

# Response

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Movie Review: The Yacoubian Building Egypt remains the long-standing capital in film production. The movie, The Yacoubian Building features Adel Imam was directed by Marwan Hamad (Mattin). Imam is one of the most popular actors in Egypt, appearing in over 100 films. The movie was set in a Cairo apartment building. I agree with the film with the way it follows the lives of the inhabitants, and utilizes their lives as a wider critique of the Egyptian politics as well as community. The movie's brevity is cemented in its theme when it does not shy away from controversial topics in the Egyptian society, such as sodomy, rape, homosexuality, police brutality, and Islamic extremism. I agree with movie's director that most of these topics are a taboo in the Egyptian culture. As cited by Mattin, in the movie: while Zaki lives in vanishing luxury and loves women, Bothayna is a victim of sexual harassment while working as a shop assistant in order to fend for her family after her father's demise, Bothayna's boyfriend, Taha (Mohamed Imam), is not wanted in the police and joins a radical Islamic group, and gay newspaper editor who seduces a young soldier (Bassem Samra). The Egyptian board of censors gave the movie an adults-only rating.

As a consequence, the movie has sparked a lot controversy in Egypt. For example, the legislators denounced the film on the floor of the House, and a subsequent television series of similar name cut out the homosexuality part. However, the movie still became one of the highest-grossing movies Egypt has ever produced. Marwan Hamed is able to balance these story lines with skill, bring out credible performances from the cast, and expertly handles the variations in tone and scale. To me, the movie is an epic in scope. To others, it may be tender and intimate. According to Mahajan (2), the film, The

Yacoubian Building is one of the bravest movies that have been produced in Egypt. Now a former shadow of its former, the Building is a metaphor for Egypt where the country was faced with poverty and corruption under the leadership of President Hosni Mubarak.

On the other hand, the movie's weakness is that the more than 2 hrs 30 minutes duration makes The Yacoubian Building tiresome to watch. The other weakness is that by using the most expensive building of; Yocoubian apartment. The movie is the most expensive in Egypt making it inaccessible to the majority of the audience. The divergent plot lines imply that the opening scenes of this movie lack the narrative zap. However, in general, I am of the opinion that in spite of the nearly three-hour running time, Hamed provides a sweeping melodrama that is nothing short of an Egyptian state-of-the-nation address that is interesting to watch.

#### Works Cited

Mahajan, Vijay. The Arab World Unbound: Tapping into the Power of 350 Million Consumers. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2012. Print.

Mattin, David. The Yacoubian Building. . Web. September 8, 2007. Accessed March 11, 2015.