THE CONCISE GARLAND ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WORLD MUSIC

Volume 2

The Concise Garland Encyclopedia of

World Music

Volume 2

The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music

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The Middle East

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Contents

VOLUME 1

VOLUME 2

Editorial Board

Contributing Authors

Volume 2

The Middle East

Stephen Blum
CUNY Graduate Center
New York, New York, U.S.A.

Kay Hardy Campbell
Hingham, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

Margaret Caton
The Institute of Persian Performing Arts
Rolling Hills Estates, California, U.S.A.

Dieter Christensen
Columbia University
New York, New York, U.S.A.

Virginia Danielson
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

Jürgen Elsner
Institut für Musikwissenschaft
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Berlin, Germany

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Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Scheherazade Qassim Hassan
Centre de Recherche en Ethnomusicologie
LESC-CNRS
Paris, France

L. JaFran Jones (deceased)
University of Toledo
Toledo, Ohio, U.S.A.

Jean Lambert
Musée de l'Homme
Paris, France

Theodore Levin
Dartmouth College
Hanover, New Hampshire, U.S.A.

Manuk Manukyan
Komitas State Conservatory of Music
Yerevan, Armenia

Irene Markoff
York University
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Bezza Mazouzi
Paris, France

Christian Poché
Paris, France

A. J. Racy
University of California
Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

Ursula Reinhard
Berlin, Germany

Dwight Reynolds
University of California
Santa Barbara, California, U.S.A.

Philip D. Schuyler
University of Washington
Seattle, Washington, U.S.A.

Edwin Seroussi
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
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Karl Signell
University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A.

Razia Sultanova
School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London
London, England

Habib Hassan Touma (deceased)
Freie Universität Berlin
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Sławomira Żerańska-Kominek
Warsaw University
Warsaw, Poland

South Asia

Alison Arnold
North Carolina State University
Raleigh, North Carolina, U.S.A.

John Baily
Goldsmiths College, University of London
New Cross, England

Amy Catlin
University of California, Los Angeles
Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

Peter J. Claus
California State University, Hayward
Hayward, California, U.S.A.

Veronica Doubleday
Goldsmiths College, University of London
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Paul D. Greene
Penn State Brandywine
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San Diego State University
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Bangalore, India

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University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Scott L. Marcus
University of California
Santa Barbara, California, U.S.A.

Allyn Miner
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Adam Nayyar
Pakistan National Council of the Arts
Islamabad, Pakistan

David Paul Nelson
Wesleyan University
Middletown, Connecticut, U.S.A.

Regula Burckhardt Qureshi
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

David B. Reck
Amherst College
Amherst, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

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Massachusetts Institute of Technology
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The University of Texas at Austin
Austin, Texas, U.S.A.

Gordon R. Thompson
Skidmore College
Saratoga Springs, New York, U.S.A.

Bonnie C. Wade
University of California, Berkeley
Berkeley, California, U.S.A.

Richard Widdess
School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London
London, England

East Asia

Sawada Atsuko
Senzoku Gakuen College of Music
Kanagawa, Japan

Lee Bohyung
Seoul National University
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Hwang Byung-ki
Ewha Women's University
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Gerald Groemer
University of Yamanashi
Köfu, Japan

Keith Howard
School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London
London, England

Takakuwa Izumi
Tokyo National Research Institute of Cultural Properties
Tokyo, Japan

Qiao Jianzhong
Chinese Academy of Arts, Music Research Institute
Beijing, China

Stephen Jones
School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London
London, England

Tanigaito Kasuko
Senzoku Gakuen College of Music
Kanagawa, Japan

Okuyama Keiko
Tokyo Seitoku University
Tokyo, Japan

Andrew P. Killick
University of Sheffield
Sheffield, England

Motegi Kiyoko
Joetsu University of Education
Joetsu City, Niigata, Japan

Joseph S. C. Lam
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A.

Theodore Levin
Dartmouth College
Hanover, New Hampshire, U.S.A.

Terence M. Liu
National Endowment for the Arts
Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

Nogawa Mihoko
Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music
Tokyo, Japan

Li Minxiong
Shanghai Conservatory
Shanghai, China

John Myers
Bard College at Simon's Rock
Great Barrington, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

Terauchi Naoko
Kobe University
Kobe, Japan

Carole Pegg
University of Cambridge
Cambridge, England

Tsao Penyeh
Shanghai Conservatory
Shanghai, China

Rulan Chao Pian
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

Robert C. Provine
University of Maryland
College Park, Maryland, U.S.A.

Helen Rees
University of California, Los Angeles
Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

Heinz-Deiter Reese
Japanisches Kulturinstitut
Cologne, Germany

Simura Satosi
Osaka University of Arts
Osaka, Japan

Francesca Rebollo Sborgi
Provo, Utah, U.S.A.

Alan R. Thrasher
University of British Columbia
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Yamada Tieko
Kurashiki Sakuyo University
Okayama, Japan

Ônuki Tasiko
Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music
Tokyo, Japan

Tukitani Tuneko
Osaka University of Arts
Osaka, Japan

Hae-Kyung Um
University of Liverpool
Liverpool, England

Li Wei
Rollins College
Winter Park, Florida, U.S.A.

Dale Wilson
Connecticut College
New London, Connecticut, U.S.A.

J. Lawrence Witzleben
University of Maryland
College Park, Maryland, U.S.A.

Lee Byong Won
University of Hawai'i
Honolulu, Hawai'i, U.S.A.

Isabel K. F. Wong
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
Urbana, Illinois, U.S.A.

Tsui Ying-fai
Music Office of the Hong Kong S.A.R. Government
Hong Kong, S.A.R.

Chen Yingshi
Shanghai Conservatory of Music
Shanghai, China

Tokumaru Yosihiko
The Open University of Japan
Tokyo, Japan

Bell Yung
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Southeast Asia

Corazon Canave-Dioquino
University of the Philippines Diliman
Quezon City, Philippines

James Chopyak
California State University
Sacramento, California, U.S.A.

David Harnish
Bowling Green State University
Bowling Green, Ohio, U.S.A.

Thomas John Hudak
Arizona State University
Tempe, Arizona, U.S.A.

Margaret J. Kartomi
Monash University
Clayton, Victoria, Australia

Ward Keeler
University of Texas at Austin
Austin, Texas, U.S.A.

José Maceda (deceased)
University of the Philippines Diliman
Quezon City, Philippines

Patricia Matusky
Grand Valley State University
Traverse City, Michigan, U.S.A.

Terry E. Miller
Kent State University
Kent, Ohio, U.S.A.

Phong T. Nguyễn
Institute for Vietnamese Music
Kent, Ohio, U.S.A.

Sam-Ang Sam
Pannasastra University of Cambodia
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Ramón P. Santos
University of the Philippines Diliman
Quezon City, Philippines

R. Anderson Sutton
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Madison, Wisconsin, U.S.A.

Sean Williams
The Evergreen State College
Olympia, Washington, U.S.A.

Reviewers

Volume 2

The Middle East

Kay Hardy Campbell
Hingham, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

Virginia Danielson
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

Galeet Dardashti
University of Texas at Austin
Austin, Texas, U.S.A.

Ruth Davis
Corpus Christi College
University of Cambridge
Cambridge, England

Michael Frishkopf
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Scheherazade Qassim Hassan
Centre de Recherche en Ethnomusicologie
LESC-CNRS
Paris, France

Theodore Levin
Dartmouth College
Hanover, New Hampshire, U.S.A.

Manuk Manukyan
Komitas State Conservatory of Music
Yerevan, Armenia

Irene Markoff
York University
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

A. J. Racy
University of California
Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

Jonathan Shannon
Hunter College, City University of New York
New York, New York, U.S.A.

South Asia

Alison Arnold
North Carolina State University
Raleigh, North Carolina, U.S.A.

Martha Ashton-Sikora
Calameda, California, U.S.A.

Peter J. Claus
California State University, Hayward
Hayward, California, U.S.A.

Veronica Doubleday
Goldsmiths College, University of London
New Cross, England

Tim Eriksen
Amherst, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

Paul D. Greene
Penn State Brandywine
Media, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Edward O. Henry
San Diego State University
San Diego, California, U.S.A.

Gayathri Rajapur Kassebaum
Girinagar
Bangalore, India

James R. Kippen
University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Peter Manuel
John Jay College and The Graduate Center
City University of New York
New York, New York, U.S.A.

Adam Nayyar
Pakistan National Council of the Arts
Islamabad, Pakistan

David Paul Nelson
Wesleyan University
Middletown, Connecticut, U.S.A.

George Ruckert
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

Anne Sheeran
Seattle, Washington, U.S.A.

Stephen Slawek
The University of Texas at Austin
Austin, Texas, U.S.A.

Gordon R. Thompson
Skidmore College
Saratoga Springs, New York, U.S.A.

Bonnie C. Wade
University of California, Berkeley
Berkeley, California, U.S.A.

Amanda Weidman
Bryn Mawr College
Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

East Asia

Wah-Chiu Lai
Kent State University
Kent, Ohio, U.S.A.

Theodore Levin
Dartmouth College
Hanover, New Hampshire, U.S.A.

Elizabeth M. Macy
University of California, Los Angeles
Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

Carole Pegg
University of Cambridge
Cambridge, England

Helen Rees
University of California, Los Angeles
Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

Sean Williams
The Evergreen State College
Olympia, Washington, U.S.A.

Heather A. Willoughby
Ewha Women's University
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Dale Wilson
Connecticut College
New London, Connecticut, U.S.A.

Cynthia P. Wong
Columbia University
New York, New York, USA

Southeast Asia

David Harnish
Bowling Green State University
Bowling Green, Ohio, U.S.A.

Margaret J. Kartomi
Monash University
Clayton, Victoria, Australia

Patricia Matusky
Grand Valley State University
Traverse City, Michigan, U.S.A.

Terry E. Miller
Kent State University
Kent, Ohio, U.S.A.

Phong T. Nguyễn
Institute for Vietnamese Music
Kent, Ohio, U.S.A.

Sean Williams
The Evergreen State College
Olympia, Washington, U.S.A.

Audio Examples

Volume 2

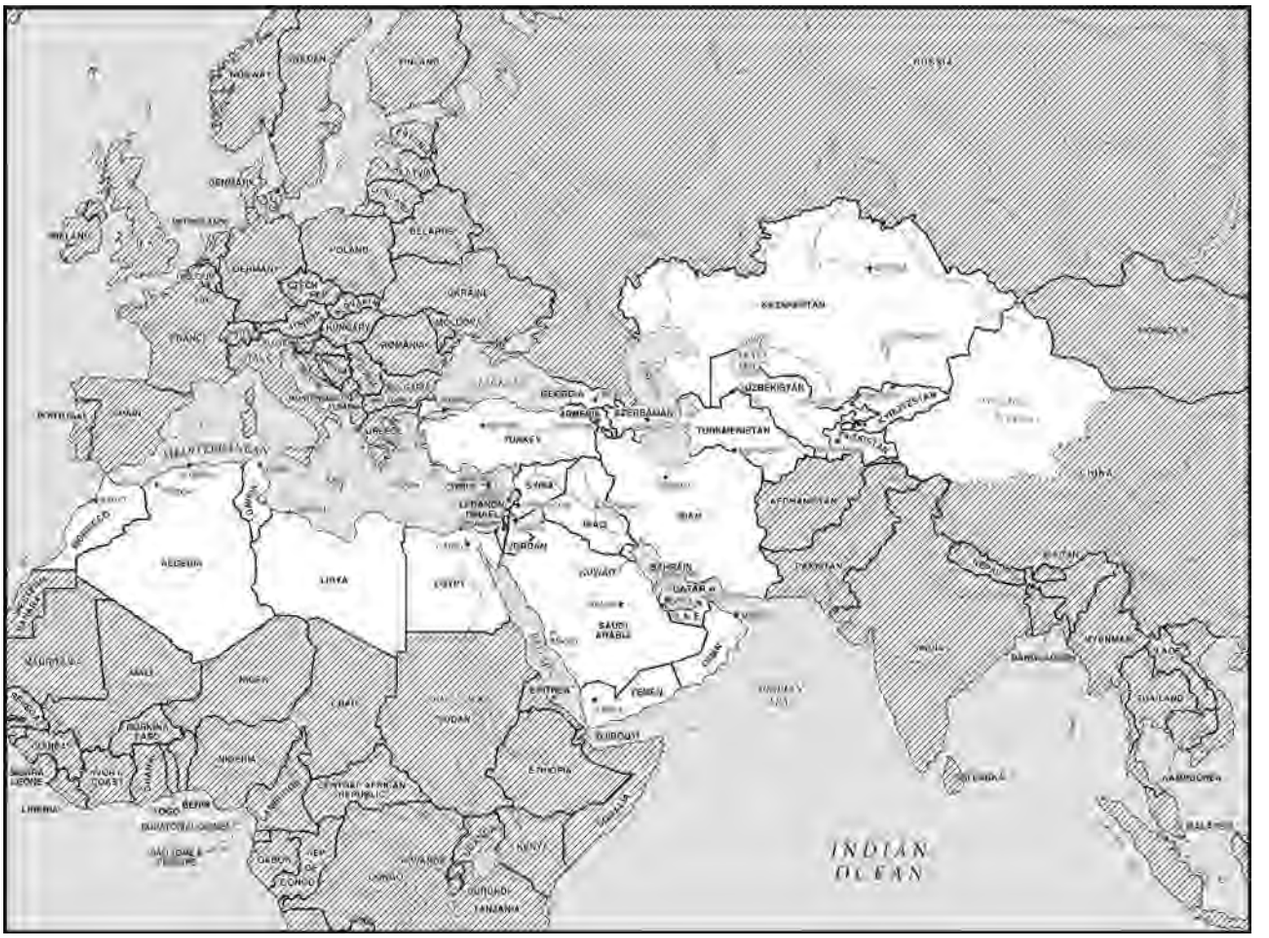
The following examples are included on the accompanying audio compact disc packaged with this volume. Track numbers are also indicated on the pages listed below for easy reference to text discussions. Complete notes on each example may be found on pages 1387–1392

6. The Middle East

The large and diverse geographic region that we call the Middle East and Central Asia supports widely shared, important musical practices. The singing of fine poetry, sophisticated melodic improvisation, and musical composition using a great variety of long, complex rhythmic patterns are the basis for essential aesthetic values. Large, often open-ended forms that offer the potential for spontaneous alteration at the request of an audience are integral to the construction of social time—of entertainment—in this region. Musical performances often grow out of lifecycle events such as weddings. Musicians now work comfortably in the media as well; indeed, "mediated" performances may be a part even of weddings and similar occasions, and during the twentieth century the mass media became patrons of music and musicians.

Within these broad characteristics, countless local musical identities have emerged. For listeners, the many dialects, melodic and rhythmic patterns, musical instruments, and genres produce the rich musical world of the Middle East and Central Asia.

Child musicians perform outside the bazaar in Tehran, Iran, 2005.
Photo by Niloofar Mina.



The Middle East

Hearing the Music of the Middle East

For musicians and listeners of the twenty-first century, the Middle East is a region with far-reaching connections that extend across large portions of three continents—Africa, Europe, and Asia—and can be discerned, as well, in large diasporic communities of Australia and the Americas. The contributors to this section have been more concerned with fundamental principles of the musics of the Middle East and with ways in which shared resources and values have been adapted to local requirements than with drawing sharp contrasts between Middle Eastern musical practices and those of neighboring regions.

An especially impressive continuity in Middle Eastern music is the ingenuity with which musicians, in response to changing demands, have systematized resources drawn from many regional practices while devising countless ways for groups and individuals to articulate their differences. Musicians pursuing local interests and those attempting some kind of broader synthesis run up against different pressures for change. The desire to construct comprehensive musical systems derives, in part, from the cultural prestige and the intellectual frameworks of the world religions born in the Middle East, which include Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In no other part of the world have the chanting of sacred texts and the organization of liturgies occupied a greater share of musicians' energies. Classifications of rhythmic and tonal patterns according to their character and function have served both sacred and secular ends (which have often been closely intertwined).

Musical instruments originating in the Middle East and Central Asia were carried, together with ideas about music, in all directions—to Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, and South Asia, East Asia, and Southeast Asia. A striking example is a type of ensemble that served as an emblem of power in countless Asian, African, and European courts from Sumatra to Malaysia to northern Cameroon and northern Niger. The core instruments of this ensemble, in its various manifestations, are oboes, long trumpets, and kettledrums, though others (cylindrical drums, shorter trumpets, and various metallophones) have often been added and the long trumpets are not always present. The towers called *naubat-khānā* in South Asia and *naqqāra-khāne* or *ṭabl-khānā* in the Middle East were designed for this paradigmatic "outdoor" ensemble, which contrasts in almost every respect with the ensembles that have cultivated more refined sounds, suitable to garden pavillions or indoor settings. Different attitudes and postures were associated with each type of ensemble; this was also the case with the Chinese distinction between "military" and "civic" instrumentation and the medieval European classification of instruments as either *haut* 'loud' or *bas* 'soft'.

The manner in which music solicits (or demands) the attention of potential (or involuntary) listeners is one of the main ways in which genres of performance and the roles of performers are distinguished. The need for such distinctions stems from the importance of music as a medium through which people interact and through which they can represent different styles of interaction.

This article introduces some of the issues that are explored in greater depth in this section: improvisation and the centrality of the voice, compound musical forms, and cultural diversity. (For basic information on the peoples, languages, religions, geography, and history of the Middle East, see Bates and Rassam 1983; Eickelman, 1998; Goldschmidt 1999; Hourani 1991; Lapidus 1988, Mostyn and Hourani 1983; and Rahman 1979.)

Improvisation and the Centrality of the Voice

The forms of musicmaking most highly valued in many Middle Eastern societies, as well as in some adjacent regions, require performers to improvise—that is, to adjust patterns and sequences they have mastered in ways they find appropriate for each occasion. Performers may learn such patterns and sequences as a fund of resources assembled for use in composing unique performances, or by way of a repertoire of relatively fixed compositions, which they may modify during performance.

Some forms of musical interaction depend on face-to-face contact among a restricted number of participants, some may occur in public (figure 1) or in private spaces. Amateur musicians often create their own relatively private space as they perform for one another in a venue, such as a teahouse or a public park, where other activities are taking place (figure 2). When a group of men or women sing short responses to a leader's phrases, the leader, in turn, must respond to his or her perceptions of changes in

Figure 1 A violinist performs for passersby at Tehran's bazaar, Iran, 2005.
Photo by Niloofar Mina.

the group's emotional state, noting as well the variable reactions of its individual members. Soloists must be similarly attentive to the responses of listeners who do not sing but utter conventional expressions of pleasure during the performance or even remain silent until they applaud or offer compliments once the performer has finished. Professionals or semiprofessionals who provide music on demand—notably for weddings and other celebrations—must quickly learn the necessary improvisational skills. Members of a circle of amateur musicians who perform for themselves are likely to cultivate accute sensitivity to the ways in which different facets of a musical personality may manifest themselves from one session to the next.

DISC 2 TRACK 4

The voice has remained central to the musics of the Middle East because it is the primary instrument of human communication. Voices can be effectively supported, extended, contradicted, or transcended by other musical instruments. Knowledge of a repertoire of poetic and musical resources enables a performer to rearrange familiar sequences and activate listeners' memories. As we expand our capacity for remembering rhythmic and melodic patterns, and for associating these patterns with human actions and emotions, listening to the music of the Middle East becomes hearing it. When a performer draws attention to one musical segment by repeating it with slight (or extensive) changes, the listeners' memory may retain a background against which they can perceive changes from one repetition to the next.

A musical performance in the Middle East normally consists of several sections of varying length. A shift from one section to the next may be quite abrupt, or it may be so gradual that listeners do not immediately realize that the music is taking on a new character. Listening for the most striking contrasts between sections with respect to pitch register, timbre, rhythm, and mode is probably the best way for new listeners to approach Middle Eastern music. With further experience, very subtle contrasts within each section start to register on the ear.

Sequences and Compound Forms

Listeners new to the music of the Middle East can quickly learn to appreciate the diverse ways in which instrumentalists interact with singers (some of whom are also instrumentalists). No function is more important than supplying instrumental interludes, which in many performance genres offer a much-needed respite after the most intense passages of sung poetry. The rhythmic and tonal relationships of the interludes to the music that precedes and follows these passages vary greatly. Great composers, such as Riyāḍal-Sunbāṭī (1906–1981) have designed impressive sequences in which one interlude is performed between a few sections, then replaced by a new interlude for the next few sections, and so on. Outstanding improvisers may be recognized by their ability to create effective transitions between the emotional coloring of one passage and the frame of mind that suits the poetry of the passage that follows it. Listeners who are new to the music of the Middle East can also

Figure 2 Two friends entertain themselves outside a teahouse, playing a three-stringed *dutār* and a goblet drum, Herāt, Afghanistan, 1969.
Photo by Stephen Blum.

quickly learn to appreciate the diverse ways in which instrumentalists interact with singers.

The density of events must vary if a performance is to hold the attention of listeners. Exchanges between singers and instrumentalists often involve overlapping entries which in a conversation would sound like interruptions but in music can show support while at the same time articulating a complementary perspective. Listeners whose musical habits were largely formed by the polyphonic music of Europe and the Americas have sometimes described Middle Eastern music as "monophonic," in other words "single-voiced." The term monophonic can be misleading to the extent that it directs attention away from the interactions through which performers create sonorous textures whose components cannot be enumerated as easily as the individual lines in, say, a four-voice fugue by J. S. Bach. Sometimes a singer is 'shadowed' by one or more instrumentalists who follow every twist and turn in the singer's line almost (but not quite) as closely as possible. The precise points where instrumental figures begin and end are often left to the performer's discretion; as a result, the number of sounds that can be heard at any given moment and the harmonic relationships among them will fluctuate.

One model of cyclic organization used by composers from the eighth through the early sixteenth centuries is a sequence of seven songs, such as the cycle about seven fortresses composed by Maʿbad (d. 743). The most richly elaborated compound forms are cycles consisting of pieces and improvisations in a more or less prescribed sequence of genres—such as the *nūba* of North Africa, the *waṣla* of Egypt and the Levant, the Turkish *fasıl*, and the five great *fuṣūl* of the Iraqi *maqām*. Different types of sequence, some more formalized than others, have been worked out to meet the diverse needs of courts, Sufi lodges, circles of amateurs, and in the twentieth century the concert hall.

The **Levant** is the name given to the area of the Middle East that comprises Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria.

A compound form conceived as a sequence of genres may or may not progress through a prescribed sequence of musical *maqāmāt* 'modes' (singular, *maqām*); in some cases each "movement" or major section of the compound form begins and ends in the same mode. Compositions or improvisations that move systematically through every available mode have constituted a genre of their own at certain times and places, sometimes to provide a synopsis of the modal system, at other times to challenge composers or performers to display their command of the entire system. A musician's ability to make a harmonious arrangement of the full range of modes was tested by such Ottoman Turkish genres as the precomposed instrumental *küllî külliyat peşrev* 'compendium prelude' and the improvised *taksîm külli*. One Persian *dastgāh* 'system' in current use, *rāst panjgāh*, is sometimes said to have been assembled in large part from portions of other *dastgāh-hā*.

The idea of modulating through several—if not all—parts of a modal system is easily combined with the idea of a compound form made up of several genres. Different ways of joining the two concepts are

evident in the Iraqi *fuṣūl* 'cycles', the Iranian *radīf* 'row', and the Tajik-Uzbek *shash maqām*, among others.

The long-standing interest in compound forms stimulated efforts to classify tonal and rhythmic patterns according to their potential functions—such as introducing, continuing or moving away, reaching a culmination, and returning or closing. Terms for music that fulfills these functions occur in all major languages of the Middle East—for example Arabic *qafla* 'lock' (a cadential pattern), Persian *forūd* 'descent' (an extended melodic descent toward a cadence), Azerbaijani *ayaq* 'foot', and Kurdish *paṣ-bend* 'after the verse'.

Cultural Diversity

The development of compound forms provided much-needed opportunities for bringing together verses, rhythms, and melodies from highly diverse sources. A ceremony of the Qāderi dervishes in Iranian Kurdistan might include texts in Arabic, Persian, and Sorani Kurdish. The Iraqi *maqām* is a particularly impressive achievement, incorporating both rural and urban genres, performed in both religious and secular settings, and with texts and vocables taken from dialectal Arabic, Persian, Kurdish, Turkish, and Hebrew as well as from literary Arabic; before the emigration of Iraqi Jews to Israel in 1949, Jewish instrumentalists and Muslim vocalists collaborated in performance of the *maqām*. For most of its existence, the Tajik-Uzbek *shash maqām* accommodated sung poetry in both Tajik (Persian) and Uzbek, but in the twentieth century nationalist pressures led to the artificial construction of separate Tajik and Uzbek "traditions."

Historians of European music have traced continuities in the traditions associated with a single language and nation, giving us excellent histories of, for example, "Italian music" and "Russian music." However, the model of national music histories is more misleading than helpful when applied to the Middle East, where the norm has been cultural interaction among speakers of two or more languages and among practitioners of several religions.

In the *Kitāb al-aghāni* 'Book of Songs' of al-Iṣfahānī, the story is told of the singer Ibn Misjaḥ (d. ca. 715), who was active in Mecca during the reigns of the first six Umayyad caliphs (661–715). He is said to have traveled widely in order to assimilate the best aspects of several musical repertoires—Byzantine melodies, the Syrian *oktōēchos*, songs from the Persian province of Fars, and the repertoire of the Persian short-necked lute *barbat*. Two key verbs in al-Iṣfahānī's narrative form a complementary pair: *wa-akhadha* 'he assimilated' and *wa-alqā* 'he discarded'. Selecting the features one wishes to adopt from a foreign musical practice entails identifying and rejecting its undesirable features, in this case certain *nabarāt* 'vocalises' and melodies that Ibn Misjaḥ deemed incompatible with Arabic vocal art. In turn, a listener who hears the options that performers have chosen is often in a position to recognize the options they have rejected.

—Adapted from an article by Stephen Blum

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Guide to Transliteration and Pronunciation

This section covers cultures whose people speak Middle Eastern and Central Asian languages from three of the world's major language families: Afro-asiatic, Indo-European, and Altaic. Many of the languages of these families were at some point, or continue to be, written in the Arabic script, a fact that reflects the spread of Islam throughout the region (and with it the use of the Arabic language as a religious and scientific lingua franca) nearly 1,300 years ago. Although the Arabic script was adopted over a broad geographic expanse, the pronunciation of certain letters varies from one language to another. One result is that a vast array of cognate words are found throughout the Middle East and Central Asia, much as words deriving from Latin can be found scattered throughout the European languages. Some of these terms have retained a similar pronunciation and a single meaning, but many words have, over time, acquired different meanings, different pronunciations, or both. Cognate terms of both types are very much in evidence in the music cultures of these regions. For example, the terms *maqām* (Arabic), *makam* (modern Turkish), and *muğam* (Azeri) all refer to similar, though not identical, concepts of melodic mode. In addition, several of these languages have numerous spoken colloquial dialects that use variant pronunciations of the same word: *darbūka*, *darabukka*, and *dirbaki* are all Arabic dialectical variants of one name for the common vase-shaped single-headed drum. In many cases, the spelling of musical terms has been standardized in this section for the convience of the reader; in other cases, however, particularly where a specific tradition is stressed, cross-linguistic and dialectical variations have been retained.

When required by the conventions of English syntax, plural forms of nouns throughout this section generally follow the norms of each language. Because the syntactic conventions of some languages (such as Persian and Turkish) do not use the plural as nearly as often as English uses it, this policy has produced sentences that may seem awkward to readers familiar with these languages.

Arabic, Persian, Turkish

The *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (*IJMES*) transliteration system has in general been used for Standard Written Arabic, Persian, and Ottoman Turkish. A guide to the pronunciation of these sounds is found below. Additional vowels have been added to accommodate those of the many Arabic spoken dialects referred to in this section, some of which differ dramatically from the literary written language ("Standard Arabic"). When lyrics or spoken dialects are quoted, the transliteration follows the speaker's pronunciation as closely as possible.

Arabic Vowels and Dipthongs

Each Arabic vowel has a long and a short form. Short vowels appear unmarked; long vowels are marked with a macron: *ā*. In addition, Arabic vowels are all "darkened" when they occur next to an emphatic or velarized consonant (see below). This difference is most noticeable in the "light" and "dark" pronunciations of the long form of the vowel *a*.

Romanization	Pronunciation
a ā	short as in *tack*; long as in *can*; long in conjunction with a velarized consonant, as in *father*
e ē	short as in *bet*; long as in *mate*
i ī	short as in *bit*; long as in *seek*
o ō	short as in *oak*; long as in *open*
u ū	short as in *put*; long as in *ruler*
aw	*ow* in *how*
ay	*y* in *my*

Arabic Consonants

Unless otherwise noted, consonants are pronounced approximately like their English equivalents. Sounds that are pronounced differently from, or do not exist in, English include the emphatic or velarized consonants (most of which are marked with underdots) that have a "dark" pronunciation made with the tongue further back and arched higher in the mouth than in English:

ḍ ṭ ṣ q ẓ (pronounced as "dark" *z* or *dh*—see below)

Plus the following:

th	*th* in *thin* (never as in *this*)
dh	*th* in *this*
j	*j* in *joke* in the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf; *s* in *measure* in the Eastern Mediterranean and parts of North Africa

kh	*ch* in Scottish *loch* or German *Bach*
ʿ	uvular fricative, pronounced like a short growling sound deep in the throat
ʾ	glottal stop, like the short silence in *uh-oh*, but occurring at the beginning, middle, or end of a word in Arabic
ḥ	"heavy" *h* pronounced deep in the throat (like the sound made by blowing on a pair of eyeglasses to clean them)
gh	fricated *r*, as in the French pronunciation of *Paris* but stronger

Persian Vowels and Dipthongs

There are three main dialects of Persian: Farsi (spoken in Iran), Tajik (spoken in Tajikistan and northern Afghanistan), and Dari (spoken in western Afghanistan). Persian is written in the Arabic alphabet but has four additional letters, transliterated here as *p*, *ch*, *zh*, and *g*. (When Persian musical terms were adopted into Arabic, these consonants were changed: for example, *chahārgāh* became *jahārkāh*; *āhang* became *hank*; and *pīsh row* became Turkish *peşrev* and then Arabic *bashraf*.) Four Persian consonants are pronounced differently from the Arabic consonants written with the same letters:

Arabic *th* (as in *mathnavī*) becomes *s* (*masnavī*).
Arabic *dh* (as in *dhikr*) becomes *z* (*zekr*).
Arabic *ḍ* (*ḍarb*) becomes *ż* (*meżrāb*).
Arabic *w* becomes *v* (*verd*).

In everyday speech, Persian vowels are differentiated more consistently by timbre than by length. Speakers and singers of classical poetry, however, take great care to distinguish the three long vowels—*ā*, *ī*, and *ū*—from the three short vowels we have written (in a departure from the *IJMES* system) as *a*, *e*, and *o*. The six Persian vowels can also be classified as three front vowels (*a*, *e*, and *ī*) and three back vowels (*ā*, *o*, and *ū*). In many publications *i* and *u* are understood as potentially long vowels without carrying a macron, but we have placed macrons over all three long vowels in order to make the transliteration of proper names and musical terms reasonably consistent in Arabic and Persian. The two Persian dipthongs are here as *ow* and *ey* or *ei*.

Ottoman Turkish

Because Ottoman Turkish was written in the Arabic script, it is transcribed here using the same system as Persian and Arabic. This has the advantage of giving a precise rendering of the written form of words and also highlights the many Persian and Arabic borrowings. In Ottoman Turkish, most of the letters of the Arabic alphabet were pronounced as in Persian; however, Ottoman Turkish no longer exists as a spoken language; rather, it exists for modern Turks as a literary heritage similar to Latin, Middle English, and Old Provençal for modern Europeans.

Modern Turkish

In 1924, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk launched a reform of the Turkish language as part of his effort to westernize Turkey. This included discarding the Arabic script used over seven centuries of Ottoman culture and adopting the Roman alphabet. Some letters that had been part of Ottoman orthography but were not pronounced by Turkish-speakers (such as the Arabic letter *ʿayn*) were dropped, and a number of distinctions made in Ottoman Turkish (such as vowel length, particularly in words borrowed from Persian or Arabic) were also abandoned. Diacritic marks such as umlaut, cedilla, hacek, and circumflex on romanized letters allowed the expression of all sounds of Turkish in the new alphabet. In this section, names and terms from the Ottoman period have been transliterated from Arabic script according to the system described above; those after 1924 have been cited in their modern Turkish (romanized) spellings. Modern Turkish consonants are pronounced in English, except for the following:

c	*j* in *joke*
ç	*ch* in *church*
ğ	between two vowels as a slight *s* sound, otherwise silent
ş	*sh* in *ship*

Modern Turkish vowels are pronounced as follows:

a	short *u* in *sun*
e	short *e* in *bed*
i	*i* in *bit*
ı	similar to the second vowel sound in *station*, *wanted*
o	*o* in *falsetto*
ö	French *eu*, *feu*
u	*u* in *pull*
ü	German *ü* in *über*

The vowels *a*, *i*, and *u* are occasionally written with a circumflex accent (*â*, *î*, and *û*) before the letters *g*, *k*, and *l* to indicate that a slight *y* sound is inserted before the vowel: thus *kâtib* is pronounced *kyatib*. In some words of Arabic or Persian origin, the circumflex is also used to indicate the lengthening of a vowel sound.

Central Asian Turkic Languages

Many of the Central Asian Turkic languages were at one time or another written in Arabic script. During

the Soviet period, however, nearly all of these closely related languages—Azeri, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uygur, and Uzbek—came to be written in various forms of the Russian Cyrillic alphabet. This is also true of Tajik, an eastern dialect of Persian. In modern Central Asia one can find examples of the same language written in romanized Cyrillic, and Arabic scripts.

The romanized spellings in this section represent a simplified and, for native English-speakers, more intuitive version of transliteration schemes used in the nations of Central Asia themselves. For sounds that cannot be intuitively or unambiguously transliterated into English orthography, these conventions are used:

Romanization	Pronunciation
kh	*ch* as in *loch*
gh	similar to *ch* in *loch*, but voiced to sound like *logh*
q	*c* as in *cot* (hard *c*, formed in the back of the throat)
j	*j* as in *joke*
ç (Turkmen)	*ch* as in *choke*
ş (Turkmen)	*sh* as in *shake*
zh	*g* as in *loge*
ā (Uzbek and Tajik)	*a* as in *father*
ä (Turkmen)	*a* as in *cattle*
ö	*e* as in *alert*
ü	*ü* as in German *über*
y	*i* as in *bit*
ÿ	*y* as in *yellow*

Individual Languages

Armenian

Armenian has its own unique alphabet and is transliterated here according to the Library of Congress system.

Hebrew

Hebrew has been transliterated according to the Library of Congress system.

Kurdish

Two forms of Kurdish are now written in standardized alphabets: Sorani in a modified Arabic alphabet, and Kurmanji in a Latin alphabet modeled on that of modern Turkey with the addition of the consonants *x* and *q* as well as a few others that have not been used in this book, which otherwise uses the alphabet devised for Kurmanji. The five long vowels are written *a*, *ê*, *î*, *ô*, *û*; short vowels used in Kurdish words cited here include *e*, *i*, *o*, *ö*, *u*, and *ü*.

—Compiled by Dwight F. Reynolds

Theorizing about Musical Sound

Nearly every Middle Eastern music has a centuries-old history of theoretical works. Writers sought to understand music in terms known to them from ancient Greek theories of the harmony of the spheres, consonance and dissonance, and the relationship of music to nature and human moods. They sought to measure and explain melodic intervals, modes, and musical instruments. They asked questions about the proper role of music in society and in spiritual life.

Music theory—part of the Greek *quadrivium* that also included arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy—first entered learned discourse through Arabic translations of Greek encyclopedic and scientific works. Middle Eastern scholars became familiar with Euclid, Pythagoras, Ptolemy, Nicomachus of Gerasa, Plato, Aristotle, and Aristoxenus, the authors of the Greek explanations of tetrachords (Greek *genus*; plural, *genera*—known to this day in Arabic by the cognate *jins*; plural, *ajnās*). The Arabic translations of some of these works served to preserve and perpetuate them; some became known to European scholars of later centuries through these translations.

Subsequent theories of music attempted to name the notes, and fundamental melodic structures such as tetrachords, metrical patterns, and modes of local musics. At first, these theories remained close to the Greek models; one example is the writings of Ḥunayn bin Isḥāq (d. 873), which found an enthusiastic reception in Arab and Jewish intellectual circles.

Beginning with al-Fārābī (ca. 870–950), however, theorists turned away from theoretical models that did not seem to accommodate local practice. Their ideas were, in turn, transmitted in Arabic, Turkish, Persian, and Hebrew works, modified to suit local scholarly and musical practices. Many Middle Eastern societies, despite their different languages and social histories, claim the same theorists as their own. Middle Eastern musics seem to share a "core" of theorists whose works underpin different classical-historic repertoires.

Al-Fārābī, who systematized music with a keen ear to actual practice, is certainly the best-known of these "core" writers. Like other theorists, he chose the *ʿūd* as his own instrument; not coincidentally, this is an important instrument of practical performance. Al-Fārābī described instances when the theoretical solutions of the Greeks did not account for the actual sound of music in performance. He analyzed characteristic microtones and rhythmic patterns, systematized information about notes and modes, and considered the processes of composition and performance. As a scholar, he was equally interested in Greek writing on poetics and on musical genera; this broad view, bringing theory and practice together, was typical of his life's work.

Al-Fārābī's legacy was carried on and augmented by others over the centuries. Safī al-Dīn al-Urmawī (d. 1294) was a well-known theorist, and his *Kitāb al-adwār*, giving a recognizably modern system of modes and meters, relies heavily on al-Fārābī's example. Al-Urmawī's legacy became that of an international systematist, and many treatises, including some of Persian origin, followed this highly rigorous and analytical trend at least into the sixteenth century.

Early Arab theories of rhythm and meter were closely tied to contemporary systems of poetic meter. As early as the eighth century al-Khalīl ibn Aḥmad (ca. 718–ca. 790) systematized meter according to sixteen poetic meters, and his successors, for instance al-Fārābī (in *Kitāb al-īqāʿāt* 'Book of Rhythms') also linked the meters of music and poetry. As in many other areas, al-Fārābī set lasting precedents in his treatment of rhythm, developing a letter notation for rhythmic description and classifying attacks, rhythmic modes, and ornamental techniques.

Modern scholars have brought archaeology to bear on instruments and instrumental music in the ancient Middle East. Beginning with the early-twentieth-century excavations by Sir Arthur Wooley in Sumer (modern Iraq), much research has indicated the prominence of the lyre in this ancient region. Moreover, numerous discussions of musical instruments by early Arab writers have been preserved. These writings differ according to philological, historical, and theoretical approaches: whereas writers like al-Mufaddal ibn Salāma (d. 903) preferred a taxonomic approach, theorists like al-Kindī (ca. 801–ca. 866) and al-Fārābī exploited instruments (notably the *ʿūd*) as a medium for technical discussion of modal concepts. Al-Fārābī is typical in that (like the Greeks) he gives pride of place to the human voice; in his concept, instruments fall into a hierarchical continuum with the voice at the top, followed by melodic instruments and percussion instruments, with military instruments at the bottom. After the voice, the prominence of plucked stringed instruments—especially the *ʿūd* and *qānūn*—can be

seen in the writings of Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna; 980–1037), who classified instruments according to the presence of strings. However, as al-Fārābī had stated in *Kitāb al-mūsīqī al-kabīr* 'Grand Book on Music', imitation of the voice remained an ideal.

The potential for musical notation has interested theorists variously. They made occasional attempts to notate music, beginning with al-Kindī's alphabetical notation. Little notated music exists before the twentieth century, although there are important exceptions in Ottoman classical music. Two Europeans resident at the Ottoman court made large collections of notated pieces. Ali Ufkî Bey (born Wojciech Bobowski; 1610–ca. 1672), a slave-musician and then an interpreter in the Ottoman palace service, compiled 300 pages of notated music (*Mecmû'a-i Saz ü Söz* 'Collection of Instrumental and Vocal Works', ca. 1650) representing a wide variety of classical genres. A half-century later, Demetrius Cantemir, a royal hostage in the Ottoman palace, made his own collection of notations, similarly documenting the classical traditions. In the nineteenth century, an Armenian cleric, Baba Hamparsum (1768–1839), devised his own system of notation and applied it to religious court melodies.

In the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, naming and measuring notes and modes remained fundamental to music theory. Science, a principal aspect of Middle Eastern modernism, was brought to bear on rational divisions of the octave. Theorists attempted to measure intervals precisely with a variety of mechanical tools, finding, however (as al-Fārābī had found centuries earlier), that their measurements did not match performance practices.

As a scientific device, notation was widely adopted in the twentieth century; theorists and teachers used it to preserve repertoires, develop modern pedagogical techniques, and facilitate the work of people in new occupations (such as studio musicians). Subjects ranging from musical exercises for beginners (for example, ʿArafa and ʿAlī's method book for learning the *ʿūd*, now in its seventh printing) to compendia of the entire *radīf* of a major Persian musician found their way into print, even though there were only a few music printing firms in the Middle East, and these were only in major cities. Nevertheless, reading music has not replaced oral-aural means of learning musical style and practice.

Maḥmūd al-Ḥifnī's *Turāthunā* 'Our Heritage' (1958–1963), published in four volumes by the Egyptian ministry of culture, was intended to preserve and teach important "pieces." In some places musicians and scholars have reconstituted or recovered traditions using oral and printed sources and have made new printed sources of their own. Yunus Rajabi (1897–1976) in Uzbekistan produced a version of Tajik-Uzbek *shash maqām* regarded as authoritative and used to teach the tradition. Commercially published transcriptions of notations and song texts throughout the Middle East extend to the lyrics and music of the latest pop artists.

Adapted from an article by Virginia Danielson and Alexander J. Fisher

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Musical Instruments in the Arab World

Most of the basic musical instruments used in the contemporary Arab world were already known in the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and southern Arabia; in the Islamic period; or in both. Consequently, a certain continuity with the past—in some cases dating back 5,000 years—is evident in the morphology, denomination, or function of the basic instrument types, and even in the role of ensembles.

Throughout the history of the region, instruments have generally been at the service of the voice. In the twentieth century, some modern trends in music tended to change this predominance and liberate urban instruments from their historical association with the voice. However, the different initiatives to install independent instrumental music did not change the primacy of the voice, cherished by traditionalists. For example, in traditional "classical" music, instruments rarely perform outside the framework of a vocal repertoire; solo instrumental parts, preludes, interludes, and independent instrumental forms either are based on vocal renditions, serving to reinforce the voice, or are played within a formal framework that is essentially vocal. Some performers of religious and religiously inspired forms sing without instrumental accompaniment. Good performers of urban and classical traditions, who also sing in religious settings, are often able to sing without accompaniment. Some secular singers claim that they can sing without instruments, and indeed that instruments may impede the development of singing, although others maintain that instruments can be helpful to a new singer. This idea was expressed by al-Iṣfahānī (897–967) in *Kitāb al-aghānī* 'Book of Songs': he contrasts solo singing—*irtijāl* 'improvisation'—and singing with instrumental accompaniment, suggesting that instruments thwart the singer's desire for complete freedom. In folk music, instrumental performances exist but are always in relation to a social occasion in which music is only one aspect.

Role of Musical Instruments: Concepts and Continuity

That Arab music has always been considered essentially vocal did not prevent Islamic musicologists from discussing instruments theoretically and even considering them outside the realm of the voice. Short- and long-necked lutes, the flute, or the plucked zither often served for theoretical discussions of intervals, tetrachords, melodic modes, and tonal systems. The short-necked lute was used to illustrate tablatures indicating finger positions on the strings.

The capacity of musical instruments to exceed what they usually do is an old preoccupation. As early as the tenth century, al-Fārābī (d. 950) demonstrated not only how instruments were used but also what they could be capable of in the hands of an expert musician. In modern times, some musicians have attempted to broaden the techniques and sounds of musical instruments such as the *ʿūd*, for reasons other than accompanying singing. In general, however, the results remain either theoretical or, if applied, experimental and limited. Some of the most important experiments were by the Baghdad school of the *ʿūd*, which sought to develop this instrument, create a new repertoire for it, and make it independent of singing; but for a long time these efforts were seen by the general public as alienating. To save solo *ʿūd* playing, some representatives of this school have depended on paraphrasing regional vocal traditions; for example, Iraqi solo *ʿūd* performers base their content largely on the vocal material of the Iraqi *maqām*.

Traditional Instruments in Contemporary Performance

Percussive Instruments (Idiophones)

The metallic *ṣunūj* (cymbals) are found all over the Arab world. They come in three sizes. The smallest are called *ṣunūj al-aṣābiʿ* (finger cymbals), or *sagāt* in Egypt, *chumpārāt* in Iraq, *nuiqsāt* (the diminutive of *nāqūs*) in Morocco, and *zel* in Libya. The player typically uses two pairs, holding one pair in each hand between the thumb and index or middle finger. Small cymbals are used by women dancers, Gypsies, and were used by effeminate men to accompany solo dancing with other string and percussion instruments. Medium-size cymbals (about 10 centimeters in diameter), called *tura* in Egypt, are played by groups that specialize in religious music. In Oman the same cymbal ring, *sehal*, or *ṭāsa* (plural, *ṭūs*) is played by men or women to accompany the singing and dancing of professional groups. In the Gulf, a pair of *ṭūs* are used in the bedouin dance *ʿayyāla*, in

which two rows of men sing antiphonally. Large cymbals (15 centimeters in diameter) are often the most popular idiophone in both secular and religious contexts. They are usually played with an ensemble of other instruments that differ according to the country and the occasion. At many outdoor festivities, time is structured by the metallic sound of *ṣunūj*. In rural Mesopotamia, in the original war dance *al-sās*, the dancers (who carry shields and are sometimes on horseback) are accompanied by cymbals, a shawm, a large circular drum, and a small double kettledrum. Cymbals have an important role in religious ceremonies, accompanying monodic chant and group singing. Large cymbals are used in Oriental Coptic, Chaldean, and Syriac churches; in Shiʿa mourning ceremonies in Iraq, Lebanon, and Bahrain; and in the ceremonies of different Sufi orders.

Stringed Instruments

For Arabs, strings have always been the most important category of instruments. Four types of stringed instruments have been used in modern times: lutes, fiddles, zithers, and lyres. (Harps completely disappeared from the core area of the Arab world after the sixteenth century, leaving only traces in the southern periphery in contact with Africa.)

Both short- and long-necked lutes are used. Short-necked lutes include the *ʿūd*; the *kwitra*; and the *ʿūd ʿarbī* or *tūnīsī*, specific to North African music. These are all associated with urban music. Long-necked lutes, by contrast, are associated with folk music. The *ṭanbūr*, *sāz*, and *buzuq* in eastern Arab lands and the *lōtār* and *gimbrī* in North Africa are used mainly by non-Arab populations.

Short-necked Lutes: The ʿŪd

The *ʿūd* or *al-ʿūd al-sharqī* (plural, *ʿīdān*) is by far the most important and prestigious Arab instrument (figure 1). It was used in Middle Eastern centers of civilization even before the "golden ages" of the ninth and tenth centuries; but although it was known by all Arabs, many local traditions, whether art or folk, did not use it. Today the *ʿūd* is widespread in the Arab world, even in remote villages; it accompanies folk song. In some places where there is a distinct local version of the short-necked lute, the term *ʿūd sharqī* 'eastern lute' is used.

The *ʿūd* is the symbol of high Arab musical culture and indeed is called the *sulṭān* or *amīr* 'prince'; it represents both secular musical pleasure and scientific and intellectual thought, and its history is closely connected with the splendors of urban Arab civilization. From Arabic manuscripts written from the ninth and tenth centuries to the present day, no other instrument has been studied so extensively or from so many perspectives—mythological, historical, cosmological, theoretical, acoustical, morphological, technical, ethnological, and sociological.

The modern *ʿūd* is an unfretted instrument with five or six courses, played with a plectrum. The sixth string was apparently added in Baghdad in the 1940s. It has been adopted by Arab instrumentalists to give prominence to solo improvisation. In general, it is agreed that the Egyptian and Syrian schools are primarily based on vocal aesthetics, whereas the Baghdad school established an instrumental

Figure 1 Salman Shukur from Iraq plays an *ʿūd*.
Photo by Scheherazade Qassim Hassan, 1987.

technique and style independent of the needs of the voice.

In many parts of the Arab world, the second half of the twentieth century saw a remarkable renaissance of the *ʿūd* in which its production and use expanded. Evidently, its modest size (which makes it easy to transport) and its technical capabilities (relative to those of regional short-necked lutes) met musicians' need for a practical master reference instrument that could be used anywhere to accompany any singing, including popular song. Today, the *ʿūd* still has multiple roles. It accompanies solo singing and is part of the *takht sharqī* 'Oriental ensemble' (which is made up of *ʿūd*, *qānūn* 'zither', *nāy* 'flute', violin, and percussion) and modern enlarged orchestras. Its new role as a solo improvisational instrument has been accepted in almost all Arab capitals. In many Arab centers, concertos for *ʿūd* and symphony orchestra bring together traditionally trained and Western-trained musicians.

Other Short-necked Lutes

The *kwitra* is another regional short-necked lute, used only in Arab-Andalusian urban ensembles in Morocco and in the Algerian cities Tlemcen and Algiers. This instrument resembles the *ūd sharqī* but has a more elongated, smaller, less bulging sound box. In the classical *nūba* repertoire, it is played by the master of the ensemble, the *maʿallem* or *bāshā kyatrī*, who is the first lute player. In Tlemcen, it accompanies *ḥawzī*, a song style that falls between the classical and the popular.

The *qanbūs* (also known as the *gabūs*, *ʿūd ṣanʿānī*, and *turbī*) is used today to accompany the classical *ṣanʿānī* singing of Yemen. The *qanbūs* is a four-string lute made from a single piece of wood; its sound box is covered with a skin membrane. It probably descends from a tenth-century south Arabian lute. Like all traditional lutes, the *qanbūs* is at the service of the voice, paraphrasing its melodic lines.

Long-necked Lutes

The contemporary long-necked lutes, the *ṭanbūr* and *sāz*, are very popular among Kurds, Turkomans, and Yezidis, and the Gypsies in northern Iraq and Syria. These lutes are made in different sizes and shapes. They have a varying number of frets, generally twelve to seventeen, and two or three courses of strings. The sound box is made of wood, metal, or vegetal materials. The *ṭanbūr* is the most popular instrument among amateurs, specialists, and professionals in these minority groups; it accompanies secular solo singing and the ritual and ceremonial songs of some esoteric Islamic groups. The *ṭanbūr* has flourished in the past few decades. When Baghdad Radio presented Kurdish and Turkoman programs in the 1970s, this instrument was featured and thus was reintroduced, after many centuries, to the musical life of Baghdad, becoming part of various radio ensembles that combined local and regional Arab instruments. In the north, it was introduced into the ensembles of cultural centers and schools.

To meet the needs and aesthetic standards of radio, another long-necked lute, probably of Turkish origin, the *buzuq* (figure 2)—which has enlarged tonal capacities and thus can compete with the *ʿūd*—was introduced into the capitals of the eastern Arab

Figure 2 The *buzuq*, played by Lebanese-born musician and ethnomusicologist Ali Jihad Racy. *Photo by Barbara Racy.*

world. The *buzuq* has twenty-four frets, allowing the full range of sound preferred in cities like Baghdad, Damascus, and Beirut. The *buzuq* became an instrument for solo improvisation, *taqāsīm* (introductory instrumental sections involving free improvisation), and is also played with the *ʿūd* and in modern ensembles.

The Bowed Fiddle: Rabāb

Rabāb is the generic name for bowed fiddles in the Arab world. These fiddles are of two types: popular spike fiddles and classical polystring fiddles such as the Moroccan two-string *rbeb* and the Iraqi four-string *jōze*.

The oldest and best-known spike fiddle is the bedouin monochord *rabāba*, which has a thin wooden frame, rectangular or waisted, covered with skin stitched on one or more sides. In Yemen, in the Tihama area on the Red Sea, the *rabāba* is circular and has a wooden or metal sound box. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, a rectangular type was used in Egypt, and probably throughout the Middle East; this form, which has disappeared in urban Egypt, had the same characteristics as the current bedouin *rabāba*.

The neck stick of the bedouin *rabāba*, which holds the single peg, pierces the whole body and is extended on one end by a metal spike. The single horsehair string is rubbed with resin. For intonation, *rabāba* players make movable frets of thread or fine cloth bands tied around the neck. To produce the three to five notes of this instrument, the player touches the string very lightly with the fingers of the left hand; he sits cross-legged on the ground, holding the instrument at an angle with the spike on his thigh—a position that makes it easy to turn the instrument right and left and facilitates bowing. In Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the Gulf, this way of playing is called *yisḥab al-rabāba* 'pulling the *rabāba*', and some of the musical styles are called *masḥūb* 'that which is pulled'. The rectangular *rabāba* is used by bedouin in the Arabian Peninsula, Jordan, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon; the waisted *rabāba* is usually found among rural and semisedentary tribes in contact with towns east of the Mediterranean.

Board Zithers: The Qānūn *and* Sanṭūr

The only zithers used in the Arab world are table zithers, the *qānūn* and *sanṭūr*. These are instruments of classical and urban music. The *qānūn* is more widespread in urban Arab centers and is taught in its conservatories as a pan-Arab instrument. Although Arab musicians generally know of the *sanṭūr*, its use is now restricted to Iraq.

The *qānūn* has about twenty-six triple strings, played with two plectra attached to rings worn on the first finger of each hand. It is considered an aristocratic instrument and is sometimes referred to as 'the sultan' (like the *ʿūd*). It forms an essential part of the *takht sharqī* ensemble (the small Oriental ensemble) along with the *ʿūd*, the *nāy* 'flute', violin, and percussion and has maintained a prominent place in large modern orchestras. It has also become a solo instrument. By the 1930s, multiple levers were commonly added to each course of strings so that the performer could switch easily from one scale to another. For example, a course of strings tuned to E-flat would become E-half-flat when one lever was raised and would become E-natural when two levers were raised.

Most likely, the *sanṭūr* derives from an ancient Babylonian horizontal harp that was struck with two sticks. The *sanṭūr* was popular in Spain and known in North Africa and Egypt. Today, it is used only in Iraq. The table of the Iraqi *sanṭūr* is an isosceles trapezoid; it has twenty-three to twenty-five triple strings each set of which is tuned in unison and struck with a pair of light sticks. The *sanṭūr* is one of two essential melodic instruments accompanying the classical genre of the Iraqi *maqām*. It is part of the local ensemble *chalghī baghdādī* (figure 3), along with the *jōze* (a spike fiddle) and a *daff* (tambourine) and a *dumbuk* (single-headed drum). Nowadays, it is also used as a solo instrument.

The lyre: Ṭambūra

The lyre is one of the oldest instruments in the world. It has existed in many shapes and sizes in Mesopotamia since the third millenium B.C.E. Five types of lyres, some circular, are depicted on seals from the second century B.C.E. found in Dilmun (present-day Bahrain). In Yemen, murals dating from the first millenium B.C.E. depict a five-stringed lyre with circular sound box.

In the modern Middle East, the *ṭambūra* (plural, *al ṭambūrāt*) is an emblem of *nūban*, the major Afro-Arab ritual of possession. In the Gulf region—from southern Iraq down to Yemen, all along the Gulf shores—and through Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman, the instrument is uniform in shape and size (more than 1 meter high), and the same terms are used for its parts. This *ṭambūra* is a symmetrical triangular lyre with a shallow, circular wooden sound box (or, in more recent instruments, metal bowls) to which a covering of cow membrane is nailed or pegged. Almost everywhere in this area, *ṭambūrāt* have five strings, though some have six. Each string has a name. The *ṭambūra*

is placed on the ground to the left of the musician, who leans it against himself and plays it with the right hand. In one technique, a finger strikes the desired strings; in another technique, a large wooden or horn plectrum strikes all the strings and the left hand stops the unwanted strings from sounding.

Wind Instruments

Wind instruments include end-blown oblique flutes, single-reed clarinets, double-reed oboes, horns, trumpets, and some other, minor wind instruments. With the exception of the flute (*nāy*), all wind instruments are folk instruments played in nonurban settings.

Flutes

End-blown flutes were known in both ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia (where a silver flute from the third millenium B.C.E. has been excavated). The generic name for all varieties of flutes is *nāy* 'reed' (plural, *nāyāt*); this is also the only name for the urban and classical flutes used in cities of the Arab world. The classical *nāy* is made from "Persian reed" and is found in at least seven sizes. Whatever the size of the reed, all *nāyāt* have six holes plus one thumbhole, always located in the same parts of the reed: eight nodes and nine antinodes. A good *nāy* player, called a *nāyātī*, can produce almost three full octaves.

The *nāy* is the only wind instrument used in art music in the Middle East. It is an essential member of the traditional *takht* ensemble, along with the *ʿūd*, the *qānūn*, and percussion instruments. It is also present in most large modern orchestras.

The Arab world uses a great variety of popular flutes, in different sizes. They are made of wood or metal (figure 4), but above all of reed, with three to ten holes. These flutes have many local names: *juwwāk*; *fḥāl* 'male'; *gaṣba* 'reed' (plural, *gaṣbāt*); *shbēb* 'young' or *shabbāba* in North Africa and the eastern countries (where *shabbāba* is also a generic term for flutes); and *ʿuffāta*, *qawwāla*, *ṣuffāra*, and *salāmiyya* in Egypt—to mention only a few.

Most of the popular flutes are oblique flutes played by blowing on the edge of the mouth hole. However, duct flutes are also found in some parts of the Arab world, such as Iraq and Tunisia. Flute performers include amateurs and professionals.

Single-reed Instruments: Clarinets

Among the single-reed instruments, clarinets, called *bous* in Saudi Arabia and *magrūna* in Tunisia, are solo instruments played by shepherds and amateurs. The double-barrel reed clarinet—two clarinets, side by side, each with its own single reed—is perhaps the most widespread wind instrument in the Middle East. The term *mizmār* has two meanings in the Arab world: it is the generic name for any wind instrument and the specific name for single- and double-reed instruments. Many local names for the clarinet—such as *mizwij* and *mitbej* in Iraq, *jiftī* (from the Persian *joft* 'pair') in the Gulf countries and Oman—refer to the double reed.

In the double-reed instruments (of the clarinet type), two identical pipes, made of reed or an eagle's leg bones, are attached to each other, and five, six, or seven identical fingerholes are pierced in each reed.

Figure 3 Two members of a *chalghī baghdādī* ensemble perform at the Maison des Cultures du Monde in Paris, 1998. Suhaib Hashim al Ridjab (*at left*) plays the *jōze*, a spike fiddle, and Mohammed Zaki plays the *santūr*, a table zither.
Photo by Scheherazade Qassim Hassan.

The two smaller reeds, with a narrow rectangular tongue cut in each, and inserted into the larger reeds, are held entirely in the performer's closed mouth and are played with a circular breathing technique.

Double-reed Instruments: Shawms
The shawm is an ancient instrument of this region. It is known as *zurna* east of the Mediterranean; *ṣrnāj* in the Gulf area; *mizmār* or *mizmār baladī* and *sibs aba* (*sibs* being a small instrument, *aba* a large one) in Egypt; and *zūkra* in Tripoli, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. (The Turkomans in Iraq have a cylindrical shawm called a *qarnāta*.) The parts of the shawm and their names are almost the same today as they were in the nineteenth century. The *zurna*, *ṣrnāj*, and *mizmār baladī* consist of a wooden tube that gradually widens into a fairly large conical open end. Shawms in the eastern Arab lands have seven fingerholes and those in the Gulf have five or six; all have a thumb hole. Sometimes, there are small additional intonational holes on the cone. The upper part of the shawm consists of a double reed attached to a metal staple and a circular disk on which the lips rest. The staple is inserted into a cylindrical fork that enters the body of the instrument.

In the Arab world, shawms are associated with open spaces and gatherings, military or festive, including weddings. In lands east of the Mediterranean they are entirely secular and are usually played in a duo with a large circular drum, called *ṭabl wa zurna* in Arabic and *dhol wa zurna* in Kurdish, to accompany collective singing and dances. In Egypt the common ensemble, called *mizmār wa ṭabl baladī*, consists of three *mizmār* players and two drummers. In North Africa, the shawm is used on popular festive occasions, at marriages, and in religious and ritual contexts.

Drums
The folk music of the Arab world—particularly in the Gulf, the Arabian Peninsula, and the southern parts of North Africa—is characterized by a wealth of drums. However, although rhythm is important in the classical and urban repertoires of the Middle East and North Africa, only three types of drums are used: the *ṭabla*, a portable drum; a pair of kettledrums; and tambourines of various sizes.

Single-headed Portable Drums: Ṭabla
Single-headed portable drums with an open shell at their distal end are known in urban music as *ṭabla* (plural, *al ṭablāt*) or *darbūkka* (or *dumbuk* in Iraq). Those used in art music have various forms, such as a vase shape in Egypt and areas to the east and a goblet or a jug shape in North Africa. Traditionally, *al ṭablāt* of urban and art music were made of clay with the skin either glued on or laced on through holes along its edge, but metal drums with metal pegs are also common.

In folk music, *al ṭablāt* vary greatly in shape, the most common being tubular or waisted *al ṭablāt*, some with a suspension belt. Most of the popular *al ṭablāt* are terra-cotta, but wooden and, more recently, metal drums are also used.

Kettledrums
The *ṭabl bāz* or *bāz* was originally a kettledrum used for signaling in hunting with falcons. It is a small truncated copper kettledrum used by the Qādiriyya Sufi order in Baghdad and by affiliated orders in

Figure 4 A musician plays a metal flute to accompany the bedouin Dān Ghayyathī (singing) during a marriage ceremony in Mukalla, a city in the Ḥaḍramawt area of Yemen, 1997.
Photo by Scheherazade Qassim Hassan.

Egypt and Libya. In Palestine and Egypt, the *bāza* or *bāz* is used during Ramadan. The *bāz* is held in the palm of the left hand while the right hand strikes the skin, often with a leather ribbon. A recent form of the kettledrum with a foot positioned on the ground is used by the Rifāʿiyya Sufi order in Baghdad, either alone or with cymbals.

Double kettledrums, *naqqāra*, which may or may not be the same size, are part of classical ensembles in North Africa and Iraq. They are also used in large modern urban ensembles, in Sufi orders, in popular music, and in some Afro-Arab traditions.

Single-skin Frame Drums (Tambourines)

Frame drums are generally of two kinds: single-skin or double-skin. Single-skin frame drums can be subdivided, with respect to their additional elements, into at least four types, each of which comes in different sizes: (1) simple, without any additional sonorous elements; (2) with cymbals; (3) with jingles and bells; (4) with one or more strings that create the effect of a snare drum. Their names vary from country to country, and there is some confusion about nomenclature. *Daff* (also pronounced *deff*) would be an appropriate generic name.

All tambourines are held with the thumb and index finger of the left hand, leaving the other fingers free to play on the instrument's edge. The right hand plays low sounds (*dumm*) in the center; high sounds (*takk*) are played on the edge. When an instrument has additional sonorous elements, it is commonly, at times, either shaken or moved up and down. The *daff* is often played only by the chief of an ensemble, to provide the basic rhythmic formulas. The name of God or his attributes, the names of saints, or the owner's name, and other decorative elements or religious and protective signs are sometimes written on the skin of a tambourine. In many parts of the Arab world, a fairly large number of tambourines (up to twenty) are played together in certain religious and popular secular contexts.

Double-skin Frame Drums

Circular frame drums with two heads attached directly to each other by braces are used between southern Iraq and Oman along the Gulf shores. A thin frame drum called *ṭabl* or *ṭabl al-ʿardha* in Iraq and *kāsir mufalṭaḥ* in Oman varies between 30 and 50 centimeters in diameter. It is used only in the context of tribal traditions of the Arabian Peninsula, particularly a communal dance—originally a war dance—called *al-ʿardha* in Iraq down to the United Arab Emirates and *ʿayyāla* in the Emirates and Oman (figure 5). This drum is struck by a stick held in the

Figure 5 ʿ*Ayyāla* bedouin ensemble of drums and frame drums, Bahrain, 1997.
Photo by Scheherazade Qassim Hassan.

right hand and by the left hand directly. Various double-skin frame drums—*qanqa* and *dendoun* or *dendoun toaurgī* (the *dendoun* of the Tuareg)—are used in Libya and southern Algeria, where they are played mainly by the Tuareg, by Berber women, and by Arabs to accompany song, along with the fiddle. [For more on the Tuareg, see TUAREG MUSIC in the Africa section, volume 1.] The Algerian *ṭbel* is played with two rounded sticks as part of the duo *ṭbel-zurna*, which performs at outdoor festivities (its counterpart in eastern Arab countries is the *ṭabl wa zurna* or *mizmār ṭabl baladī*).

A type of double-skin frame drum called *saḥfa* or *mard* is used in Hudaida in western Yemen. The name depends on the size; the smaller drum plays basic rhythm while the larger one adds rhythmic ornamentation. The clay frame of this drum juts out to cover a portion of the back; thus the size of the skin is not exactly the same on both sides. A stick like a spike extends out from both the upper and lower side of the frame: the lower spike is pushed into the player's belt; the upper spike serves to hold the instrument on his belly. The musician may stand, sit, or (exceptionally) lie down. The frame drum is played on festive occasions.

Double-headed Drums

The great variety of double-headed drums in the Arab world can be reduced to three basic shapes: circular, tubular, and barrel-shaped. The best-known circular double-headed drum is a large wooden drum known from ancient times, generically called *ṭabl* or *al-ṭabl al-kabīr* 'the big drum', though it also has many regional names. The *ṭabl* and a shawm form the famous duo *ṭabl wa zurna*; this drum is also paired with a second drum to accompany three shawms in the *mizmār ṭabl baladī* ensembles of Egypt. Whatever the configuration, the double-headed drum is often obligatory at festivities throughout the Middle East. This *ṭabl* comes in many sizes; the largest is about 65 centimeters in diameter. It has two skins of different thicknesses—one perhaps cow skin, the other perhaps sheepskin—that are played with two sticks: one heavy and the other very light. In general, both membranes are attached indirectly through an outer ring with braced lacing, but many variations, including some inspired by Western drums with metal pegs, are also found.

Adopted and Adapted Western Instruments

Certain European musical instruments are used to perform Arab music. These were chosen, in part, on the basis of two apparently contradictory criteria. On the one hand, most stringed instruments were adopted because they sounded like local instruments and could imitate regional and vocal intonation and ornamentation. On the other hand, keyboard instruments were chosen for their equal-tempered tuning, which some people saw as a model for the Arab music of the future.

Among the stringed instruments, the violin (called *kamān* or *kamānja*, after indigenous fiddles, and *jrāna* in Tunisia) has been adopted most widely and most successfully; it has found a firm place in the music of North Africa and the eastern Arab world. Because it can perform the subtlest details of local music, both vocal and instrumental, without sacrificing any modal or stylistic qualities, it met with no opposition from traditionalists; and as a non-tempered instrument, it was adopted without any structural modification. However, the Western tuning of the open strings was modified to fifth, fourth, and fifth (G–D–g–d). The violin is played as a solo instrument; can be part of any Arab ensemble, small or orchestral; and accompanies folk, urban, and classical repertoires. A number of violinists have achieved renown in Syria, Egypt, and Iraq.

Keyboard instruments had much success in the first half of the twentieth century and became pervasive by its end. In 1922, a piano capable of playing all the quarter tones of Arab music (in equal-tempered tuning) was first created in Cairo. During the 1930s, pianos were in vogue in Arab capitals open to Western influence, and the cosmopolitan Arab aristocracy in Tunisia, Egypt, and Lebanon bought pianos to accompany traditional songs, played by both hands in the octave. Musicians and piano-makers experimented with different models capable of playing twenty-four tempered quarter tones. Lebanese and Egyptian pianos were discussed at the conference for Arab music in Cairo in 1932. In the 1950s, ʿAbdallah Shāhīn devised an Oriental piano with a pedal to modify scale degrees. A late example of such experiments is a double-board piano created in 1974 by a Syrian woman, Wajiha ʿAbdul-Haqq, to facilitate the playing of Arab music in both harmonic and polyphonic textures: in addition to the normal diatonic keyboard, it had a second posterior keyboard to produce microtones.

Electric organs and synthesizers are also popular. They are used for a wide variety of music, both traditional and modern, in small and orchestral ensembles. These instruments are capable of playing quarter tones (often in both tempered and non-tempered tunings); with the use of sampling, they can be made to resemble traditional Arab instruments such as the *nāy* (reed flute) and *qānūn* (plucked zither).

—Adapted from an article by Scheherazade Qassim Hassan

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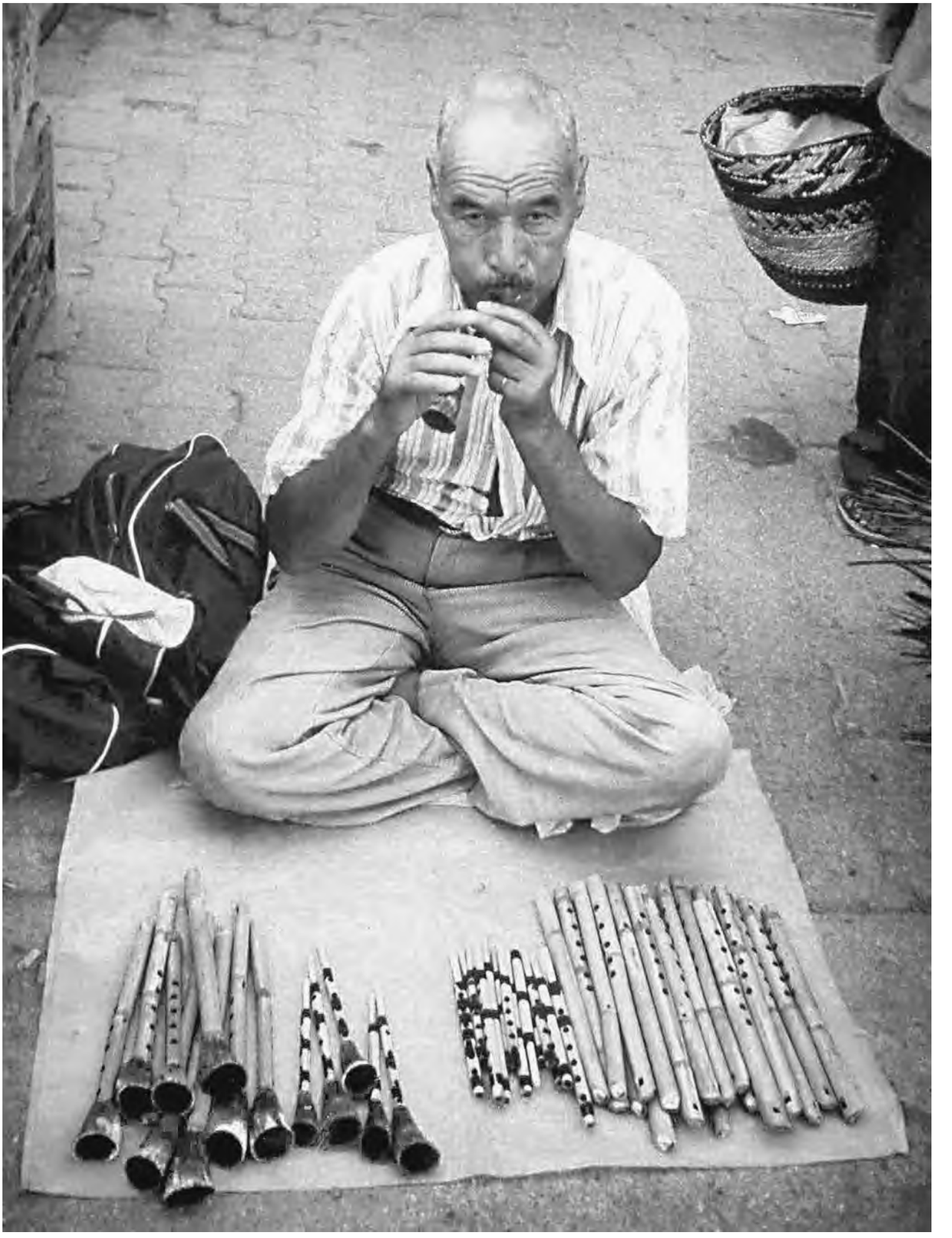
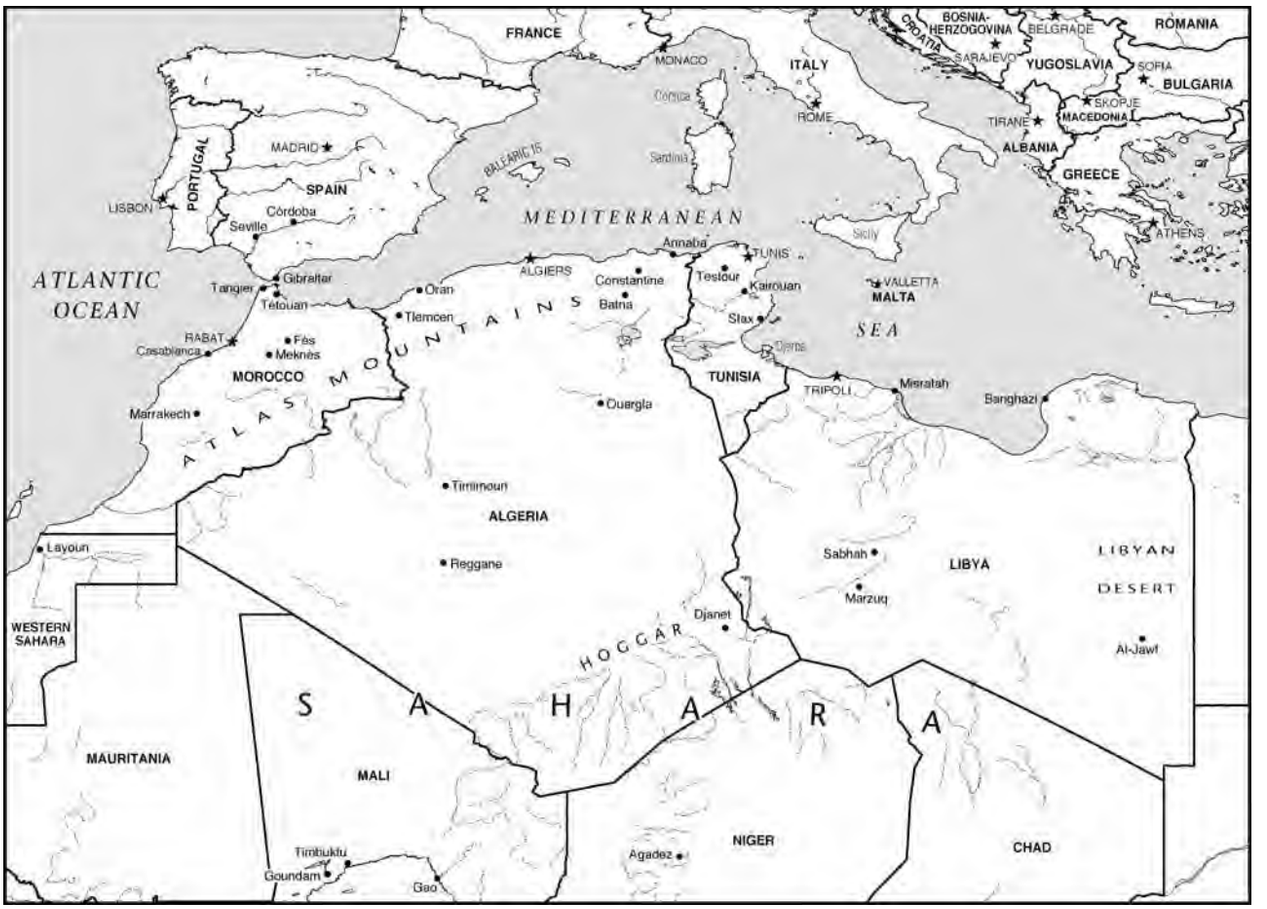
North Africa: The Maghrib



North Africa: The Maghrib

North Africa has long been the cultural contact point between Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. Musical traditions of Berbers, Arabs, Sephardic and Mizrahi Jewish communities, Ottoman Turks, and the remnants of Portuguese, Spanish, and Italian coastal outposts have existed side by side, and occasionally intermixed, for centuries. Despite a variety of historical and local influences, the four countries that form the Arab Maghrib 'where the sun sets'—modern Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya—share an art music tradition known as Andalusian music, which has its roots in the courtly traditions of medieval Islamic Spain. The musical traditions of North African Sufi brotherhoods provide another unifying element. Yet many areas also maintain richly distinctive folk and urban traditions: *malḥūn* from northern Morocco and *gnāwa* music from the south, *shaʿbī* music from Algiers, *rai* from the region of Oran, *ḥawzī* from Tlemcen, and many others. Today, popular musics of North Africa, particularly *rai* and *malḥūn*, are finding a global audience and interacting freely on the world music scene with traditions of Europe and West Africa. In the articles that follow, a sample of the art, folk, and popular musics of the Maghrib are described.

A street merchant in Tunisia sells wind instruments, 1995.
Photo by Scheherazade Qassim Hassan.



North Africa

North Africa: An Overview

Although it supplied the name "Africa" for the entire continent, the southern coast of the Mediterranean, with its desert and mountain hinterlands, is quite distinct from the rest of Africa and constitutes an ethnic and cultural, as well as geographic, unit. This distinctiveness was noted by early Arab writers, who called the area *Jazīrat al-Maghrib* 'island of the west' or, literally, 'place of the sun's setting'. It is inherent in the perception of modern inhabitants, who feel themselves closer to Europe and the Arab east and regard Africa as "someplace else."

The four independent countries of the Maghrib are Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. They cover approximately 1,830,000 square miles (roughly half the size of the United States) and are home to some 78 million people. The official language throughout the area is Arabic, and the religion of the overwhelming majority is (Sunni) Islam. In the era of European expansion, the Maghrib fell variously under the power of France, Spain, and Italy; it regained independence after World War II: Libya in 1951, Tunisia and Morocco in 1956, and Algeria in 1962. Recognition of a common heritage and goals continues to prompt aspirations for a united Maghrib, currently in the form of l'Unité du Maghreb Arabe, a supranational structure somewhat like the European Union.

On the broad scale of history, the entire Maghrib from western Egypt to the Atlantic has shared major trends; but their effect has been uneven, and generalizations should not blind one to important local variations. The "original" inhabitants, according to the earliest written sources, may be considered ancestors of the modern Berbers, a "Mediterranean" people of more or less uniform ethnic stamp with related, though not mutually intelligible, languages. The name is not their own: it derives from an epithet the Greeks used for all peoples whose languages they found unintelligible. Berbers have been an important background presence throughout North African history, often playing a more important role than has been acknowledged in official histories written by outsiders. There are still sizable Berber populations in the Maghrib, particularly in the mountainous areas away from the coastal centers of population and colonization and their spheres of political and cultural influence. [For more on the Berbers, see North Africa: An Introduction and Tuareg Music in the Africa section of volume 1.]

The description "crossroads of civilizations" generally fits the history of North Africa. This has been a theater where foreign powers have acted out their destinies, largely independently of the indigenous Berbers. First to arrive in historic times were the Phoenicians from ca. 800 B.C.E. Their center was Carthage, near Tunis, and they extended their Punic emporiums throughout the Mediterranean.

The Romans called their central province (around Carthage) "Africa," a name of uncertain origin that was subsequently adopted for the entire continent. Whether the music of our own day still has any echoes of Roman music cannot, unfortunately, be determined. During the Roman period, the Jewish diaspora also touched North Africa, although the extent of immigration is unknown. The Jewish community on Jerba, a southeastern Tunisian island that was reputedly Ulysses' "Land of the Lotus Eaters," has a tradition dating back two millennia. Christianity found fertile ground in the Maghrib and was well established there by the time it achieved official status in Rome. The area also produced its share of religious dissent, including the Donatists and the curious Circumcelliones, possible prefigurations of the Kharijite rebellion and certain Sufi practices under Islam.

As the Roman Empire weakened, North Africa fell under Byzantine influence and into various stages of anarchy, with a brief episode (429–533) of domination by Gothic (Vandal) tribes from Spain. Their importation of the Arian sect of Christianity is seen by some as a preparation for Islam, which became a prominent force in the world only a century after Belisarius of Byzantium retook Carthage.

Islamic Period

Islam reached the Maghrib by the mid-seventh century, and the first permanent Arab encampment, Kairouan (or Qayruwān, in central Tunisia), was established in 670. From there the conquerors continued along the coast to the Atlantic, entering Spain in 711 and extending their apparently irresistible course of victory beyond the Pyrenees and as far as Poitiers, where they were halted in 732. These feats were accomplished largely by Berber armies.

Arabization and Islamization proceeded slowly and superficially, however—until the eleventh century, when nomadic Arabs poured into the Maghrib

from Egypt, overrunning the country as far as the mountains of Morocco, changing the face of the land, and spreading their language and religion to a degree that would have been unobtainable by a political or military force perched on the coast. These were the redoubtable Banī Hilāl (and other associated Bedouin tribes), who virtually remade the Maghrib and left in their wake, among other things, a great epic cycle—*chanson de geste*—of their feats, an oral tradition of poetry and song that has persisted to our day. At the same time, the great Berber empires emanated from the other extreme of the Maghrib: the Almoravids (*al-murābiṭūn*, 1054–1147) and the Almohads (*al-muwaḥḥidūn*, 1129–1269), encompassing and dominating the entire area (including Muslim Spain) with both their military power and their severe religious orthodoxy, until their decline and other forces from the east and west shifted the balance.

By the time the Almohads had lost their last stronghold, Seville had already fallen to the Christians, and the Mongols had laid waste to Baghdad. The Maghrib lapsed into a period of isolation—though also of relative peace and prosperity—under several independent kingdoms, prefiguring the regional subdivisions that exist in our day. Eventually, the Ottomans became masters of much of North Africa, beginning in the sixteenth century. Only Morocco retained a margin of independence. The era of the Barbary pirates was under way, but behind the glitter of the corsairs and their coastal palaces the brilliance of Maghrebi civilization had faded. The area slid into a long decline that made it easy prey to European ambitions in the nineteenth century once Turkish power had waned.

Meanwhile, events in Spain wrought changes in the complexion of the North African population. Each surge of Christian reconquest—Seville (1248), Granada (1492), and the final expulsion of Spanish Muslims (1609)—sent waves of refugees into the Maghrib, enriching it culturally and musically but creating new problems. When the Jews were expelled in 1492, many of them also found their way to the Maghrib, either directly or by stages through Europe. They also brought with them an important cultural heritage and came to play a unique role during the era of European colonization. The French took Algeria by force in 1830 and Tunisia by stratagem in 1881. Morocco was officially divided between French and Spanish "protection" in 1912, the same year Libya fell to the Italians. Colonization forced the Maghrib to absorb a deluge of outside influences in a relatively short time. This created tension and resentment, but also certain benefits. It did not, as some had hoped, weaken the religious fabric; rather, it tended to strengthen people's identification with their Arab-Islamic heritage, and it prepared the ground for the era of independence.

Peoples and Influences

The ethnic tapestry of North Africa is rich and complex, as is its multifaceted music. All the peoples who have lived or passed through the region have left musical, linguistic, and cultural traces. Remnants of pre-Islamic cultures—Punic, Greek, Roman, and Vandal—can sometimes be found in the language and customs of today, as well as in their stone monuments; however, their possible contributions to North African musics are lost to our knowledge, though they still feed our imagination. The influence of peoples whose contact is more recent is easier to discern; here, we look at some of them.

Arabs

Arab music is the foundation and the point of reference for most music in the Maghreb. This is true not only because the independent Maghreb nations have a strong Arab identity but also as a consequence of Arab immigration to the Maghreb in the wake of the Islamic conquest and the invasion by the Banī Hilāl. It is also true because the great centers of Arab-Islamic learning in the East and West (Spain) were the major sources of intellectual and artistic culture in the Maghreb before the centuries of decline. The theoretical underpinnings of Maghrebi art music—the modes, rhythms, and performance techniques—as well as classical instruments, hark back to Arab prototypes. And in rural regions the epic tales of the Banī Hilāl are heard and their influence is felt in other genres of music such as *malḥūn*.

Egypt

Egyptian music constitutes a special case of Arab influence in our time. Egypt has been the prime center from which culture has radiated throughout the Arab world—not only because of its eminent Islamic university al-Azhar, its scholars, and its reformers, but also because of its popular artists and writers. Egypt was prompt to take advantage of the new media: gramophone, film, and later, television. Early in the twentieth century, Egyptian music ensembles toured the Maghreb, inspiring local artists, implanting new ideas, and shaping popular (urban) taste. There were also music teachers, and "artists in residence" in Maghrebi cities. With regard to classical music, Cairo was the host city for the pivotal

Congress on Arab Music in 1932—largely at the urging of a Tunisian Jewish immigrant, Baron Rodolphe d'Erlanger (1872–1932). But Egypt's forte was popular music. It absorbed influences from West and East and passed them on to other Arab countries. Egyptian operetta (*à la Sayyid Darwīsh*) became very popular in the prewar decades. The Egyptian singer Umm Kulthūm (1896–1975) was the superstar of Arab music, unsurpassed in the twentieth century. Cairene dialect and Egyptian song conventions have become a lingua franca of pop music throughout the Arab world, and indeed an intimidating force against which Maghrebi composers and performers struggle if they wish to imbue their own work with a more national flavor. Egyptian-style songs still sell better and more quickly at home, and find a more ready market abroad, than those that are Maghrebi in character. This is part of a perceived crisis in popular song about which Tunisian music journalists, for example, have been agonizing for decades.

Ottoman Turks

Ottoman Turks controlled much of North Africa from the sixteenth century until European colonization. They did little to benefit their subjects, but in music left a worthy legacy. Admired as well as feared, they served as models for imitation in music and military strength. Imitation accounts for much of the Turkish influence on music in Morocco, which was not directly under Ottoman rule. In the rest of the Maghreb, the Turkish influence was more direct. Some Ottoman rulers were musically adept and worked at revitalizing and refashioning local repertoires. Muḥammad Rashīd Bey (d. 1759) is a notable example. His compositions still form part of the Tunisian *ma'lūf* repertoire, and the Rashīdī Institute is named after him. The Ottomans' military bands and palace ensemble provided employment for Maghrebi musicians and teachers. These performing groups adapted much local art music for their repertoires and gave many concerts that were open to the public, bringing their version of this national heritage to the urban masses, who might not otherwise have been exposed to it. Band clubs sprang up in some cities, calling for teachers and giving urban youth an opportunity to make music outside of traditional contexts. Many Ottoman rulers had European wives and permitted them to bring artifacts from their home culture, including musical instruments, into palaces. In this way, several Western instruments (and some elements of the Western repertoire) entered into North African music.

Spanish Muslims

Spanish Muslims (Andalusians) poured into North African cities in the wake of Christian reconquests and particularly after the expulsion order of 1609. They had a generally higher level of culture and technology than the Maghreb—which was already stagnating—and their innovative contributions were admired. The music they brought enriched and vitalized cognate genres in the Maghreb, particularly "classical" art music, which subsequently came to be called Andalusian. The entire genre is not an importation; the Andalusian endowment was substantial, in terms of textual and musical material, but it merged with an existing repertoire and other influences to form a uniquely North African idiom, with important regional variations.

Jews

Jews have lived in North Africa at least since Roman times, but their presence became more prominent when Sephardic refugees arrived from Spain and later immigrants came from Europe (particularly from Leghorn, Italy, since the late eighteenth century). Although they were a minority with "separate" status, they were nevertheless tolerably well integrated into Maghrebi society and often played important social roles. Compared with their Muslim compatriots, they typically maintained closer ties to Europe. Under the French, they had special privileges, which brought some benefit to the colonized people in general but also stirred resentment and began to open a rift in what had been a mutually comfortable relationship. The independence of the Maghrebi states ushered in changes that Jewish communities saw as an unfavorable omen. As the issue of Palestine intensified and relations between Jews and Arabs became strained, many Jews departed, leaving only vestiges of their community in the Maghreb. The Jews' private music, from the synagogue and the home, had little influence on the Maghreb at large, but their public musical activities had a very significant influence.

Jews were not subject to the Islamic sanctions regarding music and their opportunity to perform in public was unrestricted. They drew their material from Muslim sources—the traditional and folk repertoire, Egyptian innovations, and some European music—they sang in classical Arabic and local dialects, and were enthusiastically received by Muslim and Jewish audiences. By the beginning of the twentieth century, they had become a major contingent among professional musicians in the Maghreb. Jewish pop stars used their wealth and influence to benefit the common cause of artistic

activity in their homeland and helped advance the careers of their Muslim and Jewish colleagues. They also played a significant role in the restoration and revitalization of the Andalusian repertoire and are credited, along with the Sufi brotherhoods, with having preserved it from eclipse. As Muslims became more active in professional public music, the Jews became less prominent, but their influence remained palpable until the Jewish communities dwindled after independence. Still, many Jews who once had a degree of fame in their native Maghreb, spread North African popular music abroad.

Africans

Black people from south of the Sahara entered the Maghreb as slaves and as free people. Their influence on the music of the Maghreb has been felt largely in the popular milieu, both urban and rural. They have retained the musical traditions and customs of their homelands, with the result that theirs is a somewhat separate music, though part of the Maghrebi tapestry. Blacks have traditionally had the status of professional musicians, albeit in different contexts from the Jews. For instance, they are engaged for local festivals, where they perform "outdoor music" on drums and wind instruments in the folk idioms of the region. There are also black brotherhoods, analogous to those of the Sufis, who merge homeland traditions with local popular religions. The Bū Saʿdiyya of Tunisia, for example, perform at the shrines of certain saints and in private homes; these performances combine dance, trance, and spirit possession, thought to have therapeutic value. The itinerant Gnāwa are a frequent sight in the streets and squares of Moroccan towns. A trademark of such groups is the *gumbrī*, a plucked stringed instrument with a rectangular body.

Europe

From the Ottoman era through the colonial and postcolonial periods, and by way of Egypt, many elements of European music have become commonplace in North Africa. Some Western instruments have all but displaced their Maghrebi counterparts, not only in bands but also in traditional ensembles. Violins and cellos routinely appear in even the most traditional Andalusian ensembles; a type of mandolin and a small guitar are virtually folk instruments in Algeria; electronic and electronically enhanced instruments are no longer a rarity. Music ensembles have grown from a few *shaykhs* clad in the *jibba* or *jallabiyya* to chamber orchestras of musicians in white tie and tails, led by a conductor with a baton, presenting orchestrations that abandon traditional unison or heterophony, counterpointing, if not actually harmonizing, the instruments' differences in dynamics and timbre.

Traditional Art Music

The so-called Andalusian music of the Maghrib is cultivated and performed in most major cities as a national heritage. The term *Andalusian* refers not to the modern Spanish province of Andalucía but to *al-Andalus*, the Arabic name for Muslim dominions on the Iberian Peninsula in the eighth to fifteenth centuries. In its main regional variants, the genre is known as *maʾlūf* 'familiar', *gharnāṭī* 'Granadan', *ṣanʿa* 'art', and *āla* 'instrumental'. It also has a religious component, *jadd* 'serious', traditionally the preserve of Sufi brotherhoods. The repertoire consists in each case of a set of *nūbāt* 'suites' (singular, *nūba*), one for each melodic mode. [See Andalusian *Nūba* in Morocco.] Each *nūba* begins with instrumental and free-rhythm solo vocal material; this introduction is followed by perhaps five rhythmic sections, based on a succession of rhythmic modes that progress from stately to lively and give an impression of acceleration and increasing tension. These sections are sung in unison (heterophony) by a traditionally all-male vocal ensemble with instrumental accompaniment, using strophic poems in literary and dialectical Arabic. The rhythms seem more distinctively Maghrebi than the modes, which correspond roughly to counterparts in eastern Arab music. Both the rhythmic and the melodic modes, however, vary from region to region and have different names.

Religious Music

Terms such as "music" and "song" are inappropriate in discussions of the sacred practices at the heart of Islam. The Qurʾān is "chanted"; the call to prayer is "intoned." These are the apparently musical manifestations of Islam with which Westerners have become familiar through television documentaries. They are also cultivated to a high degree, and with a measure of local flavor, in the Maghrib, but that topic belongs in a different context.

Beyond this, though still near the core of approved devotion, are certain traditional poems sung by men or boys in the mosque or its courtyard during high feasts and on pivotal occasions connected, for example, with the Qurʾānic school or rites of passage. The best-known are the *Burda* and *Hamziyya* and the *Mūlidiyya*, the "cantata" of the Prophet's birth. Although these draw on local Maghrebi tradition, they are part of a broader practice and invite comparative study.

More specifically North African is the music of the many Sufi brotherhoods, most of which are at least roughly beholden to the Shādhiliyya movement. All practice a variety of *dhikr* 'remembrance' in their *zwāyā* 'shrines', usually built around the tomb of a saintly personage. *Dhikr* certainly involves what Western ears hear as musical elements, but the emphasis is on the repetition of divine names and the recitation of sacred texts. The brotherhoods' more frankly musical repertoires bear the general title *madāʾiḥ w-adhkār* 'songs' of praise and remembrance. The music they draw on varies from brotherhood to brotherhood and from region to region, as do their customs regarding musical instruments, dance, and trance. Some are within the sphere of Andalusian music. Indeed, certain Sufi brotherhoods have been credited with an important role in preserving this genre over the centuries. Others maintain the music of the deep Sahara. The Tījāniyya, with its major centers in desert areas, has been a chief transmitter of Saharan music into urban milieus. There are also Berber brotherhoods, black brotherhoods, and brotherhoods that are custodians of rural and urban folk music genres.

Other groups resembling the brotherhoods, though perhaps concerned more with music than with devotion, also have repertoires similar to the *madāʾiḥ w-adhkār*. They perform professionally, for pay, at festivals, weddings, and other private celebrations. Many women's ensembles—for example, the *zamzamāt* of Libya, the *ḥaḍrāt* of Tunisia, and some varieties of *shaykhāt* in Morocco—fit into this category, since women are typically denied any official status in the brotherhoods. (The female Tījāniyya in Tunisia are an exception.) There are also black troupes. Their practice hovers between Sufi affinity, popular religion, and the frankly secular and may also include trance, spirit possession, and therapeutic functions. Sufi-like repertoires may also be reworked for political aims, as in the case of the "national" *madāʾiḥ w-adhkār* performed daily on Tunisian radio during Habib Bourguiba's reign (1957–1987).

Folk Music

In a region as broad and diverse as the Maghrib, folk music is rich, varied, and subtle, almost bafflingly so. This may be the most important type of music to discuss, but it is also the type about which the least is known.

Folk music of the Maghrib (and elsewhere) may be the variety most resistant to change. Events and customs long forgotten elsewhere are preserved in this music; and it is in this music that we may seek echoes of melody and rhythm from bygone ages and peoples. But folk music is also frighteningly fragile, vulnerable to disappearing altogether for as simple a reason as girls going to school or young men emigrating to cities. A pastoral community absorbed into the tourist trade or oil industry will lose its songs for shearing lambs. A community that begins to buy processed flour will lose its songs for preparing grain.

Current Trends

Changes in Maghrebi society are accelerating, contacts with the outside are multiplying, the assimilation of international culture is spreading, and the tenacity of tradition is weakening. Traditional art music remains on a pedestal of national honor and folk music is still enjoyed at celebrations. But modern media tends to render its viewers spectators rather than participants and music from outside the region is engulfing and diluting indigenous music. The process of embalming music and showcasing musical traditions is expanding. For better and worse, the Maghrib is becoming integrated into a world community and its music is being fused into world music.

—Adapted from an article by L. JaFran Jones

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Andalusian *Nūba* in Morocco

Medieval Islamic Spain is referred to in Arabic as *al-Andalus*, a term ultimately derived from the Vandals who ruled the Iberian peninsula and portions of North Africa at the time of the first Arab contact with the region. The musical traditions that originated in Spain during the golden age of Islamic rule are thus known collectively as Andalusian music (figure 1). Andalusian music constitutes an extensive, highly sophisticated musical repertoire of vocal and instrumental pieces, though vocal forms predominate. Transmitted orally for more than twelve centuries, it comprises approximately 1,200 pieces in Morocco, more than 900 in Algeria, about 350 in Tunisia, and about 200 in Libya.

Andalusian music is organized in a distinctive form know as *nūba* 'suite' (plural, *nūbāt*), which has a long history and a characteristic procedure of performance and claims its own audience. Three regional "schools"—whose centers are Fès, Tétouan, and Rabat in Morocco; Tlemcen in Algeria; and Tunis in Tunisia—determine the stylistic parameters of the *nūba* repertoire. The repertoire is known in Morocco as *āla* 'instrumental', in Algiers as *ṣanʿa* 'skill' or 'craft', and in Tunisia as *maʾlūf* 'familiar'. To become an interpreter of the *nūba* repertoire requires years of musical training, a solid knowledge of music theory, an excellent memory, and a beautiful voice.

Origins of Andalusian Music

The Andalusians—that is, the medieval Spaniards—first developed this repertoire, preserved it, and then introduced it into North Africa, where it was later augmented by new texts and musical compositions in the Andalusian style. The Andalusians were transmitters of a culture that had flourished in Islamic Spain from the seventh to the fifteenth century, during the reign of the Umayyad dynasty, the "factional party states," the Almoravids and Almohads, and the Granadan Nasrid dynasty. It would be difficult to discuss the contemporary *nūba* repertoire without referring to these eight centuries of Islamic Spanish history. Indeed, the cultural history of the Iberian Peninsula played a major role in the development of the *nūba* repertoire beyond 1492, when Granada, the last bastion of Muslim rule, surrendered to the Catholic monarchs of Spain, and continued until 1609–1614, when the last Moriscos (Muslims living in Christian Spain after the *reconquista*) left the peninsula and emigrated to North Africa.

In 822, the great musician, singer, and courtier of Baghdad, Ziryāb (whose full name was Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī Ibn Nāfiʿ; d. 852) arrived in Córdoba, Spain. He was the highly gifted pupil of the most

Figure 1 A small Andalusian ensemble performs in Fès, Morocco, 2004. The musician on the left plays a *suisin* lute, the musician in the middle, a *rabāb* fiddle, and the musician on the right, an *ʿūd*. The ensemble also included a vocalist and a percussionist.
Photo by Jonathan Shannon.

prominent advocate of the *ṣawt* (an early Arabic song form), the master musician Isḥāq al-Mawṣilī (767–850), and became an authority on its repertoire. The emigration of Ziryāb from Baghdad to al-Andalus was of great significance musically as well as socially. In Córdoba, he is said to have been the creator of the *nūba* form, and he enthusiastically disseminated the elegant manners and accoutrements of the ʻAbassid court of Baghdad. Thus, the year 822 was significant both for the development of the *nūba* and for its eventual maturation in a courtly context in al-Andalus. Ziryāb is said to have organized his performances using musical modes and concepts of pitch that accorded with classical Greco-Arabic medical theory regarding the four temperaments and their corresponding bodily fluids, *sawdā'* 'gall', *balgham* 'phlegm', *dam* 'blood', and *ṣafrā* 'bile': certain melodic modes were to be performed only at certain times of the day and were thought to evoke certain emotional responses.

It is said that Ziryāb would, in a single night, compose songs ranging from one stanza to much longer; he would preserve them by singing them to his two singing-girls, Ghuzlūn and Hunayda, who would then repeat each melody on the *'ūd* (short-necked lute). It is also said that night after night, *jinn*—invisible higher beings—inspired his compositions. According to tradition, his personal repertoire included ten thousand memorized songs. Ziryāb's tremendous fame overshadowed the lives and creations of almost all other contemporary singers until the eleventh century. Long after his death, singers continued to follow his practice of beginning a performance with a *nashīd* 'song' to the accompaniment of any *naqr* 'rhythmic pattern'; then proceeding directly to a simple, light section, the *muḥarrikāt*; and finally singing the *ahāzīj* 'swift songs', which brought the performance to a close.

It was not until the twelfth century, during the rule of the Almoravids (1054–1147) over both Spain and Morocco, that another musician of Ziryāb's caliber emerged. This was the vizier Abū Bakr Ibn Bājja (d. ca. 1139), who contributed immensely to the *nūba* repertoire and, in later periods, was renowned as the composer of all the best-known melodies.

Nūba

The formal structure of a *nūba* comprises five main vocal sections, *mayāzīn* (singular *mīzān*), usually preceded by two introductory instrumental genres—the nonmeasured *bughya* (or a *mīshāliya*) and the measured *tūshiyā* (plural, *tawāshī*). Each of the main vocal sections, which can take an hour or more to perform, consists of a number of smaller vocal pieces called *ṣanʼāʻi* (singular, *ṣanʻa*; see below). In Morocco, the five primary vocal sections of the *nūba* are called *basīṭ*, *qāyim wa-nisf*, *bṭayḥī*, *darj*, and *quddām*. The name of each section also designates the rhythmic pattern that accompanies it. Thus, the *bṭayḥī* section has the rhythmic pattern *bṭayḥī* as its base, the *darj* has the rhythmic pattern *darj*, and so forth. Originally, the *nūba* repertoire is said to have consisted of twenty-four *nūbāt*, each in a different melodic *ṭabʻ* 'mode'—literally 'nature' or 'character'. Of these *nūbāt*, however, only eleven have been preserved in Morocco, fifteen in Algeria, thirteen in Tunisia, and nine in Libya.

Mīzān

Each of the five vocal sections of a Moroccan *nūba* is called a *mīzān* 'balance' or 'measure'. A sequence of all five sections together constitutes a complete *nūba*. Each *mīzān* is bound to a prescribed elaboration of tempo, which goes through several stages during the performance. The temporal plan includes an introductory segment, three major phases separated by two intermediary stages known as bridges, and a concluding segment. The three main phases are called *muwassaʻ* 'spacious', *mahzūz* 'shaken', and *inṣirāf* 'departure'. The overall temporal plan thus takes the following course: *taṣdīra* 'introduction', *muwassaʻ* 'spacious', first *qanṭara* 'bridge', *mahzūz* 'shaken', second *qanṭara, inṣirāf* 'departure', and *quf l* 'lock'. The tempo accelerates at each phase from the *muwassaʻ* to the *inṣirāf*. However, the time signature of the music, as well as that of the recurring rhythmic pattern maintained by the percussionists, remains constant throughout the *mīzān*.

The time signatures of the five vocal sections are: *basīṭ* 6/4, *qāyim wa-nisf* 8/4, *bṭayḥī* also 8/4, *darj* 4/4, and *quddām* 3/4. The rhythmic pattern of each *mīzān* is executed in performance on the *darabukka* (a vase-shaped drum) and the *ṭār* (a frame drum with jingles). The recurring rhythmic pattern played on the *ṭār* and *darabukka* in each of the five vocal sections must coincide with the time signature of the music being performed.

The term *mīzān* also indicates the period of several *naqarāt* 'beats' (singular, *naqra*) that accompanies the singing in the *nūba*. Such a period of beats is described by Moroccan musicians as an imaginary *dāʼira* 'circle', on whose circumference the sequence of beats is shown. A period of beats in a *mīzān* represents the primary rhythmic type in each of the five vocal sections. The first *mīzān*, in 6/4 time, thus forms a cycle of six beats; the second and third form cycles of eight beats; the fourth forms a cycle of four beats; and the fifth a cycle of three: the sequence of cycles

is, then, 6, 8, 8, 4, and 3. The rhythmic pattern of a *mīzān* consists of a characteristic combination of identifiable beats, recurring continuously throughout the course of the performance. A beat is described as muffled, bright, brighter, stressed, accented, unaccented, unoccupied, unchanging, veiled, or variable. The melodic structure within a section is based on the rhythmic pattern of that section and coincides with its structure; this is why a section (*mīzān*) is named after its rhythmic pattern. Thus, *basīṭ* (figure 2)

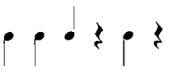

Figure 2 The rhythmic pattern *basīṭ*.

indicates both the name of the first main section of every *nūba* and the name of the six-beat rhythmic pattern. The same is true for the remaining sections and their rhythmic patterns.

Moroccan musicians call such a rhythmic pattern a *dawr* 'cycle' (plural, *adwār*), in the sense of a measure or a period; accordingly, a *dawr* in *basīṭ* consists of six beats. Musicians identify the length of a melodic passage by the number of *adwār*, that is, the sum of its measures. A melodic passage in *basīṭ*, for example, is identified as being made up of four, twelve, or even more *adwār* of the *basīṭ* six-beat pattern. In this manner, the *dawr* also serves as a measuring unit to preserve the flawless performance of a specific melodic passage. The number of *adwār* in each *ṣanʿa*—a sung stanza of poetry—within a *nūba* is marked at the end of each line of poetry in the songbooks of performers of Andalusian music.

Ṣanʿa

A complete *nūba* is the stringing together of the sung *ṣanʾāʿi* 'stanzas of poetry' within the five main vocal sections. Although the focus is primarily on the progression of the vocal pieces, the *nūba* also includes instrumental passages within the vocal pieces as well as separate instrumental pieces called *tawāshī* (singular, *tūshiya*). A single *ṣanʿa* does not make a *nūba*, nor does a simple series of *ṣanʾāʿi* sung one after the other: a complete *nūba* must contain *ṣanʾāʿi* strung together into the five vocal sections. The *ṣanʾāʿi*, then, form the musical backbone of the *nūba*.

Most of the sung poetry in the Andalusian repertoire belongs to either of two genres: *zajal* or *muwashshaḥ* 'adorned' (plural, *muwashshaḥāt*; this term is derived from *wishāḥ*, a woman's scarf decorated with pearls and jewels). However, other forms, such as the *barwala* (a Moroccan form) and the classical *qaṣīda*, are also found. A sung poem in *qaṣīda* form consists of two or four lines of poetry ending with the same rhyme—that is, aa for a two-line *ṣanʿa* or aaaa for a four-line *ṣanʿa*—whereas the *zajal* and *muwashshaḥ* forms have a wide variety of rhyme schemes.

Form of the Muwashshaḥ

The poetic form of the *muwashshaḥ* incorporates a number of lines of verse grouped into three categories: *maṭlaʿ*, *bayt*, and *qafl*. The *matlaʿ* is the introduction and comprises at least two verse lines, whose end rhymes may be identical (aa) or different (ab). A *muwashshaḥ* is called *tāmm* 'complete' if it has such an introduction; however, many *muwashshaḥāt* do not have this element and are called *aqraʿ* 'bald'. The introduction—which is short—is followed by one or more stanzas, each of which consists of two parts; the first part, the *bayt*, is the body of the stanza. A *bayt* contains at least three verses, and each section of the *bayt* introduces a new end-rhyme. In a complete *muwashshaḥ*, the *bayt* follows the *maṭlaʿ*; in a bald *muwashshaḥ*, the *bayt* begins the piece. The second part of each stanza is the *qafl* (most often comprising two verse lines) that repeats the rhyme of the *maṭlaʿ* and concludes the stanza. The final *qafl* is called the *kharja* 'exit'. The rhyme scheme of a *muwashshaḥ* may thus look like this: aa (*maṭlaʿ*) bbb (*bayt*) aa (*qafl*). The *muwashshaḥ* is composed and sung in classical literary Arabic; a related form called *zajal* uses almost exactly the same rhyme format but is composed in colloquial Arabic.

The following *muwashshaḥ* is sung as the first *ṣanʿa* in the melodic mode *māya*, and is identified by musicians as a seven-line *ṣanʿa*. Note that internal rhyme *–ya* at the end of each half-line remains constant throughout the poem:

unẓur ilā rawnaqi l-ʿashiyya // kasat bi-ḥulla ʿalā l-ghurūs (a)
billāhi yā sāqī l-ḥumayya // adir ʿalaynā khamrata l-kuʾūs (a)
daʿūnī naghnam sāʿa haniyya // mā dumtu fī waqti l-ʿaṣīl (b)
zāranī ḥibbī wa-ʿṭafʿalayya // mā li-l-raqībi ʿalayya sabīl (b)
saqānī min fīhi al-ḥumayya // mawlā l-dībāji wa-l-ṭarfi l-kaḥīl (b)
sharab wa-ghannā wa-māla ilayya // wa-dhabulat ʿaynāhu l-naʿūs (a)
qabbaltuhu qublatan bilā khafiyya // wa-qultu yā rāḥata l-nufūs (a)

Behold the glow of the evening light! // Like a veil it lays itself over tree and bush.
By God, O cupbearer // Fill our wine glasses one after the other!

Let us seize an hour full of happiness // While the day draws to a close.
My beloved visited me and took pity on me // When no one could spy on us.
From his mouth I drank wine // As he faced me dressed in silk brocade, his eyelids dark with kohl
He drank, then sang, then leaned toward me // As his sleepy eyes did close.
I gave him a kiss with no shyness // And said, "O soother of souls!"

***Structure of the* Ṣanʿa**

The poetic and melodic structure of a *ṣanʿa* can be built on a stanza of two, five, or even seven lines, each of which has its own traditional melodic plan of performance. This plan determines whether a verse is to be sung in a single melodic phrase or in parts, and whether, when, and how often the instrumentalists are to repeat melodic phrases from the verse. The traditional musical sequence for a five-line *ṣanʿa*, for example, is divided into three parts, as follows—the text is rhymed ab ab ab cb cb:

yā ʿashīya dhakkartanī shawqī (a) // *wa-zamān al-nuḥūl* (b)
rawnaqu al-shamsi ṣāra fī l-ufqi (a) // *māʾilan li-l-khumūl* (b)
ayyuhā l-sāqī jud lanā wa-sqi (a) // *ʿalā ghayẓ al-ʿadhūl* (b)
unẓur al-shamsa kayf badat tasfar (c) // *janaḥat li-l-ufūl* (b)
jullanār qad ḥaffa bi-l-ʿanbar (c) // *fitnatan li-l-ʿuqūl* (b)

O evening light, you bring to mind my yearning // and a time of pining
The splendor of the sun upon the horizon // inclining toward slumber
O cupbearer, be generous and pour again // despite the jealousy of rivals
Look at the sun, how it turns golden // leaning toward the setting stars
A pomegranate blossom surrounded with amber // enrapturing our minds.

Entrance (Dukhūl)
The first verse is sung to the accompaniment of the instrumentalists; it is followed by an instrumental reprise of the melody in slightly altered form known as the *jawāb* 'response'. The second verse is then sung to the opening melody; it too is followed by the slightly different instrumental response. Finally, the third verse is performed to the opening melody with no response.

Covering (Taghṭiya)
The first half of the fourth verse is sung to a new melody with the accompaniment of the instrumentalists; it is followed by the instrumental response, a slightly altered form of the new melody. The second half of the verse is sung to the original form of the new melody.

Exit (Khurūj)
The final line of poetry is sung with a return to the opening melody of the first verse to the accompaniment of the instrumentalists.

The *Jawq*

The ensemble in Moroccan Andalusian music is called a *jawq* (figure 3) and usually includes players of the *ʿūd*, (short-necked lute), *qānūn* (box zither), *rabāb* (bowed fiddle), violin, viola, cello, *ṭār* (frame drum with jingles), and the *darabukka* (vase-shaped drum). The members of the ensemble are instrumentalists and also constitute the choir; typically, only the lead vocalist, the *munshid*, sings without also playing an instrument. Customarily, the *rabāb* player is considered the head of the group and leads the performance. The *munshid* sings in unison with the other members of the *jawq* during the *ṣanʾāʿi* but at certain points in the performance is featured in vocal solos.

The vocal pieces, in either classical Arabic or colloquial Moroccan, have themes such as love, happiness, evening twilight, groups of companions drinking wine, longing for al-Andalus and its landscapes, and praise of the Prophet Muhammad. The very first piece in a *nūba* performance is the instrumental *bughya* or *mīshāliya*, a nonmeasured piece performed by all the instrumentalists except the percussionists. This introductory piece displays and elaborates on the *ṭabʿ* 'musical mode' and its characteristics. A measured instrumental piece, the *tūshiya*, is then performed, with the percussionists joining in. This is followed by the first *mīzān* of the *nūba*, then the second *mīzān*, the third, the fourth, and finally the fifth. In each *mīzān*, a chosen number of *ṣanʾāʿi*—perhaps as many as forty—are rendered. Generally, shortly before the performance starts, the leader of the *jawq*, along with his musicians, chooses the order of the *ṣanʾāʿi* to be sung.

Oral Transmission of the *Nūba* Repertoire

Within the framework of traditional oral transmission, the rhythmic patterns have a special function in the teaching of the *nūba* repertoire to the younger

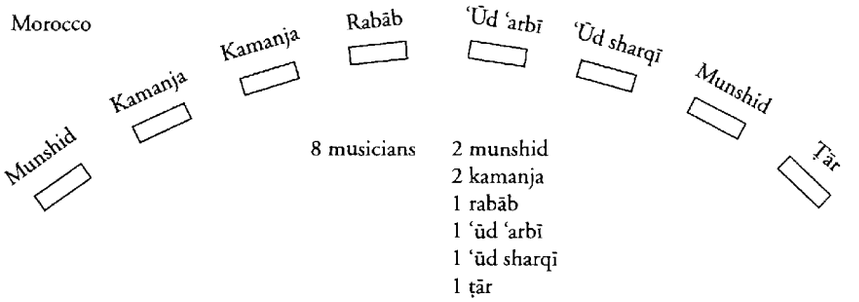

Figure 3 Traditional Morrocan ensemble.

generation. The student first learns the rhythmic pattern (*mīzān*) and its relationship to the words of the text both in terms of strong versus weak beats and in terms of the number of measures per line. Next, the student masters the melody, within its specific melodic mode (*ṭabʿ*); this mastery includes the use of filler syllables, such as *yā lā lā*, *ṭīrī ṭān*, and *yā lā lan*, in certain songs and the interaction between the vocal and instrumental sections. Finally, the student learns the placement of a piece: its proper section within the *mīzān*. This implies the placement of a piece within the larger *nūba* repertoire; for example, a *ṣanʿa* learned as part of the *muwassaʿ* section of the *mīzān basīṭ* in *nūba māya* is performed only at that specific point of the repertoire.

—Adapted from an article by Habib Hassan Touma

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Malḥūn: Colloquial Song in Morocco

The exact origins of *malḥūn* are unclear. Arabic dialectical poetry, known as *zajal*, first appeared in Muslim Spain in the twefth century C.E. (sixth century A.H.). The first evidence of dialectical Arabic poetry in Morocco comes from the fifteenth century C.E. (ninth century A.H.), and the word *malḥūn* itself was first used in a poem about one hundred years later. *Malḥūn* thus appeared long after the Andalusian *zajal*, but it seems to have developed independently. The earliest poets of Moroccan *malḥūn* were from the Tafilalet, an area on the edge of the desert, far from the cities where Andalusian refugees settled after their departure from Spain in the years leading up to 1492. The Tafilalet was, rather, an area populated both by indigenous Berbers and by Arabs who had migrated west from the Arabian peninsula. The presence of the eastern Arabs, and the poetic form and themes of some of the early poems, has led a number of scholars to conclude that *malḥūn* was based on an Arabian model. At least one observer, however, has also noted similarities between *malḥūn* and Berber poetry.

The Tafilalet was the home of the ʿAlawite family, descendants of the Prophet Muhammad who gained control of the rest of Morocco in the seventeenth century (and who still rule the country today). As the ʿAlawites moved north to the great cities of Fès, Marrakech, and especially Meknès, they took *malḥūn* with them. Many members of the ʿAlawite dynasty were supporters of *malḥūn* and some—including the founder, Moulay ʿAli Cherif—were poets themselves. The most revered poets, however, seem to have come from more humble origins. The greatest flowering of *malḥūn* took place in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when the form was refined (some say perfected) by such poets as Jilali Mtired, a greengrocer; Abdel Hadi Bennani, a spice merchant; and al-Hajj Ahmad al-Gharabli, a weaver.

Malḥūn continues to appeal to both the elite and the working class. King Hassan II (r. 1961–1999) was a great patron of many varieties of Moroccan music, including *malḥūn*. During his reign, a growing cultural nationalism encouraged the study of traditional Moroccan forms, including *malḥūn*, proverbs and other forms of oral literature in both Arabic and Berber, as a way of asserting Moroccan identity in the face of previous intellectual domination by France, on the one hand, and by Egypt and Lebanon on the other. A new generation of scholars, such as Abbas al-Jirari and Ahmed Suhum, wrote extensively about the form. The playwright Tayyeb Siddiqi incorporated *malḥūn* into his theater pieces, which in turn generated a new genre of folk-revivalist popular music.

At about the same time, in the old centers of *malḥūn* such as Fès and Marrakech, intellectuals began to stage festivals and conferences, and also to organize societies that met regularly for discussion and performance of the music. The most highly regarded performers of the traditional style, however, continued to come from the artisanal groups.

Poetic Form

A poem in *malḥūn* shares both its name, *qaṣīda*, and its basic organizational device—a two-part line form—with classical Arabic poetry. Each line of a *qaṣīda* is divided into two half-lines (hemistichs). In the classical *qaṣīda*, both rhyme and meter are established in the first verse and maintained throughout the entire poem, which generally includes twenty-five to one hundred lines.

In the eleventh century C.E., Andalusian poets replaced the classical form with more elaborate patterns, grouping together lines of different lengths, with rhyme schemes such as aa bbb aa or aa bba ccca. The new rhyme schemes were the basis of a strophic form, known as *muwashshaḥ*, that was probably a result of the ecumenical atmosphere of the Muslim states of medieval Spain, which fostered collaboration between Iberians, North Africans, and Eastern Arabs, and between Christians, Muslims, and Jews.

Like the *muwashshaḥ*, the *qaṣīda* of *malḥūn* is strophic in form. The patterns of the stanzas are often very simple (for instance, four lines with a pattern such as aaab, cccb, or dddb), but they can also be very long and complex, sometimes appearing to approach free verse. A *qaṣīda* may have anywhere from four to a dozen or more stanzas.

Themes, Language, and Imagery

A *qaṣīda* of *malḥūn* can touch on any subject, from pleas to Allah and praise of the Prophet Muhammad to elegies and descriptions of nature to social advice and political commentary. Most common of all are songs of love, which may include explicitly erotic descriptions of the beloved and depictions of

intoxication by wine (which is forbidden in Islam). The theme of the poem is developed in successive stanzas, which may describe an imagined voyage, parts of the body, or the efforts of a lover to join his beloved. In the poem *Al-Herraz* 'The Magician', for example, the beloved is held captive by a crafty magician, and in each stanza the lover attempts a different disguise in order to gain access to the magician's house. His efforts are consistently foiled until the last stanza, when he finally defeats his enemy. Similarly, each stanza of *A-Naḥla* 'The Bee' describes, in botanically correct terms, different areas of a nineteenth-century royal garden.

The language of *malḥūn* draws on literary and dialectical Arabic from different periods, as well as slang and even other languages, including Berber. There is a profusion of synonyms (including fifteen different names for the Prophet Muhammad in one *qaṣīda* alone), and extensive punning. The vocabulary is often obscure in itself and made even more so by the intentional distortion of pronunciation for sonic effect. Even when the surface meaning is clear, it may conceal a rich network of metaphors. Some of these images, such as the comparison of the beloved's eyebrows to bows shooting arrows at the lover's heart, are drawn from the repertoire of classical Arabic, while others are unique to Morocco.

Often an entire poem is an extended metaphor. "The Bee," mentioned above, describes not only the passage of a bee through a garden but also political maneuvering in the sultan's court. More commonly, songs describing erotic love or intoxication are, in fact, discussing the love of Allah or the Prophet Muhammad.

Instrumentation and Ensembles

Malḥūn can be found in a wide variety of contexts, from street performance to religious lodges to the royal palace, accompanied by a wide variety of ensembles. According to some sources, a singer of *malḥūn* originally accompanied himself on the *deff*, a square double-headed frame drum. Since poetry was the point, no additional accompaniment was necessary. Even today, singers in the marketplace sometimes still use only a *deff* or a *bendīr* (a round frame drum) when presenting a *qaṣīda*.

When *malḥūn* is used in the rituals of Muslim religious associations, such as the ʿAissawa (ʿĪssāwa), the song is generally accompanied by a variety of drums, including both the *bendīr* and the *naqqāra* (or *ṭbila*, a bound pair of pottery kettledrums). In these sacred performances, the singing alternates with instrumental passages, accompanied by the same set of drums, played by a wind ensemble of double-reed pipes (*ghaita*) and six-foot-long trumpets.

Over the course of the last century, *malḥūn* was increasingly incorporated into the repertoires of urban string ensembles, which usually include several European-style violins or violas (played upright on the knee rather than on the shoulder), at least one *ʿūd* (a pear-shaped fretless lute), a *suisin* (a small, three-stringed fretless lute), a *darbūka* (a single-headed goblet-shaped drum), a *ṭār* (a tambourine, about 18 centimeters in diameter), and one or more *taʿrij* (small single-headed drums). This is similar to the standard ensemble for many urban popular musics in Morocco, and, with the addition of the *rebāb* (a two-stringed bowed lute), it is also much like the ensemble used in the performance of *al-alā andalusiyya*, the style favored by both the royal court and the bourgeoisie. Indeed, a number of Andalusian orchestras include some *malḥūn* in their performances to lighten the mood during interludes or at the end of an evening.

Despite these (and other) variations in ensemble form, a performance of *malḥūn* is characterized in particular by the presence of the *taʿrija* (plural, *taʿrij*), a small pottery vase drum. According to legend, the *taʿrija* was introduced to the *malḥūn* ensemble by Jilali Mtired from the "other world," where the great poet-singer entertained the spirits at a wedding party. The *taʿrija*, at least since the nineteenth century C.E., has become the main instrument in the *malḥūn* ensemble. The lead singer uses it to measure his own singing and to control the rhythm and tempo of the orchestra; and in instrumental interludes or at the end of a song, to add rhythmic energy to the performance, polyrhythmic improvisations are played with a supporting *taʿrija*.

Performance

The performance of a *qaṣīda* follows the repetitive structure of the poem, but the rendition is almost always elaborated by the addition of other elements. The result is a kind of suite built of a variety of melodies, meters, and forms, both poetic and musical. A song is generally preceded by a *taqsīm*, an unmeasured solo instrumental improvisation. In some instances, all the featured instruments—violin, *ʿūd*, *suisin*—may each take a solo in turn. When there is only one opening *taqsīm*, the other musicians will get their turn as soloists in other *qaṣāʿid* later in the event. Less frequently, the lead singer may present a solo vocal improvisation in free rhythm. This improvisatory introduction may be followed by a short introductory song composed by a different, often anonymous, poet. This song is distinguished

from the rest of the performance by its quick tempo, asymmetrical meter (5/8), and call-and-response style.

The presentation of the *qaṣīda* itself usually begins with a statement of the refrain (*harba* 'pike' or 'spear point') by the lead singer. The accompaniment here, and throughout the song, is very restrained; the melodic instruments quietly underline the contours of the tune while the drums provide a spare metric framework in 2/4. The musical focus is entirely on the singer, who is esteemed particularly for the clarity of his enunciation and his ability to navigate rhythmically through the tongue-twisting text.

After the solo presentation of the *harba*, the refrain is taken up by the rest of the orchestra, singing in chorus and then giving an instrumental statement of the tune. The *harba* contains the kernel of the entire piece—the poetic form, the theme of the poem, and the basic melody. Following this introduction, the solo singer performs each of the stanzas, which alternate with the choral refrain and instrumental interludes.

The three initial repetitions of the refrain—as solo, chorus, and instrumental passage—thus present a summary of the overall form of the music, which is repeated throughout the performance.

Although the first stanza establishes the basic form, variations and elaborations may be introduced later in the performance. For example, subsequent stanzas may be preceded by three or four short lines of poetry, sung in call-and-response style. At several points in the performance, the singer may modulate from one melodic type to another, raising the pitch level and raising tension among the listeners at the same time. Then, toward the end of the last stanza, he begins to acclerate the tempo, and at the very end of the song he modulates the meter to a vigorous 5/8 or, more commonly, 6/8. The final *harba* is repeated over and over in a joyous chorus while the tempo continues to accelerate and the instrumental accompaniment, particularly the dialogue of the *taʿrija*, becomes louder and louder. The song concludes with a brief, unmeasured melisma by the lead singer, bringing the melody back down to the tonic as the ensemble dissolves in laughter and shouts of approval. After a break for some tea and conversation, the musicians will begin again.

—Adapted from an article by Philip D. Schuyler

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Urban Folk and Popular Music in Algeria

Algeria, with a total land area of nearly 2.4 million square kilometers, is a vast country; however, more than 85 percent of it is covered by the Sahara Desert, which is bounded in the north by the high Chotts plateau between the Saharan Atlas and the Tell (or Little) Atlas mountains. The desert and steppes are thinly settled and contain only a few centers, which in recent years have evolved from small market towns into larger settlements with several thousand inhabitants. Most Algerians live within the relatively narrow, yet fertile and moist, coastal areas on the Mediterranean Sea. In 1989, approximately 95 percent of the population lived in this area; between 1962 (the year of national independence) and 2005, this population increased to 32.5 million.

Since ancient times, cities along the coast and in the nearby Tell Atlas mountains (which enjoy the climatic influence of the Mediterranean) have developed into military, administrative, and trading centers. These cities were shaped ethnically, socially, and culturally by their relationships with other communities of the Mediterranean, the Near East, and the Middle East. With the changing fortunes of history, some of these centers achieved great importance and experienced swift and lasting development, while others were marginalized, decayed, or were destroyed with the downfall of regional dynasties. In more recent times many of these locales have experienced a rebirth. At the time of the massive French colonization at the end of the nineteenth century, these communities became destinations for rural populations whose land had been expropriated; and during the war of independence in the 1950s and 1960s colonial repression forced nearly half of the farmers—a third of the total population of the country—into the cities. With the population continuing to increase even after the conclusion of the war, urbanization continued unabated. In 1997, roughly 50 percent of all Algerians lived in cities.

History

Algeria has had a long history. Fantastic rock paintings in the central Sahara dating from approximately 10,000 years ago demonstrate the existence of a black population. Some 5,000 years ago Hamitic tribes of Berber extraction invaded the region from the east. After them, Phoenicians, Romans, Vandals, Byzantines, Arabs, their slaves from black Africa, Turks, and Europeans all left their mark. The present ethnic and social structure of the population is complex, and the traditions are many and various, having been nourished by many sources. The influence of the Arabs has been particularly lasting. Beginning in the seventh century they entered Algeria in several waves, subjecting or driving out the Berbers, who persisted in peripheral areas such as the Aurès mountains (in northeast Algeria), Kabylia (the mountainous coastal area east of Algiers), the Mzab (in the center of the country), and the Hoggar (in the south). The steppe areas and the bordering desert regions were taken by the Banī Hilāl and other bedouin populations, whose traditions experienced a fruitful development and remain significant even today. In the Saharan Atlas between Aflou and Bousaada, the ethical-meditative song genre *aiyāi*, which is performed by singer-poets known as *qawwāl*—accompanied in recent times by one or more *qaṣbāt* (singular, *qaṣba*), edge-blown open transverse flutes—alone encompasses some thirty-five types. This genre has even been taken up by the media, which has popularized it throughout Algeria as part of the national musical heritage.

Music in the Cities: Diversity and Differentiation

Arab culture enjoyed exceptional development and influence in the thickly populated coastal zone with its many cities. Both language and musical life were considerably shaped by this culture, even if the regional dialect and vernacular, musical design, articulation, instruments, and so forth, reveal other sources as well. Owing to the disruptive history experienced in Algeria, the musical culture of the cities is remarkably diverse in structure. It is highly differentiated according to traditions, musical spheres, classes, functions, instruments, genres, forms, and presentation. Moreover, even some of its strictures, grounded as they are in social and regional-historical differences, are in no way homogeneous, despite overlapping characteristics, common functional links, and increasing distribution via modern media. This is the case not only with religious music but also with the dominant courtly-urban art music tradition introduced in the wake of the Arab conquest, a repertoire which in its present

development is known as *mūsīqā andalūsiyya* 'music of Andalusia', *mūsīqā gharnāṭa* 'music of Granada', or increasingly as "classical" music.

Apart from classical music, other socially or functionally determined musical practices, folk music and folklike music, popular music, religious or cult music, and "Western" music can be found in Algeria's cities and in areas influenced by them. These musics cannot simply be differentiated according to their sources and characteristics; they also differ from one another in how they are rooted in society. In the course of history, these types have differed greatly in relative importance. In particular, folklike music and popular music have increasingly moved into the foreground, overshadowing other musical traditions.

In connection with the social dislocations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, new folk music practices have emerged in Algerian cities. The common people have contributed the most to this development. These new forms of urban folklike music arising from the lower social classes have drawn on various traditions, such as classical music, music for religious functions, and folk and tribal music. However, the borrowed material has been given a unique stamp, and new stylistic standards have been developed that have their own historical significance. The texts are usually in *malḥūn*, the colloquial language. Originally, the performers were primarily professional folk musicians, but these repertoires have also been adopted by classical musicians.

Urban Folk Music: *ʿArūbī* and *Ḥawzī*

Regional traditions have given rise to vocal genres such as *ʿarūbī* (or *ʿarbī*) and *ḥawzī*. Though simpler in design and less rich in repertoire, the *ʿarūbī* is nevertheless related to, and has grown out of, classical "Andalusian" music. It first developed in the rural area surrounding Algiers, influenced by the *nūba* tradition of that city. The name itself implies an emphasis on "authentic" ethnic roots as opposed to "Andalusian" repertoires. The basis of the *ʿarūbī* is formed by strophic poetry in various forms, transformed into broad melodic arches that resemble those of classical music but lack its characteristic richness. These pieces are usually performed responsorially by a soloist and a group and sometimes close with an improvised solo in free rhythm.

The folk genre known as *ḥawzī* (from *ḥawz* 'boundary') was originally associated with the region around Tlemcen but has also been adopted by the other regional centers of Algiers and Constantine. Appealing to popular taste in language as well as in content, the *ḥawzī* embraces serious themes concerned with religion, saints, Muhammad and his companions, miracles, and the beauty of nature, as well as lighter themes—wine, women, love, dance, and music. Since the seventeenth century many poets have devoted themselves to this form, and, despite the occasional persecution and exile of poets on moralistic grounds, many of the thousands of examples of their work survive today. The most famous of these poets were Ahmad Ibn al-Trīkī (who died at the beginning of the eighteenth century); Muḥammad Ibn Msāyib (d. 1766), who left behind more than two thousand poems; and Būmidyān Ibn Sahla (who lived to see the end of Turkish occupation in 1830).

With respect to poetic form, the *ḥawzī* closely resembles the "Andalusian" *zajal*. As a rule it is organized strophically and has a complex rhyme structure, in which internal rhymes play a large role and the ending lines of each stanza have the same rhyme. Like the *ʿarūbī*, the *ḥawzī* melodies are much plainer than those of the "Andalusian" *nūba*, and the underlying binary and ternary rhythmic periods are simpler.

Along with the *nūbāt*, the *ʿarūbī* and *ḥawzī* have long since found their way into the private as well as the public sphere. During traditional wedding concerts the musicians would occasionally throw in refreshing lighter songs, often at the request of the audience. In earlier times, in cafés featuring musicians, the colorful assemblage of listeners would often call for lighter, more easily digestible fare.

Women's Music: *Qādriyya* and *Ḥawfī*

In the sexually segregated society of Algeria, the *ʿarūbī* and the *ḥawzī* belong to the realm of men. Women have developed their own striking musical forms for their own circles, forms that have also been adopted by classical musicians and have served especially as refreshing, unaffected additions at the end of the *nūba*. These are the *qādriyyāt* (singular, *qādriyya*), sung in dialect, which belong to the repertoire of traditional women's ensembles. These groups, engaged by rich families for celebrations such as marriages, betrothals, and circumcisions, have fulfilled ceremonial functions and provided entertainment. The *qādriyyāt* are pretty, elegantly formed melodies setting multiple stanzas of love poetry, classified as *qādriyya ṣanʿa* (elaborated *qādriyya*) in classical music or as *qādriyya zendānī* in the context of urban folk music. The songs of the first group are generally tied to a three-part rhythmic period known as *inṣirāf*, while those of the second group are characterized by the rocking meter (6/8 or 12/8) of the *zendānī*—a name derived from a light dance song.

There are very old and intimate bonds with respect to language, form, rhyme, and content between the *ḥawzī* and the *ḥawfī*, a genre of urban folk music. This genre, which is cultivated in northern Algerian cities from Tlemcen to Algiers and about which little is known, is the exclusive domain of women. The *ḥawfī* features short rhymed texts of few verses, which are improvised in free rhythm on a melodic model of usually four or five lines (figure 1).

A *ḥawfī* song, performed by a soloist, serves as entertainment and can encompass a wide range of themes, from nature poetry to poetry about the joys and sufferings of love to the glorification of Allah and the saints.

Women of lower social standing, who in Muslim society are for the most part ostracized by the public and must provide for their own musical needs, cultivate along with the *ḥawfī* numerous other genres, including incantations; cradle songs; work songs; songs of ritual or entertainment relating to birth, circumcision, marriage, pilgrimage, and veneration of the dead; jocular songs; dance songs; and laments. When rhythmic accompaniment is called for, the women clap their hands or use the *darbūka*, a goblet-shaped drum with one head that is traditionally considered a woman's instrument.

Since children belong generally to the sphere of women, their musical expressions should be mentioned in this context. These expressions include songs of mockery, prayer, and play, as well as songs sung during Ramadan, at the great feast (*ʿīd el-kebīr*), and during the *mulūd* (birthday of the Prophet).

Popular Music: *Shaʿbī* and *Rai*

Shaʿbī

New musical practices and genres associated with the enormous social upheavals and developments of the twentieth century have taken their place beside such forms as *ʿarūbī*, *ḥawzī*, and *qādriyya*, themselves considered modern in the nineteenth century. In this creation of new musical forms, the *madḥ*, which has been widely disseminated and is deeply rooted in popular consciousness, has assumed a particularly important and highly interesting role. It represents one source of the music called *shaʿbi* 'popular' or 'people's music', which developed in Algeria during

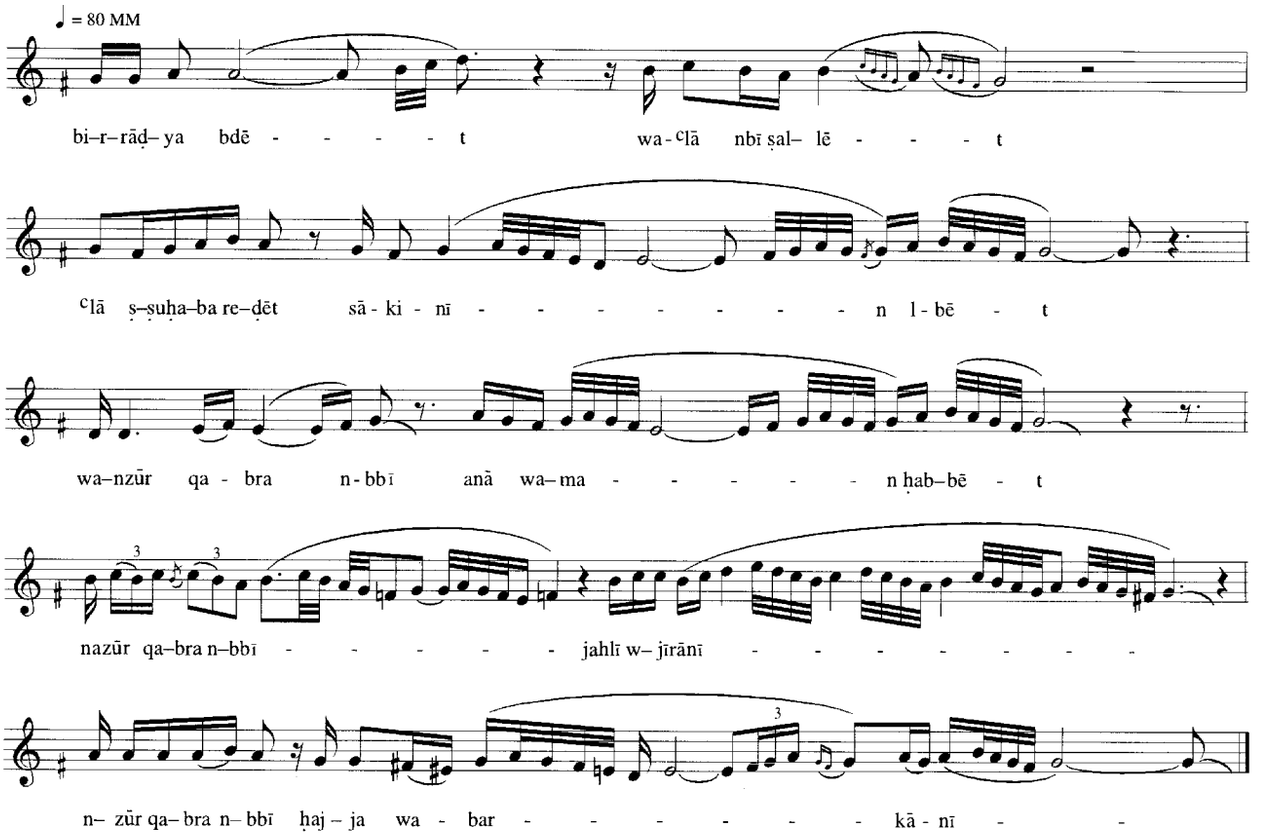

Figure 1 Bi-r-rāḍya bdēt (*ḥawfī* Tlemcen).

the 1930s. Like other types of traditional music, the *shaʿbī* used colloquial language (*malḥūn*) and was formally related to the *qaṣīda* in its strophic structure and equal rhymes over several lines and half-lines of verse. On the other hand, it was influenced by classical music as well as by popular genres, although it tended to orient toward forms developed in other countries, which were subsequently adopted with great eagerness in Algeria. These included newer Egyptian music (often called *sharqī* 'eastern'), jazz, and European dance music. These genres gradually spread from east to west through concerts of Egyptian, Tunisian, and Algerian music in the 1920s; eventually, they were disseminated throughout the French colonial empire in North Africa, since the French recruitment of Algerian soldiers in the First World War led to greater knowledge of and influence by popular European music. To a certain extent the distribution of phonograph records and radio (since the early 1930s) also contributed to this phenomenon.

The influence of jazz and of European dance music on the *shaʿbī* is unmistakable, even if its forms and articulation remain firmly rooted in Algerian musical culture. Particularly striking has been the adoption of fretted stringed instruments like the mandolin, guitar, and banjo and the disappearance of other traditional instruments. This has led to changes in the overall profile of the sound, which has become sharper, more vigorous, more penetrating, and more subjective; at the same time, the reinforcement of higher frequencies gives the overall sound a greater stridency. Structurally, these changes have reinforced a tendency toward simplifying the music and making it more understandable—it demands little in the way of specialized training or knowledge. The newer *shaʿbī* are characterized by shorter sections and phrases. Simple rhythmic patterns are preferred, and the vocal style is elastic, light, and swinging, yet rhythmic and impulsive. As a result of this process, participation in the world of professional music-making has become democratized.

Mohamed Idir Ait-Ouarab, known and loved under the name Mohamed El-Anka, or al-ʿAnqā, is an exemplary figure in the origin and development of this genre. His innovative, refreshing style of popular song, despite its controversial content, became known as *shaʿbī*. The new genre was laconic, mutable, pleasing, and accessible. Many musicians of El-Anka's generation and especially of later generations, motivated and stimulated by current social and cultural events and trends, dedicated themselves to the inherited traditions of popular music, particularly the new genre. Even in the difficult times after World War II and independence, much hope was in the *shaʿbī*, which remained accessible to the masses of the dispossessed who had fled into the cities and reflected their ideas and aspirations. The genre remained popular into the 1980s, when it was displaced by *rai*, a new kind of music that gained ground despite official resistance.

Rai

Rai originated in western Algeria at the turn of the twentieth century, as a folk music of bedouin shepherds, based on bedouin folk forms and Arab love poetry. It began to flourish in the 1920s in the port of Oran. Modern *rai* dates from the 1950s and 1960s, when it was taken up by singers influenced by Western styles. Today, the word *rai* 'opinion' is translated more idiomatically—for example, as "my way," "tell it like it is," and even "oh, yeah!"

Development of Rai

Traditional *rai*, which is still sung and played today, is exemplified by *shuyūkh* 'masters' like Hamada, Khaldī, Madānī, Būrās, Jilālī, Laïd, and Hadādjī; and by *shaykhāt*, women singers such as Rimiti, Fatima, Kheira, Largam, Dalila, and Rabia. The women sing in a very low voice that usually has a raspy quality. Some of these women began their careers as dancers, like the famous Rimiti, who was followed by Abbassiya, Djaniya, Oudam Zahram Jarba, and others. Women have also been skilled percussionists, playing the *gallāl* (a tubular single-headed drum) and *ṭār* (tambourine), but few play the *gaṣba* (flute), which is reserved for men.

In the early 1950s, signs appeared of what was to become pop *rai*. Belkacem Bouteldja began to use the accordion in place of the *zamr*, a double clarinet. The advantage of the accordion was that it allowed a *rai* performer to play and sing at the same time. But the accordion could not play quarter tones, so Bouteldja transformed it by changing the length of the strips of metal inside, making it compatible with the traditional Algerian melodic system. His fame is due in part to his introduction and adaptation of the accordion.

In the same era, Bellemou Messaoud, a trumpeter who had been trained at the Aïn Temouchent conservatory after playing in brass bands in stadiums and Western-style shows, began playing *rai* in cabarets and saxophone with Bouteldja at weddings. Bellemou introduced the saxophone to *rai*. In 1974, inspired by jazz, rock, bossa nova, and reggae, he and Bouteldja named their genre pop *rai*. This name stemmed from the combination of *rai* as sung by Bouteldja and Bellemou's Western-influenced music.

Later, other young musicians followed this syncretist path, calling their music *ghinā' rai* 'rai song'.

Thus a way was opened for the introduction of all sorts of Western instruments that had had no aesthetic justification in traditional *rai*. Musicians attempted a kind of compromise between the Western sound of saxophone, accordion, guitar, electric organ, drums and, in the early 1980s, synthesizer and drum machine; and the Algerian sound of *gallāl*, *ṭār*, *darbūka*, *qarqābū* (cymbals), and *kamānja* (bowed fiddle). Of course, all these musicians orchestrated and composed differently, inspired by and borrowing from sources outside their own tradition.

The Culmination of Rai

With the introduction and spread of the electric organ, synthesizer, and drum machine in the early 1980s, *rai* entered its triumphant phase: *chāb rai* 'the *rai* of the young'. Because the cassette market was flourishing, *rai* could go far beyond its point of origin to reach many young people who were seeking a sharp separation from their elders. In 1985, at the instigation of the mass media, the Algerian ministry of culture organized the first Festival of *Rai*. At this time, *rai* had a short-lived but nonetheless real heyday in the media. There were television and radio programs and reports on *rai*, and many articles about it in the press. The press reported on the production and marketing of *rai* and also debated the ethics of this music—the tone of *rai* and its lyrics were anti-establishment and uninhibited.

The *rai* of the 1980s, represented by *chāb* singers like Khaled, Mami, Moumen, Tati, Messar, Khada, Jallāl, Abelhak, Zahouani, Raïna Raï, Noudjoum el-Raï, and Chaba Zahouanïa, was definitely controversial. One controversy had to do with the intertextuality of *rai* as it was cultivated by the younger generation. They incorporated indistinguishable clichés from blues, reggae, and rock into their music, but they also brought in *charqī wahrānī* (a style of Algerian music similar to early *rai*, but that uses different instumentation), *'aytī* ('contemporary', a genre of Algerian music dating from the 1950s, influenced by Western styles and drawing rhumba, samba, and waltz rhythms), and bedouin music from the high plateaus.

Chāb rai is characterized by an improvisational, impromptu, precarious quality. There are at least two reasons for this. First, this younger generation lacks solid musical training and often knows nothing of the musical universe of older people. Among older generations, musicians have many years of training; in their universe, a disciple takes over only on the death of a master. This type of training severely limits the opportunities available to young musicians, and thus it does nothing to encourage their interest in traditional *rai*. The second reason is the younger generation's critical attitude toward tradition. Such an attitude is, perhaps, implicit in young people's accrued aesthetics of multiple, converging musical practices from which a new genre develops at the margins of existing genres. This critical stance is also, of course, implied by the name *rai* itself.

—Adapted from articles by Jürgen Elsner and Bezza Mazouzi
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