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Walls and Waiting: The Power of Expectations in *Access Denied*

As the haunting strains of a Sufi sheik chant fill the air — or strain out of tinny computer speakers — the light on the stage slowly brightens, revealing a group of dancers crouched in the upper right corner, next to a large grey wall. This is the beginning to *Access Denied*, an hour long dance performance, which choreographically explores individuals' experiences under the Second Intifada. This piece was choreographed and performed in Ramallah in 2004 by a collaboration of artists from the Palestinian companies *Sareyyet Ramallah* and *El-Funoun*, including Noora Baker, Raed Badwan, Maysoun Rafeedie, Nicholas Rowe and Maher Shawamreh. *Access Denied* presented itself as "'a collage of scenes from Occupied Palestine [territories]. Created during the years of the Second Intifada, it reflects the experiences of the artists involved. Some of the images are presented live onstage and others projected as pre-recorded dance videos'" (Program note, Ramallah Dance Theatre 2004, "*Access Denied* and Sumud" 26). Leading up to the Second Intifada and the building of the wall along the West Bank, Israel and Palestine had entered a period of tense peace; negotiations at Camp David led to promising statements by both parties, yet no serious action was taken. In September of 2000, Israeli politician Ariel Sharon, who would later become Prime Minister, paid a controversial visit to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem which served as a symbolic representation of his position against the previous concessions exploring the possibility of transferring land to Palestinian authority. The next day, the Second Intifada began, a wave of increasingly violent acts by both

Palestinian protesters and the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) that marked the end of a period of relative peace (Harms and Ferry). In 2002, after Sharon took office, Israel began construction of a massive wall (Figure 1) loosely enclosing the West Bank and, in many cases, stretching far inside of boundaries determined by the Green Line (Figure 2), the boundary between the State of Israel and the West Bank as determined by United Nations in the mid 1900s. Claimed to be key in preventing violence and terrorist threats, the wall and resulting checkpoints that people were subjected to severely impacted many individuals lives in many different ways, impeding travel, limiting access to resources, and dividing families (Backmann).

Art created under such conditions cannot help but have some political elements; *Access Denied* is choreographed as a physical, semi-narrative representation of the dancer's experience under the Second Intifada, for a local audience familiar with these experiences. The choreography explores the physical limits and subsequent emotional impact set on their world by the wall, checkpoints, and interrogations. For this local audience, *Access Denied* explores specific, local issues, often satirically, creating a shared sense of identity through a shared set of experiences. By toying with the audience's expectations of both the realities of life under occupation and what will happen onstage, *Access Denied* subtly subverts and challenges preconceived notions about Palestine, forcing people to consider the issue in a new light. In doing so, *Access Denied* draws attention to the issues surrounding occupation.

Throughout the entire piece, the grey wall looms, omnipresent, in the upstage right corner over the dancers. Even when the dancers are not engaging with the wall and when their focus projects outward or to different parts of the stage, the wall remains (Figure 3). This mirrors the actual situation in many parts of Palestine. In the town of Qalqiliya, for instance, Kapitan points out that "some 40,000 people [are] completely surrounded by this wall … [and] have been

affected by the closure of hundreds of shops and businesses within proximity of the wall" (Kapitan 55). As one can imagine, this causes a fair amount of hardship among people who live nearby. In *A Wall In Palestine*, Rene Backman describes the experiences of ordinary citizens and the ways in which the construction and presence of the wall continues to impact their lives. Economically, people are forced to close businesses, as they can no longer buy and sell easily with neighboring towns. People are cut off from their farmland, and many cannot leave the town due to a lack of the proper paperwork (Backman). In *Access Denied*, while the dancers do not literally represent these aspects, their use of the ubiquitous grey wall reflects the presence of the wall in everyday life. The first movement is entirely focused on the wall, beginning with four dancers all leaning against it. After a short video segment, the same dancers interact with the wall and with each other, using both as springboards to leap into the air. They come away from the wall at times, but continuously return to the wall, only to leap off of it again (Figure 4). The ways that the dancers use the wall to propel themselves away and up into the air illustrates a desire to escape from the confines of the wall. Their focus remains on the wall, mirroring the way that the gray concrete walls enclosing the West Bank are similarly unavoidable and obtrusive (Figure 1). In some movements, the dancers will interact with the wall and in some they will not; nonetheless, the wall is always there. Similarly, even as many people in Palestinian territories continue their day to day lives, the spectre of the wall remains and affects everyone's lives in some manner.

A later video segment also involves the wall, portraying an effort to continue daily life despite a new impediment: two people press halves of a chessboard against the base of the wall, taking turns to make moves and throw pieces over the wall. This segment demonstrates the ways in which people attempt to continue living their lives around the wall; they continue to play

chess, yet the chessboard has been irreparably split. Their lives are irrevocably altered by the wall, and the segment ultimately "show[s] a fractured game mirroring the fractured lives" (Foyer par. 5). The chess game itself is a bit of a farce, adding some macabre and satirical humor to the piece, as neither player can see what the other player is doing, or even the entire board. Although people might attempt to live out their lives in peace, the wall prevents them from doing this on a very basic level, dividing people from ancestral land, family, and resources (Backmann). In a later video segment, one of the same dancers plays chess by herself against the wall, her body contacting the wall gently and then with more force. Her vibrant red dress contrasts the dull grey wall, providing a spark of life and color beside inanimate stone, mirroring the ways in which life goes on despite the occupation. The camera angle shifts quite a bit during this segment, showing a view of the wall as though from the dancer's perspective, a close-up of the dancer's face or hand against the wall or ground, or a wider shot containing all of the dancer's body. Finally, the wall features prominently in the end of the piece, in which the youngest member of the cast climbs above the others, holding both hands in a V-sign for peace, curling her fingers twice to make a quotation mark (Figure 5). At this point, she is above and looking over the wall, perhaps symbolizing a desire to not be restricted and move past the wall. The peace sign indicates a desire for peace, while the quotation marks add an element of sarcasm, as peace in the region had recently dissolved into violence in the Second Intifada. Resulting peace comes as a result of Israeli occupation and the building of the wall, an oxymoronic forced peace recognized by the sarcastic air quotes. While individual movements, analyzed in subsequent paragraphs, have more specific meanings, focus on the wall bookends the performance; overall, this indicates the inescapability of the wall and its tremendous impact on the public, albeit in many different ways.

As well as through the presence of the wall, *Access Denied* portrays the effects of occupation through themes of confinement and waiting, often intermingled. In one video segment, the camera pans to show empty streets and empty desks, indicating the city under curfew. A young girl physically explores the boundaries of her bedroom while her older sister studies at a desk. Although frustrated by the lack of space and her inability to go outside, the girl uses the confines of her room to full effect, exploring all corners of the room, climbing over and under furniture. The video is interspaced with shots of sunshine outside, sometimes with the girl dancing and sometimes a grouping of hands overhead, like children playing. This video segment reflects Palestinian frustration at the curfew; for days on end, the IDF would enforce a twenty-four hour a day curfew with only short breaks to buy food. Beyond the economic hardships this causes, it becomes frustrating and boring to stay indoors, especially for children like the girl in the video. Noora, for instance, first started dancing during the First Intifada, when there were similar curfews: she recalls her parents worrying because she was an active child and all the schools were closed (*Talking Dance* 38). During the curfew, there was nothing to do but wait. Waiting also comes up in the section of *Access Denied* where the dancers are all waiting on the bench. A male dancer sits in the downstage right corner at a desk, presumably an interrogator at a checkpoint. All of the dancers crowd on the bench, pushing and shoving as they try to reach the front of the queue (Figure 6). This section of the dance is not without dark humor, as the dancers exaggerated movements and shoving is rather comical; nonetheless, they are waiting in line to be interrogated by an official who will determine if they can pass the checkpoint. Both of these situations mirror the realities of everyday life in Occupied Palestine; they present experiences that the audience finds familiar and sympathizes with, creating a shared set of experiences.

Contrasting the Palestinian presentation of the wall and occupation as restricting and inhumane, many Israeli citizens believe that a barrier is a necessary security precaution, a way to protect both Israeli and Palestinian citizens from terrorist acts and reprisals. Backman, providing a balanced view on opinions centering on the wall in the region, also quotes Dany Tizra, who served as chief architect for the fence: Tizra explains that, along the Trans-Israeli Highway and near two Palestinian towns, Qalqiliya and Tulkarem "'building a twenty-seven foot high wall with watchtowers, [made] sniper attacks impossible'" (Backman 66-67). As the architect, Tizra's arguments reflect the typical view of the Israeli government on the necessity of the wall, as merely one aspect of a separation between Israel and Palestine, key in reducing terrorist attacks and providing a sense of safety and security (Tizra par. 7-8). This view, along with typical Western civilian knowledge of the conflict — coming from sensational and image-based media — emphasizes the role of violence in this conflict. However, in much of *Access Denied*, this violence is not readily apparent. The only scene that appears directly violent is the interogation video, which involves the physical demonstration of one man's power over another (Figures 7 and 8). During this video, the camera angle shifts from a wider view where the audience can see everything that happens to the view of the person with a blindfold, so that there is an extremely limited viewpoint and the audience has no idea what movements will happen next. This reflects the anticipation and fear that one must feel when awaiting interrogation, completely at the mercy of a stranger. Rowe explains that a later scene, where tires are rolled across the stage, references an impending clash ("*Access Denied* and Sumud" 39). However, neither of these reference methods such as bombs typically associated with terrorists or portray sensationalized, bloody warfare. Rather than explicit depictions of violence, the performance relies more on suspension and apprehension, relying on the audience's innate knowledge of what comes next. This is where

the themes of waiting, as discussed earlier, have a larger significance. Although Palestinians might not experience direct violence every day, there is a sense of what-could-happen, especially in stressful situations. For the audience, this creates more tension than just portraying gratuitous violence; the tension of what will happen continues to build throughout the piece without the release of the eminent violence. As for the violence, Rowe explains that upon showing the performance to international colleagues, one critic questions the exclusion of suicide bombings, in particular, claiming that this made the performance inherently biased. Rowe counters this by questioning the necessity of a perfectly balanced perspective in art, particularly art such as this portraying a minority viewpoint in asymmetrical warfare where one party holds most of the power. ("*Access Denied* and Sumud" 40) In this instance, audience expectations about the presence of violence in the Middle East, and thus in art originating in the area, are subverted. From a Western viewpoint, informed by sensational media stories about suicide bombings, the piece appears to be lacking something integral. However, the piece was well received during its short-lived run: Rowe explains that it was performed to a full house all four nights ("*Access Denied* and Sumud" 40), and Foyer's review compares it to "Botticelli's Venus … fully formed and appealing to the senses" (Foyer par. 1). Again, this is not the reception one would expect, presuming that the piece is inherently biased and lacking a certain viewpoint. The differences between these expectations and the realities imply that these expectations, not the piece, are inherently lacking. By choosing to portray the conflict through tension and waiting as opposed to violence, *Access Denied* forces the audience to confront their preconceived notions and stereotypes about the area.

Another specific way that *Access Denied* challenges the audience's expectations is through the use and symbolism of light. As the piece opens, the wall is the only thing

illuminated, at first with two harsh white spotlights reminiscent of military spotlights or car headlights (Figure 9). The dancers all stand or crouch beside it, with small twisting movements, heads bowed, and hands held behind their backs as if tied, continuing as the light fades into a softer, colder shade of blue illuminating the entire wall (Figure 10). In this case, the usual dichotomy of light and dark as associated with good and evil are subverted; whereas traditionally light is associated with goodness and safety and dark with evil and danger, darkness in *Access Denied* means safety and light. Nicholas Rowe, an Australian professor and one of the dancers and choreographers in *Access Denied*, shares experiences with checkpoints that corresponds with this association: when simply going out to buy cheesecake, he and a friend walked while "hugging the shadows" ("*Access Denied* and Sumud" 41). In this case, the shadows represent safety, where as being in the light heralds the possibility of being seen and stopped by the IDF. Later on in *Access Denied*, this dichotomy is again subverted. Dancers crawling on the floor in the background are shadowed and safe, while the male dancer standing in the light raises his hands in a gesture of contrition and submission. This further ties into the literal aspect of the performance: the dancers are "safest" when all of the lights are completely out; only when the stage is dark and the audience is not watching can they completely relax. By counteracting traditional notions of light and dark, *Access Denied* plays with the audiences' expectations of the piece and its symbolism; this dissonance between what is expected and what actually occurs onstage invites the audience to take a deeper look at what is being performed.

Further tensions, not as readily apparent to a Western audience, surround the inclusion of female dancers. Noora, one of the dancers and choreographers in *Access Denied*, explains that "being a female dancer growing up in Palestine you're not fully accepted in society, you become increasingly excluded" as dance was seen as a primarily male sphere. Many women feel pressure

both internally and externally that they ought to quit dance in order to take care of children and home (*Talking Dance* 187). This reflects the patriarchal nature of Palestinian society, which is largely influenced by Islamic Shari'a law, and the view that women's place is in the household. There are no official laws[1] requiring a certain dress code, and the female dancers performed with their heads uncovered (Figure 6); nonetheless, *Access Denied*'s artistic treatment of female performers as equal to males reflects a less traditional viewpoint. In the twentieth century, as dance became a cultural vehicle for national identity, the *dabkeh* was a primarily male dance form while female dancers demonstrated their chastity and modesty through less acrobatic, calmer movements (*Raising Dust* 123-124). *Access Denied* steps away from these more traditional models of female behavior, including an equitable number of male and female dancers who perform similar, if not identical movements. Nonetheless, the piece acknowledges the tension inherent in including female dancers onstage, for instance, in the part where two women poke their heads above a barrier and dart across the stage ("*Access Denied* and Sumud" 40). The very tenseness of this scene, which also alludes to oncoming conflict, reflects the tension inherent in including women onstage in what many would see as a male activity. Another instance that carries this tension is the scene where three men and three women perform duets separated by long poles (Figure 11). In this instance, the two genders are physically as well as metaphorically separated, again referencing the twentieth century separation of acceptable forms of male and female dance. The separation of the male and female dancers allows for an intimacy in the duet that nonetheless appeases more traditional audience members, due to the lack of physical contact. However, both male and female dancers are onstage together, in a dance that is

[1] Note that law in Palestine is a complex subject due to the fact that Palestine is not a country and remains largely subject to Israeli law; furthermore, legal codes are highly influenced by the region's history under the Ottomans, British, Egyptians, Jordanians, and Israelis. For more on law in the Middle East as it pertains to women, please see Gihane Tabet's "Women In Personal Status Laws"

simultaneously more progressive and more tense. Furthermore, this tension is not as readily apparent to an international audience. In western cultures, dance is seen as a more feminine pursuit; in classical ballet, for instance, it is often seen as the man's role to support and glorify the women. *Access Denied*, by portraying tension surrounding the inclusion of female dancers, subtly plays upon western expectations of gender roles in dance, challenging a view of dance as effeminate and emasculating. For a local audience, the show challenges opposing notions of dance as masculine and unfeminine, proving to both audiences that dance is an artform that defies traditional gender roles. The expectations of both a local and a non-local audience are played upon through the inclusion of both female and male dancers, albeit in different ways.

For local audiences, *Access Denied* helps create a shared identity through shared experiences and emotions. One difference in the way that *Access Denied* is perceived by local and international audiences comes from the lack of graphic violence, as discussed earlier, instead focusing on more banal aspects of day to day life in the occupation. This is emblematic of the ways that *Access Denied* appeals to a local audience. Rowe explains that "examining local ideas without explaining them is central to the work's intention to speak in a local way, to address a local audience in order to develop a localized contemporary movement vocabulary" ("*Access Denied* and Sumud" 40). In this instance, the disparity between expectations and reality lie in the audience's identity. The piece was choreographed with a local audience in mind, an audience who would sympathize with the dancers waiting in a queue for interrogation and would recognize the tires rolling across the stage as emblematic of approaching conflict ("*Access Denied* and Sumud" 39). Having a local audience and choreographing mainly for them allowed for the exploration of a very specific set of issues, including the inclusion of women and the presence of the wall, as explained previously. The videos provide important, specific context for

understanding and sympathizing with the situations presented in the piece. Furthermore, as the piece was choreographed based off of the individual choreographers' experiences, its popularity with the local audience reveals that it is also emblematic of a more general sentiment by citizens living under Israeli occupation. *Access Denied* functions as an expression of Palestinian experience under Israeli occupation, both individual and collective: "For the Palestinians who have no state, no citizenship, no rights and no remedies, artistic expression is a life-line" (Foyer par. 6). The piece allows for a cathartic expression of the myriad of complex emotions that come from living under this difficult occupation. Both the dancers, by performing, and the audience, by connecting with the performance, are able to process the emotions and feel a sense of unity in that the entire theatre is experiencing the same emotions. Combining modern dance and the *dabkeh* creates a performance that is uniquely Palestinian. Combined with the piece's subject matter, an exploration of specifically Palestinian issues, this performance helps create a collective identity among audience members as well as the artists. For a local audience, *Access Denied* allows for a cathartic expression of the experiences of living under occupation by exploring specific local issues for a local audience, creating a collective Palestinian identity based off of shared experiences.

Tying together local and international audiences, *Access Denied* draws from both the traditional *dabkeh* and Western modern dance. The influence of the *dabkeh* (Figure 12)can be seen in some of the movements involving a fluid upper body and stomping footwork whereas the influences of western modern dance can be seen in movements involving the entire body, resembling dances that one might see in the Americas, Europe, or even Israel. *Access Denied* was the first major performance of contemporary dance in Palestine — checkpoint officials were incredulous of the idea of a modern dance performance garnering international attention (Foyer

par. 1) — as well as one of the first pieces to directly deal with contemporary political issues. Previous performances, often the more traditional *dabke*, would touch on modern themes and issues tangentially and through the lens of ancient folklore and drama, if at all. As such, this performance is significant for the ways in which it conveys its message as well as the message itself. The inclusion of both modern dance and *dabkeh* of dance helps connect the piece to both Palestinian and Western audiences, appealing to a wide range of aesthetics despite a very specific, local context. In fact, choosing to use elements of western modern dance lends the piece greater authority in the international dance community. There is a artistic hierarchy within the dance world that often places dance forms such as classical ballet or modern above more traditional ethnic folk dancing[2]. Rowe points out that "creative innovation" will not always follow the same model and that "being denied the label "contemporary" can feel like being denied a collective cultural visa to the twenty-first century;" judging choreography based on one particular aesthetic can be inherently biased, "reinforce[ing] a sense that colonized and politically marginalized populations are bound to 'either resist or yield to the new but cannot produce it'" ("Post-Salvagism" 1). As such, using western modern dance in addition to traditional folkloric elements means that *Access Denied* is gains greater respect in the international dance community, whereas traditional folk-dancing can be brushed off "to a place where everybody dances in circles, reminiscing about the glorious golden past of their own particular civilization" ("Post-Salvagism 1). As *dabkeh* does conventionally deal with more traditional stories; using modern dance allows the choreographers to explore contemporary issues, while appealing to a broader audience.

[2] Attitudes toward less westernized forms of dance are highly linked to foreign hegemonic control and post-colonial discourse; for more on this topic as it pertains to Palestine, see Nicholas Rowe's essay "Post-Savagism: Choreography and its Discontents in the Occupied Palestine Territories"

For an international audience unfamiliar with the mundane aspects of life under occupation, *Access Denied* forces the audience to confront preconceptions and expectations about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Despite the intended local audience, using dance as the artistic means to convey these experiences ultimately means that the piece does reach a wider audience. Furthermore, dancing transcends language, allowing people to communicate complex ideas and emotions across the globe without the limits of different languages. Although Rowe claims the piece was intended and choreographed primarily for the local audience ("*Access Denied* and Sumud" 40), Ramallah Dance Theatre's decision to post the video on Youtube, where it remains publicly and internationally available over ten years after the show, indicates a desire to reach a wider audience[3]. By performing a piece that directly addresses the humanitarian issues surrounding occupation, *Access Denied* works to bring this subject to international attention. As discussed above, *Access Denied* subverts the audience's expectation surrounding violence, the presence of women, and safety; as such, the popularity of *Access Denied* not only serves to bring issues surrounding occupation to international attention but forces this non-local audience to confront their own stereotypes and expectations surrounding the region and the issue.

While it creates a shared sense of identity for a local Palestinian audience, *Access Denied* also helps bring the injustices suffered under Israeli occupation to international attention, forcing viewers to confront their expectations and biases surrounding the issue. By portraying everyday issues such as waiting in line at checkpoints, the performance serves as a cathartic form of expression for both the dancers and the audience, allowing them to express their frustrations. Ultimately, *Access Denied* brings to light a subject matter that is not often discussed and draws

[3] Note that, however, the piece was recently removed from Youtube for a copyright violation, likely regarding the music. Unfortunately, this means that the piece will no longer be easily accessible for any audience, and closes one avenue for discussion on such topics as it brings up. There is an inherent irony in access having been restricted for a piece titled *Access Denied*.

attention to the Palestinian experience under Israeli occupation, rather than endlessly debating who is in the right and who is in the wrong. In Palestine, Ramallah Dance Theatre was disbanded a few years after, due to internal and financial difficulties. However, the artistic legacy of the piece lives on: the Ramallah Contemporary Dance Festival is an international event that has been held annually since 2006, a few years after *Access Denied* was performed. The performance ends with a pulsing, rhythmic drumbeat and with the dancers stomping in unison, before pressing themselves against the wall. The youngest dancer climbs on top of several other dancers, reaching over the wall to make peace signs with her fingers, then sardonically scrunching her fingers to make air quotes. Perhaps this is the most important part of *Access Denied* — the longing for peace despite all of the previous injustices presented, and the doubt that it will ever happen.

Annotated Bibliography

Primary Sources:

"Access Denied." *Youtube*, uploaded by Ramallah Dance Theatre 10 July 2016. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wD1wLwriBAE

This is a video of Ramallah Dance Theatre's 2004 performance of *Access Denied.* This performance involves eight dancers, all wearing casual contemporary clothes. The dance itself involves both the personal and collective experiences of Palestinian people affected by the wall dividing Palestine and Israel, represented in this hour-long dance by a literal wall in the upstage right corner. At times, dancers physically interact with this wall, throwing themselves at it and propelling themselves off of it, while at other times they appear to ignore it. This performance itself incorporates multimedia elements; video clips including an interrogation room, a child with her mother, and even a concrete wall helped create a setting for the different pieces within this larger work. This source is the primary artifact that I will be examining in my essay; I will explore the relationship between modern dance and political/cultural climate, focusing on Palestine in the early 2000s.

"El-Funoun Performance in Ottawa." *Youtube*, uploaded by Ahmed Abau-Shaaban 19 November 2014. El-Funon is one of the premier folkloric dance companies in Palestine. This video comes from their 2014 North American tour, while this particular performance was done in Ottawa, Canada. The video was not shot from an ideal angle; it appears to have been taken in the wings, leading to an odd angle that does not capture the front part of the stage or even all of the dancers. When dancers stand too close to the camera in the wings, it blocks other parts of the stage from view. However, the quality of the film was a lot better, allowing me to see individual steps and expressions much better. Traditional Palestinian dance, as presented in this

video, involves rhythmic stomping motions with the lower body while the upper body remains fluid. This video serves as as a point of comparison for my primary artifact, allowing me to analyze which elements of the choreography in *Access Denied* come from traditional Palestinian dances such as the *dabke* and which elements did not.

Foyer, Maggie. "Access Denied - Ramallah Dance Theatre, a Small Miracle." *Ballet-Dance Magazine*. Dance Europe, Mar. 2014. Web. 21 May 2017.

This primary source is a review of the performance of *Access Denied*, originally printed in a 2004 issue of the *Dance Europe* magazine. It provides some brief information about the author's experience in Palestine and short descriptions of some of the more memorable moments of the performance, mentioning several of the main dancers by name. The review was mostly positive, with Foyer recognizing the artistic significance of much of the dance. She only really disliked one of the pre-filmed segments, where she felt that the dancers did not deal well with the confined space. This review serves as insight into audience reactions toward *Access Denied*, as well as a second perspective on the performance. Foyer provides a less biased perspective on the performance than Rowe who, while knowledgeable, was too deeply involved with choreographing and performing not to be somewhat biased.

Rowe, Nicholas, Buck, Ralph, and Martin, Rose. *Talking Dance: Contemporary Histories from the Southern Mediterranean*. I.B. Tauris and Co., London, 2014.

Rowe and Buck are both associate professors in dance studies at the University of Auckland, Australia, while Martin is a lecturer at the same; Rowe is a common author in dance studies in this area and all three of them are reliable sources. This source is actually a combination of both primary and secondary sources; it incorporates both secondary analysis of culture in the Southern Mediterranean by the authors and primary source interviews with dancers in the area. The

authors provide some analysis at the beginning, while the majority of the book is comprised of snippets of interviews with various dancers. Although this book focuses on a very broad area, including Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt as well as Palestine, several of the interview snippets come from Palestinian dancers. I will focus on those interviews that come from Palestinians; this will provide me with more background as to the social and cultural climate surrounding dance in Palestinian territories; these dancer's personal experiences will add depth and a more personal element to my paper.

Rowe, Nicholas. "*Access Denied* and Sumud." *Choreographies of 21st Century Wars.* Edited by Morris, Gary and Giersdorf, Jens Richard. Oxford University Press, 2016.

This essay by Nicholas Rowe, part of a larger collection of essays, is centered around his experiences with *Access Denied*. He provides a short synopsis of the piece, including a description for every segment. He also provides important context, connecting the more symbolic parts of the dance with concrete events that do not make as much sense to a non-local audience. Rowe was involved with both choreographing and performing the dance, which makes him both biased in favor of the show and more knowledgeable about what the dance is portraying and what sort of emotion it is intended to illicit. As a choreographer and a scholar with so much knowledge about dance in Palestine, Rowe provides an important viewpoint into the creation of *Access Denied* and what the choreographer's goals in creating the piece were. I plan to base much of my analysis off of this essay, as it directly deals with my primary artifact and contains valuable information about the significance of the performance.

Secondary Sources:

Backmann, Rene. *A Wall in Palestine*. Translation by A. Kaiser. Picador, New York, 2010.

Backmann's book looks in depth at the construction and impact of the West Bank Barrier, a concrete wall between Israel and Palestinian territory. As it includes interviews with Israeli policy makers, politicians, and Palestinians living in the West Bank, as well as some of the author's own personal experience, this is partly a primary source. However, the author's analysis of the effects of the barrier on both daily life of citizens and its impact on the larger future of the Middle East make this a secondary source as well. In my essay, I will use this book mainly as a secondary source, focusing on Backmann's discussion of the wall's impact on Palestinian populations. I plan to use it to support my analysis of my primary artifact, which contains a visual representation of the wall onstage.

Harms, Gregory with Ferry, Todd M. *The Palestine-Israel Conflict: A Basic Introduction*. Pluto Press, 2005.

This book provides a basic introduction to the Palestine-Israel conflict, stretching from the ancient history of Palestine, to the Ottoman Empire, both World Wars, and current events up to 2005. As my primary artifact was performed in 2004, this book provides all of the political and historical background necessary to make sense of the connections between the dance and contemporary events. The author, Gregory Harms, is an independent scholar who claims in the preface that he attempted to make this book as accurate and nonpartisan as possible, making it a reliable source for background information on the history of the Palestine-Israel conflict.

Rowe, Nicholas. "Post-Salvagism: Choreography and Its Discontents in the Occupied Palestinian Territories." *Dance Research Journal*, vol. 41, no. 1, Summer2009, pp. 45-68. 1 May 2017.

Nicholas Rowe is an associate professor in dance studies at the University of Aukland, Australia; his research revolves around dance writing and research, choreography, hegemony, and colonial discourse. In this essay, he examines the relationship between cultural modernity and overtones of hegemonic colonial power, with regard to alternative forms of modernity that are often overlooked in favor of a more homogenous global sense of modern innovation. He notes the inherent cultural bias present in evaluating unfamiliar forms of dance, coining the term *salvagist* to describe the cultural movement that directly linked Palestinian folk dances to ancient biblical dances. In my paper, I will use this essay as a reference to base my analysis of which to base *Access Denied*, looking at the choreography and movement patterns with a more critical eye and watching in which ways the choreography incorporates elements of western modern dance and in which ways it does not.

Rowe, Nicholas. *Raising Dust: A Cultural History of Dance in Palestine*. I.B. Tauris, 2010. Rowe's research into Palestinian dance continues with this book, a culmination of much of his research and experience teaching dance and choreographing within Occupied Palestine Territories. As he mentions in the book, in one of several personal anecdotes, he married a Palestinian women, indicating that there may be some level of bias in all of his works. He examines the history of the area from biblical times through the early 2000s. The earlier history provides important background as to where modern dance in Palestinian originated while the sections on the late 1900s and early 2000s are directly relevant to my research. I will use this source as both historical background and as a source linking contemporary dance to socio-political climate. The few pages where my primary artifact itself is described will be particularly helpful.

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"El-Funoun Performance in Ottawa." *Youtube*, uploaded by Ahmed Abau-Shaaban 19 November 2014.

"Palestinian Dabke" *Youtube*, uploaded by nelhk 10 Aug 2009. Web, 20 May, 2017.

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Figures

Figure 1 (*Raising Dust*, 198)
The wall that encircles the West Bank, dividing Palestine and Israel.

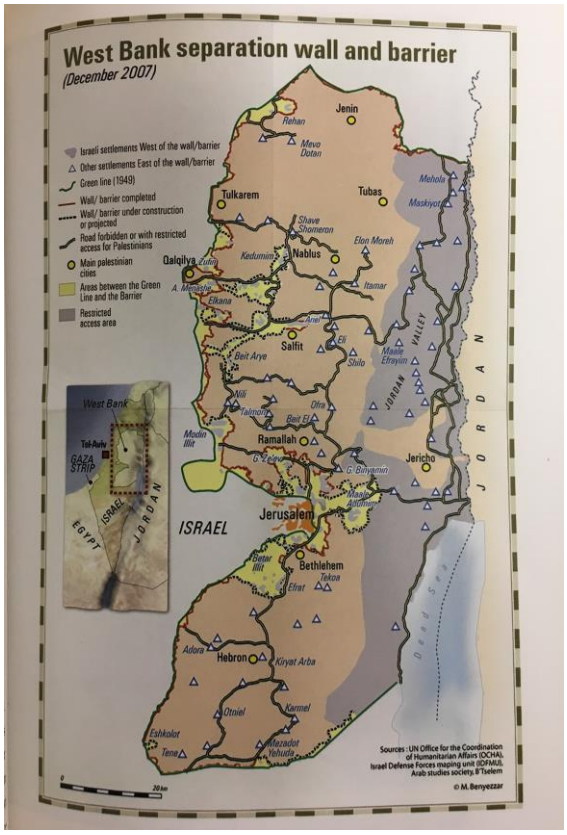

Figure 2 (Backmann, insert)
A map of the Green Line (green) and wall (red) along with roads and settlements; notice how the wall often strays far inside of the Green Line.

Figure 3 (*Access Denied*)
This is a screenshot from the beginning of the piece, when the dancers are all standing in the upstage right corner by the wall.

Figure 4 (*Access Denied*)
This screenshot is from shortly after Figure 3; notice how the dancers are all focused on and interacting with the wall.

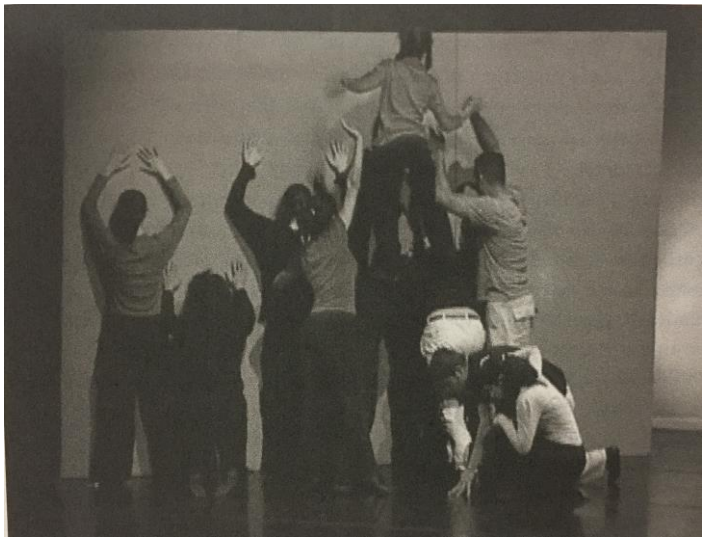

Figure 5 ("*Access Denied* and Sumud" 39)
The ending of the performance, with one of the dancers supported by the others and looking over the wall.

Figure 6 ("*Access Denied* and Sumud" 36)
Two of the female dancers, with hair uncovered, sitting on the bench as they wait for the checkpoint official to offer direction.

Figure 7 (*Access Denied*)
The interrogation video, from an outside perspective.

Figure 8 (*Access Denied*)
The interrogation video, from the limited perspective of the blindfolded man.

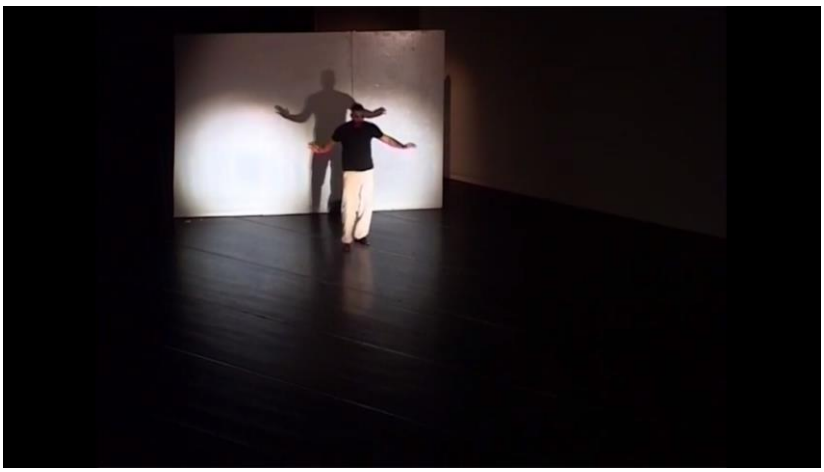

Figure 9 (*Access Denied*)
One of the dancers in front of the wall, with bright white lights resembling car headlights.

Figure 10 (*Access Denied*)
The dancers in front of the wall, with darker blue lighting.

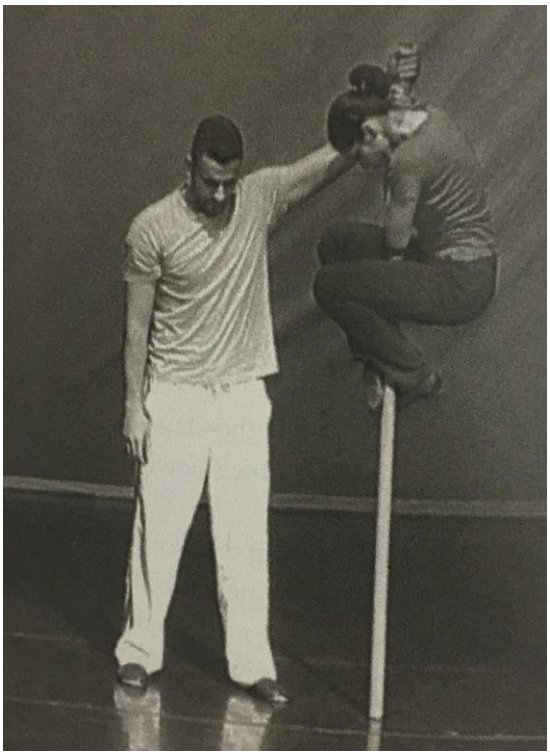

Figure 11 ("*Access Denied* and Sumud" 38)
The duets with a pole, separating male and female dancers to allow for an intimate yet appropriate pas de deux. This section indicates the tension behind including female dancers onstage.

Figure 12 (*Raising Dust* insert)
This picture comes from a performance by El-Funoun, a Palestinian dance company, of traditional folk dancing, the *dabkeh*. Notice the difference in costumes between this dance and *Access Denied*.