

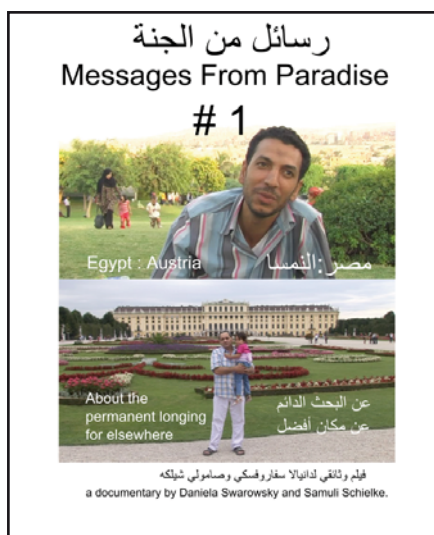


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## Imaginary cosmopolitans: Engaging the world in provincial Egypt

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Official poster of the motion picture



Man in toktok with a German flag and a Dutch jersey



Men in a barber shop

One of the most ambiguous outcomes of globalisation has been the emergence of a large class of people, most of them in third world countries, who consume images and subscribe to ideologies of global currency, and locate themselves in complex multiple identities of religion, consumerism, nationalism, football and music fan culture, etc., without having access to the mobility nor the means of class distinction that have often been associated with the notion of cosmopolitanism. Their experience of engaging the world in face of very limited possibilities of physical movement contains many of the fluidities and ambiguities of a cosmopolitan experience but takes place primarily on an imaginary or virtual level, for example in dreams and plans of migration, in football fan culture, and in the consumption music, film, and fashion. Rather than merely consuming these global images and promises, young Egyptians often actively and creatively engage and develop them to make them meaningful parts of their daily lives. The fieldwork of this project has its starting point in northern Egypt, but since many of the subjects of the research not only aim to but eventually do manage to migrate to different locations, the project also follows their changing experiences and expectations when virtual engagement with the world is amended by the actual experience of migration. Especially in this regard, the project draws upon the cooperation with Daniela Swarowsky in the documentary film project Messages from Paradise (2008).