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Dystopian Egypt before the Arabian Spring: Critical review**on Ahmed Khaled Towfik's *the Knife* (2012)**

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Abstract

In Egypt, where the Arabian Spring took place through the Revolution of 25th Jan. 2011, Egyptians exploded rejecting the Dystopian society they lived in for decades. This paper presents a thematic analysis to Ahmed Khaled Towfik's novel *The Knife* where he draws a complete picture of Egyptian society before the Revolution as a corrupted society where it is better not to be seen or heard. The characters of Elshinawi District represent different characteristics of Dystopian society and types of control used by the government and the regime. Towfik depicts professionally social, political, and economical temptations that led to the Revolution and people's hope to break the strong circle of corruption they live in. He presents Nawal, who sells her body for food, Mustafa who represents religious fanatic groups, Hussien, the young man who finds no job and is suffering from bureaucracy, Abbas as a drug dealer who sells drugs widely and gains much money, Ibrahim, the rich man who always has the nightmare that he lives in a destitute area, and the most important character, Afaf who was sexually violated by Hamasa and his men. By the end of the novel, Afaf committed suicide under the train after writing "The Kinfe" with black spray on the big wall. The paper reveals that people who dream of breaking Dystopian society were victimized twice and they couldn't fulfill their dreams nor keep their old reality. The final scene when Essam went into The Serga and disappeared symbolizes the dark tunnel in which 25th Jan. Revolution entered after 18 days of protesting at Tahrir square.

Key words: Dystopia, Arabian Spring, Egypt's Revolution.

