

Statelessness, Politics of Self and Other, Gender Battle, Issue of Species Superiority, International Politics, Marginalized Voices and A Comparative Analysis of Al-Hakim's Egypt and Today's Egypt in *Fate of a Cockroach*

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Abstract— *Fate of a Cockroach* (1973) brilliantly portrays statelessness, policy paralysis, lethargy in taking effective decision, overpowering clutches of a self-declared cockroach King who is unable to take any decision in order to eliminate the threats coming from the ants vis-à-vis this play also showcases a struggle for survival. The cockroach's tireless fight for freedom is inspiring for us because life is not a bed of roses; it is full of challenges and pricks. If a ruler fails to lead his nation he is not eligible for the post. Individualistic cockroaches stand in complete opposite to the ants who believe in the mantra of collective efforts. Today's Egypt also under the presidency of Sisi desperately needs peace and stability because Sisi is accused of his authoritarian and dictatorial leadership and failed economic policy. The cockroach Queen and Samia - both appear to me as powerful female characters who are not ready to be dominated by their husbands. On the other hand, they have thrown a challenge to the phallogocentric monopoly of our patriarchal society where women are pushed at the periphery and phallus is in the centre. Al-Hakim deserves our kudos because he has vividly sketched the various agathokakological entities of our life through the portrayal of lawlessness, failed state machinery, parasitic leeches who like to eat fig in galore after carrying coals to Newcastle, Self/Other, Centre/Periphery politics etc.

Keywords— Agathokakological, Dictatorial, Individualistic, Periphery, Statelessness.

I. INTRODUCTION

It is remarkable that in *Fate of a Cockroach*, the product of a broken heart, the author should have so controlled his attempt and bitterness as to give not only a drama, but also a political document, of

value. This play is an inspired, thoughtful and vigorous denunciation of Egyptian (and Arab) politics and policies as he saw them in the years immediately prior to the June War and his last direct dramatic word on Abd an Nasir.

—Richard Long

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,

—William Butler Yeats

QUEEN Don't apologize! My position is like yours. I know that. The difference, however, is that he's male — and that he's got longer whiskers than me!

—Tawfik Al-Hakim

I do not know how a person suffering from Katsaridaphobia would respond to Tawfik Al-Hakim's *Fate of a Cockroach* (1973), a three-act satirical comedy designed for and written in contour with the ethics of the theatre of the absurd but it is a matter of fact that this play also highlights struggle for life, political, psycho-cultural, religious and even governmental problems. Al-Hakim deserves our kudos because with a true impartial journalist's eye he has portrayed class struggle, gender struggle, Self/Other, Centre/Periphery, Master/Slave dichotomy in his *Fate of a Cockroach* (1973). In Al-Hakim's universe cockroaches talk, share their opinions and discuss about various inconveniences of their kingdom but what is most striking is that the self-declared cockroach King is not able to hatch any decisive solution to the age-old threat coming from the ants. Ants are tiny creatures in comparison to the cockroaches while

cockroaches are also tiny in comparison to human beings. Proletariat ants feed themselves from the crumb of their masters' table and they live in community. On the other hand the cockroaches are greedy and proud of their species superiority and even claim themselves as "thinking creatures". (Al-Hakim 21) Cockroaches appear to me as petty bourgeoisie arrogant having exhibitionist and self-fashioning gestures while the ants belong to "[n]on hegemonic groups or classes." (Gramsci xiv) Richard Long in his "Philosophical and Psychological Themes in *Fate of a Cockroach*" has observed:

If *Fate of a Cockroach* is an exercise in disillusion and bitterness, its chief protagonist nevertheless stems directly from Hakim's established psychological and philosophical attitudes. In *From Beyond*, the concluding item of *The Devil's Pact*, he refers to the wars of the ants and the cockroaches. In *From the Ivory Tower* he describes his 'frequent' contemplation, when a youth, of columns of ants bearing cockroach corpses, he uses to scatter their ranks with cups of water, which he supposed they probably regarded as well-aimed acts of God and which prompted in him the by no means unprecedented thought that perhaps humans were 'ants', whose natural catastrophes were the deeds of 'ants' yet longer than them: 'Allah is greater than we can conceive, and our senses are more ignored about this life as we imagine.' He returns to this train of thought in *Literature is Life*. In the preface to the play he declares again his interest in the insect world — one demonstrated in *Solomon the Wise* — which, he surmises, is the ancient Egyptian in him, coming out: they 'used to link insects and man in one framework'. He says that he once saw a cockroach struggling to climb out of his bath and heralds one purpose of Act One of the play by continuing, 'How glorious is the sight of a determination to struggle without hope! ... (It) is, as I understand it, the crux of tragedy... For me, sadness, catastrophes and the death of the hero are not properties of tragedy, but obligatory is (it) ... that the hero's end comes as a result of his striving with a force over which he has no power' — as, he avers, is the case with Othello but not with Hamlet. 'Every human struggle lacks efficacy before that power against which man is powerless. Nevertheless he struggles, and that is the tragedy and greatness of man.' Having expounded his theory, he correctly dismisses the idea that *Fate of a Cockroach* is a tragedy — 'it is merely a play and no more.' Containing much

political criticism which is examined elsewhere, it is difficult to label. (500-501)

The cockroach King has not the really great organising power and judiciousness of Dr. Ashoke Gupta of Satyajit Ray's *Ganashatru* (1990), an adaptation of Ibsen's play *An Enemy of the People* (1882) in the sense that Dr. Gupta did his level best in raising the mass protest against drinking the holy water of Tripureswar temple which was the epitome of jaundice and an epidemic was about to plunge into the small township. Dr. Gupta had the power and ability to create a mass agitation against the corrupt politicians and spineless journalists but in *Fate of a Cockroach* (1973) the King is not capable of assembling even ten cockroaches to mobilize a battalion against the ants:

SAVANT Naturally. If the King can't order ten cockroaches to assemble together, then what authority has the King got? (Al-Hakim 11)

The despotic cockroach King and his court can be compared to the court of Hiraik Raj because both the cockroach King and Hiraik Raj of Satyajit Ray's *Hiraik Rajar Deshe* (1980) always like to listen "Your Majesty" (Al-Hakim 20) from their subjects and both are megalomaniac and are surrounded by power hungry, hypocritical leeches who always like to eat the fig in galore after carrying coals to Newcastle:

MINISTER Before you, Your Majesty, we lived in an age of primitive barbarism. We had neither a king nor a minister, then you came along, with your sense of organization and sound thinking, and ascended the throne. (Al-Hakim 8)

The *darbari* cockroach King's lobby consists of a prime minister who cannot see plans through, a scientist who is unscientific, unreasonable, arrogant and uncooperative and a priest who is conceited, irreligious and duplicitous. (Long 505) As Richard Long in the previously mentioned essay has again observed:

Putting them all to shame is the Queen. Hakim's striking and vicious account of the kingdom is so presented that the ordinary Arab spectator or reader ought to be able to assimilate the satire effortlessly. It is, nevertheless, doubtful whether the politically unaware Arab would grasp that it is not about cockroaches at all and, if coaxed into the theatre, would not be on the retreat within a short space of time. If he missed the satire he would, however, also be denied the humour and vivacity which make the act a continual joy. It is an anti-Egyptian (perhaps anti-Arab) parable: the kingdom is Egypt, which has not studied its problems with the necessary seriousness and depth and substitutes slander and lies for the considered demarche; the King and his sensible

Queen are respectively the Egyptian President and people, whom Hakim is not complimenting by dressing up as cockroaches; and the non-existent cockroach army is Egypt's. (505)

Hakim has criticized the indecisiveness of a king who fails to take any judicious decision at the juncture of a critical situation and such a king has no right to exercise his authority any more only because of the length of his antennae but unfortunately the subject cockroaches are highly individualistic and always think for themselves and not for their community. There is no one like Udayan of *Hirak Rajar Deshe* (1980) in the cockroach kingdom who will dethrone the failed King to get rid of his overpowering clutch after gathering the masses against his empire and his self-deluding propaganda: "Dori Dhore Maro Tan (Pull the ropes now) / Raja Hobe Khan Khan (The king will lie in pieces)". ("Dori Dhore Maro Tan" 00:07:36-00:09:40)

The cockroach King is a poster boy of masculine hegemony and a worshipper of "phallogocentrism" (Derrida's term for the masculine power at the origin of the Law). In a typical patriarchal society phallus is in the centre and women are pushed at the periphery. Here the cockroach King is proud of his long whiskers while in Act Three Adil calls her wife "a weak woman" (Al-Hakim 54):

ADIL It's a desire on my part to please her, because she's a woman, a weak woman, taken up with her youth, her advancement, her talent. I don't like to shake her belief in her own strength and superiority. I would regard that as meanness, meanness on my part as a strong man. I hold that real manliness demands that she be made to feel her strength and her importance and to raise her morale. (Al-Hakim 54)

Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949) stressed upon how a woman is tagged as "Other" (xxii) in our patriarchal society while Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics* (1970) showcases how women are inessentialized in patriarchy and how power structure operates which seeks its pleasure only in shifting women to the margin. In *Fate of a Cockroach* (1973) Al-Hakim has tried to de-stereotype the prevailing notion of our gender stereotype where men go to war with phallic swords and women are stereotyped as experts in kitchen. Amidst the callousness and jittery over strategizing an effective military strategy against the disciplined and organized army of the ants where the cockroach King, his minister and Savant rejected to fight, the Queen then wanted to showcase her valour, bravery and courage after challenging the age-old patriarchal hubris which never admits women as warriors and I think the King and his masculine lobby is psychologically

castrated and effeminized after denying to go for a war which is believed to be manly:

QUEEN Then I shall go — I, the Queen — yet I shall not say I am the Queen, but merely a female. Stand, you males, and watch with folded arms while females go to war. (Al-Hakim 17)

Obviously a woman can fight like a man and the cockroach Queen, Manikamika or Saint Joan — they all have the capability to lead and strategize warfare. The setting of *Fate of a Cockroach* (1973) is dystopic in nature because here the King is not capable of taking any decision and is surrounded by a minister and a Savant who like to confide their tomfoolery in him. The king is hubristic of his whiskers and negligent towards policy making or in statecraft. There is a complete policy paralysis in his kingdom and the situation of law and order is abysmal. The King was uncontested for his post and his court stands in complete opposite to the description of the well-ordered, transparent, viable and intelligent French court as mentioned in the beginning of *The Duchess of Malfi* (1623):

QUEEN (*sarcastically*) The court!

KING Please — no Sarcasm! I have an ever-growing feeling that you're always trying to belittle my true worth. (Al-Hakim 4)

The cockroach Queen challenges the quintessential patriarchal ethos of her husband after declaring that she is not ready to obey his commands because she is not a parasite and she feeds herself without her husband's help:

QUEEN (*even more sarcastically*) Your authority? Your authority over whom? Not over me at any rate — you are in no way better than me. You don't provide me with food or drink. How you ever fed me? I feed myself, just as you feed yourself. Do you deny it? (Al-Hakim 4)

She further states that her husband has no right to decide when she will wake or when she will go for sleep. Simply she does not want to be dominated and bullied by her husband:

QUEEN Let me be then. It is I who will decide when I shall work and when be lazy, when to sleep and when to get up. (Al-Hakim 4)

The King has set his lobby not on the basis of their merit but in the dire need of those who will call him "Your Majesty". (Al-Hakim 20) In Nirendranath Chakraborty's "Ulanga Raja" (1971) no one except an innocent small boy dared to point out the clothless naked body of the king while his courtiers went on appreciating that look of him saying that he is looking superb and elegant. Similarly, here in *Fate of a Cockroach* (1973) except the Queen no one has the guts to hammer hard the lawlessness, indecisiveness and irresponsibility of the

King towards crafting a strategy to eliminate the threats coming from the ants. The minister's son when he fell on his back was triumphed by the ants as a trophy and they joyously marched with the corpse of the upturned son of minister. Al-Hakim has satirized the death after calling it "a national catastrophe!" (Al-Hakim 7) The King, his minister and Savant — they all belong to the centre of a power structure and they are totally careless about their subject cockroaches who are peripheralized/marginalized and are killed by the ants on a regular basis. If the death of the minister's son who went for a stroll is "a national catastrophe" (Al-Hakim 7) then why the death of the subject cockroaches would not be declared as a big national calamity or why any public mourning would not take place in memory of the departed souls? The King and his lobby belongs to the category of "haves" while his subject cockroaches belong to "have nots" (Marx in Wen 74) category. Individualistic and opinionated cockroaches are pompous and parasitic while the ants believe in the mantra of collectivism:

*Here is your great feast,
We carry it together, together,
To our towns, our villages:
A great and splendid cockroach—
Provision for the winter long.
With it our storerooms we shall fill.
None of us will hunger know,
Because we all lend a hand,
We're members of a single body,
There is amongst us no one sad,
There is amongst us none who's lonesome,
There is amongst us none who says
'I am not concerned with others.'* (Al-Hakim 16)

The cockroaches here try to inflict upon the ants a kind of Hegelian Master/Slave dialectic in the sense that they claim themselves as "larger creatures" (Al-Hakim 12) and "the most superior creatures on the face of the earth" (Al-Hakim 18). In our everyday life also people who have power belong to the centre and powerless people are pushed at the periphery level and in this way the power structure operates. The ants have ensured their safety and security by the virtue of a specialized Minister of War and a Minister of Supply whether the cockroaches don't have such ministry; they have just one all-in-one Minister who proposes "disconcerting problems" (Al-Hakim 6) and produces "unpleasant news" (Al-Hakim 6). The King who himself is destroying the state's precious time because of his inability in sorting out the ants problem is accusing his Minister of wasting the costly time of his kingdom:

KING Talk seriously, Minister, and don't waste the state's time. (Al-Hakim 9)

Jenny Gustafsson in her 25 January, 2019, *Asia Times*, article, "Eight years after Egypt's uprising, a craftsman stitches history" observes:

Eight years ago, on 25 January 2011, Egypt witnessed the start of mass protests. They came on the heels of similar demonstrations in Tunisia, which set the Arab Spring in motion. After 18 days of protests in Cairo, which spread to cities across Egypt, President Hosni Mubarak— in power since 1981— was forced to resign. (Gustafsson)

Gustafsson further observed:

Many of the most powerful artworks from 2011 were street art, such as Ammar Abo Bakr's portraits of martyred protesters with angel-like wings, or Bahia Shehab's stencilled blue bra for the protester who was dragged in the streets by members of the military until her clothes ripped— creatures symbolizing the ongoing regime brutality. Or the dozens of artists who came daily to the sidewalks around Tahrir, to draw what was happening. (Gustafsson)

Current President of Egypt Abdel Fatah Sisi ousted the Muslim Brotherhood backed Mohamed Morsi after raising a military coup. If the Egyptian cockroach King of *Fate of a Cockroach* (1973) failed to establish law, harmony and stability because of his indecisiveness and lethargy in sorting out the ants problem, its 21st century humanoid counterpart today's Egyptian President Sisi is also accused of rights abuses, failed governance, deteriorating economy, policy paralysis, eroded status of Egyptian middle class, misguided "new" Suez canal or the New Administrative Capital, extensive monopoly to military institutions, loss of Egypt's historic right of sovereignty over the Tiran waterway, adverse impact on Egypt's share of the Nile waters, national insecurity. If the subject cockroaches of *Fate of a Cockroach* (1973) needed justice, permanent solution to the ants problem and stability today's common Egyptians also need harmony, justice and peace from their incumbent President Sisi who has allegedly repressed the voice of his opponents and has butchered those who dared to speak against him. From Asma Nassar's 3 January, 2019, *Egypt Today*, article, "President Abdel Nasser's car restored to original condition, Irrigation minister drive it" we come to know that Nasser's historically important cavalcade which he drove during the construction of the Aswan Dam has been restored to its original condition but whether today's Egypt under the allegedly dictatorial leadership of Sisi would be able to live in a restored and peaceful environment is a million dollar question to me.

Denys Johnson-Davies in his Introduction to "*Fate of a Cockroach*" and other plays has observed:

In *Fate of a Cockroach*, man's natural love for freedom, his refusal to despair in the face of adversity, are exemplified in the cockroach's strivings to climb out of the bath. (Johnson-Davies in Jeyifo 499)

Adil and Samiya, the young married couple who have got up early in the morning and are now preparing to go to office orchestrate a haughty tag-of-war between them after Samia noticed the presence of a cockroach in their bathtub. The cockroach was struggling for life and it was trying again and again to climb up but due to the slippery sides of the bathtub it was losing its grip and was falling down again and again. Kudos to the Nietzschean Will to power of the cockroach who was tirelessly trying to climb up the tub and much like the spider of Robert the Bruce the cockroach is trying its level best to survive. This Will to power is absent in the character of the cockroach King. Act Two and Three both show humans behaving in an even more purposeless, void and meaningless fashion than the cockroaches of Act One. In Satre's vision man is born into a kind of void (*le néant*), a mud (*le visqueux*). (Cuddon 260) M.H. Abrams in his *A Glossary of Literary Terms* has observed:

After the 1940s, however, there was a widespread tendency, especially prominent in the *existential philosophy* of men of letters such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus, to view a human being as an isolated existent who is cast into an alien universe; to conceive the human world as possessing no inherent truth, value, or meaning; and to represent human life — in its fruitless search for purpose and significance, as it moves from the nothingness whence it came toward the nothingness where it must end— as an existence which is both anguished and absurd. (1)

As Albert Camus said in *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1942):

In a universe that is suddenly deprived of illusion and of light, man feels a stronger. His is an irremediable exile... This divorce between man and his life, the actor and his setting, truly constitutes the feeling of Absurdity. (Camus in Abrams 1)

Adil who is lost psychologically finds a temporary solace in the cockroach's struggle for life. The company doctor who had assumed that Adil is continuously looking at the cockroach due to a pathological condition and according to him Adil has identified himself with the cockroach but later it is found crystal clear that Adil has not bridged any kind of similarity between him and the petty cockroach. Neither Adil carries any kind of sympathy for that creature nor does he want to help it to get over that challenging

situation. There is a popular saying that failures are the pillars of success and I encash a great lesson from the cockroach's tireless fight for freedom which mesmerizes me vis-à-vis it also inspires me to take a vow of overcoming all the obstacles in the zigzag way of life:

ADIL Indeed we're tired from watching but it's not tired from trying. (Al-Hakim 57)

As Stephen O. Solanke in his scholarly article "Of species and symbolisms: exploring the peculiar world of Tewfik al-Hakim's *Fate of a Cockroach*" has observed:

The psychological movement and transference of Adil's consciousness from humanoid to insect is a mythical journey towards freedom in his personal world. This Kafkaesque world is symbolised in the character of Gregor Samsa in Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis* (1958), who transmutes into a giant insect. Adil experiences arrays of emotions like horror, kindness and pity from both his wife and doctor. Through this journey, his innermost troubles and achievements are portrayed. (203-204)

Samia likes to boss over her hubby after de-stereotyping the gender stereotype:

SAMIA (as she enters the bathroom) Listen, Adil, you've got the day off today. You should know that I want you to spend this day usefully. D' you hear? There are my clothes and dresses all crumpled up in the wardrobe — get down to sorting them out and hang them up at your leisure one by one so that when I come back from work I'll find everything nicely sorted out and organised. Understood? (Al-Hakim 62)

Both Samia and cockroach Queen appear to me as the quintessential Amazon who do not like to passively obey their husbands' command though Samia in her pursuit to bring her husband out of his supposed pathological condition admitted that she has not been always nice to him but later when the physician declares that Adil is sound she returns to her domineering avatar who always likes to boss over her husband. Adil previously declared that her wife is "a weak woman, the weaker sex." (Al-Hakim 25) This is the age-old patriarchal hubris which gets its gratification only in shifting women at the periphery and Al-Hakim has portrayed the marginalized, peripheralized, downtrodden and miserable condition of women in patriarchy where phallus is in the centre. William Maynard Hutchins in *Tawfiq al-Hakim: A Reader's Guide* has observed:

The cockroach's persistent struggle to climb out of the tub is tragic, because the goal is beyond his strength. The struggle of masculinity to reassert itself is thus tragic, as well, since once more the odds are against men. Man seeks to free

himself from the womb from the moment of conception until he finally returns to the womb of the earth. The human hero Adil identifies with the cockroach King's struggle and rebels against his wife's commands, since he now realizes that although she has emasculated him and reduced him to the status of a cockroach, even a cockroach can rebel. Though the struggle is futile, it allows him to feel like a human being again. When Samia, the wife, calls in the doctor and he inquires about Adil's dreams, Adil says he has no dreams, good or bad. This should be obvious since masculinity is essentially the ability to dream. Adil's one dream is to be the struggling cockroach, since struggle lends tragic meaning to catastrophe. The cockroachified Adil is another fallen Adam, and just as cockroaches are destined to fall prey to ants, men are destined to fall prey to sexuality. (179)

It is highly ludicrous to see that Adil instead of eradicating the cockroach out of the bathtub is witch-hunting for a dictionary to know and research on the habits and synonyms of cockroaches. It is also found in the text that Adil is writing a Ph.D. thesis paper in his free time. Neither he finds any kind of resemblance between him and his insect protégé nor is he ready to compare his wife with a cockroach. Umm Atiyya is a working class woman and she is unaware of the heroism of the cockroach King. She runs the bath and as a result the cockroach King is drowned and she flings it in the corner. A phalanx of ants who later attract Adil and the doctor's attention and appreciation triumphantly march with the carcass of the cockroach. It is true that Adil had no pity for the cockroach but I cannot deny that he had also saved the life of the insect after locking the door of the bathroom so that neither his wife nor the family cook can destroy it with the help of insecticide or carboric acid. He strategically manoeuvred parrot in order to dump his wife's constant attempts of opening the bathroom door. In *Fate of a Cockroach* (1973) the cockroach Queen is stereotyped for her small whisker or Samia is tagged as weaker sex, the superstitious priest goes for costly prayers but with zero result. The priest's overestimation for rituals reminds me of Madame Sosostriis of *The Waste Land* (1922) who promoted superstition, irrationality and playing of cards instead of promoting science and rationality. It is also highly ironical that the atheist Savant who advocates scientific explanation and logical inquiry unbelievably at the end of Act One when the cockroach king fell into the deep lake joins the priest's camp and starts praying:

PRIEST Pray! Lift up your hands with me! Oh gods!

ALL (*lifting up their hands and calling out*) Oh gods! Oh gods! (Al-Hakim 23)

But unfortunately no god came, no miracle happened to rescue the King. In *Waiting for Godot* (1952), Godot never arrived to assist the tramps and in the world no one will come to save us because we are lonely, deserted and are living in a void, meaningless world and we will have to struggle for our survival much like the cockroach who tirelessly tried to survive until it was swayed away by the stream of the tub.

II. CONCLUSION

In Srijit Mukherji's *Mishawr Rawhoshyo* (2013) Hani Al Quadi had vividly portrayed the political/economic crisis, pathos, suffering, downtrodden and bitter situation of the common Egyptians who are victimised and are tactically made scapegoat of the crimes and villainous activities committed by the powerful state machinery vis-à-vis Al Quadi had also bludgeoned how a child is bound to grab a pistol in tender age instead of holding a pen. Donald Trump with a heavy heart on 13 December, 2012 tweeted:

Egypt is a total mess. We should have backed Mubarak instead of dropping him like a dog. (@realDonaldTrump)

Obviously this tweet had sparked controversy and Trump was trolled on social media by the Democrats but it is true that the anarchy and lawlessness that started spreading like a cankerous ulcer slowly but effectively after the great January Revolution which though for a very short span of time had flamed the rays of hope and prosperous future in the minds of the common Egyptians is now an old chapter because Sisi has allegedly rattled the peace of Egypt because of his failed policy and his critics say that his incessant hunger for power never thinks twice before killing mercilessly his opponents. In *Fate of a Cockroach* (1973) it has been proved that the subject cockroaches like to live in harmony and they like to sing "o night, o lovely night". (Al-Hakim 21) The joy that is found while looking at a Wordsworthian setting sun or at a Shelleyan moon is eternal and everlasting and this peace of our soul is always superior to the artificial and temporary pleasure that is felt while erecting a dynasty like the kingdom of the cockroach King which is ephemeral and fragile. Today's Egypt under the presidency of Sisi is in a dire need of peace and stability. *Fate of a Cockroach* (1973) proves Al-Hakim a true mascot of democracy and he has criticized the lack of energy, indecisiveness, gender stereotype, politics of Self and Other etc. *The Waste Land* (1922) ends with "shantih shantih" (Eliot line 433) but will peace ever come in this politically and economically unstable world where only a selected number of rulers are in the centre and marginalized poor people, minority

voices are crushed under the fatal mill of class hegemony. If the subject cockroaches need order and decisiveness from their ruler in *Fate of a Cockroach* (1973), today's Egypt also need "shantih" (peace) and harmony. The microscopic cockroach world can be compared to the macroscopic human world in the sense that cockroaches die due to torrential downpours, moving mountains or by insecticide while human beings are also scattered, crushed and devastated due to unavoidable natural calamity, hunger, poverty, famine, nuclear warfare, domestic violence.

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- [18] *Mishawr Rawhoshyo*. Directed by Srijit Mukherji, performances by Prosenjit Chatterjee, Aryann Bhowmik, Indraneil Sengupta, Swastika Mukherjee, and Rajesh Sharma. SVF, 2013.
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