Exploring a Creative Learning Process in Dance Education in Egypt

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Introduction

Inaugurated in 2002, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Egypt strives to be a center of excellence in the production and dissemination of knowledge as well as a place of cultural dialog and learning. More than a library, the mission of this public institution is to promote mutual respect between individuals while transmitting and spreading knowledge within a variety of fields from sciences to arts through a wide range of cultural outreach programs. Believing in the role of artistic education in enhancing social responsibility and cohesion as well as cultural dialog, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina considers that art education is an essential part of global education and a major asset in tackling social and cultural challenges in Egypt. Hence, it has been investing in cultural actions with an impact on the quality of educational programs. More specifically, its Arts Centre supports contemporary arts development providing training and opportunities for artists and young people. Accordingly, in February 2014, with the support of the European Delegation for Egypt and in partnership with the British Council in Cairo, it offered a ten-month pioneer dance education development project titled SEEDS. This project included an intense training program for dance instructors provided by professional and experienced dance educators brought in especially for this program.

SEEDS was opened to 20 Egypt-based applicants seeking to develop dance teaching as a vocational activity whether they were freelance contemporary dance artists involved in teaching practices, dance teachers working in public and private dance schools or within community settings, or art educators

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using body and movement as a tool in their cultural activities. Applicants were required to have some previous experience in dance transmission. They were asked to file an application form that included a description of their dance teaching experience, dance level, and so on and an interview to assess their motivation. Commitment to all sessions was required although exceptions could be made for those engaged in parallel professional activities.

From 2003 till 2009, as a cultural activist, while still majoring in performing arts and cultural anthropology, I was involved in specific performing arts development activities lead by the Arts Centre of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. Later, in 2012, I took part as a dance researcher in one of its major contemporary structuring dance projects. Two years later, based on my local fieldwork experience and knowledge and as an external expert in the facilitation of its new project—SEEDS—I was tasked by the Arts Centre to contribute and take part in its conception and coordination. By that time, I had completed my PhD degree in Anthropology of dance and was continuing my investigations of contemporary performing arts practices in the Arab world focusing on intercultural and interpersonal dynamics and their impact on shaping minds, empowering individuals and opening spaces for dialog and free expression. Interested in my academic background and applied research approach, the Arts Centre invited me to Cairo in October 2014, this time as a trainer, to conduct a three-day workshop within the SEEDS program. As my session was planned toward the end of the program, I thought it would be beneficial for the participants to keep on exploring the topic of dance transmission introducing a reflexive attitude toward their own teaching/learning experience. In order to reach a better understanding of the value of transmitting dance, I included within my workshop a specific creative tool developed by Belgian-Moroccan choreographer Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui I had worked with in Antwerp a few years before.

In this chapter, I present this workshop as a site-specific case study to analyze a transmission experience using a creative tool to make the participants reflect on their own practice. Thus, the methodology chosen to conduct the workshop was embedded in phenomenological concerns (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). In designing it, I focused on addressing the experience of the trainees in dance transmission from the first-person point of view and to emphasize their subjective experiences in order to highlight the meaning this conscious experience has aroused in their learning/teaching process and trigger a reflexive attitude. I factored out some features for further elaboration using the ethnographic approach of participatory observation since I took part in the experiment as a trainer/researcher. My analysis is also informed by recorded audio-visual data of the workshop and interviews with trainees to elicit their experience (Gore, 2012). Other information is drawn from my follow-up of the SEEDS proceedings, and many discussions with SEEDS trainers and external expert.

The aim of this chapter is to provide insight into how artistic creativity can be used as a tool to integrate theoretical knowledge simultaneously with dance practice. This borrowed tool generated embodied knowledge on the specific topic of transmission, which also enabled the participants to extend their under-

standing and challenge their assumptions. The reflexive educative dynamics produced during this time made this workshop a memorable learning process.

In order to better explain the context in which my workshop took place, I start by briefly presenting the SEEDS dance educational program and its curriculum before expanding on the topic. I then elaborate on the creative tool used and how it was integrated in the workshop. This qualitative research investigates the impacts of the multilayered teaching-learning process it generated on the trainees' understanding of dance transmission. It opens with a reflection on the concepts of migration and deterritorialization (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983) in relation to dance education and transmission. By doing so, it aims at further contributing to the discussion on the topic of arts-based and research-informed intercultural arts education.

Planting SEEDS: Transmission, Learning, Teaching of Dance

"Education sows not seeds in you, but makes your seeds grow."
Gibran Khalil Gibran

Training for Dance Educators in Egypt

In the mid-2000, enthusiasm for contemporary dance grew in Egypt consequently giving greater visibility to a new generation of contemporary dancers and contemporary dance audience. To respond to their enthusiasm and enhance the professionalization of the dance sector, non-institutional long-term contemporary dance educational programs were implemented in Cairo. The main ones were the Cairo Contemporary Dance Workshop Program (CCDWP) at Studio Emad Eddin from 2008 till 2011 and the Cairo Contemporary Dance Centre training program launched in 2010. Also, cultural centers opened dance classes and offered workshops for youth outside the capital of Cairo such as Rézodance in Alexandria and the Jesuit Cultural Centre in Al Menya in Upper Egypt. Amidst this, and despite the political turmoil in the wake of the 2011 revolution and its impact on the dance sector (Martin, 2015), a ten-month project for contemporary dance development titled "Raqs 3a Tayer" was led by the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in 2012. It aimed at improving the condition of the emergent contemporary dancers by bringing them a more structured framework to sustain their practice (Khoury, 2014). Through several activities, "Raqs 3al Tayer" raised awareness toward contemporary dance in decentralized areas by introducing dance workshops. It also contributed to the development of the artistic skills of 11 Egyptian contemporary dancers. In addition, it enriched their professional experience by inviting them to take part in an artistic residency and create a collective performance that toured in Egypt and later in France.

Building on the outcomes of this project and noting the absence of any formal training for dance educators in Egypt, the Arts Centre of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina continued fulfilling one of its missions related to artistic educa-

tion. Assuming that dance teachers are key players in the development of the sector, an emphasis was put on the function of dance as a vocational activity for artists as well as a recreational activity for civil society. This led to another initiative in 2014 entitled SEEDS. This specific project including free training of dance educators was concerned with dance transmission in the spirit of the previous project "Raqs 3al Tayer". It focused on dance education and targeted individuals who were already involved in transmitting dance to various audiences. It wished to provide them with consistent training to improve their transmission skills and expand their knowledge of the science of dance. With trained dance trainers, SEEDS was seeking to improve the dance teaching abilities and provide a more relevant dance education level for professional dancers, amateurs, youth or children. Ezzat Ismail, a dancer who recently opened one of the very few studios dedicated to contemporary dance in Egypt and one of the most enthusiastic trainees recalls:

> SEEDS had a great impact on me. When it came to teaching, I acquired different visions towards the same thing. (…) Before, I could not say that I was a dance teacher though I could transmit information. I understood that there is a difference between transmitting information and teaching in the sense that the latter is here to open doors. (…) SEEDS had an impact on me not only as a trainer but also as a dancer. It made me understand better what are the needs of my body in order to work (Ismail, 2014).

Through its participatory activities, the SEEDS project was also an opportunity to start introducing dance within the educational sphere in schools and local cultural organizations with educative missions and bring to the fore the beneficial role it can play, strengthening its true scope.

In Egypt or in other Arab countries, one can find public and private institutions such as universities and conservatoires that provide arts practice with a focus on visual arts, communication arts, theater and music. Also, when it comes to civil society endeavors, a number of Arab Non-Governmental Organizations are including art practices in their cultural activities as a way to enhance community engagement and action and wider accessibility. Within this perspective, some initiatives have even led to the publication of manuals as resources for arts educators (Charif, Hafeda, & Al Jabri, 2014; Rowe, 2003). However, arts education and access to the arts in general is not yet seen as a priority in any national educational strategy. Sustainable quality training for arts educators concerned with how to teach arts practices and not just how to practice arts, questioning methodological tools and pedagogical visions in an innovative manner are yet to be included in academic curriculums. Moreover, when it comes to dance education and despite a number of individuals providing dance classes in Egypt, the government has no interest in leading an official state certification with international standards that can guarantee the quality of teaching to ensure a safe dance practice and avoid physical injuries. Unless the dancer or physical educator has completed dance education programs abroad, mainly in Europe

(Martin, 2013b; Rowe, 2010) and out of personal interest and curiosity in dance pedagogy, they do not have the chance to enrich their theoretical and praxis-based dance education and develop the appropriate tools to convey it. They rely on their experiences of how they were taught or on their implicit learning (Reber, 1989) of dance. As Ismail (2014) contends, "I used to teach dance intuitively like how I like dance to be taught to me. I know how to dance and move but I was training and teaching people intuitively. I was improvising".

SEEDS was therefore considered to be a critically important and unique learning opportunity to address this imbalance in the dance sector in Egypt, even if it was not part of a formal study program. It was a starting point in improving the skills of dance educators and introducing the importance of the principle of long-life training within dance education, although to have sustainable impact within the political decisional sphere, implantation of much longer similar and incremental actions and further structured socio-economic support are required.

Practice-Based Theory Teaching and Application

The teaching of dance in the region was subject to European cultural hegemony (Rowe, 2010) especially through dance training institutes modeled on European conservatory training practices (such as the Cairo Opera House in Cairo/Egypt, Conservatoire National Choréographique in Rabat/Morocco, Higher Institute of Dramatic Art in Damascus/Syria, The Performing Arts Center in Amman/Jordan) and the international education of young dance artists from the region in Europe and North America (Martin, 2013a). Bearing in mind this situation, the SEEDS program content was grounded in post-colonial concerns and cross-cultural contemporary dance transmission issues. It focused on providing educational tools rather than teaching methods taking into account the specific teaching/learning context of the participants and cultural history specificities.

The Arts Centre invited Laurence Rondoni[1] a pedagogue and artistic director of descent-danse association (France) residing in Cairo and who had been actively involved in the development of the Egyptian contemporary dance scene, as an external expert to conceive SEEDS's ten month educational program. With my anthropological background and field knowledge, I also contributed to the project. Despite the short timeline and financial constraints, the program was conceived in a way to combine practice-based theoretical learning with dance teaching activities organized in collaboration with local cultural structures. Hence, the trainees had to immerse themselves in live transmission practice in order to integrate the knowledge presented.

The teaching activities under the supervision of Rondoni took place in a range of different locations: a dance studio, schools, educational and cultural organizations, an orphanage and reached more than 500 individuals. They were conducted in several cities including Cairo, Alexandria and Al Menya. Part of the trainees' tasks was to elaborate their content depending on where

or when the sessions were held and to whom they were addressed. Thus, they had to adapt their teaching to a variety of cultural contexts and audiences while simultaneously leading their activities. The practice-based theoretical classes were divided into five sessions and conducted by experienced dance educators.[2] During the first and last sessions on healthy dance, trainers elaborated on themes such as anatomy, injury prevention, somatic principles, psychology and nutrition. Two other sessions included mastering learning processes according to age and level of students, body functional analysis, movement fundamentals and body awareness. In addition, a special session[3] based on encounters with local and regional artists was organized to share reflections on the role of transmission and cultural heritage. It is within the framework of this particular session that I was asked to conduct a three-day workshop.

Connecting Body and Mind

From the beginning of the second training week, the trainees started integrating their on-going teaching activities, which included information for safe and effective dance practice. Cairo-born Canadian dance educator Karine Rathle who was heading this session, explains:

> The content of my course is based on researched international guidelines for safe practices in dance teaching, which is valid for all countries, and dance styles. (…) I had a very clear plan of what was to be transmitted, and I have adapted it to be delivered for this specific audience. The approach is about sharing principles that are applicable to all. Once the principles are understood by the participants, they can adapt them to all contexts. (Rathle, 2013)

One of the trainees, a fitness and ballet teacher said: "I modified my ballet class structure based on what I learned and I was very happy to hear from one of the injured students that she felt less pain at the end of the class." Many replaced their ballistic stretches with dynamic ones and gave more time to warm-ups. Others developed more acute body observation as evidenced in this statement by one of the trainees: "While in the streets, I started observing people's walk to see if I could recognize hypermobility." Other than greater body awareness, this program seems to have affected the trainees on a personal development level by giving them more confidence in what they did. Ismail confided:

> It helped me to be more honest with myself and to know where I am standing concerning what I know and can do and what I don't know and cannot do. I became more aware of the risks and dangers and what I need to improve. I became kind of equipped to deal with sometimes challenging teaching situations.

Overall, with the room it offered for practice, experimentation, discussion and observation, SEEDS was seen by the participants not only as physical training but also as a process connecting body and mind and where, as Ismail noted, "trainers weren't there to give us information but to share it with us".

Exploring Transmission Using a Creative Tool

This sharing-based approach underpinned my workshop. I sought to move away from any top-down pyramidal method. Indeed, critical essays and studies on arts education in Egypt, which focus mainly on visual arts areas such as drawing, painting, sculpture and ceramics (Alwan, 2006; Hamama, 2012; Kholeif, 2013; Shawky, 2015), reveal the "crisis" of institutional public arts education in Egypt. They point out the "stagnation of creativity within state institutional systems and the co-option of 'artistic authority' which arts education suffers from" (Davies, 2006). Most of the teaching methods use strict technical approaches that tend to dismiss new forms of pedagogical experimentation and knowledge (Kholeif, 2013). Hence, they contribute to restricting the learning process by not giving enough space for creativity and critical thinking. Although no in-depth research has yet been undertaken nor published on contemporary dance education methods in Egypt, and despite dance education particularities within the artistic realm, discussions held during a symposium on dance pedagogies in the Arab countries in 2010 (Khoury, Martin, & Rowe, 2012) showed that similar concerns are shared by dance educators.

During my session, I sought to build an experience together with the participants in order to generate a dynamic based on dialog and guidance around dance transmission. Since "transmission" was the topic of my workshop, I looked for a creative tool through which the trainees could simultaneously experience transmission yet also undertake a process of reflexivity. To ensure this was an authentic experience, I decided to look back into my personal stories as an observer–participant dance researcher.

Antwerp, Studio Bourla, 2006

Immersing Myself in Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui's Myth Creative Process

In 2006, as part of my doctoral research project in Anthropology of Dance, I undertook nine months of fieldwork with internationally renowned Belgian-Moroccan choreographer Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui. Interested in dance transmission issues, I was seeking to gain a better understanding of Cherkaoui's artistic approach through a pragmatic eye. I tried to identify and analyze the creative devices he was using in order to create his work. Thus, I arrived at Cherkaoui's studio in the Bourla Theatre based in Antwerp to follow the creative process of his theatrical dance piece *Myth*. *Myth* was staged in a borderline world and choreographically explored the possible connections between two poles: what we actually know about ourselves, and the intuitive and hidden motivations behind our gestures. It gathered a multidisciplinary group of 21 performers from various countries such as Belgium, France, Japan, Sweden, USA, Australia, Italia and Slovakia, and included a range of artistic skills including dance, theater, circus and music/singing.

"I am interested in the past of the past", stated Cherkaoui (2009). Indeed, looking at his first pieces (*D'avant* (2002), *In memoriam* (2004), *Tempus Fugit* (2004), *Loin* (2005), *Origine* (2008)) one can guess that time as memory or heritage and the physical traces it can leave on our bodies was a main area of focus in his earlier works. In this context, *Myth* was no exception. In order to explore this notion of inherited movement, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui developed a specific creative tool.

The Imitation Game: A Creative Tool for Producing Dance Sequences

In an interview I made with Cherkaoui back in 2006, he stated,

> We reproduce the gestures that our parents have taught us, how our mother moves (…). We start moving like her, or like our father or like people on TV. We are not enough aware of the fact that we are reproducing what they do because we still have the choice to choose how we want to move. Yet, this information certainly feeds us and it is up to us to perceive this and be aware of what it will become.

Like German choreographer Pina Bausch's emblematic creative method, Cherkaoui's was triggered by questions he asks the dancers. While Bausch asked the dancers to respond through embodied situations, Cherkaoui called for a narrative response in return and filmed the conversation. After the choreographer had chosen a short abstract, the dancers were asked to reconstitute as precisely as possible how the interviewee acted and what did he/she say in it in a kind of imitation process. Having embodied the behavior of the dancer, they then presented their reconstituted movement in duos or trios. With subtle work on details and musicality, the simultaneous re-enactment of the gestures became dance material. The initial unconscious behavioral patterns were then transformed into short dance sequences that were integrated in the dance piece at a later stage.

This device was clearly a creative tool that the choreographer employed to generate movement and create dance. Above all, it explored the notion of transmission in an original constructed way. Based on imitation, it placed the dancers in a challenging creative position. The different steps it included engaged them in many levels of transmission. I decided to borrow this technique and apply it to a difference context.

Cairo, Ezzat Ezzat Contemporary Dance Studio, 2014

A Reflexive Workshop on Dance Transmission

"Tell me and I'll forget.
Show me, and I may not remember.
Involve me, and I'll understand."
Proverb taken from Xun Zi

This reflexive workshop methodology had a clearly phenomenological dimension. Taking place within the final stage of the program, the workshop focused on the trainees' subjective experiences. Thus, it called upon a phenomenological approach as its aim was to stimulate self-critical thinking toward the trainees' own teaching activities by addressing the role of attention in the experience of the body, the spatiality of the body, the motility of the body, the body in speech and in temporality, and so on. Drawing from Merleau-Ponty's philosophy on phenomenology that considers existence as subjectivity (consciousness) inseparable from the body and the world—consciousness is embodied in the world and body is infused with consciousness—I sought to use Cherkaoui's creative device to experiment transmitting dance as a conscious experience in order to reflect on it in a more acute way. As Merleau-Ponty explains (1962, p. 408), the conscious experiences have a unique feature: we *experience* them, we live through them or perform them. This experiential or first-person feature—that of being experienced—is an essential part of the structure of conscious experience and with specific conditions, it can bring more awareness toward one's action.

There were nine participants, three women and six men; the other expected participants were rehearsing for a major dance event that was taking place during the same period. The workshop was divided into three interrelated moments. I attempted to build on what was discussed or experienced the day before. My goal was for the participants to achieve a comprehensive understanding of their dance transmission process, and an awareness of the fact that through their teaching process they were producing dance knowledge in addition to sharing it with others and not to deliver knowledge for its own sake. The way I conducted the workshop was grounded in a popular education method that emphasizes the dialogical model (Freire, 1970). It was also inspired by my anthropological research methodology that considers dance knowledge as a co-construction between researcher and dancer (Bakka & Gore, 2007). From an analogical viewpoint, it seemed to me that in this particular educational context, where the trainees have already accumulated experience in teaching, their knowledge could be sharpened through the co-educative dynamic emerging from the interaction between them and myself.

Unlike other SEEDS workshops where communication had to be in English, I conducted my workshop in Arabic, which is the language the trainees would normally teach in. I could feel they were more at ease while communicating as they could express their thoughts directly without the need for translation. Within post-colonial times and search for cultural autonomy, the linguistic issue is of extreme importance as it is an essential component in cultural appropriation of knowledge and power balance dynamics. Moreover, it broadened the discussion on which local terminologies to use, translate or create when teaching dance. In fact, the workshop started by discussion about the most appropriate translation of the word "transmission" in Arabic and its cultural implications. It then moved onto a constructive dialog including the trainees' viewpoints on the different meanings of transmission and how to identify it

as such. The trainees were subsequently asked to write down their personal stories of how they were taught to dance. Writing was used in this section of the workshop as a "mode of learning" (Emig, 1977). The purpose of this writing was to clearly reflect on their personal experience. When I informed them that we would not read the texts out loud many were disappointed and they wondered why they had to complete this task. I then explained the purpose of such an exercise.

Exploring Transmission Modalities

On the second day, I introduced the "imitation game". I took each trainee separately to another room and told them that I would ask a question and film them answering it without allowing time for preparing their response. All were enthusiastic and patient enough not to ask for more clarification. The question was about the most significant dance moment they experienced so far. The nine resulting stories were approximately five to ten minutes long each. While some shared how they were first introduced to dance, others recalled specific situations that were sometimes not directly related to dance, but to an embodied experience that left an impact on them. Through these narratives, each one expressed and reproduced instinctively incorporated or bodily actions (Connerton, 1989). These were spontaneous as well as conditioned movements derived from a reflexes' network (Barba, 1995), a system of interconnected unconscious behavioral patterns coming from a transmitted or a culturally learned situation (their education, social and artistic background, and so on). From their gaze and their speech tempo, it was clear that they were going through a cognitive re-memorization process. The camera recorded the conversation, enabling the capture of the action at a moment of time. Afterwards, I divided the trainees into two groups of four and five participants each and asked them first to watch and listen to their stories, then to choose a very short section and begin working on the re-enactment of the selected parts and reproduce very closely what was said and done as mimics, expression and gestures.

Generating an Embodied Knowledge as a Way for Learning

During this learning process, the trainees accomplished four actions: they selected what was meaningful for them to re-enact, they repeatedly watched themselves talking and moving to learn the movements and speech and their rhythms—some even wrote down exactly what they said—and they rehearsed in groups the different parts. Each one of these steps added a layer to the transmission/learning process. The trainees were bringing particular attention to what the interviewee was doing in the video. In doing so, this visualization was stimulating their sensorial and motor functions in such a way that they would react and create from this image an action-image (Deleuze, 1994), that is, an image that can be substituted to an active behavior to which one can react to (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1 Individual interview with Shereen Hegazy

All were becoming familiar with the others' gestures and words and gaining awareness of their own recording in a reflexive way. In each group, the rehearsing part consisted of each one incorporating the gestures and words of the others, including his own. Needless to say that it was the part they enjoyed the most. On an individual level, it challenged their memory and their observational capacities. On a collective level, it sharpened their level of listening to each other and working as a team (Fig. 2).

Throughout this learning process, copying the actions of the other was not only about transmitting information but a discovery journey of the unconscious part of oneself and the others. As Tim Ingold (1996) put it, the learning process "involves a mixture of imitation and improvisation: indeed these might better be understood as two sides of the same coin. Copying is imitative, insofar as it takes place under guidance; it is improvisatory, insofar as the knowledge it generates is knowledge that novices discover for themselves" (p. 179). The attentive engagement (Ingold, 2001) made them aware of the variety of transmission modalities: observation, inscription, transcription, embodiment and re-enactment. They went through a cognitive process searching for the most appropriate tool to enhance their creativity. As Nadine Emile, one of the trainees, pointed out at the end of the session: "I had to develop many strategies to see what the best one is for me to achieve this task and at the same time what is the best one for the group I was working with."

When it was time to present the short works, the collective performances highlighted how the more the trainees tried to do the same thing, the more their individual interpretation was accentuated. Exploring the differences and similarities activated a process of singularization, which is at the core of any form of construction of identity (Deleuze, 1994). It triggered a reflection on the relationship between production and creation, imitation and originality (Fig. 3).

Fig. 2 Team work

Fig. 3 Collective re-enactment of words and gestures

For Shereen Hegazy, trainer and dance artist, who participated in the SEEDS program, transmission includes everything around the dance. It is the experience of working with someone, be him/her from another culture and or age, who is transmitting something to me but through him/herself. So I do not take the information only but the whole identity with it. Thus, involving the trainees using this creative device brought a better understanding of transmission as a complex relational process that engages the educator as much as the learner and both their identities as in cultural background, personalities, intentions, capacities to learn, teaching skills, and so on, as well as the surrounding

field (time-space frame). It was a phenomenological experience where both participants are not only experiencing but also experienced by one another.

This reflexive process helped in creating a distance with the trainees' own ways of transmitting. Hence, the last session was dedicated to observing some transmission situations recorded during their teaching activities and discussing how they were taught with a critical eye.

Conclusion

This imitation game was a way for them to proceed from the first-person point of view. Even if characterizing an experience at the time one is performing it is not evident, the creative device was introducing a reflexive attitude on behalf of the participants in a form of transmission experience as they were experiencing it. It was an active experiment with specific tasks to arouse consciousness and attention on transmission modalities and meanings. And it is in that sense, that their practice had a phenomenological dimension. The trainees went through several stages. They described a type of experience just as they found it in their own (past) experience, what Merleau-Ponty calls "pure description of lived experience". They explored one interpretation of this past experience through the narration and gestures interpreted within a specific context—the imitation game. They went through a sharper analysis process of the form of the type of teaching experiences they were practicing.

The use of this creative device engaged the trainees fully in a cognitive process in relation to their own dance knowledge transmission (Felföldi, 2002). Other than sharing their narratives, these dance educators explored, by being in action, their own embodied knowledge. Throughout this particular transmission process, they were given a tool to sharpen their awareness toward their own body language and what it can convey beyond words. To respond to the strict task they were given, they put into practice their creative skills, rehearsed and found their own working schemes. Indeed, the emphasis was on the creative process the choreographic tool was generating in relation to dance transmission rather than the exact achievement of the imitation task.

Within this specific experience, arts (dance) and education findings were combined to enhance the arts learning-teaching abilities of the trainees. A choreographic tool was used for an educative purpose. Not only was it projected in time and space, it was taken out of its initial function to serve another one, from the territory of arts to the one of education. This move meant a migration of knowledge from one field to another, questioning intercultural understandings. Whereas the occurring deterritorialization (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983) would have involved detaching this tool completely from its context of signification, it was instead adapted here to the specific context. Further investigation and research in similar "migration" experiences in Egypt and Arab middle-eastern countries would definitely provide more elements for a better understanding of arts-based and research-informed intercultural arts education.

Notes

1. Laurence Rondoni is a dance professional and educator who collaborated with one of the major Egyptian contemporary dance choreographers, Mohamed Shafik, before being invited in 2008 by Studio Emad Eddin to curate the CCDWP dance training program in Cairo. The Bibliotheca Alexandrina collaborated with her as the external dance expert for the "Raqs 3al Tayer" project in 2011.
2. Karine Rathle, dance educator, MSc degree in Dance Science from Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance—London; Erin Sanchez, MSc in Dance Science from Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, member of the International Association for Dance Medicine and Science, certified Safe and Effective Dance Practice trainer; Nathalie Schulmann, instructor for the State Teaching Dance Diploma at the National Dance Centre in France; Sherry Sable, dance educator and trainer in dance for children at the National Dance Center (CND) in Paris.
3. This session included four short workshops with Cairo Opera Singer and teacher Mohamed Abul Kheir, Baladi dance artist from Lebanon Alexandre Paulikevitch, theater director of Al Warsha Theatre Group, Hassan El Geretly and myself.

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