

A Semiotic approach to content analysis of lighting in Egyptian Films adapted from Naguib Mahfouz's novels

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Abstract:

Many of the works of literature by Naguib Mahfouz received extensive studies occupying whole books and university theses, and his literary novels that were converted into films also received similar studies. But most of these studies were limited to the study of character building, narration and plot in both of them. However, the lighting language as the most important component of the language of cinematography in cinematic works taken on literary novels has not received any similar study. The research aims to highlight the role of lighting in the composition of the visual language in Egyptian cinematography, cited from the novels of Naguib Mahfouz, to serve events, character building and conflict with the novel. It also aims to provide a semiotic analysis of the lighting language in these films during the research body and also during the content analysis. It also aims to reveal the most important points of convergence and difference between the novel and cinematic lighting in films adapted from Naguib Mahfouz's literary novels. The research assumes that the lighting in the hands of the creative director of photography is able to create a visual image equivalent to the eloquence of the literary text in the novel. The researcher first studies the most important points of difference and convergence between the novel and the lighting of the cinematographic movie cited from it. He then describes and analyzes lighting in scenes from films adapted from the works of Naguib Mahfouz, using semiotics as an introduction to content analysis. The selection of the research by Naguib Mahfouz stems from his reaching the top of his artistic expression through the novel. And by that he occupied his place on the map of Arab national and international culture. The importance of Naguib Mahfouz in the cinema is not less than the importance of his presence in literature. Naguib Mahfouz's name appeared on the screen in 62 Egyptian films from 1947 until 1989, including eleven of the hundred best Egyptian films. Al-Matn permeates lighting analysis in a group of the most important films cited from his works, which are: "Beginning and End", "Cairo 30" and "Qasr Al-Shouq". The researcher aimed at analyzing the content to study the movie "The Thief and the Dogs", which is based on Naguib Mahfouz's novel "The Thief and the Dogs", as a selected sample for the purpose of analysis and achieving the research objectives. The research follows the descriptive and analytical method for displaying and analyzing the content of the cinematic visual image through its most important vocabulary, which is lighting in different shots and scenes from films adapted from the works of Naguib Mahfouz. One of the most important findings of the research is that the lighting in the hands of the creative director of photography turns into a visual language, and it has a rhetorical ability that parallels the narrative language in expressing the psychological states of the film's characters, their struggles and the events they pass through. The relationship between the signifier and the signified in the language of illumination is not confined to the iconic mark only, but the relationship between them can often be symbolic, which gives the illumination a clear semantic depth. Lighting is subject to the concept of the original signifier and additional linguistic mean. Also, the success of Kamal Karim in the movie "The Thief and the Dogs" in using lighting creatively to create homogeneous visual sentences that tell a drama and loaded with indications, has achieved the desired goal in the novel.

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