and questions, not only regarding the subject of identity and nationalism but also concerning religion. In the recent past, these themes have crossed paths as the world experiences intensified nationalism and hate for Muslims and everything Islamic (Bracco, 2019).

Egyptian movies have played a role in influencing Arab and Egyptian society, especially generating reviews of Islamophobia and nationalism. There were some cinematographic activities in Egypt as early as the silent film period, but the change for more systematic production was marked by practices of sound films in the 1930s (Bracco, 2019). Between the forties and the sixties, this industry came out with films that gave the Arab world audience films that it could easily associate itself with. These films represent the social issues, love stories, and histories of most nations, and they portray a certain type of patriotism and unity among one nation (Zahed & Youssef, 2019). Recently, changes in the political environment all over the world were an input to Egyptian cinema and introduced new themes and conflicts. Consequently, the day raises the theme of nationalism, which is complicated by political shifts and economic volatility. At the same time, when anti-Muslim sentiments fuelled by international terrorism and Middle East violence have entered the lexicon of media, the representation of Muslims and Islamic culture in the movies has emerged as a defining trend (Bajuwaiber, 2023). Many of these subjects are not only iconic to the referenced cultural period but are also significant in influencing the populace's perspectives.

The problem is that the Egyptian movie industry has themes of Islamophobia and nationalism in films of which the effects should be explored. The intertwining factors show important issues in relation to national representation and identity within the scope of Egyptian filmmaking, as well as its consequences on society (Zahed & Youssef, 2019). It is, therefore, not unusual to see nationalism, which is most often presented as a uniting factor, becoming almost an austerity to the exclusion of the other, particularly to

certain sections of the community. While the first one is informative, opens debates, and can help eliminate prejudice, Islamophobia can create such prejudices and contribute to separation (Aidi, 2023). The challenge then stems from identifying how these themes are portrayed in films, not to mention the ramifications of it to Egyptians. This assessment is important in a country where cinema still functions as a significant tool of social communication and artistic representation.

The objectives to address the complex issue are provided below:

1. To determine nationalism representation in Egyptian cinema.
2. To investigate Islamophobia's depiction and its influence in Egyptian cinema.
3. To explore the intersection of Islamophobia and nationalism in Egyptian movies.

Literature Review

Nationalism in Egyptian Cinema

The history of Egyptian cinema, which started half a century ago, has witnessed many instances of nationalism. However, the 1940s -1960s popular culture known as the 'Golden Age' of Egyptian cinema is remembered more for its patriotic films that celebrated Egyptians and their freedom. Movies like "Nasser 56" (1996) and "The Night of Counting the Years" (1969) provide splendid examples of how cinema has been employed to stir up nationalism and unite the masses, as mentioned in Rakha (2020).

Islamophobia in Egyptian Cinema

Prejudice against Islam and Muslims, which can be referred to as the phenomenon of Islamophobia, became one of the relatively popular topics in Egyptian movies only recently. Its beginnings can be attributed to global occurrences like the 9/11 stark all terrorism incidents and the participation in international tensions and other regional conflicts that have raised alerts on Islamic militancy. Narrating society's concern with terrorism, the film depicts issues leading to Islamophobia, such as extremism and prejudice in films such as "The Yacoubian Building," released in 2006, and "Cairo Exit," released in 2010 (Senoussi, 2024). Academic literature on this topic, such as Shohini Chaudhuri's "Contemporary World Cinema: In Europe, the Middle East, East Asia, and South Asia," points out that these pictures reveal others through placing reasonable Muslims against the terrorists in order to demonstrate the civil war between

the reason and the fury inside Muslim worlds (Chaudhuri, 2005; Zahed and Youssef 2019).

In addition, this type of representation is not confined to portraying how foreign people or nations view the Egyptian or any other Muslim nation but also clearly describes what the Egyptian feels or perceives about the Muslims around him, as highlighted in Bajuwaiber (2023). Zahed and Youssef (2019) mentioned that common themes in portrayals of Muslim culture in the movies relate to how moderate Muslims deal with the prejudice of extremism and how it plays into their routine and interactions. Casting Islam as simultaneously threatening from the outside and corrupt within, this polarised representation fixates on the opposition between Christians and Muslims (Senoussi, 2024). The blending of nationalism and Islamophobia is another research topic that is relevant to Egyptian cinema since it is a field that requires more exploration with regard to the relations between these two concepts. It takes a particularly nationalist turn in two films, namely "The Terrorist," directed by I. Shyam, in 1994, and "The Island," directed by Ramanaa, in [2007], and is an attempt to fight the growth and spread of Islamic extremism The Island [2006]. These films imply that terrorism is suppressed by a strong and unified state, which strengthens nationalism as a shield against internal and external adversaries. For instance, Armbrust [1996] mentioned in his book "Mass Culture and Modernism in Egypt," expounds on how films employing nationalist motifs subvert and nullify the legitimacy of extremism. Thereby, by presenting the state as the protector of Egyptian sanctity and historical essence, these films reaffirm the standpoint that extremism is diametrically opposed to genuine Egyptian identity.

Representation and Stereotyping

The research on the analysis of stereotyping in Egyptian cinema unveiled a strong correlation between nationalism and stereotyping, coupled with Islamophobia, as mentioned by Jarmakani (2021). When it comes to the portrayal of characters in a film, there are always two dimensions: patriots and nationalists are portrayed as right, while living embodiments of evil are also nationalists. While it captures significant aspects of people's experiences, it also exoticizes and distills general social and political realities into a binary that can maintain prejudice. Scholars like Lila Abu-Lughod in "Dramas of Nationhood: In their article titled "The Politics of Television in Egypt" for instance, assert that while such representations may be of benefit to the television

networks, they are unhelpful to Egyptian society as a whole because they contribute to polarised societies rather than providing a bridge as mentioned in Abu-Lughod (2008). This stereotyping extends not only to the portrayal of extremists but also to characteristics of various ethnic and religious groups. This reality is evident even in programs created by major news networks and Western states – such as Christian minorities being portrayed as prone to Islamist attacks and thus reinforcing the conception of Islam as a violent religion, like the Alexandria church bombing in 2011 in Egypt targeting the Coptic Christian Community. It is due to this that only portions of society end up being depicted, and this may distort the perceptions of the public and even fuel conflicts between communities.

Thus, Egyptian cinema, bearing the widest impact and reach among all Egyptian arts, has a significant responsibility towards swaying the Egyptian and Arab public opinion regarding nationalism as well as the prejudice of Islamophobia (Abu-Lughod, 2008; Jarmakani, 2021). Films are good examples of mass media productions that have the potential to either mirror or shape societal beliefs. Armbrust and Shafik, for instance, stress the fluidity between the film and the society in which movies operate within culture and politics as a mirror and an active constructor, as highlighted in Elsaket (2023). It was found that nationalism and Islamophobia films have been widely discussed, and the impact of cinema on society is obvious while discussing how these films were appreciated by the viewers. Patriotism and nationalism, which are positive in their representation, are always able to elicit outward emotions with some feelings in the form of pride and togetherness. On the other hand, Zahed and Youssef (2019) added that Egyptian movies that portray elements of Islamophobia, especially those that reflect more dubious perspectives, encourage people to think about the identity and radicalism at large in Egypt.

Research Gap

Despite the fact that there exists a considerable body of works that consider Egyptian cinema through the lens of nationalism and Islamaphobia, there are limited studies that engage with both concepts comprehensively (Elsaket, 2023). Controversy rages when such research addresses these themes individually and not in an interconnected manner while taking into account the impact on society as a whole (Elsaket, 2023). Second, there is a lack of information

regarding the studies addressing the effects of these cinematic representations in the long run, specifically considering the views of the society and inter-group relations in Egypt (Jarmakani, 2021). Future research should try to fill this gap in the literature by using an interdisciplinary approach and specifically investigate nationalism and Islamophobia as two entangled concepts that act and interact in the Egyptian context through cinematographic productions.

Materials and Methods
Research Design

Based on the research question and aims of this study, the method of inquiry chosen is qualitative for this study because the researcher sought to understand the ways in which Egyptian Cinema portrays nationalism. Qualitative design is used because it is capable of capturing the richness and complexity of cultural phenomena, given that it is able to offer detailed descriptions of events in the form of narratives (Tomaszewski et al., 2020). This structure allows us to provide a detailed consideration of films, specifically features of their text, which concern not only the themes, symbols, or storylines the films are based on but also the ones conveying nationalist attitudes. Therefore, there is a better understanding of content analysis and thematic analysis in a way that the research will be able to detect the images and politics embedded in films (Rakha, 2020). Moreover, it will also be possible to construct the qualitative design in relation to the context factors that I have provided here, namely the historical as well as socio-political contexts that are relevant to the understanding of nationalism in relation to Egyptian cinematography. Therefore, the identified subjective-interpretative method provides a wide and comprehensive approach to discuss and reveal how the film is disclosing and how it perceives the elements of national identity and pride and vice versa where language symbolics are pursued (Tomaszewski et al., 2020).

Data Collection

Concerning the data collection procedure, adopting secondary data collection is a part of this research on Concerning the data collection procedure, adopting secondary data collection is a part of this research on nationalism in Egyptian cinema. This involves conducting empirical research through making use of data currently available in current databases including articles, books, movie critiques and reviews, historical and even government documents. This way, the

researcher is able to build on what is already known since the approach allows the researcher to take a wide lens view of the topics and issues within Egyptian cinema. Moreover, it argues that the contextualisation of the analysis of the particular films presented in this study is based on historical and cultural grounds that maybe useful for examining how films' meditative process is instrumental in the formation of nationalist discourses (Cheong et al., 2023).The data collection was done by exploring research studies and academic articles through keywords on Google Scholar. 7 articles extracted by the keywords "islamophobia, nationalism, Egyptian cinema, Egyptian movies, and Egyptian films." Only English language articles were extracted as through keywords there were Arabic articles also which had to be filtered.

Data Analysis

For data analysis, the investigator in the current research considered thematic analysis for interpretation of the data and examination of complex narratives in Egyptian cinema. Through analysing and identification of themes and patterns in data, a nuanced exploration of nationalism is conducted (Peel, 2020). The method further involves the interpretation of transformations and diverse representations in cinematic landscapes and enables a detailed understanding of evolving themes. The analysis is effective and justified for the study as it helps in navigating complex data aligning it to the objectives and making it meaningful. The thematic analysis

ensures that the interpretation is coherent and comprehensive through secondary sources that contribute to the creation of a deep understanding of nationalistic and cultural dynamics (Squires, 2023).

Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations that is focused on in the current research are academic integrity, in which the investigator has ensured that the information is not copied and pasted but that the information is used as supporting evidence by giving proper respect to authors of previous studies through consideration of intellectual property rights. The study includes an analysis of historical and cultural context, which is why the investigator remained sensitive when it came to interpretations, avoiding misrepresentations and bias.

Results and Discussion

From the data collection set in the methodology section, there were seven articles extracted by the keywords "islamophobia, nationalism, Egyptian cinema, Egyptian movies, and Egyptian films." The results are grasped under three themes that are designed from the extracted data. These themes are nationalism representation in Egyptian cinema, Islamophobia depiction and its influence in Egyptian cinema, and the intersection of Islamophobia and nationalism in Egyptian movies. Apart from the results, a discussion was also conducted in which different supporting and contradicting articles were used to draft conclusions that can satisfy the objectives of the current study.

Study Table

Authors	Aim	Methods	Findings	Strengths	Weaknesses
Bracco (2019)	Investigating dancer character in bint-al balad to femme female.	Study of three movies.	The portrayal of women in cinema by Nasserist Regime Policies. The character of Oriental dancer and shifting review from national icon to stigmatized femme fatale. Cinema is a tool to promote state-sanctioned values and social norms concerning gender roles.	The detailed historical context of Egyptian cinema with female portrayal along with shaping societal views about a particular gender.	Narrow selection of movies. Nasserist period review that omits generalisability to other regions and eras.

Mahdi (2019)	The aim is to investigate the representation of Egyptian Americans in cinema.	Cinematic narratives.	Subversive portrayals were used in Egyptian cinema to counter stereotypes of Hollywood.	Challenging stereotypes and cultural insights.	Bias and limited scope.
Bajuwaiber (2024)	The aim is to analyze the way Egyptian cinema and Hollywood cinema represented Arab Muslim identities post-9/11 and before 9/11 with consideration of Islamophobia.	Comparative analysis of pre and post 9/11.	Hollywood stereotypes represent Arab Muslims as negative identities. At the same time, Egyptian cinema challenges boundaries and issues along with offering nuanced perspectives.	Insights about Arab Muslim portrayal, and highlights on portrayal by media through responsible representation.	Overlooking the specific nuances of filmmakers' intentions and individual movies. Also, there is a limited scope of representation in the broader political and cultural context.
Al-Rawi (2014)	Examining Pakistani, Bollywood, Turkish, and Cypriot movies portraying people's lives post 9/11 and challenging stereotyping towards Muslims.	Content analysis of movies.	Diversity in the Muslim community and highlighting conflicts arising from power struggles and misunderstanding rather than cultural and religious disparities.	Insights about the role of cinema and promotion of understanding through recognition of complexity in experiences and identities of Muslims.	Limited focus on movies that overlook variations in representation in cinema.
Birnbaum (2013)	Countering terrorism and radical Islam by exploring Egyptian cinema.	Historical analysis of the relationship of cinema with the political system and its effects on countering radical ideologies.	Egyptian cinema combats terrorism and radical Islam by portraying the struggles of Muslim scholars against extremism.	Offers insights into politics, culture, and cinema.	Lack of nuanced analysis of cinema techniques and specific movies.
Kosba (2018)	The intersection of nationalism and Islamophobia in public	Qualitative research from historical data.	Colonial European constructs shape Egyptian identity, have racial European	Interdisciplinary approach, identification of contemporary factors that influence	Limitation of data availability and bias in interpretation.

	discourse and Egyptian identity construction, especially how colonial Europeans construct Egyptian identity and Islamic perception.		barriers, and have parallels drawn between African Muslims and Egyptian identity in the Western Islamophobia context.	Egyptian identity, and identification of complex dynamics of Islamophobia.	
Zahed & Youssef (2019)	Investigation of the portrayal of Islam and observant Muslims in Egyptian media from 2012-2018	CDA (Critical et al.)	Egypt, having postcolonial secular elites, constructs Islamophobic narratives to portray that Islam is incompatible with modernity. Moreover, it highlights that Islam is prone to violence.	CDA rigorous framework. Focus on 2012-2018, which is a specific period to develop deeper insights.	Representation bias. Lack of resources available. Lack of direct engagement of article with voices.

Table 1: Study Table

Results

Theme 1: Nationalism representation in Egyptian cinema

In Egyptian cinema, there is nationalism representation that is noticed in different studies like Bracco (2019) and Mahdi (2019). These are analyzed below:

Bracco (2019) was aimed at investigating dancer characters in bint-al balad to femme females. The approach that is used is reviewing three movies. Bracco (2019) mentioned in the article that Egyptian cinema, especially in the middle of the fiftieth century, after the July revolution of 1952, became an eloquent advocate of nationalism and an illustrative depiction of the societal transformation due to the impact of Nasserist rule. The movies produced in Egyptian cinema provide a view of how Islamophobic narratives are propagated and created in cinema. The termination of English colonial domination over Egypt and the emergence of President Gamal Abdel Nasser as the icon of anti-colonial struggle and Pan-Arabism. Further, Bracco (2019) highlighted that state interventionism through the Ministry of Culture and Orientation and the General Organisation of Egyptian Cinema paves the way for the cinematic construction of the narrative since state involvement allowed cinema to establish itself as an instrument of social and political indoctrination and results in shaping societal attitudes amongst specific communities/groups. The article by Bracco (2019) presented the characters in Egyptian cinema, especially the Oriental dancer, who was colored by nationalism. Oriental dance was first introduced to cabaret shows in the period between the two world wars, and, as time went by, it went through an 'Egyptianisation' process, with dancers performing it, like Tahia Carioca and 'bint al ballad' which is the girl of the country highlighted another aspect of nationalism in Egyptian films including qualities of coquetry, glamour as well as cleverness. The othering process is seen in the portrayals in Western media depicting Muslims. Egyptian cinema creates a dichotomy between good and evil women; the Western media, however, creates the binary of bad and good Muslims that perpetuates stereotypes.

Mahdi (2019) highlighted that since the 1990s, the representations of Egyptian Americans have intersected with the sentiments of nationalists, which encapsulate them within the framework of Egyptian identity. The cinematic narratives challenge the

orientalist depictions of Hollywood and contribute towards perceptions that are alternatives to Aram Americans. Apart from this, the portrayals in movies like The Island 2 and The Terrorist are the subversions of Hollywood's portrayals, which are constrained through the understandings of Islamists and Muslims that are governmental-endorsed and limit the ability to navigate fully from prevailing stereotypes (Hollywood's understanding government endorsed, and orientalist depiction).

Theme 2: Islamophobia depiction and its influence in Egyptian cinema

Islamophobia is depicted and has influenced Egyptian cinema. This is analyzed from the articles discussed below:

The first article, Bajuwaiber (2024), is analyzed to reveal how Hollywood, as well as Egyptian cinema, represents Arab-Muslim identities before and after 9/11. Islamophobia highlighted that Hollywood moved from explicit Orientalism to neo-Orientalism and Islamophobia, which enables the continuation of stereotype construction and reinforcement of negative impressions of Arab Muslims. Egyptian cinema, on the other hand, pushes at the boundaries from the inside and questions internal impetus and malaise while evincing a keen appreciation of the soul of chaos. This emphasizes the constant influence of media and its importance in shaping public view, as well as a call to have responsible media and representation of every group.

The second article of Al-Rawi (2014) talks about how the Bollywood, Pakistani, Turkish, and Cypriot films have portrayed the life of people in the aftermath of 9/11 to convey the message that there is more than one kind of Muslim, and they do not have the same experiences or wants. It seems with these films that there is a connection between people and the difference between Islam and terrorism, foreseeing conflict resulting from misunderstanding and power struggles rather than from religious or cultural disparities. The films bring compassion and concern to the sufferers and also indicate terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda in a negative manner.

Last of all, the third article by Birnbaum (2013) looks specifically into how Egyptian cinema was employed by regimes to counter the political Bill of Islam radicals and terrorists. It also provides information concerning the history of the Egyptian film industry, considering it a part of the exportation of culture to the Arabs and its ties with political systems. It analyses the war against 'jihadism' and the difficulties faced by liberal Muslim scholars in not being able to garner 'popular' support, mostly due to ignorance.

Combined, these articles shed light on the mutual interconnectedness of cinema, culture, and politics with regard to Arab-Muslim representations and identities while calling for better depictions, analysis of the independent narrative, an appreciation of diverse voices, and critical consideration of the media.

Theme 3: Intersection of Islamophobia and nationalism in Egyptian movies

There is the intersection of nationalism and Islamophobia, as noticed in Egyptian movies. These are analyzed in the studies below:

Kosba (2018) delves into the intersection of Islamophobia and nationalism in Egyptian identity construction and public discourse. It explored the liminality of the identity of Egyptians influenced by colonial European construct and their portrayal of Islam. The article further highlights the Egyptian identity situated in racial European barriers (racial, colonial, and liminality) that contribute to the initiation of Western Islamophobia. This draws in parallel with African Muslim's liminality in antebellum America.

Another article by Zahed Youssef (2019) employed CDA (Critical et al.) to examine observant Muslims and Islam in Egyptian media from the years 2012-2018. The article revealed how the Islamophobic narrative has been constructed by postcolonial secular elites associated with Islam with incompatibility and violence with modernity in different movie narratives, which provides negative insights about Islam. Through the exclusion of perpetuating stereotypes and Muslim voices, the elites justified marginalized Muslims and military coups from Egyptian society. The articles collectively illuminated the interplay of secularism, nationalism, and Islamophobia in shaping public discourse and Egyptian identity. Articles depicted Islamophobia through societal elites and Egyptian media construct narratives portraying that Islam is prone to violence and incompatible with modernity. Also, nationalism is intertwined with Islamophobia, as nationalism in Egyptian movies perpetuates stereotypes and reinforces Muslim exclusion.

Discussion

Findings of the current study on the representation of nationalism in Egyptian cinema, Islamophobia depiction in Egyptian cinema, and the intersection of Islamophobia and nationalism have contributed to achieving the objectives established through delving into Egyptian cinema portrayal, which uncovered the

connections between nationalist ideologies and cinematic narratives. The analysis further shed light on media constructing Islam's negative perception and created an understanding of societal bias. The intersection of Islamophobia and nationalism provided insights into the interaction and influence of public discourse that enriched the comprehension of political identity in Egypt.

Egyptian cinema has been studied through the lens of Islamophobia and nationalism that has evolved through the last three decades (Zahed & Youssef, 2019). In the study, Aidi (2023) mentioned that Egyptian cinema particularly has played the role of a mirror that reflects the movements of Egyptian society and mirrors its norms and belief systems. Since the birth of filmmaking, the cinema has depicted Egypt's beauty and history as cultural and political victories toward independence. Nationalism is not unique to any one specific genre or story but rather exists in all arenas of Egyptian literature – from early narratives recounting the strength of Egyptians against the colonial powers to modern narratives regarding the ongoing strength and identity of Egyptians (Labidi, 2021). When it comes to the representation of national sentiments in Egyptian movies, one is likely to develop or enhance a feeling of nationalism. Such pictures as The Land [1960] and The Battle of Algiers [1966] elevate the legend of the Egyptian struggle for independence and portray Egyptians as devoted and sacrificing people protecting their country and individuality (Cheraitia, 2024). These narratives are crucial not only for the remembrance of historical processes but also for putting an appeal to the mass consciousness of the existence of a single Great Nation.

However, reactionary nationalism in Egyptian cinema does not confine itself to representing historical dramas to the current events and societies' censure. In Hollywood, many directors depict corrupt characters in the political world or any other societal vices and the effects of their creative pursuits with the intention of creating awareness. Movies like Cairo 678 [2010] that comment on the subject of sexual harassment as a rampant problem in Egyptian society have acted as very strong reminders of the progression of society, especially when it comes to the oppression of women (Buskirk, 2015). Moreover, there has been exploration done towards the phenomenon of Islamophobia based on the representation of Muslims in Egyptian cinema from the 1930s to the 2010s. The influence of Islamaphobia on Egyptian cinema has been evident and explained by deeper concerns in society and international relations. Consequently, global Islamophobia in the past few years has permeated Egyptian collective consciousness and has influenced the general Egyptian movie-going public as well as filmmakers and producers. However, Kosba (2018) added that it is worth acknowledging that Egyptian filmmakers work within a contextual framework that can be identified as rather ambiguous – on the one hand, it is possible to represent Islamic culture and the corresponding setting; on the other hand, filmmakers have been facing the task to resist the stereotypes promulgated by the Western mass media. While some Egyptian films engage with Islamophobia by portraying Muslim characters and challenging misconceptions in other films and portrayals, other films contribute to negative portrayals or orientalize Islamic culture. Buskirk (2015) supported this by adding that analyzing how Arab-Muslim characters are portrayed in Egyptian movies allows people to argue that these representations are influenced by internalized racism and societal phobias in the context of postcolonial identities and struggles.

Nevertheless, Egyptian filmmakers have managed to combat Islamophobia through the cinema to encourage a broader narrative of the identity of the nation. The use of films like Clash [2016] and The Square [2013] where the society provokes division and racism while calling for unity and acceptance towards strangers, as mentioned by Strohmaier and Krewani (2021). However, Mahdi (2019) added that, situating the influence of nationalism and Islamaphobia, Egyptian cinema sheds a timely light on current trends in identity politics and social conflicts. Apart from this, Nationalism and Islamophobia coupled with Egyptian cinemas describe the political status and identity politics that are intertwined in media. Directors struggle to balance nationalist discourse and fight between offering something that will boost one's patriotic spirit and denouncing the process of Islamophobia. Labidi (2021) supported this by adding that the representation of Arab-Muslim subjects speaks to the larger issues of secularism, authoritarianism, and colonialism that affect contemporary sociopolitical and cultural realities. The films The Yacoubian Building, released in 2006, portray Nationalism in combination with Islamophobia and the social relations of Egyptian society alongside the subject of the crisis of identity in the present world, as highlighted in Onanuga (2022). By unraveling these themes, Egyptian cinema provides

a perspective on the dynamics of contextual nationality and the effects of Islamophobia on media.

Finally, discussing the national and spiritual identity of people in Egypt, one cannot ignore the role of nationalism and Islamophobia as vital problems in the cinema that express the tendencies in society and politics. Thus, Onanuga (2022) added that the filmmakers engage these themes with a measure of subtlety and elaborate them in their creations to raise awareness and alter perceptions for a more harmonious society. Labidi (2021) further mentioned that cinemas and films generally have acted as a window into understanding the society and culture of different nations, and the analysis of Egyptian cinemas also provides a deep insight into the dynamics of Egyptian society as well as gives a colorful picture of the representation of Egypt in the present day Egypt.

Conclusions and Recommendations
Conclusion

Egyptian cinematic production exists both under the umbrella of patriotism and combating Islamophobia, which helps to analyze important aspects of society. Hence, it not only provides a reflection of the established identity of the nation but is also a tool for activating change socially and in terms of discussion. Upon closer look at the example, it can be concluded that filmmakers of Egypt have a great ability to set the tone and direction of new perceptions or rejection of prior stereotyping. Thus, through the representation of nationalism, Egyptian cinema adventures depict the nation's history as well as its remarkable cultural and socio-demographic fabric. As a medium, it has been used to create patriotism and nationalism within Egyptians and to remind Egyptians of their achievements and challenges over the course of history. Be it historical records portrayed in big screen spectacles or the dramas and comedies of modern life that shape common culture, directors and screenwriters construct stories that play out into the collective experience.

In the same breath, the Egyptian cinema engages with the social concern of Islamophobia within its domestic sphere as well as the global one. When portraying a picture of / a certain culture or religion, the portrayals have a positive impact on the culture's religion and vice versa in the representation of Muslims and eradicating stereotypical portrayals of Muslim image. In this way, they give the audience and public an insight into the lives of Muslim individuals in society. It's diverse and not always simple, but they are people who make significant contributions to society. Additionally, Egyptian cinema also reflects and comments on societal dynamics and political situations by challenging concepts like corruption, inequity, and authoritarianism. Media uses its creativity in a manner that elicits public discourse, invokes a call to change, and, in many cases, invokes civil disobedience. In this aspect, they bring the audience into social dialogues through their mission and vision of justice, freedom, and a better future for Egypt.

Recommendations
The recommendations are provided below:

Promoting Diversity and Inclusivity: The filmmakers from Egypt should consider introducing different social classes, diverse individuals, and varying perspectives to the audience. The audiences, being exposed to multiple and differently-abled characters belonging to various cultures, faiths, and economic strata, feel more connected and develop a sense of bias in them (Al-Qudah et al., 2023).

Addressing Islamophobia: It is recommended that Egyptian filmmakers present the Islamic core and the identity of Muslims from a different perspective altogether, as they face much discrimination, hatred, prejudice, and bias in global media. That can be done by portraying Muslim characters as real people, full of variety, with their virtues emphasized, as well as their interactions with other people in society (Aidi, 2023). Further, filmmakers should associate with Muslim scholars and community leaders to remain culturally sensitive and not contribute towards propagating a negative portrayal of this group of people.

Encouraging Dialogue and Social Critique: Egyptian cinema was always an instrument where problems and irregularities in society and political life were highlighted and discussed. It is critically important that filmmakers keep pushing the envelope concerning provocative dialogues, break the social mold, and encourage positive changes (Al-Qudah et al., 2023). The most important social problems that filmmakers can help address are corruption, inequality, and authoritarianism; by doing this, they ensure that the nation's citizens are knowledgeable about such issues and that others are held responsible for their actions.

Supporting Emerging Talent and Independent Filmmaking: For the continuation of Egyptian cinema's rejuvenation, it is incumbent upon spectators to patronize the budding director and independent

cinema. This could be through more funding, which means that research grants would be available more often, as well as regular training sessions and, more often, research mentors to guide those in need (Aidi, 2023). Although the transformation of Egyptian cinema has already taken place and the industry already has its icons, it is possible to always have more points of view and unique approaches to the type and style of films.

Enhancing Media Literacy: Media is currently a powerful actor in shaping public opinion, and as such, there should be an attempt to increase media literacy among consumers. Relating to this, workshops, educational programs, and awareness campaigns ensure that those who need to transform their thinking learn how to critically examine how media portrays different people and fail to recognize prejudice and prejudiced thoughts (Bajuwaiber, 2024). The provision

of such guides helps to enable the audience to become actively involved in media consumption and thus better equipped to contest issues of Muslims and trigger social inclusion.

Hence, it should be stressed that Egyptian cinema is capable of acting as a mediator and creating social change, which would include the confrontation of prejudices, initiating discussions, and encouraging tolerance. Ultimately, through accepting and accommodating differences, combating Islamophobia, promoting the exchange of ideas, nurturing fresh creative voices, and improving critical viewership, Egypt's filmmakers can help foster a fairer, tolerant, and empathetic world. For this reason, they can create hope and promote feelings of compassion, inclusion, and togetherness through which they contribute to the development of the cultural context and to the formation of the future of Egypt and the world.

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