

The 1919 Revolution in the Eyes of Modern and Contemporary Egyptian Theatre Directors: A Reflection of a Generation Gap



The 1919 Revolution in the Eyes of Modern and Contemporary Egyptian Theatre Directors: A Reflection of a Generation Gap By Hadia abd el-fattah Ahmed

Arab Stages, Volume 7 (Fall, 2017) ©2017 by Martin E. Segal Theatre Center Publications

Historical Background:

In 1919, after thirty years of European occupation, the Egyptians decided to revolt against their suppressors: the British military forces. The spark started immediately after the British expelled the Egyptian national leader Saad Zaghloul, and his companions Mohammed Mahmuod, Ismail Sedki Basha and Hamad El-Basel from Egypt. When the group demanded an Egyptian representation at the Versailles Conference to defend Egypt's right to be an independent national state, the British arrested and sent them to Malta on 9 March 1919. From that day until late April 1919, Egypt witnessed a nationwide upheaval—encouraged by the two official parties' members that dominated Egypt at that time, *Al-Hezib Al-watany* (The National Party)[\[1\]](#) and *Al-Wafd* (The Delegation Party).[\[2\]](#)

Many consecutive demonstrations, initiated by law school students, covered Cairo's streets. As workers, lawyers, Egyptian women and artists followed, the British forces retreated from their decision. They allowed Zaghoul and his companions to return home and represent Egypt at the Versailles Conference. Saad Zaghoul was considered the official spokesman of the revolutionaries and the two major national parties at that time, Al-Wafd and Al- Hezib Al-watany. As a result, a long series of evasive negotiations took place between Zaghoul and the British occupiers. The main two enquires during those negotiations were giving Egypt an absolute independence and letting the Egyptians form their own constitution.

A quick glance tells us who was the real winner on these debates. Of course, the winner was the British forces. During such negotiations, the British continued arresting the active revolutionaries, the youth in particular, while keeping the others calm until the politicians reached the end of their conversations. Not to mention, the golden opportunity that the British had as they extended their oppressive laws, for instance the Anti-Demonstration Law and the Martial Law[3], both issued in 1914 during World War I, to suppress the resistant voices whether from the public or from the journalists and artists. Such facts are documented in many books and are very well-known among Egyptian intellectuals, students and historians. Here a question arises: how could the Egyptians accept such a position? They suffered a lot under the British authority's domination, particularly, during the years of World War I.

Such an enigma could be solved by unfolding the untold history. In 31 August 1914, only twenty-seven days after the United Kingdom's decision to join World War I, wild protests led by workers started in Alexandria. And in less than five days the angry protests were echoed in Cairo. During the war, being in a desperate need for reinforcements, the British demanded facilities, workers, food and cotton to fortify themselves from Egypt.[4] In return they promised the Egyptians that after the war ended, Egypt would enjoy its independence. The Egyptians were forced to fulfill all the British requests. As a result, the Egyptians suffered from a deterioration in all aspects of their economy, especially the workers and peasants.



The Revolution of 1919. Photo: Zeinab Mohamed

As a result, a tidal wave of demonstrations was set off by unemployed workers, then supported by the masses. Their main demands were toppling the regime headed by the British forces and the Egyptian government. At that time, the workers were complaining a good deal about the bad conditions that they were living in. Therefore, during their protests they were shouting "We are hungry, we are hungry, overthrow the government, down with injustice, down with the British." The few historians who mentioned such incidents,[5] unanimously agreed on the fact that these demonstrations were not organized under a certain leadership. They were thoroughly the angry voice of the crowd.

Thus, the British forces could crush them quickly, arresting a large number of the demonstrators, besides imposing, in cooperation with the Egyptian government, a siege and a blackout over this movement, in order to prevent any further reactions among the Egyptians.[6] As a consequence, the official records rarely mentioned this movement. Even after the English occupation had finished, no one paid attention to the importance of underlining these incidents and including them in the educational courses in schools. Most probably, the only thing that saved the 1919 Revolution documents from facing the same destiny as the uprising was the regulations set forth against it. However, after the 1919 Revolution incidents very few of the Egyptian writers dared talking about it in an artistic or literal work, either after it had finished or in our contemporary times.[7]

Back to the future, specifically in January 2011, a similar outburst happened in Egypt, led by the youth and the public, at least at the very beginnings of it. Then, another parties interfered like the Muslim brotherhood party, the remnants of the old regime, etc. As a result, the 2011 Revolution started to take another route. Perhaps because of that, in the aftermath of the 2011 Revolution, some Egyptian directors, dramatists and novelists thought about drawing a comparison between what happened in 1919 and 2011. Or in other words, they exploited the 1919 Revolution as a cover to show their own perspective towards what has been going on in Egypt since the insurgence of 2011. Why has such a thing happened?

Actually, after reviewing many theatre records,[8] perhaps it's safe to say that before 2011 no one succeeded in putting a performance on stage about the 1919 Revolution in Egypt. Such a situation during the period from 1910 through the 1920s could be explained by the censorship laws imposed by both the British military forces of occupation and the Egyptian executive authority, especially after the Revolution broke out. They imposed a ban on handling any sort of political issues on stage or even uttering the words of freedom and independence.

Hence, during the first half of the 20th century, some of the Egyptian directors tended to make an actor or a public figure recite some poems or speeches before or during the intermissions of the plays to raise the audience emotions towards a certain issue. However, in order to evade censorship, they relied on presenting translated or historical plays that could refer to, in an indirect way, the issue that they wanted to discuss. Some of these techniques were used again during and after the 60s despite Egypt gaining its independence. That Egypt suffered again from another sort of oppression.

This time the suppression stemmed from the totalitarian Egyptian regimes which governed Egypt starting from the term of Abdel-Naser, then followed by Al-Sadat and Mubarak. They knew that theatre has its political effects, therefore they surrounded not only theatre artists but also all kinds of mass media. They put them under their control to be sure that they could suppress any kinds of criticizing voices. As a result, since 1955, the year in which the Censorship law was issued, until now no one has dared to criticize Egypt rulers and their governments in a direct way.

Instead, the Egyptian directors and playwrights kept their style of writing in an indirect way to express their opinions. As a result, many of the plays were shaped as an allegory or a metaphor of what was going on in Egypt then. Perhaps Naguib Surur and Salah Abdel Sabour's [9] plays could be taken as an ideal example of this. This situation continued until the Revolution of January 25th occurred. Then a new theatrical form, which was rarely used in the Egyptian theatre, started to be used widely. It is the verbatim or documentary theatre. [10] Some critics considered it as one of the "democratic formula" gains that the Egyptian directors acquired after 2011 Revolution. It had been adopted as the fundamental medium to convey the ecstatic and fevered news about the revolution and to ensure the dissemination of real news and revolutionary actions which took place then in Tahrir Squar. Finally, such theatre disclosed what was not allowed to be mentioned in the official media. [11]



Laila' Soliman's *No Time for Art*, Ljubliana, 2011. Photo: Gunmar Lisch

At that time, a long series of what has been called verbatim theatre took place, whether by alternative theatres or by the state-funded theatres. Most of these performances were a result of improvisation and collective writing workshops. And what was very remarkable in all the documentary plays presented then was that the real criticizing voices came from the fringe, like Laila Soliman's *No time for Art; part 1, 2 & 3* in which she questioned the actual role of all the parties that shaped the revolutionary scene, especially the role of the military forces and Mubarak's old regime.

The series of performances which Laila Soliman, in particular, presented from 2011 until 2013 came as

agit-prop shows to indicate that the revolution was not over yet. But since 2014, Laila went back to cover her point of view with some layers that could give her the right to stage her pieces without fear. Most probably for that reason she decided to delve into Egyptian history, instead of talking directly about what is going on, to find reasons for the current times. This she did in order to let herself and the audience to recall what has happened since the outbreak of the 2011 Revolution.

A similar approach was adopted by Ahmed Ismail, who presented, in 2011, a performance called *Hekayat Alnas Fi Thawret 1919* (People's Tales in 1919). However, as the reader can notice from the performance's date, it had been done immediately after the Revolution. So why did Ismail decide not to follow his counterparts among Egyptian directors and talk directly about what was going on in Tahrir Square? Ismail adapted the 1919 Revolution as the central topic of his performance. Before making a final judgement, it is better to analyze the two performances: *Whims of Freedom* by Laila Soliman and *Hekayat Alnas Fi Thawret 1919* to enable the readers to have a close insight into them.

Hawa Al-Horreya (Whims of Freedom):

Laila staged her multimedia performance *Hawa Al-Horreya (Whims of Freedom)* in 2014, in an unpopular Egyptian centre for arts called *Makan (A Place)*, located in downtown Cairo, very close to Tahrir Square. The irony here stems from the street name of the centre where Laila's piece was set. It is 1st Saad Zaghloul Street. This is separated from Zaghloul Square and his grave by only four or five meters if not less than that, as if Zaghloul would stand there as a witness to what had happened and to what Soliman was about to discuss. Entering from its old door, the audience felt like they were stepping into an old apartment or to be more precise, into a desolate governmental office.



Entrance to the Makan Performance Space. Photo: Foursquare

In a narrow and barely furnished room, a wooden lectern and an armless chair were set besides two cardboard boxes to hold old scraps of papers and documents. Also, an old wooden shelf holding some books and a gramophone with records used to play old songs were there. Lastly, the floor was covered by an old and worn shabby red carpet. The only places to sit, or to stand on, were some wooden seats on the left side of the apartment where also a raised balcony was located. That balcony could be reached by a steel ladder which offered the audience a good view of the performance.



Interior, Makan Performance Space. Photo: Foursquare

Choosing a set and a location like that was done deliberately. First of all, to make a connection between the past and the present which was the main target of the performance. Secondly, to picture the post-dramatic structure of the piece which consists of three parallel interwoven voices. One of them was the slides or pictures which were shown on the rear cracked wall behind the performers, as if those old walls and pictures represented the voice of the documented historical past. The other two voices were, first, a perplexed voice of a female Egyptian scholar who was eager to understand the connection between the circumstances that led to 1914 and 1919 Revolutions and what happened to the Egyptians in 2011, and second, the voice of a female Syrian refugee who lives in Egypt and is concerned also about the similarities between her position as a refugee in 2011 and the thousands of refugees who came to Egypt in the advent of the last century before 1919.



السيدة منيرة الهدية

Munira al-Mahdiya. Photo: Isaac Bader

In order to show the similarities between the two pictures of what happened in the past (1914-1919) and the present (2011-2013), and in an attempt to demonstrate an alternative reading of the history or what Laila called "the popular history"[\[12\]](#) and its incidents, Soliman concentrated first of all on the stories of the two female Egyptian singers Mounira El Mahdeya[\[13\]](#) and Naeema Al Masriah. Whilst Mounira El Mahdeya documented most in her heydays and by herself, Naeema Al Masriah did the opposite. Despite being very successful at her time and as a result of her ignorance about the importance of boosting her relations with the press in order to have a full coverage of her career, Naeema fell out of the historical documents. This example could help to explain in general how the history itself is written.

As many writers have stated, documenting history is a very controversial process and it depends on various factors, such as who wrote it, when and under what sort of political and social circumstances, the way by which the historical events are organized and narrated, etc. All these factors have a great effect on the written materials or even the oral anecdotes that had been left to us and known as history. [14] The Syrian actress also asserted such an idea when she said that despite what Bashar Al-Asad, the President of Syria, is doing nowadays in his massacres against the Syrians, some people still ask her "Does Bashar really kill people?" What would happen in the future if Bashar killed all his objectors and ordered his followers to write the history of what had happened?

Certainly, the people will then believe only the official written books. Hence, people should be more aware about the way they receive the past and, of course, how they read the present. Actually, in an account of the way the history is documented, and to make this notion more impressive, the director revealed the most painful fact occurred in 1919 and that was concealed until then just before the end of the performance: some incidents of rape took place in two or three Egyptian villages.

Secondly, the position of these two singers as independent owners of artistic companies refers to the role of Egyptian women in the 1919 Revolution. For the first time, on March 16th, more than 300 Egyptian women participated in the 1919 demonstrations to show their condemnation of the brutalities of the British soldiers against the young Egyptian protestors. All of those women belonged to respected and wealthy families. [15] Such information implies the fact that what happened in 1919 was very well-organized, to the contrary of what had happened in 1914. Returning to the future, this could be likened to the difference between what had happened in January 2011 and then in June 2013. In 2011 varied societal strata burst forth without an agreement on what would happen, whether during their sit-in in Tahrir Square or after Mubarak's stepping down.

The same idea could be traced in the director's choices of the songs which punctuated all the performance. All the selected songs were old and most of them were sung originally by Al Masriah or El Mahdeya and composed by Sayed Darwish; like the "*Salma Ya Salama*" song (It's Saved, O, Salama). And some other songs were composed and also sung by Darwish like "*Bardiun ya Wingate*" (Excuse us, O, Wingate). During the performance, some of these songs were sung live by the Syrian actress. The remaining songs were presented through the old gramophone. The big surprise here stems from the fact that most of these songs had been sung not only from 1914 to 1919, but also by the revolutionists during the 2011 Revolution. One expects to find all the songs inextricably interwoven with the incidents of 1919 period, but when the listener compares them to what was happening before and during 2011, it draws his attention to the obvious similarity between the past and the present. Perhaps the only difference is that in the past the songs were directed to the occupiers but in the present, they were directed primarily to Mubarak and his assistants.



Laila Soliman's *Whims of Freedom*, Cairo, 2017. Photo: Laila Woliman

Finally, to reinforce the link between the past and the present, Soliman presented two more things. Both of them highlight Soliman's angry perspective towards the authorities' mistreatment of the young protestors in 2011, whether they were men or women. At first, Soliman referred to it only implicitly, when the Syrian actress talked about the poem written by Hafez Ibrahim called *Kharag Al-Ghawani Yahtagegna* (Ladies went out to protest). The poem narrates what happened to the Egyptian women when they joined the 1919 demonstrations. A number of the British soldiers imposed a siege on them with swords, and they had to stand in the heat of the sun for more than two hours before being released.

Concerning that, with heavy sarcasm, the Egyptian actress recited the sentence of the poem which described this incident by saying "O, proud soldiers you should be happy with your victory on those women and forcing them into submission."[\[16\]](#) The bitterness that the actress showed performing this sentence indicated the shock that people felt when some of the female protestors were arrested and jailed after the 2011 Revolution broke out.



Laila Soliman's *Whims of Freedom*, Cairo, 2017. Photo: Laila Woliman

The other indication came at the end of the performance when the Egyptian actress recited the articles of the Anti-Demonstration Law and the Martial Law which were issued in 1914 by the British invaders. These laws are still in effect today, one hundred years later, and some of the young protestors were sent to the prison because of those laws, especially after 2013. In this way, the director presented her alternative point of view towards what happened in the past and the present revolutions. Only the well-organized parties could succeed and impose their goals. The other trials were only a sort of uprising though they expressed the real impulses of the crowd.

Hekayat Alnas Fi Thawret 1919 (People's Tales in 1919):

This performance, directed by Ahmed Ismail and staged in 2011, appeared immediately after the Revolution which means the political scene was still confused. Ismail's piece was a result of a collective writing workshop held just before 2011. When the Revolution broke out he adjusted its final shape to connect between the past and the present or in other words to refer to the current situation after Mubarak and his regime stepped down. Depending only on a bare stage, the actors moved from one location to another by adding a portable piece of furniture and changed their characters by using a new piece of accessory or cloth. Through the whole piece, the director introduced both the preliminaries that led to the events and incidents of both 1919 and 2011 Revolution. It was a chronological narration to the 1919 Revolution phases, with the intervention of dramatic scenes as a completion to the narration and

punctuated by songs composed and sung by Sayed Darwish during the 1919 Revolution.

Ismail exploited the loose construction of his piece, to move from one thread to another smoothly without effort. Starting his piece with a conviction of the British occupation and its crimes, especially those that happened during the 1919 Revolution, like the raping accidents and shooting defenseless and unarmed citizens. Then accusingly pointing to Egypt rulers, executive governmental authorities and the elite strata, Ismail put together the reasons that led to the economic deterioration that resulted in the 1919 Revolution and the key factors that led to the 2011 Revolution. Of course, with perhaps too much pride Ismail did not forget to assert the unbreakable unity that has existed between the Christians and the Muslims despite of the recurring attempts done by the invaders to destroy it, in addition to displaying the roles of the famous parties who participated in the 1919 Revolution; Women, students and artists for instance.

Finally, Ismail addressed a question referring in an indirect way to his doubts about the nature of the 1919 Revolution. Was it really popular as many historians documented it or it was a result of the secret association which had been created by AdbelRahman Fahmi (1870-1946),[\[17\]](#) and his colleagues? Ismail mentioned the fact that Zaghloul was not any sorts of political activist before 1919.[\[18\]](#) Rather he was one of the higher government members. Furthermore, Zaghloul was one of the officers who agreed to apply the Publications Censorship Law. Ismail's wondering about this question is suggested when an actress asks "Which one makes the other? Does the revolution make its leader or does the leader make the revolution?"

Up to this point, it is obvious that both Ismail and Laila Soliman share similar perspectives about the 1919 Revolution. Still, there are two main differences between the two pieces. The first one is that Ismail's piece was presented while the varied opposed parties (revolutionary youth, Muslims brotherhood, old regime's remnants, even the traditional older people) were still fighting with each other. Hence in his attempt to shape the performance message, Ismail inserted an imaginary scene between the two leaders Muhammed Farid and Saad Zaghloul to say that both had the same target—bringing back to Egypt its stolen freedom. Thus, both of them are a sort of completion to each other in spite of adapting different methods. The whole piece and this scene, in particular, was a kind of invitation to unify the efforts of the two contradictory parties instead of being apart from each other, referring to the opposed parties in 2011.

In order to understand Ismail's piece the audience should know that in the past the key difference between the National Party and Al-Wafd Party is that the first one was established by Mostafa Kamel (1874-1908) and his friends, especially Muhammed Farid, most of them under the age of 40. The later one was established later than the first one by wealthy farms owners and high-ranking officers of an older generation who had mutual financial interests with the British occupiers.[\[19\]](#) Hence, there was a huge gap between them in the national battle against the occupation.[\[20\]](#) The National Party was very sharp, jealous and enthusiastic in its speeches and reactions, whilst The Wafd Party was more rational and cautious. Actually, The Wafd Party was willing to agree on more concessions as long as the Egyptian emancipation from the yoke of occupation was the result, no matter how long it would take.

Forming a new unified party, the Al-Wafd Party, after 1919 from both the National Party and previous members of The Party of the Nation, inspired Ismail to call for the same goal in 2011. The opposed parties should find an equation to gather both the revolutionary youth and the older people whether they belonged to the public or the national remnants of the old regime. So instead of fighting with each other, it is better to sit together in order to decide what to do next. Such an idea disappeared from Laila

Soliman's piece simply because she staged it after 2013 which means the political scene was settled down, ended by the Military seizing power in a coup.

The second basic difference between the two pieces results from the tone of voice that the audience can sense in every single moment of the two pieces. Apparently, Ismail's performance represents the wisdom of elderly people, those who learned from the past to be careful before criticizing anything directly. They use political hints to shape their messages or what they want to say. For instance, the author inserted a poem written by Bayram al-Tunsi (1893-1961) starting by saying that no one can interfere to stop the compulsory drafting of the Egyptian workers; Who would dare to do that after the Military authority tied their hands? Quoting such a phrase shows a sort of conviction about the role played by the Egyptian executive authority to help the British occupiers in the past.

Connecting this hint with the recent situation during the 2011 Revolution, it could be interpreted as blaming of the Military forces that declared at the beginning of the Revolution incidents that they would take a neutral position only, which means they decided not to interfere to stop what Mubarak might do at any time. But later incidents proved their loyalty to the old regime. On the contrary, Laila Soliman, the young director, in her piece adopted a clearly sarcastic tone and dared to criticize the Military actions, especially towards the revolutionary young people whether during the Revolutionary incidents or afterward when they seized power in 2013. Hence, Soliman ended her piece with a recitation of the Anti Demonstration law's articles which were reused harshly against the young political opponents after 2011 Revolution!

The irony here stems from the comparison between Ismail and Soliman's message and attitude towards what happened in 2011. It represents the same gap that occurred between the youth and the older people in 1919. When the National Party agreed to make a coalition with Saad Zaghloul's party they merged the two parties under the name of "Al-Wafd Party." From the beginning, it was obvious there was a difference between the way the two parties' members were talking. Since the youth had never been satisfied with the notion of prolonged negotiations while they knew that they were demanding their fair rights, not to mention their resentment towards the unjust compromises that the older people usually accepted. They had to choose between two destinies; to integrate themselves with the older people or to isolate themselves whether by shutting their mouths or by immigrating to a foreign country.

The same destiny has faced the 2011 revolutionary young people. They had only two choices. The first one was to kneel before the older people or regime to reach a compromise about how things should be managed. Many of the surviving young people preferred this solution which could be considered as a response to the Ismail perspective. The second choice was to oppose what has happened. In this case, they had to immigrate, as many of them have done already or to live in Egypt with their bitterness, mocking what has happened, rethinking and analyzing the mistakes they made. And this is exactly what Laila Soliman represented in her piece. It has a sarcastic and analytical tone of voice because of the discovered similarity between the past and the present.

Most probably the destiny of the two pieces could inform the reader of the difficulty of adopting the second choice. While Ismail's rational piece found a welcoming audience for about a month and sympathetic ears from the state-funded theatres, the piece by Soliman had to search for an alternative place where to be seen only for a week or maybe less.

Hadia abd el-fattah Ahmed is a professor of the Faculty of Arts, Helwan University, Cairo. She has been a visiting scholar at the Segal Center of the City University of New York. She has directed *The Bus Stop* by Nehad Gad, *The Princess is waiting* by Salah Abdel-Saboour, *The Crucible* by Arthur Millar, *Al-Kateb Fi Shahr Al-Assal* or *The Playwright in the Honey moon* by Ali Salem, among others. Her study *The Role of Women in Developing Theatre Directing in Egypt: A Semiotic Study of Egyptian Women Directors from 1990 until 2009* was published by the University of Helwan and by the Egyptian The Supreme Council of Culture in 2012.

Footnotes:

[1] Was established by Moustafa Kamel, the Egyptian nationalist leader, in 1907. After his death Muhammed Farid (1868-1919) was elected as a successor to Kamel in the party's leadership. See Abd al-Ra?m?n Al-Rafi, "Muh?mmad Far?d: ramz al-ikhl?s ?wa-al-tad???yah : t?r?kh Mis? al-qawm? min sanat 1908 ilá sanat 1919". (Cairo, D?r al-Ma??rif, 1984), 33-35.

[2] In 1918 after meeting Sir Francis Reginald Wingate, the British Higher Commissioner in Egypt, Zaghoul and his companions decided to form this party to allow them a legitimate representation of the Egyptian people in their struggle to gain their independence.

[3] See AbdelRahman AlRafi, "Thawrat 1919: t?r?kh Mis? al-qawm? min sanat 1914 ilá sanat 1921", 3rd edition. (Cairo, Mu?assasat D?r al-Sha?b, 1968).

[4] For more details about the deteriorated living conditions that the Egyptian suffered at that time see also Ellis Goldberg, "Peasants in Revolt - Egypt 1919," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 2, (May 1992), 261-280.

[5] Perhaps "*The Egyptian Gazettes*" is the only Egyptian newspaper that could be found by our historians and talked about those incidents. See the book mentioned below.

[6] Latifa Salem, "*Masr fi Alharb Alalamya Alola 1914-1918*" [Egypt during World War I 1914-1918], (Cairo, al-Hay?ah al-Mis??yah al-??mmah lil-Kit?b, 1984), 301.

[7] See Mostafa Baioumy, "*Saad Zaghoul Fi Al-Adab Al-Masry*" [Saad Zaghoul in the Egyptian Literature], (Cairo, Dar Al-Helal, No. 644, August 2004).

[8] See "*selselt Tawtheque Al-Towrath Al-Masrahi*" [The Series of Egypt Theatrical Heritage Documentation], seasons from 1919 to 1920, 1921, 1922, until 2006. This series is issued by The National Centre for Theatre, Music and Folklore. Ramsis Awad, "*Maws??at al-masrah ?al-Mis?? al-bibliy?jr?f?yah, 1900-1930*" [Bibliographical Encyclopedia of the Egyptian Theatre from 1900 to 1930], (Cairo, Al-Hay?ah al-Mis??yah Al-??mmah lil-Kit?b, 1983).

[9] (1931-81) one of the most prominent Egyptian playwrights in the 60s, and a pioneer in of modern Arabic poetry.

[10] The first two or three Egyptian plays that could be classified as documentary plays are the plays that had been written during the first decade of the twentieth century by Hassan Marey, an Egyptian actor,

journalist and a theatrical manager, both dealt with incidents that happened then. The first was the "Denshawai" accident, which occurred in 1906 during the period of the British occupation. The playwright wrote it around a month after the accident. The second play was "Al-Azhar wa qadyet Hamada Pasha" [Al-Azhar and the Hamada Pasha Case]. It was written in 1909. It was about a sit-in and strike that had been held by the Azhar students in 1909. And both of them got a refusal to be presented from the authorities. See Sayed Ali Ismail, *Bedayet Al-Masrah Al-Tasgeely Fi Masr, Magalet Koleyet Dar Al-Oloum*, (Cairo University, No.38, 2006), 161-238. See also Sayed Ali Ismail: "Al Rekaba wa Al-Masrah Al-Marfoud", (Egypt, The General Egyptian Book Organization, 1997), 22. Also, see Rams?s ?Awad, "Ittij?h?t siy?s?yah f? al-masrah ?qabla thawrat 1919" [Political Trends in the Egyptian Theatre before 1919 Revolution], (Cairo, al-Hay?ah al-Mis??yah al-??mmah lil-Kit?b, 1979), 9-12.

[11] See Nehad Selaih, "A year of Revolutionary Theatre", *Al Ahram Weekly*, 29 December 2011 - 4 January 2012, Issue No. 1078.

[12] An Interview with Laila Soliman on "On TV Channel" in a program entitled *Al-Fan Onwan* [Art is a title]. The program was uploaded to Youtube on Jun 27, 2014 on the following URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=56WZ0Wx0yRk>

[13] Mounira El Mahdeya: A leading Egyptian singer, better known as "Sultana of the song" (1885-1965). She owned a casino called "Nozhet Alnefous" in which many journalists and politicians used to spend their leisure time. After a while they referred to their private gatherings with El Mahdeya whether in her cafe or at her house by their saying "Breezes of freedom found at Mounira El Mahdeya".

[14] See Charlotte M Canning & Thomas Postlewait, "Representing the Past, Essays in Performance Historiography", (Iowa City; University of Iowa Press, 2010), Web. 21 August 2015, Project MUSE, 1-26.

[15] See ?Abd al-Ra?m?n Al-Rafi, "Thawrat 1919: t?r?kh Mis? al-qawm? min sanat 1914 ilá sanat 1921", 3rd edition, (Cairo, Mu?assasat D?r al-Sha?b, 1968), 210-213.

[16] See Abd al-Ra?m?n Al-Rafi, "Muh?mmad Far?d : ramz al-ikhl?s ?wa-al-tad???yah : t?r?kh Mis? al-qawm? min sanat 1908 ilá sanat 1919", (Cairo, D?r al-Ma??rif, 1984), 211-214.

[17] An Egyptian retired lieutenant in the army, who played a significant part in organizing the 1919 Revolution. See Younan Labib Rizk, "Mozakirat AbdelRahman Fahmi", Part 1, (Cairo, Dar Elkotob We alwathek Alkawmeya, 2011).

[18] See the autobiography that Saad Zaghoul wrote which confirms that same fact. Zaghoul, Saad, "*Mudhakkir?t Saad Zaghlo?l*" [Saad Zaghoul's Autobiography], (Cairo: Al-Hay?ah Al-Mis??yah Al-??mmah lil-Kit?b, 1987).

[19] Most of its members belonged originally to *Al-Omma Party* (The Party of Nation) who had their own interests with the occupiers, for that reason they were opposed by the masses.

[20] Latifa Salem, *Muh?mmad Far?d: Ramz Al-Ikhl?s ?wa-al-tad???yah: t?r?kh Mis? al-qawm? from 1908 to 1919*, 4th edition. (Al-Q?hirah: D?r al-Ma??rif, 1984), 11.



MARTIN E. SEGAL THEATRE CENTER PUBLICATIONS

Arab Stages

Volume 7 (Fall 2017)

©2017 by Martin E. Segal Theatre Center Publications

Founders: Marvin Carlson and Frank Hentschker

Editor-in-Chief: Marvin Carlson

Editorial and Advisory Board: Fawzia Afzal-Khan, Dina Amin, Khalid Amine, Hazem Azmy, Dalia Basiouny, Katherine Donovan, Masud Hamdan, Sameh Hanna, Rolf C. Hemke, Katherine Hennessey, Areeg Ibrahim, Jamil Khoury, Dominika Laster, Margaret Litvin, Rebekah Maggor, Safi Mahfouz, Robert Myers, Michael Malek Naijar, Hala Nassar, George Potter, Juan Recondo, Nada Saab, Asaad Al-Saleh, Torange Yeghiazarian, Edward Ziter.

Managing Editor: Ruijiao Dong

Assistant Managing Editor: Alexandra Viteri Arturo

Table of Contents

Essays

- From Street to Stage: Hip-hop, the History of an Artification through the Example of Farid Berki by Omar Fertat
- The 1919 Revolution in the Eyes of Modern and Contemporary Egyptian Theatre Directors: A Reflection of a Generation Gap by Hadia abd el-fattah Ahmed
- The Theatrical Work *Mchouga-Maboul*: A Plunge into Moroccan Memory by Lalla Nouzha Tahiri

Reviews

- The 2016 Journées Théâtrales de Carthage by Marvin Carlson
- Jawad Al-Assadi's *Women in War: Troubling, Troubled and Troublesome Female Refugees* by Hadeel Abdelhameed
- A Drama of Unlived Stories: *Old Child* by GalataPerform by Eylem Ejder
- Shahid Nadeem's *Acquittal* in New York by Marvin Carlson
- The Mysteries Behind a Silenced Voice: Review of Betty Shamieh's *The Strangest* by Juan R. Recondo
- Why Are We Here Now? Mohammed al Attar's work *A Portrait of Absence* by Christel Weiler
- The 24th Cairo International Festival for Contemporary and Experimental Theatre by Marvin Carlson

www.arabstages.org

arabstages@gc.cuny.edu

Martin E. Segal Theatre Center

Frank Hentschker, Executive Director

Marvin Carlson, Director of Publications

Rebecca Sheahan, Managing Director