

Un/Interrupted Formations Choreographing Spaces of Gesticulation

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Graffiti on the walls of Mohamed Mahmoud by Shaza Khaled and Aliaa El Tayeb.
Photo by Salma Abdel Salam.

In December 2012, new graffiti surfaced on the walls of Mohamed Mahmoud Street, near Tahrir Square in Cairo. It depicted a ballerina in an arabesque facing a running protestor who embodied a very similar position, with one leg lifted in the air and an arm stretched out, as if the two bodies formed a mirror.^[1] They danced together – a statement on the relationship between the dancing body and that of the revolutionary fighter. The painting resonated: as a dancer, the 2011 Egyptian revolution presented an event of such magnitude that it

instigated in me an incredible urge to move.

At the time, dance enabled me to rethink the processes of power in alternative spaces, reimagining different modes of occupation. In parallel, cultural spaces were actively engaged in producing and presenting alternative narratives of opposition, thus rearing bodies into new modalities. This gave way to a sense of play, in which space and the body felt malleable and more haphazard. I came to view dance as a way to question the role of the gesture in subject formation, and became interested in how one choreographs their own body – or the bodies of others – in different spaces and within power structures. Ultimately, I wanted to find ways of reasserting the potential dance offers in imagining possibilities of opposition.

This essay is a result of this interest. It is a personal attempt to explore the potential of dance as a mode of subject formation while considering Herbert Mead's assertion that: 'Any gesture by which an individual can himself be affected as others are affected and which therefore tends to call out in him a response as it would call out in another, will serve as a mechanism for the construction of the self.'^[2] I will look at dance not as a discipline, but as a conceptual standpoint: a tool of malleability and political possibility, and a revolutionary tactic that presupposes the convergence of space and subjects in creating new collectivities through the utility of bodies and physical gestures in space. What potential does dance as a gesture have in constantly reimagining existent social structures? This question lies at the heart of my study.

Choreopolitics: Choreographing Gestures

In the postscript of the 1994 edition of *The Civilizing Process*, Norbert Elias considers societies as a 'dance figuration', arguing that 'no one will imagine a dance as a structure outside the individual or as a mere abstraction.'^[3] Elias argues that, with the onset of an exceedingly differentiated modern society, impulses of desire become more internalized, instilling onto the individual an automatic 'self-compulsion that he cannot resist, even if he consciously wishes to.'^[4] Elias urges his readers to view the individual and the environment as entangled entities; he poses dance as a fluctuating movement that enables configurations that supersede mono-directional and sterile interpretations of civilization and civilized order.^[5] 'The same dance figurations', he writes, 'can certainly be danced by different people; but without a plurality of reciprocally oriented and dependent individuals, there is no dance.'^[6] Taking this further, you could say that society is a configuration of performed gestures that can both deter or subjugate populations into compliance. This understanding allows space for disruptions that impinge the perceived divide between individual and environment that civility urges. In other words, dance always offers the possibility of moving between binaries, which in turn promises unruliness.

This brings me to the scope of my essay: to consider bodies as conditioned, trained entities that could unlearn their very conditioning through conscious movement – gestures that enable a rethinking and reinvention of the subject and its formation. When discussing gestures, I am constantly in conversation with the term 'choreopolitics', briefly mentioned by dance theorist André Lepecki in his book *Exhaustive Dance*, and later extrapolated in his essay 'Choreopolice and Choreopolitics or, the Task of the Dancer'. Lepecki considers freedom through the concepts of spontaneity, repetition and practiced choreography. He defines choreopoliced movement 'as any movement incapable of breaking the endless reproduction of an imposed circulation of consensual subjectivity, where to be is to fit within a prechoreographed pattern of circulation, corporeality, and belonging.'^[7] Thus, to break free of preimposed choreography, or to alter it in the slightest way, would create new possibilities of embodiment. This change could be as minute as sitting when expected to stand, or running

when expected to walk.

Lepecki argues that choreography produces new systems of both obedience and rebellion – or, to borrow Elias Norbert's phrase, society as dance figuration. If gestures are subjugated effectively, new tactics of resistance will arise to supersede them, just as further subjugation will develop in response to such subversion. In this sense, Lepecki considers choreopolitics as a means to achieve freedom through the constant development of new techniques of the body, which prefaces the importance of the attentiveness to gesture acquisition. The creation of such gestures, whether spontaneously or through rigorous research, punctures the normative way of being in a particular space. Though change occurs, attentiveness to such miniscule shifts is fundamental in order to actually realize their possible effect and their impact on the individual and on society's functioning. Only then does choreography and dance become political.

Gestural Transferrals, Subject Formations

In his essay 'Techniques of the Body', Marcel Mauss points to the transference of bodily gestures over space and time, and from society to society, informing subjects on how to use their bodies. Henceforth, bodies are tools that absorb, reiterate, and internalise the social domains to which they are a part. He argues that the formation of the 'techniques of the body' is produced by the 'whole society to which he belongs, and the place he occupies in it.'^[8] Mauss relies on the word 'habitus' as a reference to custom and habit, or 'acquired ability' in this regard. Here, it is important to bring in the work of Pierre Bourdieu, to further argue for the capacity of physical gestures and subject formation.^[9]

Bourdieu argues that the subject's embodiment – his 'body hexis' – is 'a pattern of postures that is both individual and systematic' and is further 'linked to a whole system of techniques involving the body and tools, and charged with a host of social meanings and values.'^[10] Following this logic, dance and movement as gesticulation have everything to do with subject formation, both in the sense of Mauss's conception of 'habitus', and in Bourdieu's notion of the 'body hexis'. By considering the techniques of the body within the habitus of a given society, Mauss invites a dynamic notion of subject formation and subjectivity by presupposing subject formation as a process of patterned and reiterated acts – society, as Elias would call it, as a dance figuration. But at the same time, dance, and more broadly performance, has the ability to invert and reinvent such patterns, allowing subject formation to be suspended, subverted, and recreated; it is here that the 'body hexis' comes into play – a conditioned pattern that is at once systematic, and yet individual.

To exemplify the interplay between the dynamics within the two notions described above are two examples: The first is *Cairography* (2012) a video dance piece traversing public and private spaces in Cairo, directed by Dalia Naous and Kinda Hassan.^[11] The second is the emergence of Electro-Shaabi Mahragan – a dance form that utilises the street as a stage platform – and its migration and co-option by different settings and bodies in Egypt. By exploring these two examples, my argument about movement – as a set of bodily techniques that are acquired, instilled, and performed – extends the notion of dance to that of gesticulation, as expressed through concert and street performances. The intention is to allow for a consideration of the interplay between private and public space and how this impacts the body and the subject contained within it.

Cairography

You have to keep small rations of subjectivity in sufficient quantity to enable you to

Cairography is a seventeen-minute video shot in the streets of Cairo directed by Dalia Naous and Kinda Hassan. In the footage, nine dancers, or movers, research body making through a kind of choreopolicing, in which dancers enacting certain situations on the street question how censorship can be consciously defied.

Throughout, the dancers stage interventions, including lounging in a public park, or sitting and loitering in front of a store in downtown Cairo instead of walking past it., reflecting verbally and physically on their staged interventions the whole time. Sherin Hegazy, one of the nine dancers, is interviewed about one intervention she is about to enact: 'I will wear a loose fit shirt, a wide pair of pants to cover my haunch,' she says. She is filmed standing in the middle of the Cornish (Nile Promenade) asking for a cigarette, un-chaperoned in a place that is normally frequented by couples, families or male bodies, rarely by single women. Her body becomes the focal point constellating a new formation of space and reordering the moving bodies of those in transit. The uneasiness and fear she reports after being filmed is completely masked.

Hegazy, as a woman asking for a cigarette in this particular spot and then smoking it publicly, gestures to what would be construed as promiscuous behaviour – a woman smoking in public is not appropriate public behaviour, indicating a deviance from a sheltered finesse and virtuous upbringing. It suggests a more promiscuous private behaviour, who if actively defies norms of femininity in the street, must be extremely willing to defy much more in the private sphere, specifically the bedroom. Both the privatization of the public and the 'publicization' of the private, leaves the subject grappling to present acceptable body conduct. Private behaviour therefore can only be evaluated once it asserts itself publicly; its lack of alteration in this case is the means by which censorship is challenged.

Using the street as the stage allows for the rethinking of what constitutes a gestural performance: What limitations do the sphere in which a performance is taking place present, and how do minute movements translate in different settings? This relates to the permissibility of gestures within the public sphere, once again highlighting the dictation of perceived notions of civility and incivility through one's bodily conduct. A body alters its behaviour in accordance to – and in conversation with – the setting it is in.

This is underlined when the film cuts to a private balcony, on which Hegazy is physically invaded and harassed by two male bodies. The choice of a balcony captures the interplay of private and public space, the balcony's occlusion is mostly in its ownership, however it is visible to neighbours. The feeling of being penetrated by the gazes of the passer-by's is translated into a literal invasion of her body. The hands on attack by the two men in the balcony capture the materialisation of the gazes she is subjected to on the street, proving the porousness of bodies.

Cairography brilliantly dissects dance as a movement that simultaneously releases and arrests its movers, offering a more grounded interpretation of the process of co-habitation of bodies and their environment when navigating such public spaces as the street. The movers continuously highlight the co-creation of their gestures through each other, the audience, and the site, or the environment imposed on them, as directed by the maxims they posed on themselves within the choreography. Rather than a novel interaction with the street, the piece anchored every interaction as one of ceaseless dance.

Cairography exemplifies this strain of body making, generated by notions of civility and incivility that is sensed by the nine dancers/movers, according to their different interactions in different street settings. The migration of physical gestures across the public and the private sphere in the context of *Cairography* alludes to the different orientations a body has in relation to different spaces. How, then, does space shape these gesticulating bodies?

In the interview 'The Power of Co- in Contemporary Dance', Lepecki speaks of 'co-imagination' as the potentiality of contemporary dance, one that if considered seriously would dismantle the boundaries of an artwork, fore-fronting it into an on-going alliance, that is always already in the making.[12] Co-imagination furthers the physical bodies to an unseen realm, of intensity and censorship as well as of unintended collaborations and appropriations, it however also grounds limitations as inescapable, and therefore imagination becomes the mode of co-building. To this point, Deleuze speaks of difference and repetition. Gestures even if repeated, are not replicated identically differing in the encounters that emerge through their performance, whether in intention, intensity, or context. Though gestures are acquired and learned, they are performed differently each time.

In her book *The Transmission of Affect*, philosopher and sociologist Teresa Brennan dismantles 'the dichotomy between the individual and the environment and the related opposition between the biological and the social' by focusing on affective transmissions.[13] These affective transmissions are best described as vibrations, or intensities, which alter spatial and physical compositions before lending them a concrete emotion, in other words, affect is in play. Similarly, social theorist and leading affect theorist Brian Massumi asserts affect as intensity.[14] He distinguishes between emotions and affect, arguing that emotions are 'subjective content, the socio-logical linguistic fixing of the quality of experience', thus transforming intensity into 'narratable action-reaction circuits, into function and meaning.'[15]

In *Cairography*, the feeling of being harnessed by the gazes Hegazy encounters as a female body is only translated when entering a space that permits for a more overt emotional reaction. The 'charged' environment she intervenes in can also be described as an environment with interacting intensities that are acutely sensed, however yet to be processed as a particular emotion. Self-censorship therefore does not suspend the on going transmission of affect between all actors in an environment, however it produces limitations for its materialization as a reactive force.

The Habitus of Form

In *Phenomenology of Perception*, Maurice Merleau-Ponty writes: 'My body appears to me as an attitude directed towards a certain existing or possible task. And indeed its spatiality is not here, that of external objects or like that of spatial sensations; a spatiality of position, but a spatiality of situation.'[16] This interplay of space and body dictates a cyclical relationship, one that forms and codes both the body and its environment. This transference of energy followed by the processing of this energy into cognitive information between the bodies once again problematizes the alleged units they are described to be, while simultaneously indicating the cognitive structure they are dictated by.

Relationships between different bodies in space are affective in nature, whether good or bad, they transmit and receive energy. However, such transactions reserve shortcomings when contextualized into an authoritarian habitus – habitus being defined by Pierre Bourdieu as a system of 'durable and transposable dispositions'

which perpetuates all human behaviour, thoughts and orientation.[17] Habitus restructures affect; it controls it in accordance to the maxims it adopts. Further, habitus is embodied and experienced in relationship to the predicated space.[18]

This connects both individual and collective systems of body techniques that enable the body to function as a tool of social reproduction. Posture, gesture and demeanour are turned into permanent dispositions executing proper conduct and in return the mind adapts to what the body does. The difficulty to defy gesture as a self-imposed regulatory behavior, exemplifies the training of bodies, which are 'subjected, used, transformed and improved' voluntarily and forcefully, serving the omnipresent force of authority, that has been internalized, producing a 'governmentality' of control and self-censorship.[19] Dance offers a re-orientation through a brief disorientation, and the utility of a different and often silenced language.

The inverted choreographies the bodies offer throughout *Cairography* instil a different dance figuration in the spaces they interject. The bodies become a spectacle through the minute changes they make in their posture and demeanour; changes which echo into much louder choices that are sensed by both the movers and the onlookers, ultimately imposed on them by the habitus they occupy. To move in a different tempo, to stand still instead of walking along, to spiral to the floor in front of a shop, all of such seemingly ludicrous interventions shift the familiar patterns and shape of the space as well as the normative environment, resulting in both scepticism and extreme attentiveness from the onlookers. Choreopolitics are often extremely discrete, which however assert a questioning that could rupture the familiar so acutely.

To view society as a dance figuration in this context still applies, as the interplay of all bodies persists; yet the affective intensities and outcomes of these interplays are outwardly controlled by our all encompassing habitus, which has become part and parcel of our ontological figuration as dancing bodies. Thus, while moments of physical and affective disorientation provide loopholes for innovation, they do not escape the habitus they emerge from. In Egypt, the body is foreshadowed as the mecca of morality, thus coupling civility with state progress. The mover's orientation to space, which is controlled by their habitus, competes vehemently with the new relationship it seeks to form. This awareness allows dance to harness this tension in order to activate, reveal, and ultimately subvert the habitus, and its role in forming what Bourdieu has called the 'body hexis', or the behavioural systems that shape society, charged as they are with pre-determined social meanings and values.



Electro-Shaabi Mahragan.

Photo published by Rolling Stone and taken by Mosa'ab Elshamy.

Electro-Shaabi

I do not think that it is possible to say that one thing is of the order of 'liberation' and another is of the order of "oppression,"... No matter how terrifying a given system may be, there always remain the possibilities of resistance, disobedience, and oppositional groupings.

– Michel Foucault

Electro-Shaabi music is played at a Mahragan, which means festival, or rave (but can also refer to the track itself). It can be referred to as *Shaabi* and *Mahragan*. These three names are often interchanged, though it is interesting to note that *Shaab(i)* can be literally translated into the commons, the people, the public. In the 1970s, Shaabi music emerged as an effort by the working class to evade the mainstream voice. Due to the growing migration of Egyptian youth to Saudi Arabia for work during the Oil Boom, cassette players were purchased and highly disseminated, allowing for people to sustain a voice no longer monopolised by state radio.

The term Shaabi music was extended to incorporate a more recent development, Electro-Shaabi music, which references the use of electronic, auto-tune music within the old Shaabi music tradition. Electro-Shaabi Mahragan emerged in the street, in the setting of weddings, extending the traditional Shaabi wedding into a rave, also reflecting the lack of affordable singers available to entertain the guests.^[20] The movement behind Electro-Shaabi utilized the street as a huge stage, thus readapting street politics and street behaviour into one of an elaborate performance. Electro-Shaabi Mahragan were staged predominantly by the male youth ranging from the early to late teens until the late twenties. These weddings emerged in 2005 and mushroomed throughout Cairo's poorest neighbourhoods, such as Ain Shams, Shoubra particularly Matareya and Al-Salam

City rapidly. These neighbourhoods are also categorized as the densest parts of Cairo, and have grown vastly as informal settlements, extremely alienated from the hubs of power in Cairo and police control.

In December 2014, I interviewed the dance crew '*Afaraeet El Assara*' (the devils of Assara) in Ain Shams, one of the first dance troupes on the Mahragan scene in 2005. Now in their late-twenties, they limit their involvement to 'the important' weddings, focusing on 'making a living'. They describe Shaabi's sole purpose as one to relieve *kabt* (frustration) and to generate *taqa* (energy). For them, Shaabi's sole purpose lies in its relief and doing,

Yet, with the increasing popularity of this new music and dance genre, the roots of Electro-Shaabi dance have become unclear. Today, the debates range: Some argue that it emerged as an extension of traditional folkloric and Shaabi Egyptian dance, in which men danced with sticks (*Tahtib*) and swords. Another theory is that the accessibility of pocketknives and their prevalence transformed them into a dancing accessory.^[21] Others argue, that while it is influenced by the above-mentioned, hip-hop, tectonic, and new style dance forms that were circulating on the Internet shaped it.^[22] Regardless of how the gestural formation took place, the proclaimed ownership over this is essential, since it articulates the importance of intention and context when developing new modes of choreography.

With the growing importance of Electro-Shaabi music, more resources have become available to researchers and fans in the form of documentaries, articles, YouTube footage, and Matb3aa, a designated website which archives *Mahraganat* (plural of *Mahragan*) songs and events from 2009 onwards. Much of the literature argues for the similarity between the emergence of hip-hop in the United States and Electro-Shaabi's emergence in Egypt. The M.C. who develops into a rapper is compared to the *Nabatshy*, whose role was to introduce the singers and interact with the crowd at street weddings. Additionally its DIY approach has been compared to hip hop initial stages. Electro-Shaabi music is often made at home, or with the help of parallel emerging DJs that reside within the neighbourhoods.

Yet, once Electro-Shaabi musicians reach a certain degree of fame they often record their albums with more prestigious producers, such as *100 Copies*. This is reflective of a trend that has occurred with Electro-Shaabi, which has – through its popularity – evolved and adapted to other settings, including middle and upper class contexts in which its performativity can be deemed superfluous. At the same time, there has been somewhat of a backlash against Electro-Shaabi. In a multitude of televised interviews, reporters and music critics alike question the rigour and quality of Electro-Shaabi music, calling it amateurish and obscene. In a TV interview music critic, Helmy Bakr, attacks Oka and Ortega (two of the most famous Electro-Shaabi musicians), mocking their lack of knowledge and taste in music, and telling them 'to go back to the streets where they belong'. In December 2015, Essam Amir, President of the Federation of Radio and Television, banned the airing of Electro-Shaabi music, deeming it derogatory and uncivilized.

The reason for this backlash reflects another reaction to the collective subject formed on the street in Egypt in recent decades. Take, for example, what Asef Bayat illustrates in *Life as Politics* on the importance of youth 'non-movements' in pre-revolutionary Egypt and Iran. He describes non-movements as movements that happen on an individual level, which do not rely on planned and legislative revolt, but that primarily rely on identification of the same habitus one affiliates with. It is expressed through style and everyday interests. He describes the collectivity of youth movements as one of "being" and not "doing" premising action on collective presence and not protest.^[23] The manoeuvrability, adaptation, and innovation that occurs within the Mahragan is indicative of

the formation of new street and youth politics capable of moving beyond their initial contexts.

Yet, though Electro-Shaabi still reserves its resonance in the street, its co-option is extremely important to note, especially given that this is a relatively new art form. In an article by Angie Balata issued by Ahrum Online in April 2015, the efforts of D-CAF (Downtown Contemporary Arts Festival), whose music curator is the owner of *100 Copies*, are highly criticised. The article states that, while the festival claims to be open to the public, Electro-Shaabi performers such as Oka and Ortega, are occluded from the general population, reserving an air of exclusivity only to those in the art scene. However, the novelty of Electro-Shaabi music within this scene is dwindling, which – according to the article – is indicated by vacant concert halls.

While independent/middle/upper-class musicians have taken up Electro-Shaabi music and remade it into something individualized, the mere migration of Electro-Shaabi music from one place to another is slippery. Though Oka and Ortega are examples of extreme appropriation, other Electro-Shaabi artists – such as Islam Chipsy and Amr Haha and El Sadat – have maintained their relationship with the street.^[24] Such developments are reflective of the ways in which movement migrates. Yes, music and dance migrate to bodies, we have seen that drastically in hip hop. However the effort to draw a fine line between migration and co-optation is extremely fraught and perhaps only lies in the intention and awareness of the people it has migrated to.

In Electro-Shaabi, music and dance constantly move through a multitude of contexts, from middle and upper class arts festivals, to local weddings and raves. This could be read in two ways. It could be signal of a fluid potential, in which a single movement might infiltrate other spaces, or a sign of the absorption of what was originally an underground expression into the mainstream, which flattens the radical nature of the movement itself and renders its gesticulations redundant. Electro-Shaabi dance has moved from the public sphere, which was its place of inception, to the private sphere – a shift that has forced the movers of this particular form of dance to reorganize and negotiate the acuteness of their gestures and the affective forces they occupy. In this trajectory, the utility of a language that allows the senses to be active and makes one's habitus visible, is the potential that dance has to offer. Once the habitus has been made visible, the potential is there to reconstruct new dance configurations in order to imagine new fluid architectures of society.

Conclusion

The importance of movement in a country that is politically and socially in motion is highlighted through the potential affective fissures the performances I have discussed create. Movement through one's predetermined subjugation provides loopholes of reinventing techniques of the body; however, change is upheld by the rigidity of the authoritarian habitus these gestures take place within, and migrate to. Both performances described in this essay offer glimpses of defiance and attempts of re-embodiment and re-inhabiting through the interpretation of dance as a series of potent gestures. One's habitus polices one's movement; yet only in movement can the individual find new possibilities of choreographies. Awareness of movement highlights the fictitious rigidity of the social structures that control us. For while these structures appear as archaic and stable, they are first and foremost premised on conditioning and learning, reflecting Norbert Elias's view of society as a 'dance formation' premised on a system of bodily transference.

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[1] The walls of Mohamed Mahmoud Street have become a counter narrative for almost all battles and events of the revolution. It exists performatively, often being updates in parallel to the ongoing battles this exact street is facing. To read more about the graffiti of Mohamed Mahmoud see Amira Taha and Christopher Combs 'Of Drama and Performance: Transformative Discourses of the Revolution', in *Translating Egypt's Revolution, The Language of Tahrir*, Edited By Samia Mehrez (AUC Press, 2012)

[2] Mead, George Herbert, and Andrew J. Reck. *Selected Writings: George Herbert Mead*. (Univ of Chicago Press, 1981), 140.

[3] Elias, Norbert. *The Civilizing Process* (Blackwell Publishing, 1994), 482 .

[4] Elias, Norbert. *Power and Civility* (Pantheon Books, 1982), 232.

[5] Elias uses the terms configuration and figuration interchangeably, ultimately rooting his sociological research in realizing the constant constellations of interdependencies forming society. He uses dance figurations in the *Postscript of Towards A Theory Of a Civilizing Process* to remedy the divide between 'society' and 'individual' – 'The image of the mobile figurations of interdependent people on a dance floor perhaps makes it easier to imagine states, cities, families and also capitalist, communist and feudal systems as figurations. By using this concept we can eliminate the antithesis, resisting finally on different values and ideals immanent today in the use of the words 'individual' and 'society'. (Elias 1994: 482).

[6] Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process* (Blackwell Publishing, 1994), p. 482.

[7] André Lepecki, 'Choreopolice and Choreopolitics: Or, the Task of the Dancer', *TDR/The Drama Review* 57, no. 4 (2013), p. 20.

[8] Marcel Mauss, 'Techniques of the Body', *Economy and Society* 2, no. 1 (1973), p. 75.

[9] Ibid, p. 73.

[10] Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 87.

[11] *Cairography*. Video. Directed by Dalia Naous and Kinda Hassan. 2012.

[12] Larisa Crunțeanu, 'The Power of "Co-" in Contemporary Dance', *Revista Arta*, (2016).

[13] Teresa Brennan, *Transmission of Affect*. (Cornell University Press, 2004), p. 10.

[14] Brian Massumi, 'The Autonomy of Affect', *Cultural Critique*, no. 31 (1995), p. 88.

[15] Ibid, p. 89

[16] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomonology of Perception*, translated by Colin Smith. (London: Routledge and K. Paul, 1962), p. 115.

[17] Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 72.

[18] Ibid, p. 89

[19] Ibid. p. 87.

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[22] ناهد, سمير. "'رقص المهرجانات'.. معركة للتباهي والبهجة." دوت مصر October 22, 2014. Accessed February 2, 2015. <http://old.dotmsr.com/ar/604/1/106360>.

[23] Bayat, Asef. *Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East*. (Stanford University Press, 2013.), 120.

[24] عثمان, هالة. "جمهورية المهرجانات الشعبية." معارف April 2, 2013. Accessed January 16, 2014. <http://ma3azef.com/جمهورية-المهرجانات-الشعبية/>.

TAGS

Street Art

Civil Society

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Salma Abdel Salam is a dancer and a researcher. She received her MA in Performance Studies from Tisch NYU and is currently the Program Assistant at ArteEast, while maintaining her dance practice in NYC. Prior to receiving her MA Salma worked in Egypt as a researcher with different scholars such as Professor Sherene El Seikaly, researching the Bread Riots of 1977, and Professor Hoda El Sadda, researching the development of neoliberalism in higher education institutions in Egypt. She also worked in non governmental organizations such as feminist organization Women and Memory Forum. In parallel, she has been training as a full-time dance student in Egypt since 2007.

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