



'The Other Side' - Attempted suicide, impossible love and (un)crossed boundaries

Samuli Schielke

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<https://vimeo.com/127082964>

This time we are proud to present [The Other Side, an enchanting ethnographic film by Mukhtar Shehata and Samuli Schielke.](#)

The Other Side tells in nine minutes the absurd story of a man with extremist



looks played by Mukhtar Shehata himself. He plans a suicide attack at the Abu Qir railroad but turns out to pursue quite different objectives, ones that appear related to an unhappy love story across class boundaries.

Shot on location in the district of Al-Mandara in Alexandria, *The Other Side* is a realistic fantasy set at two boundaries that mark the lives and expectations of the inhabitants of the area. One is the Abu Qir railway line that runs parallel to the coastline, separating a wealthy neighbourhood at the seafront from a poor, informal area on the inland side. The other boundary is the Mediterranean sea, which separates North Africa and the Middle East from wealthy Europe.

The main hero, a man from the poor side of the railroad, finds the railroad as impenetrable as the walls of Berlin and Palestine. But if his course of action seems violent at first, it soon takes a different turn. Standing at the railroad, he faces the impossibility of a love across social classes. Having finally crossed one wall under suspicious circumstances, he finds himself facing new walls. Gazing across the sea, he wonders whether there may be someone like him at the opposite shore, also longing for the other side.