Across a Divide: Mediations of Contemporary Popular Music in Morocco and Spain

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation is about the mediation of cross-cultural difference among Moroccan and Spanish musical practitioners. It is based on the idea that negotiations across the gaps of such difference have been promoted through the increased circulation of people, products and ideas in the modern era. Based on fieldwork during the years 2003-2007, primarily in the urban sites of Granada, Spain and Fez, Morocco, the project focuses on popular music, how both the production and reception of music are critically bound up with notions of genre, how resulting associations of musical practice are affected by different uses of technology, and how musical practices of all types partake of and help form different ideas of belonging.

The understanding of genres of musical expression by listeners and performers alike serves a similar function in demonstrating affiliation with certain in-groups or belief in certain ideologies: e.g., of ethnic or national belonging; or of modern, cosmopolitan access. Tracking not only performance of certain genres but discourse about those genres provides clues to how crucial cultural and political differences are understood and mediated.

Key sites for research included official venues for public concerts and cultural tourism, but also more everyday spaces of musical production and reception such as bars and cafes, homes, taxis, streets, parks, and small retail shops. In the course of my research I attended dozens of performances and rehearsals by professional and amateur musicians, trailed selected
working musical groups over many months as they pursued their performance practices, and interviewed both music producers and music listeners in many different contexts.

In the course of explicating the processes of musical production and reception in these locales, the project explores a broad set of related topics while framing the overall investigation theoretically. These topics include questions of migration in the modern era, of cosmopolitanism in various forms as a response to increased cross-cultural contacts due to various human movements, as well as consideration of crucial aspects of modernity—e.g. colonialism, nationalism, globalization, and cultural, economic and technological development—all of which have been significant for cultural practices in Morocco, and among Moroccan emigrants to Spain and elsewhere in recent generations.

To understand the consequences of exchange across cultural divides—from those occurring early and even within moments of first contact between different human groups, to colonial era encounters, and finally to complex cultural, economic, and political interactions in an era of increasingly globalized behaviors—social theorists from Homi Bhabha to Michael Taussig have stressed the significance of mimetic behavior in the negotiation by humans of their cultural differences. My research tracks the adoption, distortion and re-purposing of novel cultural forms, techniques, and ideas arriving from others’ distant practices as one ongoing social channel for cultural expression. It also tracks adherence to “traditional” means, along with the appropriation of innovative practices as ways of marking group inclusion and exclusion.
# Table of Contents

Chapter One -- Negotiating Moroccan Cultural Difference in Modernity: A Theoretical Overview

- Negotiating Moroccan Difference in the Modern Era – A Personal Anecdote 1
- Key Issues of Modernity: Colonialism, Nationalism and Difference 10
- Of More than Theoretical Interest: Cosmopolitanism and Mediation 13
- Chapter Summary 16
- Moroccan Emigration in Modernity 19
- Cosmopolitanism and Moroccan Music 35
- Effects of Modernity on Moroccan Musical Practices 41
  - Modernity and Mimesis 44
  - Nationalism, Difference and Technologies in North Africa 49
  - Music, Modernity and Newer Media 54
  - Technology and Agency 60
- Technology as an Aspect of Moroccan Musical Genre 64

Chapter Two -- The “Popular” in Moroccan Popular Music: A Cultural History of Sha’bi

- A Popular Music Group in Modern Morocco 70
- Different Kinds of Popular: Definition of Sha’bi in Morocco 80
- Parallels/Divergence with Modern European Popular Musical Practices 85
- Different Media of Moroccan Musical Distribution 87
- Some Instances of Monetary Exchange in Moroccan Popular Music 89
- Influences from Abroad in Early 20th Century Morocco 92
- Development of National Music/Culture in Post-Independence Morocco 97
- Social Status and (Im)propriety of Sha’bi in Morocco 104
- Other, Non-Western Cultural Influences on Moroccan Popular Music 108
- Origins of Sha’bi 112
- Instrumentation of Sha’bi 117
- Other Musical Characteristics of Sha’bi 120
- Places of Sha’bi 123
- Song Lyrics and Social Context of Sha’bi 129
- Porousness of the Stage in Sha’bi Performed Live 136

Chapter Three -- Other Genres of Moroccan Popular Music: a Cultural Survey

- Context of Other Musical Genres Related to Sha’bi 140
- Al-Ala 141
- Gnawa 150
- Melhûn 154
- Rationale for Summaries of Other Musical Genres Related to Sha“bi 158
- Rai 160
- Flamenco 164

Chapter Four — Across a Divide: Cosmopolitanism, Genre, and Crossover among Immigrant Moroccan Musicians in Contemporary Andalusia 170
| Citizenship through Categories of Ethnicity and Categories of Culture | 175 |
| Moroccan Migrations to Spain | 180 |
| What’s in a Name: Cultural Genre and Ethnic Grouping | 186 |
| Pragmatic Cosmopolitanism and “Crossover” among Moroccan Musicians in Andalusia | 188 |
| Moments of Friction | 191 |
| Moroccan Musicians’ Use of Gnawa in Spain | 197 |
| Flamenco and Moroccan Musicians in Spain | 201 |
| Cultural Competence and Discrepant Cosmopolitanisms | 207 |
| Continuing Exoticisms and Recent Hybridities: bailarinas del vientre in Morocco and Spain | 209 |
| Other Oriental Turns toward the West | 213 |
| Ghosts of the Past: Cultural Phantasms and Cultural Speculation | 221 |
| Recurring and Contested Nostalgia of al-Musiqya al-Andalusiyya | 226 |
| Musical Reception at Home and Abroad | 230 |

Chapter Five -- Technology as Mediation; Mediation as Culture: Appropriation in Contemporary Popular Moroccan Music

| Integrating the Culturally Foreign at Home in Fez | 235 |
| Music’s Functionality as Part of Intercultural Negotiations | 243 |
| Morocco and Its Historical Relation to Outside Cultures | 248 |
| Theorizing Cultural Arrivals from Abroad | 254 |
| Agency and Naturalizing Approaches of Indigeneity | 262 |
| The Barbershop and the Music Video: Music, Technology and Mediation in Moroccan Popular Music | 264 |
| The Wah-Wah Pedal as Mediator of the Native and the Modern | 271 |
| Altered States through Ritual and Technology | 276 |

Chapter Six – Newly Hybrid Popular Music as Nationalist Culture in Modern Morocco

| Instances of Contemporary Hybrid Musical Practices in Morocco | 284 |
| Introduction of Popular Musical Group Boohalleen | 286 |
| Background/Genre Interests of Individual Members of Group | 290 |
| Musical Antecedents for Boohalleen Thematically and Ideologically | 293 |
| Amateur Status and Networks of Possibility | 295 |
| Concluding Thoughts | 302 |

Chapter Seven – Moroccan Popular Music, Modernity, and Mimetic Encounters

<p>| Defining Modernity | 309 |
| Import of Mimetic Tendencies, Cross-Cultural and Post-Colonial | 310 |
| Introduction of Song Texts for Explication | 312 |
| Response to the Foreign or Other in Modernity | 314 |
| Evolving Phases of Reaction to Cultural Difference | 315 |
| Explication of Hoba Hoba Spirit Song text “Lmirikani” | 317 |
| Irony and Ambivalence | 319 |
| Possession as Manifestation of the Foreign | 323 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nationalism and Nostalgia</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explication of Mwizo Song text “Tanjiyya”</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different First Contacts and Mimetic Excess</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Coming of the Americans and Ambivalent Cultural Consumption</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explication of Hussein Slaoui text “Dakhlaou Lmirikani”</td>
<td>339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idea of “Second Contact”</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background of Slaoui and Context for Reception of “Dakhlaou Lmirikani”</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Mimesis and Political Independence</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concluding Thoughts -- Modernity and Continuing Difference</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discography</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Chapter One – Negotiating Moroccan Cultural Difference in the Modern Era

It was Ramadan in the town of Almuñécar on the southern coast of Spain, and Kamal and I had been walking and talking for hours already. Less than fifteen miles to the south across the water were the shores of Northern Morocco, to which I had postponed my first visit in order to spend time with Kamal during and following a concert he was performing in Almuñécar. The thousands of hours I was destined to spend listening to popular music of different kinds in the bars, cafes, concert halls, shops and streets of Tangier and Fez were still in the future.

I had little reckoning yet of the difference that the often gritty, rough, loud, and dense ambience of those Moroccan locales within which I would be pursuing my investigations into popular music in Morocco held in contrast to the more measured, even elegant contexts in which Kamal was presenting his musical performances. And I had only sampled initially some of the public settings in Granada and elsewhere in Spain where Moroccan performers presented their sometimes kitschy undertakings of music understood or purported to be “Arab” or “Oriental” or “Moroccan” – the Café de Muralles or Club Sahara in Granada, at both of which venues Muhammed, a robed, middle-aged, classically-trained musician from the Conservatory in Tetuoan played an electric keyboard as accompaniment for a Spanish belly-dancer; or in a small box of a souvenir shop where Mustafa, an immigrant to Granada of long-standing, took time out from his occasional job selling cheap fabrics and badly made lamps sourced from North Africa in order to show off his rough and varied knowledge of different Moroccan musical idioms on the ‘ud as part of a “lesson” for which he requested a propina or “tip” of ten Euros.

At this earlier moment when Kamal and I were on the very southern edge of Europe occurred during the autumn of 2005, it was soon after the start of my field research into the social context of
Moroccan music in Spain and Morocco. The two of us had paused in our lengthy perambulations by the Mirador ("viewpoint," or "outlook," in English) near the seaside on the edge of town and stopped next to a statue of ‘Abd al-Rahman I, the eighth-century founder of the Umayyad Emirate of Córdoba. This monument to the long ago lapsed Muslim dynasty in the region had been erected as a locally-initiated project only about twenty years earlier. The statue was a latter-day recognition of the achievements of this early immigrant to Europe from the Muslim world (more specifically from Damascus), by way of North Africa. The arrival of ‘Abd al-Rahman I would inaugurate a new political era in the region known as “al-Andalus” to Arab-speaking contemporaries, and it would more firmly establish a cultural connection across the Straits of Gibraltar than had existed before. This stronger connection would last for over 700 years, and continue, however sporadically and contestedly, into the present.

In fact, we were in Almuñécar to attend a series of events that had been organized to point to and celebrate at least some glimpse of the layers of Muslim-influenced culture underlying more recently hegemonic cultural practices in Southern Spain along with those of a larger, divergent Arab Mediterranean culture. Kamal and I had begun our excursion during the late afternoon siesta, after departing from the last official event of the weekend’s activities, a formal address by the local alcalde, or mayor, who seemed to embrace sincerely the idea of recognizing and appreciating the historical overlap shared by two cultures in the region: Arabo-Islamic influence, on the one hand, and European Christian and succeeding humanist influence, on the other.

Kamal himself was a knowledgeable and articulate embodiment of that cross-cultural history that straddled the divide between North Africa and Southern Spain. Brought up in the northern Moroccan town of Tetouan, which had historically served as a center for Spanish political, military, and economic incursions into the African continent, Kamal had been educated toward a multicultural
ideal from the earliest age. While growing up in Morocco, he had been enculturated in the Spanish language as well as in *darija*, the Moroccan dialect of Arabic. He had also learned European musical traditions in addition to those of Arab traditions, along with musical practices associated with ethnic Berber groups, Sufi spiritual brotherhoods, and those of Jewish friends and neighbors.

The statue of ‘Abd al-Rahman I in Almuñécar served as a reminder of the ancient beginnings of this cross-cultural legacy, and it prompted a disquisition on Kamal’s part about a striking late chapter in the long period of Muslim influence in Iberian history. This was when the “Last Sultan,” Abu ‘Abdallah Muhammad XII, also known as Boabdil, had been forced militarily by the conquering Spanish monarchs to depart Granada, the final center of Muslim rule on the peninsula in 1492. Kamal conjured up the poignant image of Boadbdil on his way to exile to North Africa departing from the same coastline we were standing on now. The resonant historical tale he recalled at this site was unavoidably implicated with the “return” to Andalusia of Kamal himself, who was highly conscious of the connection to these shores such precedents provided him, along with hundreds of thousands of other contemporary migrant North Africans there.¹

Just the night before, as part of the series of events commemorating the medieval era Muslim culture there, Kamal had sung the classical Arab musical forms of *muwashshah*, *sama‘i*, and *mawwāl* in Almuñécar, in front of a small audience of local elites in addition to financially successful expatriate Arab nationals at a garden party concert. The performance by Kamal in the series was in the context of a group of musicians with whom he was playing, for the most part, for the first and only time. Three of the four other musicians were Syrian, based in other parts of Spain, with whom Kamal had not played previously. Only Abdesalem, the player of the *qanun*, the many-

¹ As of 2001, official estimates of approximately 235,000 Moroccan immigrants to Spain remained inexact given the “hidden” nature of an incalculable number of illicit or illegal immigrants. This estimate made up more than 20% of the one million plus total immigrants officially accounted for in Spain. By 2003, the number of Moroccan immigrants had nearly doubled (see *España en Cifras* [2004]).
stringed plucked zither, was someone with whom Kamal had any continuing contact, since they were both not only from Morocco, but also both now based in Granada. The impromptu aspect through which the two Moroccan expatriate musicians were paired with the group of Syrian musicians was not an uncommon occurrence for public musical events in Spain at this time, but it showed some of the lack of regular employment for the individuals gathered in this group (as the precariousness of the economics of the larger group of Moroccan cultural practitioners was made apparent to me more generally in any number of moments), since some of them had come from as far as Madrid – approximately twelve hours by bus – to perform that evening.

Only after some persistent inquiry from me the following day did Kamal confide that he had had the idea of creating a larger, more permanent orchestra of twenty or so musicians in Spain, in order to perform traditional Andalusian music and re-embody some version of the historical ideal of *convivencia*, or peaceful coexistence so often associated with medieval Muslim Spain in modern discourse. However real any such peaceful coexistence between religious and ethnic groups might or might not have been in medieval times, the ideal had taken hold in popular discourse generally in the last quarter of the twentieth century, spurred by debates conducted in support of the reality of notions of an antique convivencia in Spain that were put forward by historian Américo Castro (1954). Later the night of our promenade Kamal and two of his friends held forth emphatically and at great length, detailing some of the historical evidence they were able to marshal to demonstrate the veracity of the notion of actually existing convivencia, as they understood it. The relevance of such an idea for general society in contemporary Spain was generated in no small part because questions of developing a more sustainable multi-cultural basis for life in Spain had became pressing, given the patent inequality and frequent strife among different ethnic groups in a country
that changed radically following the death of Francisco Franco in 1975.2

But in that moment when we were walking and talking by the statue of ‘Abd al-Rahman I, implied Kamal, the time was not yet right, politically, for such projects representing multi-ethnic convivencia to be led by a North African immigrant in Spain. Maybe it would eventually be possible, he suggested: not just when the recent wave of immigration from North Africa to Spain had been accepted and integrated, but when there was a critical mass of a potentially receptive audience there, a demographic necessary and sufficient to respond to.

After a bit more prodding, he allowed there was an institutional culture foundation in the other Andalusian cultural capital of Sevilla that already funded such things, and it was a resource that he had considered approaching with such a proposal at some point. But his experience during an earlier incarnation of this kind of musical project, he said, had dissuaded him from pursuing that possibility on his own. In that prior case, he had been part of a large performance ensemble, formed to undertake a series of recordings for public distribution. Both the group’s musical products and the ensemble’s original working title had referenced the Andalusia of an earlier era, but that title had been excised by others in the group at the last moment, just before the public release of a compact disc of the group’s recordings, while Kamal had been off singing with another group in Japan. The underlying reason, Kamal suggested, was that too much cultural credit had been given toward the non-Christian origins for the musical end-product by a title pointing to Arabo-Islamic sources to allow for successful marketing purposes in a still culturally monolithic nationalistic Spain.

The musical project had been initiated and led by Eduardo Paniagua, a Spanish native who had long cultivated projects relating to the antique coalescence of different musical practices in Spain. In recapitulating briefly the history of the group, Kamal told me that he had never asked why nor complained about the name change. He made clear, however, through his recounting of the

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cultural politics in performing this sort of “early” music in Spain, that Spaniards held a predominant influence over decision-making affecting public outcomes for such projects.

Put forward as a legacy of culture common to contemporary Spaniards and North Africans alike, the majority of such cultural projects — oriented towards a stated “rediscovering” of antique musical practices — were marketed in the milieus created and promoted by Spanish national cultural tourism and/or a global world music industry. Both of these latter capitalized on cultural difference, and both of these served as defining contexts for cultural practices and cultural politics alike for Moroccan musicians in Spain. Though relatively obscure in relation to a cultural mainstream, the producers of cultural projects borrowing from and addressing commonly held, longer-standing cultural histories such as this one were very much aware of a larger popular culture marketplace, and approached and overlapped it as one tributary feeding into the larger resource pool that defined terms of possibility for any cultural practitioner that would be relevant.

The range of what was popular in Spain and the range of what was popular in Morocco in terms of indigenously produced music were patently different, and these set the different bases on which cultural practitioners in either place might proceed, and how they might be supported. The contemporary access to resources for Moroccan musical performers including Kamal, even while they borrowed from and were based upon the shared legacy he represented and performed, had remained remarkably limited even after decades of interactions in “shared” milieus.

The cultural intermingling he had embodied himself as a developing musician, he averred, was coming not only out of a cultural basis, but also a biological or racial one. Later, back in Granada, in the evening of that same day we had been walking in Almuñécar, in the company of a couple of his Spanish friends, he proclaimed (not for the first time in my presence): “I am sure that there is not only Arab blood in me, but Berber and Spanish too, and -- who knows? – possibly –
likely -- also Jewish blood. I am a *mezcla* – a mixture.”

Though his two friends had both agreed with Kamal’s earlier statement that “all three of us live in the past,” and nodded and smiled when I asked if this was because that past was a better time, Kamal’s older friend Carmen, a native Spaniard, contended with him over an apparently new assertion on the part of Kamal. The core of this assertion was that he, Kamal, though ostensibly a Muslim, and, at times, an observant one, who had, for instance, been fasting during this Ramadan period, also qualified as a Christian. Following this contention, his younger Spanish girlfriend, Nurit, expressed even greater surprise when Kamal claimed he was culturally Jewish as well. He did so based on the historical incorporation of messages by earlier prophets (i.e., Moses and Jesus) in the divine revelation given to Islam’s prophet, Muhammad.³

As we were discussing various interpretations about what constituted a basis for religious identity, Kamal was still sporting on his jacket a pin with the modern symbol of the indigenous Moroccan Berber identity, a prominent decoration he had been wearing all weekend. He had recently taken up the badge following the Moroccan government’s new allowance of aspects of the long-suppressed Berber culture to resurface publicly in Morocco. Kamal had returned many times in conversation before, as he would also return many times later, to a favorite theme of his: i.e., that the majority of “Moors” in historical Andalusia had been Berber, as opposed to Arab. And, he often implied, that much more vaunted Arab culture was not only just one part of, but actually a thinner patina over a longer-lasting cultural complex indigenous to North Africa. He reiterated these points frequently in order to promote the idea that “Spanish” as well as “Arab” and “Moroccan” identity were all complicated historical entities, and that for any such identity, a multiplicity of ethnic and cultural streams had to be considered to keep in mind an accurate awareness of the cultural makeup of any individual or group. This held especially true for such histories as those in Andalusia.
Appropriating these various layers and markers to create a shifting hybrid identity for himself was part of one ongoing strategy in response to a culturally and ethnically hegemonic contemporary society in Spain that “welcomed” expatriate cultural practitioners such as Kamal by funneling them into the narrowing channels of stereotypical and distorted social roles. Part of his maneuvers of position involved a bid to stake a claim on the same originary moments of cultural genealogy as those individuals (i.e., Catholic, Spaniard) conventionally perceived as more native there. At the same time as he attempted to complicate his own role by laying claim to multiple ethno-cultural lineages for himself, he nonetheless also participated in the ongoing cultural milieu within the parameters of the “exotic” more generally set for him. Music -- not just as he learned it, but as he learned to re-deploy it in different social contexts -- was his cultural marker, his leading wedge for entrée to some of those new contexts.

Conversations such as those I shared that day with Kamal were among the many instances where I observed the complicated interaction of notions of personal identity played out through cultural ideologies, and the realpolitik of stratified social possibility for Moroccan musicians in contemporary Spain. One prominent mode by which such ideals were publicly demonstrated and developed included the competing praxes of different musical producers in relation to what got performed and what got heard in the context of real-world interactions in both Morocco and Spain. Kamal’s self-representations were part of a culturalist politics that both defied and played into glib categorizations of “native” and “foreigner” in Spain, as well as of “Spaniard” and “Arab” or “Moroccan” there.

Observing him in Moroccan-themed teterias (teashops) in Granada, it was impossible not to feel the tension between those venues’ oftentimes superficial reveries on culturalist singularity and Kamal’s own high-minded understanding of intercultural possibility. Though the attractions offered

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3 The sum of these revelatory messages delivered to Muhammad had served as the basis of the Qur’an.
by teterias were generally modest ones, they nonetheless attempted working for both locals and tourists to a degree, relying on awkward blends of attempted graciousness and rough and ready “exotic” décor: small silver teapots, mint tea, and odd assortments of ethnic cooking and farming implements hanging on the walls. These were sometimes sites of actual performance by Moroccan musicians, but only sporadically, as if the live performance by actual Moroccans were just one more bit of cultural bric-a-brac to wedge in among the utilitarian wooden tables or more textural offerings of thin Berber carpets occasionally hung on the wall in display. More often, some decades-old cassette of music from farflung parts of the Arab world, or more recent compact disc of New Age World Music jazz, would play in the background, perhaps because live musicians were too much trouble to organize, cost too much to support, or just didn’t draw sufficient audience to be worth the bother.

Meanwhile, idealism and a substantially informed sense of history impelled Kamal to introduce complications of multiple ethnicities into his own discourse at peak moments. Pragmatism, however, demanded that he give in to and even play upon those narrower stereotypes assigned to him, as were projected on to all North African immigrants in Spain who wished to exploit a cultural marketplace that primarily recognized a singular difference for those many individual immigrant personal histories.

I was especially struck by such tension in the figures of Kamal or one or another of his relocated Moroccan compatriots in Spain, and these -- along with the Spaniards who sometimes listened to them but most often didn’t seem to notice or care -- were the primary subjects I chose to get to know in my fieldwork. This tension was especially striking to me after I had visited Morocco myself starting in the late fall of 2005, and continuing on through most of 2006, trailing off into the summer of 2007.
In the course of these many months in Morocco over several years, I took in some of the range of sites for staging music there: from the stripped down and sober settings for practice and presentation of more classically oriented musics to the minimalist-functional and wilder bars settings for the live musics of Sha’bi (literally, “popular” in Arabic) and Rai (Ar., “my opinion”). These locales dominated nightlife in urban locales such as Fez and Tangier, and they were enlivened by the spirits of alcohol and/or the more licentious behaviors of uninhibited gathering and bodily movements, providing me with a much different range of subjects to follow: both the wild, sometimes seemingly possessed dancers who were excited and emboldened by the popular music they heard, and the musicians who stimulated them, sometimes to great effect, though also with a workmanlike and occasionally even disapproving affect themselves.

To return to Granada and witness expatriate Moroccans such as Kamal hold forth as either musician or commentator in the commercially-oriented kitsch of the New Age would-be chic of a higher-end Spanish teashop, or within the glib cross-cultural enticements of a less smooth lower-end shop catering to visiting college students or tourists from near and far, became exercises for me in integrating at least mild does of cross-cultural dissonance. And understanding what was at stake in the cultural and social negotiations for individuals including Kamal, but so many others -- both Moroccan and Spaniard – consumed many months and years of my concentrated focus both during and after my time in both Morocco and Spain.

Key Issues of Modernity: Colonialism, Nationalism and Difference

Tracking such complex political and cultural realities, this dissertation focuses on the movement of people, cultural products, and ideas about both, across borders of geographic, national, cultural and ethnic difference. It does so by paying particular attention to the effects of recent
migrations to the urban locales of Granada in southern Spain, and to Fez in Northern Morocco. The idea of “migration” is considered most broadly to include both the movement of human populations, as well as the circulation of ideas and cultural processes during the late modern era. Some crucially determining characteristics of modernity in the locales where I conducted my fieldwork included relationships of co-dependency between post-colonial nation-states, where for instance the economy of Spain relied upon large number of Moroccan immigrants as a cheap labor force, while the economy of Morocco was imbricated fundamentally within that same ongoing relationship. At the same time, both countries appealed to the larger world as sites for cultural tourism, helping define ideas of them as nations culturally, but in the process also restricting what those ideas might be by marketing those notions for economic possibility through an array of narrowing channels.

The very idea of nation is of course also a notion very much tied up with modernity. Each of these two nations had a particular relationship to larger geopolitical configurations in the latter half of the twentieth century. In Spain’s case, it had been a late entrant as full player in what was a soon-to-be formalized European Union, after a long history as a marginal pariah at the edge of the continent geographically, economically and politically. Morocco, meanwhile, had stumbled and trudged out of its colonial relationships to Spain and France, with continuing ties to them both culturally and economically, at the same time extending affiliations culturally and politically both to the remainder of the Arab world to the east, and more loosely, to other countries in the continent of Africa. Both nations were increasingly fluid demographically and culturally in the last part of the twentieth century with the movements of people, products, and ideas caught up within larger global flows.

One important effect that comes with the circulation of both people and cultural processes is an escalation in the recognition and defining of human difference. Though migration is one primary
impetus in the genesis of my research, ultimately it is the attempts, limits and obstacles in the understanding of others -- of difference -- that are at the heart of this project. With this as foundational concern, I take up in this introduction the notions of modernity and cosmopolitanism as they have been variously conceived and deployed by scholars. I do so to consider how both the gaps and bridging the gaps between cultural differences has been recurrently conceptualized and articulated.

Multiple aspects of modernity are crucially determining for negotiations of cultural difference in each locale, and especially of interest in considering the still-developing post-colonial nation-state of Morocco. Encounters across cultural divides have been increasingly impelled by different, particular instantiations of modernity: capitalism, colonialism, nationalism, and technological innovation, along with many others. Thus individuals in both Spain and Morocco have variously been brought into contact with representatives of other cultural practices from “outside” their native milieus through the momentum of large-scale geocultural and geopolitical forces in the modern era.

Among ongoing instances of such forces are the making of new nation-states themselves, agreements and treaties allowing greater human migration and commerce between and among those modern nation-states, and heavily promoted cultural tourism coordinated at both local and national levels. These processes have caused massive numbers of individuals to grapple with differences that have been at times abstract, including, for example, the ideologies of disparate social and political practices brought sometimes forcefully to the attention of natives colonized by cultural others from overseas nations. Though the colonizers themselves and their descendants remained strangers in many ways as a separate group of people -- still from “outside” to the colonized many generations after colonization had been formally abandoned -- the offspring of the colonized still negotiated
aspects of those systems that were introduced by those outsiders, such as monetary capitalism and representative democracy.

These different abstract entries from “outside” – systems and ideologies of exchange and of government -- have had a marked, ongoing impact in former colonial sites. But in other instances the arrival of foreign elements has also been undeniably concrete in form as well: the military incursions, for example, of French and Spanish troops into Morocco in the first half of the twentieth century, and the shifts in possible ways to make a living that have been introduced both to those Moroccans who remain in their native country and to those who end up relocating abroad. Meanwhile, these natives of formerly colonized territories such as Morocco have been maintained as exotic, distant, foreign and other for their former European colonizers and for their new “hosts” in their countries of emigration. It is both the violent rejection of difference in the form of closed borders (along with economic and physical exploitation), and the subtler denials of difference in ostensibly multicultural societies by relative isolation and limited social purview, by stereotyping, by relative assimilation, and overall by ongoing political disempowerment, which together form powerful means for channeling difference into uneasy proximity in the modern era.

*Of More Than Theoretical Interest: Cosmopolitanism and Mediation*

A number of factors in the modern era have increased greater contact among groups of strangers and consequently have caused an increase in cosmopolitan behaviors and awareness in both Spain and Morocco. These include interactions between the native colonized in different locales with the colonizing “authorities,” the large-scale relocation of migrant workers from those same former colonies to various overseas metropoles in a “post-independent” phase, globalizing markets,
and a welter of penetrating telecommunicative means that connect formerly separate cultural milieus.

Working definitions for “cosmopolitan” in a colloquial sense have become effectively reduced in common discourse to the access to and/or awareness of a range of locales and cultural possibilities larger than any strictly or singularly circumscribable region, as for instance where one is born and raised. Contemporary considerations of the more classical origins and applications of the term cosmopolitan – e.g., the seeking of more utopian ideals of openness and tolerance – have built on and questioned the implications of such theorizations in an increasingly translocal and international arena. It is one goal of this dissertation to point to the different kinds of cosmopolitan outlooks and behaviors generated by varying degrees of access to resources and cultural possibilities locally, regionally, and worldwide.

While such divergent cosmopolitanisms constitute a set of responses resulting from encounters of difference across cultural divides that have been hastened in the modern age, they are only one means that individuals have for conceptually positioning themselves and negotiating differences with others. The widest range of possible human expression – e.g., language and music, ritual and ethnic affiliation – serves as the fundamental channels of mediation for conceptions of self and others.

The attempt to access the widest possible range of cultural practices, and the willingness to engage or at least co-exist with others’ different means of cultural expression, delineates one extreme in culturally-defining behavior that can be called an ideal sort of cosmopolitanism. But limited cosmopolitan turns are more a norm, even in a modern globalized era. When those individuals with lesser or greater worldly access to cultural possibility deny the worthiness or relevance of Others’ cultural means, the fundamental division of cultural difference not only
remains, but it provides crucially defining terms for physical existence as well. Class, with all its distinctions and implications – cultural, social, and political – looms large and is part of not only what distinguishes and comes between different groups of individuals, but what impels or impairs their abilities to survive or thrive.

The construction of both identity and difference, then, comes not so much simply from any defining terms, structures and processes from inside any individual or even any group, but from terms, structures, and processes coalescing out of encounters and negotiations with sources external to oneself or one’s group. The idea of mediation is thus important not only for understanding the functioning of “culture” in any of its particular forms, but for possibilities of human understanding itself.

Like Louise Meintjes (2003), I see mediation as "a process that connects and translates disparate worlds, people, imaginations, values, and ideas, whether in its symbolic, social, or technological form" (2003:8). Meintjes also plays up the idea of a transmogrifying power impelled by mediating forces, pointing to mediation as both “a conduit and a filter,” shifting cultural contents and significations, even while it foreshortens gaps in time and space, as well as between differences in cultural understanding (2003:8). Following Aaron Fox, who calls attention to the process of mediation by those cultural “technologies” of semiosis -- language and expressive form -- I stress that mediation should not be seen as separable, or as a merely resulting “process of culture” (2004:34). Mediation is neither by-product nor mere agent of culture, but rather it is so fundamentally imbricated with what culture is and what culture does, that it is in fact essentially the same as culture. It is both the terms that are set and the way we know and relate to the world.

Among the many realms of cultural mediation, music and ideologies about music are particularly
salient for investigating shifting attitudes and behavior in relation to mobility, modernity, cosmopolitanism, and the accompanying perceptions of difference and identity, given music’s own shifting and malleable possible significations, and decoupling from literalness and referentiality (Feld 1990). Though other cultural forms – architecture, visual art, language, and literature – can serve as equally iconic for cultural identification, music is singular in its semantic openness as well as its portability. This is particularly true in later, highly globalized eras with their developments in media technology (Feld 2000). Music’s frequent role as a marker of identity -- and as a sign of and mediator in encounters of cultural difference -- make it especially compelling for considering these issues of identification. Some of those mediating aspects of music I look to in their functionality for cultural difference and identity include the novel incorporation of technologies with other cultural practices, ideas of genre and the ambiguous role of music-associated mimetic behavior, in addition to other modern-day rituals in negotiating difference. Before moving on to more in-depth consideration of these topics, I provide next an overview of how the dissertation addresses these topics chapter by chapter.

Chapter Summary

Because of their significance in defining the nations of both Morocco and Spain, this dissertation focuses particularly on musical genres of the “popular” among cultural practices in both places. In Chapters Two and Three, I consider how the use of the term “popular” has signified in modern Morocco, and how a range of particular musical genres have been important in those figurations. Among those genres are “Sha’bi”; “Melhûn,” a centuries-old tradition of musical poetry composed and sung in vernacular darîja, that is, the Moroccan dialect of Arabic; “al-Āla” (a legacy of musical practices traced back from Morocco to medieval-era Muslim Andalusia); and “Gnawa,” associated with a particular ethnic group and set of spiritual practices in Morocco.
The centrality to this narrative of Sha‘bi as a musical genre is due not only to that literal correlation of the meaning of the genre’s name as “popular,” but also given the genre’s role as both symptom and enabling node within a larger set of modern developments in cultural practices in Morocco more generally, whether its position at any point was in direct relation to similar or overlapping musical genres, or in contrast to other distinct ones. This cultural triangulation of one genre by defining in comparison/contrast with other genres could be extended ad nauseum. In the interest of space and relative coherence, however, I have chosen the handful of other genres of music that I believe to be the most germane and demonstrative to the investigation of what I consider Sha‘bi’s unfolding from a descriptive adjective – “sha‘bi,” applicable to any number of other genres -- into not simply a musical genre in its own right, but a sort of meta-genre: that is, an overarching, highly absorbent and somewhat fluid category of cultural practice that subsumed or intertwined with a great number of other distinct genres or sub-genres. In its coalescence as a generally understood musical category itself, as well as through its capacity to engage with and be seen as related to many other categories of musical practice, Sha‘bi was emblematic of a particularly modern sensibility of incorporating change and difference through cultural hybridizing practice.

Moving a step further away from Sha‘bi’s development in Morocco, I also make special note the importance of “flamenco,” which has served both as officially exalted cultural patrimony in Spain, and also as a bridge for North African musical practices in Spain in the latter half of the twentieth century. Tracing some of the human vectors of such cultural bridges, I take up in Chapter Four the notion of the attempted “crossover” by relocated individuals (such as the already-mentioned Kamal) and their cultural production from one geographic and cultural realm to another, as well as consideration of contemporary ideals of cosmopolitanism, concentrating on the reception in recent decades of expatriate Moroccan musicians as well as their cultural production in the Andalusian city of Granada.
Chapters Five and Six of the dissertation look at choices of new technologies for the production and distribution of sound and image as cultural processes in Morocco, how these are integrated into longer-running conceptions of musical genres, and how the genre ideas thus generated accrue social meaning or value. These seemingly pragmatic or aesthetic choices of certain technologies draw on repertoires of possibility presented from both “inside” and “outside” any prior cultural context of performance practice in Morocco. As elsewhere, they are part of the processes for the continuing production of cultural identity and, again, for negotiating the inevitable confrontations between individuals enculturated in different systems of economic, political, and social organization that arrive with cross-cultural encounters in the modern era.

Pursuing this idea further, Chapter Five also looks at the intersection of newer cultural elements and notions previously from outside Moroccan custom and their integration with spiritually-associated musical practices in Morocco. I propose that negotiations of this spiritual aspect for many Moroccans are important means or at least backdrop for addressing aspects of difference in modern life most generally, including in many categories of cultural life that would be understood as "secular" outside Morocco. This follows similar attention to the role of music as a fundamental part of Moroccans' participation in popular religious brotherhoods, and supernatural references in other aspects of cultural life, as shown in work by Crapanzano (1973, 1977), Kapchan (1996, 2000, 2007), Pandolfo (2000), Pâques (1991), Spadola (2007), Waugh (2005), and Westermarck (1968 [1926]).

The final chapter continues explicating those themes of integrating the foreign through the examination of the texts and contexts for three different examples of popular music production in Morocco during the modern era, taken from discrete moments in three different periods, starting from the 1940s and continuing through the early 2000s. Additional consideration is given to the effects of
contacts across cultural divides, and both the mechanisms and effects at integrating and reflecting the differences between those cultural contexts, including the effects of mimetic irony, distortion and cultural hybridity.

To better lay out the foundations for those later chapters, in the remainder of this introductory chapter I present a view of several moments of technological development in musical practices in Morocco, and foreground issues of agency in relation to technological use more generally. This will follow preliminary consideration of conceptions of cosmopolitanism and modernity relevant to Moroccan cultural expression, along with a survey of some of those historical factors in both Spain and Morocco that led to culturally determining conditions in both places in the modern era.

Prior to all these, I offer an overview of the study of migration by contemporary scholars, in order to clarify relevant issues for my study and provide a sense of the absence of consideration of some crucial factors in the study of migration by Moroccan cultural practitioners to Spain in the most recent era. This is, again, just one particularly prominent type of “movement” among relevant factors that shape the overall study.

1. Moroccan Emigration in Modernity

“A path is always between two points, but the in-between has taken on all the consistency and enjoys both an autonomy and a direction of its own” (Deleuze and Guattari: 1988:380).

Large numbers of people have relocated to Spain from North Africa during multiple periods over the last millennium and more. Many of those relocations in earlier periods were undertaken explicitly for the purpose of invading territories within the Iberian Peninsula in order to achieve military conquest and political domination. More recently, the political, social, and economic

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4 This include the invasion across the Straits of Gibraltar led by Tariq ibn Ziyad in 711 and the subsequent taking of power in Andalusia by ‘Abd al-Rahman I in 756, followed by later long-lasting invasions of the Almoravids and Almohads during the eleventh through thirteenth centuries.
motivations that have driven large-scale immigration across this portion of the Mediterranean have been administered by the structuring policies of governments, as well as surged beyond the margins of any channels officially sanctioned by authorities. These have included recruitment by authorities of the Spanish Protectorate of Moroccan soldiers in the Spanish Civil War during the 1930s and the opening of Spain to vast numbers of Moroccan laborers and students in the last quarter of the twentieth century.

Public consciousness has developed on both sides of a geographical and political divide marked by the Straits of Gibraltar concerning the consequences and implications of immigration: the impact on individual, regional, and national economic conditions; on social welfare; and on those factors affecting the cultural makeup of local and national polities. That impact has included an erratic integration of novel cultural and economic precepts and practices in Morocco from “outside” and specifically from the West (e.g., lycée education, urban planning in the French-style, industrialized agriculture, and the idea at least of parliamentary congresses for political representation), dating back to the colonial period and continuing since Independence in 1956. To the north, across the Mediterranean in Spain, as in much of greater Europe beyond, such impact has included as well a growing apprehension about the influx of foreign arrivals among a Spanish population relatively long-insulated from such direct daily interactions with outside importation due to governing principles and socio-cultural isolation pursued during the era of the Franco regime.

Spain’s relationships to those locales of large-scale emigration elsewhere in the world during this period (1936-1975) differed from those of many other European nations, given Spain’s relative incapacity to serve as a receiving destination or potential host for migrants from other countries in these years, including those from Spain’s own former colony in Morocco. The less robust economy of Spain during its relative isolation through much of the Franco period made immigration to Spain
less likely. This has been remarked upon by many observers, who often note twentieth century Spain’s position as a net exporter of labor populations until the period after Franco (Flesler 2006; Solsten and Meditz, eds. 1988). Spain was thus not part of a “new” Europe developing in the immediate post-war era, one that accepted a large quantity of foreign immigrants. That Europe was comprised of multiple host countries receiving such immigration from their former colonies (as was the case of France receiving Algerian and Moroccan workers), but also other European nations such as Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Scandinavia, all of whose burgeoning economies’ development relied very much on cheap imported labor from other parts of the globe, particularly Africa, even where they had little or no prior relationship politically or economically with those other parts.5

Of crucial importance in distinguishing the status of Moroccans who have recently immigrated to Spain, then, is the question of periodicity. The lapsing of the Francoist authoritarian state in the late 1970s allowed a swift rapprochement between Spain and the rest of Europe. Shortly afterwards, newly booming years of Spain’s economy would support – and indeed, rely upon – the importation of new, less expensive labor resources from outside Spain. This sudden entry into the country of vast numbers of new, semi-permanent, but non-native laborers and residents had significant effects in the social and cultural as well as in economic realms.

The question of the timing of the large-scale migration of Moroccans to Spain is critical for contextualizing the potential reception of cultural practices and practitioners from Morocco in Spain, including especially that of musicians. Building on earlier folklorized traditions of minority cultural practices to promote cultural tourism during the Franco era (notably the performance of sanitized versions of the formerly more regionally- or locally-originating flamenco of Andalusia, which

5 See Janet Kramer’s accounts of changing demographics in Europe in *Unsettling Europe* [1972], in which mention of Moroccans relocating to the former colonizing country of Spain is noticeably absent.
Franco policy allowed to be associated non-regionally with the perceived ethnic group of *gitanos* and the larger nation-state of Spain, cultural entrepreneurs in Spain during the 1970s and 1980s publicly produced through recordings and live performance their conceptions of historical overlap and influence between prior *morisco* populations and those populations’ presumed cultural traditions with the performance practices stemming from a Gitano cultural complex.

The timing of Spain’s opening up to new arrivals from outside, including most prominently to individuals from its former colony of Northern Morocco just across the Strait of Gibraltar, allowed musical practices in Spain to be affected by a more and more globally-oriented music industry in Spain, as in many places elsewhere, beginning in the 1980s. Music production in Spain became influenced by the deliberate effort internationally towards the creation of “world music” as a meta-genre. This was accomplished by subsuming multiple localist practices worldwide as one set among many increasingly cosmopolitan translocal encounters, and as part of a turn toward globalized capitalist marketing of cultural difference by the commercial music industry, among other cultural realms.

The notions being contested as to what it meant to be a Spaniard culturally were also particular to this time following Spain’s relative isolation under Franco, and this affected reception of arrivals to Spain from outside the Spanish nation. During that earlier period of rule by Franco, an unambiguously singular ideal of Spain (i.e., Catholic, non-Communist, and native Spanish-speaking) differentiated an overarching sense of nation in contradistinction with separatist ideas of internal national difference (e.g., Basque or Catalonian). Following Franco’s earlier embrace of Axis powers

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6 The Spanish name for the group known as “Gypsies” or “Roma” elsewhere.
7 See Washabaugh (1996:14, 17, 22-23, 79-83, and 161-163, particularly); also Almazán (1972), Burgos (1971, 1980), and Moreno Navarro (1977) for more on the tension between Francoist denial of regionalism while using ethnic and localist elements by promoting them as nationally Spaniard.
8 Literally, “little Moors”—i.e., Muslims who converted to Christianity in post-Reconquest Spain.
9 See Frith 2000 and Stokes 2004 for a partial history of that effort.
prior to their defeat in World War Two, governmental policies both internally and externally had also helped limit or prevent any explicit identification by Spaniards with the larger idea of being “European” as well.

Upon its release from the hyper-insulation of the Franco years, Spain quickly maneuvered to enter into cooperative agreements with the European community. Following this, both conservative elements in the country, who would protect Europe, like Spain, from alien incursions (i.e., the immigrant hordes from other continents and cultures), as well as more liberal elements (as in those separatist national movements internal to greater Spain), found new ways of identifying with a European federation politically, economically, and culturally. Both ends of the native Spanish political spectrum, then, placed immigrants such as Moroccans in the position of coming further from “outside” something nationally and culturally either Spanish or European. As Daniela Flesler puts it in her survey of cultural manifestations in response to the idea of the “Return of the Moor” in contemporary Spain: “Having to deal with the so-called immigration problems becomes an index of Spain’s belonging to First-World Europe” (2008:30).

Equally important in tracking issues relating to migration generally, and relevant to the case of Moroccan immigrants to Spain in this era particularly, is attention to the sites of both destination and origin, and perceiving of the latter as not simply static originary reference point both physically and culturally, but themselves as sites of shifting cultural practices and significations. Attending to these larger loops of movements back and forth between the two locales – of both people and of ideas, as well as how each affects one another – is a crucial aspect of what I offer in considering migration, as well as in my larger examination of practices of popular music by contemporary Moroccans and others.
Approaching Migration Analytically

Historically, social scientific literature on migration has shown a number of different orientations and biases, many reviewed in essays by Michael Kearney (2004 [1986]) and Paul Silverstein (2005). These include especially the effects on research accrued from eras steeped in epistemologies of modernization, and of world system and dependency theories. From these analytical bases, Kearney asserts, studies of human movement have tended to focus on singular sites of origin or destination, and they often defaulted to the presumption of cultural and political “centers,” these defined as such due mostly to the economic concentration in or through them. Together, this has led to conventions of considering such centers as analytic defaults.

Kearney notes the development of more fluid conceptions that took up analysis of multiple, interrelated sites for considering the flow of humans from one locale to another, as a sort of antidote to this economically-based bias toward the metropole. Kearney further proposes the use of “articulation theory,” through which researchers might attempt to track flows of humans and of their consequences via networks of relationships that extend beyond single location. Consideration of such networks would allow moving beyond dichotomized conceptions of rural vs. urban, underdeveloped vs. developed, periphery vs. center, or domestic/native vs. metropolitan or cosmopolitan. Complicating this last false dichotomy is especially important in considering the history of recent movements of Moroccan and non-Moroccan individuals and cultural ideas destined for both Spain and Morocco.

Such an approach to the immigration of Moroccans to Spain is useful in contemplating the long-term imbrications among and across the larger populations on the two sides of the Mediterranean. In the case of Moroccans relocating or attempting to relocate to Spanish shores, their experience of living in Spain and the cultural influences absorbed there have clearly been transmitted
to Moroccan non-expatriates during cycles of recurring visits back to Morocco, a trend building momentum over recent decades. At the same time, maintaining an awareness of prior histories of political domination and intolerance is important (for instance, the twentieth century period of the Spanish Protectorate in Northern Morocco, as well as the lengthy era of earlier Muslim rule on the Iberian Peninsula), since these prior histories have helped shaped attitudes and behaviors of members of each population toward the other, often negatively.

Silverstein identifies a more recent tendency within social scientific tracking of immigrants to Europe specifically, and of Muslims most pointedly. Within this bias, he asserts, efforts at explaining migration unconsciously “slot” members of these groups into an analytical status that effectively reduces them to a collective role of what he calls the “New Savage,” an argument he builds throughout his essay featuring that phrase in its title. In the process, such analyses maintain a long history of social scientific research belittling non-Western others as somehow lesser or lacking (as configured on a hierarchy of cultural possibility), and thus disable the ability of researchers to see the larger scope of effects on political and social behaviors among the relocated. Silverstein traces how representations of groups of migrant individuals in the earlier part of the twentieth century crystallized while naturalizing the idea of so-called “nomadic cultures,” following on a similar tendency in studies of Berbers and Arab tribes in North Africa.

That Western cultural bias for understanding difference, Silverstein goes on to state, yielded in the second half of the twentieth century to a more economic turn where the material basis of survival for migrant individuals was taken to be the default norm as frame for analysis. The eliding by researchers of a range of possible motivations for and idiosyncratic particularity among immigrants was furthered by the very nature of the illegal status of many of the migrants being

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10 The month of August, when so much of the native population of Europe goes on vacation, has become a particularly dense time for such mass-scale, temporary return to Morocco for immigrants in Europe also.
considered in their new homelands of Europe. This gave a distorted and limited range of perspective on those migrants as fundamentally problematic or unwanted Others, one which might occlude for researchers much of what otherwise would have been observable within prevailing circumstances for various actual migrants, though motivations for economic improvement were behind the decision by some Moroccans to emigrate starting in the 1980s.

But especially for those Moroccans who would engage in publicly performing various musical genres once they had landed in Spain, other factors not only informed their movements, but also wound up characterizing their status vis-à-vis their new host country of Spain. These individuals’ investment in culturalist values, and their willingness to perform cultural roles publicly were both motivating for their immigration in the first place, as well as ended up determining their adaptations to life and its political realities in Spain. It is with this in mind that I attend to these multiple characterizing elements of individuals by noting the courses and outcomes of various individual migrations by Moroccan musicians to Spain in Chapter Four. In preparation for that, I review next some of the existing literature concentrating on North African migration to Spain to date.

Moroccan Movements to Spain

During recent decades, a number of migration studies by Spanish scholars in particular have noted signs of the negative stereotyping by Spaniards of Moroccan immigrants to Spain, while also still largely focusing on the employment possibilities impelling relocation to Spain by North Africans especially. Such perspectives on the economic origins of migration replicates part of a “push/pull” paradigm in migration studies noted by Kearney, and can readily map much of the movements of rural/agricultural and manual labor to larger Spanish urban centers such as Barcelona,
Madrid, and Almería, and their environs. That economic basis often comes to define profiles made in social scientific accounts of groups of individuals who have immigrated to Spain (e.g., Khachani 2004; Moré 2004).

Even in reporting on the more mid-sized, non-industrial city of Granada as an exception, Carella (1999) refers to a homogenous-sounding “community” of immigrants, while stressing a different group profile (that of educational opportunity) to characterize the approximately one thousand Moroccan students attending the University of Granada during the mid-1990s. Carella differentiates his subjects of study from the greater contingent of Moroccan immigrants elsewhere in Andalusia and Spain, whose dominant mode of making a living had been manual labor, while still resorting to one frequently occurring individual characteristic to try and generate a notion of commonality if not outright group cohesiveness.

More recent studies (see, for instance, Izcara 2008) continue this focus on economics and group profiling, even while attesting to the social marginalization and psychological alienation experienced by Moroccan migrant workers in contemporary Andalusia. A more geographically-oriented exception to this tendency is the voluminous Atlas de la inmigración marroquí en España (López García and Yberriane 2004), which takes into account a wide variety of origins and destinations among expatriate Moroccans in Spanish territory. While this study gives some sense of the reception of Moroccan immigrants in contemporary Spain, it nonetheless neglects many of the cultural and social particularities of experience across the native/immigrant divide.

There are some exceptions to such sociological overviews of the North African immigrant experience in Spain, where “thicker” ethnographic accounts provide both greater substance and context to the individual stories of “candidatos,” or would-be immigrants to Spain. In her monograph on the integration of immigrants in Alfáy, a small farming village near Granada during
the 1990s, Liliana Suárez-Navaz (2004) highlights how many of Alfaya’s inhabitants were sympathetic to newly-arrived immigrant “outsiders,” including so-called North African “Moros.”

According to her account, however, the extraordinary and overtly communal basis of village life had a more positive effect on the welcoming of the first African immigrants there, as did the initial novelty of the newcomers. Suárez-Navaz ultimately allows that the intense support offered to legally-imperiled immigrants was a minority effort, and very much in contrast with the “opposition on the part of mainstream villagers” (2004:70) and other local prejudice. This last was evidenced, for instance, by the refusal of one village bar owner to serve Arab immigrants at all (2004:49). Suárez-Navaz goes on to discuss a gradual segmenting over time during her period of field research in the early to mid-1990s of work populations along ethnic lines, despite the earlier exceptional degree of openness and tolerance by some local citizens to newcomers from (mostly sub-Saharan) Africa.

Brad Erickson (n.d.) has examined another, more integrative social sphere in relation to immigrants to Spain from North Africa in the early 2000s. The setting for his study was Vilanova i la Geltrú, a small town in Catalonia. His depiction of the prevailing spirit of community in that town, which was able to absorb difference in the form of newer immigrants, emphasizes the acceptance by the native Catalans there of North African immigrants. The integration of the latter, however, seems to have come at the cost of requiring their embrace of local practices (including the primary local convivial custom of the “Human Tower,” which he features as a centerpiece in his paper), while eliding much of the cultural difference immigrants might have brought along with themselves.

This integration of newcomers via a highly local form of cultural expression shows some of the

11 I.e., “Moors”.
12 This included an anarchist collective that looked to third-world and revolutionary movements as models.
13 The “Human Tower” is a particularly communal cultural undertaking that involves a ritually-enacted and physically mutual reliance among locally-formed groups to create a temporary public construction made entirely out of human bodies, where individuals close-standing in a ring serve as a base for further layers of individuals to climb atop, as a competitive activity pitting group against group.
limits of cultural integration/assimilation in such sites, no matter how “positive” an outcome might result in terms of communal harmony.

Such erasures of cultural possibility recall a comment addressed to me by a local news-seller in the southeastern Spanish town of Cartagena in 2004. When I asked her what had changed in the neighborhood during the decades that she and her father had run a kiosk as a centrally-located business in the town, she made clear the feeling of invasion she felt from the presence of recently arrived immigrants. When I asked what the problem was with them exactly, she declared, “They would be all right, if they just acted like us!” This was just one among manifold instances in contemporary Spain where the homogenizing of difference was attempted in the name of tolerance.

Some of the long-standing social prejudices played out through given cultural structures -- prejudices that might inhibit a more integrative reception for Moroccan immigrants in Spain more generally--are illustrated in an article by Daniela Flesler and Adrián Pérez Melgosa (2003) narrating the festivals that publicly commemorate conflictual historical events involving imagined Christian predecessors of a Spanish native citizenry and non-Christian “Moorish” antagonists. These latter characters, played by local, native, amateur actors, who are “driven out” and “defeated” while performing such roles in ritual reenactments, were uncomfortably identified with modern resident immigrant arrivals from North Africa. The feelings of welcome and security for these newcomers in a new “host” society of Spain were limited and indeed unlikely, these authors assert, given such antagonistic portrayals in these memorial events of “Moors” widely understood as the newcomers’ forebears. Elsewhere, Flesler mentions how: "The Festivals have proven so attractive for tourists that, since the 1970s, a number of coastal towns without a tradition of Festivals of Moors and Christians have begun to celebrate their own during the summer" (2008:156), pointing to a new emerging disposition toward embracing those long-standing histories of antagonistic stereotyping of
difference. She goes on to highlight the antique notions of difference that haunt perceptions by native Spaniards of more recent North African immigrants to Spain, declaring:

This indexical connection to the invading medieval Moor is rampant in contemporary responses to Moroccan immigration: present in social confrontations and violent collective attacks against Moroccan workers, in Spanish politicians’ comments, in fictional works and ethnographic testimonies, it constitutes one of the most recurrent tropes by which the significance of current Moroccan immigration is explained (2008:114).

In her study of the performance of music and its functions among Moroccan expatriates in Barcelona during the 1990s, Susana Ascencio (1998) found mostly group bonding and individual identity at stake among the practitioners of a wide variety of musical genres from rai to Egyptian-style “classical” Arab music. The main commonality Ascencio notes across these varied practices was the desire of their producers to address feelings of dislocation from natal origins for Moroccan immigrants in a new residential site where social marginality was often experienced. Ascencio writes of a “necessity” for these immigrants to use music as a symbol for remembering (1998:66), and she concentrates almost exclusively on how music was performed and listened to by Moroccan expatriates as part of the attachments contributing to their feeling of belonging in an in-group.

In my own fieldwork I found a much different set of priorities predominantly associated with music among Moroccan immigrants in Granada just a few years later. Less often explicitly a personal or intra-group souvenir of times, places, or people left behind, music was used by Moroccan practitioners in this and other parts of Spain as a sign of affiliation for outward consumption, a way of identifying themselves as vocational or avocational cultural producers in a larger Spanish cultural marketplace and socialscape. The practicality of this address for most Moroccan musicians in Granada was made clear to me by the usual contexts where I witnessed their public performance of music, by their anecdotes and references to past events and future ambitions.
regarding the performance of music, and by the malleability of the formal possibilities and stylistic blends they undertook in actual musical performances. This could be read as sign of an at least partially successful social crossover in this later period, and the cultural adaptation that both enabled and signaled it.\footnote{I recall the especially excited recounting by Omar B., a Moroccan musician from Fez, of a culturally hybrid moment in one of the aforementioned teterias. Omar had clearly delighted in participating some time in the late 1990s in a jam session with visiting Turkish musician Omar Faruk, along with Haig Manoukian an Armenian-American ‘ud player. That the moment was by chance broadcast over CNN certainly augmented Omar’s pleasure in}

Hybridization of musical practice among Moroccan expatriate musicians is a topic that Ascencio addresses briefly in her work, but without dwelling on either its cultural manifestations or its social implications. The significance of cultural hybridity among the practices of most Moroccan musicians I observed in Granada is clearly worthy of greater attention, and my address to this topic in Chapter Four is part of my consideration of cosmopolitanism and attempts of Moroccan musicians at “crossing over” in their newer European context.

\textit{Other Moroccan Human Movements}

An additional track of emigration from Morocco in late modernity that is important to consider is that large-scale relocation by Moroccan-born native Jews in the second half of the twentieth century. This movement was so extreme in its proportions as to effectively hollow out almost entirely the prior existing Jewish population in the country, with estimates of a 95\% reduction in that population in the course of a couple of short decades (Levy 2004).

This near-wholesale demographic shift was impelled by a number of intertwining factors: the forming of the new Jewish state of Israel in 1948 and the appeal that that destination had economically as well as culturally and/or politically for many Moroccan Jews; the uncertain political status for Jews amid a newly developing national cultural basis in a newly independent
Morocco in 1956, with subsequent exacerbation of that political status and cultural basis in the wake of Morocco's joining the Arab League in 1958 and its developing relationship with a pan-Arab movement led by Nasser in Egypt in the 1950s and 1960s, as well as the impact on local and national politics in Morocco by the 1967 war between Egypt and Israel (Laskier 1990).

Of special note is the relationship that developed for Moroccan Jewish emigrés in Israel toward their former homeland and their own cultural background. This included their performance of residual cultural practices -- traditional musics brought along with them, as well as more non-secular practices such as various rituals related to spiritual possession among them (Bilu 1980). The overlap of these with continuing cultural practices by non-Jews back in Morocco, along with a complicated feedback loop of nostalgic "looking back" by relocated Moroccan Jews, suggests that theirs is another route worth tracing in order to discover more fully the implications of migratory movements by Moroccans and their cultural practices in the late modern era.

Movements from the Other Direction: Ideas of Relocation in Morocco

On the other side of the geographical divide, even those Moroccans without specific or deliberate ambitions to physically or culturally cross over from their native context of Morocco to new contexts in Europe, often became familiar with or brushed up against signs of relocated people, things and ideas. Friends, families and strangers; television, radio, and billboard ads; manufactured goods, terms of cultural genres, and foreign word descriptors have all arrived in overlapping waves to Morocco -- especially in urban sites -- to announce cultural differences that existed in the larger world.

The Moroccan critical historian Abdellah Laroui (1973 [1967]) insists on a double-lack that

being “recognized,” but worthy of note is the degree to which such meetings by an expatriate Moroccan in Granada could happen in the first place and lead to such public moments spontaneously as well as in more planned modes.
people in the Arab world have been made to feel as part of their own subject formation in the modern era, when Eurocentric versions of cultural possibility and social order have come to overwhelm possibilities of living otherwise in the contemporary age. That first lack for Arab subjects, states Laroui, is that they are structurally unable to achieve modern states of being as exemplified by European modes of living. Even before this, he says, Arab subjects are made to feel that they have also been somehow separated from a historical basis for their own continuing, non-European-derived cultural narratives. These are narratives, he suggests, that, as idealizations for formation of national culture, feel as if they must be recuperated but at the same time cannot be, in the onslaught of Western modernity.

Following this proposed schematic for what has influenced North African subjectivity, and looking more specifically at the issue of actual physical relocation to the West specifically, Stefania Pandolfo (2007) examines figurations of immigration by Moroccans themselves, based on her conversations with several young Moroccan immigrants or potential Moroccan immigrants from a “poor” neighborhood in the Moroccan capital of Rabat (including one sometime performer of Sha’bi music in Morocco). She discovers in their speech a frequent reference to Islamic concepts in describing their projected travel to Europe. One specific recurring reference is to the hijra, or historical forced journey into exile by the prophet Muhammad from Mecca. There are also some who conceive of their individual roles in such illicit and often dangerous migrations as one of martyrdom.

Pandolfo remarks that these ideological developments followed in the wake of a greater internationalized Islamist turn among Moroccans in the first decade of the new millennium. This turn occurred at the same time as an increase in a perceived “clash” between differing cultural notions of moral behavior and organization of everyday life across the divide of Euro-American
secular sensibilities and fundamentalist Islamic orientations. Pandolfo also notes that the clash of ideologies that ensued was one that developed simultaneously with a growing consciousness on the part of Moroccans regarding the lack of resources, economic possibilities, and means for personal dignity that was becoming more apparent for them in Morocco at the time.

While such conceptualizations no doubt have arisen in conversation or individual self-consideration among Moroccans regarding migration from Morocco, in my fieldwork I found little sign of such religiously-oriented ideologies among any of those I met who had relocated or were considering relocation to Europe. Most often these individuals either seemed more culturally predisposed toward such relocation due to class, education, and individual family orientation (suggesting a relatively privileged cosmopolitansim), or they were simply more pragmatic in their search for opportunities for a better livelihood abroad then they could find at home.

Pandolfo suggests her interlocutors’ viewing of international Arab satellite television programs offered them terms for debate that were simultaneously religious and political, and that this influence specifically impacted the conceptualization and rhetoric of their imagined journeys into exile. That influence was clearly one of the channels of mediation affecting cultural conceptions for individuals in Morocco in relation to self, to affiliative groups, and to what was understood as “foreign” at the time. However, undoubtedly more prominent in daily life during the period of my fieldwork were instances of global media from Western sources (e.g., hiphop music and Hollywood films from the United States and Europe) as well as those of Eastern secular origins (i.e., music videos from Lebanon and the Arab Gulf states, soap operas and news from Egypt, and Bollywood films from India). All of these were often played in both private homes and public sites such as restaurants and cafes. Though well-integrated into individuals’ consciousness as part of a

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15 Nor of a preference for speaking classical as opposed to Moroccan dialectical Arabic, as Pandolfo indicates for some of her interviewees.
larger, local popular cultural fabric, these particular cultural products were clearly understood as being from “outside” Morocco for the disinterested, and for the disapproving, as well as for the most devoted Moroccan consumers of such fare.

These other sources have served as only one set of starting points in a potential web of Moroccan interactions with expanding global networks in late modernity. Certainly both the turns toward and the turns away from cultural difference can be traced through many iterations over multiple generations in any post-colonial milieu. But the proliferation of immigrants from Morocco to Spain, starting in the late 1970s, added to a growing cosmopolitan awareness and possibility among Moroccans generally. At the same time, Spaniards were confronted with a new influx of cultural difference to a degree to which they had been unaccustomed to negotiating for several prior generations.

These new encounters across cultural divides occurred as Spain’s economy boomed with its re-entry into relationships with the European community, from which it had been relatively estranged during the long Franco era. Another crucial set of factors promoting such encounters were changes in Spanish laws internally, as well as new treaties signed between the two countries that allowed for greater access to Spain for Moroccan immigrants in the mid-1990s (Cornelius 2004). The life experiences of those who made the trip to Spain for both short- and long-term led to a greater dissemination of the differences that existed in Spain and the world at large for even those Moroccans who never left their native country. Given this developing cosmopolitan consciousness, I turn my attention in the next section to intertwined conceptualizations of such cross-border movements, growing worldly awareness, and intercultural understandings and maneuverings.

2. Cosmopolitanism and Moroccan Music

A sizable number of social scientists and political writers began referencing ideals of
cosmopolitanism in the last decade to address the many questions raised by a growing number of
counters across cultural difference, including those impelled by migration and the meetings
across cultural divides fostered by increasing global circulation. A sense for many of political
failure in the recognition and acceptance of difference has often accompanied such encounters in
modern times — a sense that has been generated within and across different regions of the world
despite or because of their translocal interconnection.

Writers as diverse as Anthony Appiah (2001), Jacques Derrida (2005; 2006) and Paul Gilroy
(2005) have taken up the topic of cosmopolitanism explicitly. They have done so while trying to
frame some of the social and political issues that have arisen with the higher degree of contact
between individuals who were originally native to Africa and elsewhere in the Southern
Hemisphere, on the one hand, and those individuals native to locales in Europe and the West — to
which locales those Africans or “Southerners” have arrived via life-changing migrations – on the
other. The implications for cultural, moral and political order stemming from these encounters have
brought the notion of cosmopolitanism to the forefront both for many a pragmatist as well as many
an abstract thinker. Even where such a conceptualization is less than explicit in the thoughts or
speech of those who might be involved in such encounters, the cross-cultural interactions and the
behaviors resulting from those interactions have suggested the importance of considering
cosmopolitanism for those interested in tracing the underlying presumptions and possible political
outcomes of contact across differently perceived cultural groups.

In the course of my fieldwork, references to cosmopolitan ideals by those I met occurred
most notably in Granada, Spain. There, the nostalgic fetishization of “Las Tres Culturas” and
“Convivencia”\textsuperscript{16} emerged in many contexts of social discourse in a locale that heavily promoted reminders of its own historical legacy as part of its ongoing efforts at cultural tourism and national defensiveness in the face of large-scale arrivals of immigrants from Latin America and Africa, including especially Morocco.

Kamal, the Moroccan expatriate musician mentioned at the outset of this chapter, was one of many embodiments of such discourse. Examples of this discourse prevailed in contexts of official representation of cultural ideals, ranging from cultural festival events to museum exhibitions, but also in more casual moments of conversation and occasional performances. Kamal could become especially fervent both in asserting the past history as well as present and future possibility of cultural mixes. Summing up the many backs and forths of cultural history in the region for me at one of our first meetings, he concluded: “I think the culture in Andalusia, in Al-Andaluz, was basically unified.”

These notional bases from a bygone era served for many individuals during this period as an idealization of a cosmopolitanism that had not been fully attained in the contemporary moment given the difficulty of integrating the large proportion of a swelling immigrant population in Spain. This was also due to a larger political tension ensuing from threatened ruptures of national state sovereignty by those native would-be breakaway populations of Andalusian, Basque, Catalanian, and Valencian sub-nationalities. Failures in modern political coexistence in Spain came also, of course, out of the continuing factious debates about immigration, national separatism and other matters between more conservative and liberal strains of political perspectives and formal political parties in the generations immediately following the long authoritarian rule of Francisco Franco (Cornelius 2004; Flesler 2008).

\textsuperscript{16}“The Three Cultures” of Christianity, Islam and Judaism, and the mythologized period of an idealized peaceful multi-ethnic and multicultural coexistence dating back centuries to the era of Muslim rule in the Iberian peninsula,
Meanwhile in Fez, and in Morocco more generally, a slow, porous cosmopolitan turn over many generations, dating back most prominently to the colonial era during the first half of the twentieth century, subsequently increased with globalized interactions of both economic and social exchange which brought about the movements of people and cultural products. Manifestations of these reached higher and higher intercultural levels through the initiation of a number of musical and other culturally-oriented festivals in Morocco (e.g., the Festival of Sacred Music in Fez and the Festival of Gnawa and World Music in Essaouira) beginning in the 1970s and 80s. These were designed to bring international visitors along with outside economic investment to Morocco, and to promote ideals of a Moroccan national culture both to natives and to those visitors from abroad. Though references to “cosmopolitanism” by that name were not so common in these environs, the attention to globalized relationships playing out across difference stemmed from similar impulses and toward similar stated goals as those suggested by many cosmopolitan ideals. The spiritual and cultural commonalities that were promoted explicitly through official discourse, as well as through programmatic themes and events, included highly-promoted Fez Festival roundtable events such as one of a series in 2006 titled “Making Spirit in the Era of Globalization.” These explicit efforts at extolling the benefits of globalization culturally were supported by the financial sponsorship of many nationally- and internationally-owned, but overall transnationally-oriented agencies and business concerns (i.e., telecommunications, travel and banking).17

The effects of a larger set of recent tourist visitors from afar on musical and cultural awareness of natives in Fez was clear in other instances, however limited or slow-growing that awareness might be due to local resources, prior existing tastes, and habitual custom. When I first landed in Fez in 2005, the topic of American gospel music among some Moroccan music listeners I

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17 Primary sponsors of the 13th Festival in 2006 included, for example, Nokia, Toyota, and the World Bank.
met was still quite current in local conversation, many months after the prominent appearance of a gospel group at the previous year’s Fez Festival. And, while it was extremely unlikely any Moroccan woman would have appeared on the streets of a Moroccan city in the navel-revealing style that many younger Spanish women were currently wearing just a few kilometers across the Mediterranean at this time, the newly emerging global Latin musical genre of *reggaeton* audibly began its entry into Moroccan soundscapes during this period. Hiphop and reggae had already not only become familiar if somewhat marginal items of musical consumption among Moroccan listeners, but those imported genres had made a strong enough impression to influence some producers of Moroccan music, including several I met who were also still engaged in more long-standing localized musical practices, such as *samā’* and *madih*, Moroccan vocal genres with spiritually oriented lyrical themes. While this incorporation of cultural possibility across existing cultural borders indicates a “sharing” of resource possibility and engagement with difference, at one level, other complications or problematizing must be taken into account when considering such behaviors as “cosmopolitan.”

The conceptualization of cosmopolitanism I proceed with here responds to categories of “uneven” or “discrepant” cosmopolitanisms proposed by Anna Tsing (1998) and James Clifford (1998) — sometimes noted as “critical” (Mignolo 2000) or “counter” cosmopolitanisms (Calhoun 2008). In these qualified or “hyphenated” versions of the term, a worldly access and/or awareness is not necessarily impossible for any individual in the contemporary moment, but the unequal foundations on which different modes of functioning, *practical* cosmopolitanism are based for people starting out in different socio-economic circumstances becomes key to factor for consideration of globalized or intercultural relations.

Not only did the differences between my primary field sites of Granada and Fez obviously
demonstrate characteristics of this sort of uneven distribution of worldly awareness, capability, and resource access (a distinction suggested by Tsing’s calling attention to distinctions of “cosmopolitan specificities” and “cosmopolitan nationalism” [2005:121-130]), but so did the multiple demographic constituencies within each locale: i.e., native Spaniards and Moroccan (and other) immigrants in Granada, and native Moroccans and visiting foreigners in Fez. These last sets of groups of individuals lived divergent experiences through their discrepant capacities for understanding of difference in their parallel cultural and political realms.

The coalescence of these combinations of people and their particular experiences of difference developed out of encounters characteristic of and stemming from the modern era especially, where idealizations of customary or “traditional” practices and concepts were themselves a product of perceived changes, challenges and limitations in cultural and social possibility in this more recent period (Ivy 1995). Even more than cosmopolitanism, but intertwined with it, considerations of modernity in contemporary social scientific literature have proliferated in writers’ attempts to grapple with the analytic challenges presented by seemingly more pervasive and farther-reaching signs of a globalized episteme for culture, economics, and social interaction and discourse.

If interest in or pursuit of certain kinds of cosmopolitanism is a sign of the reaction to increasing perceptions of difference in a more and more translocal era, modernity is the condition or cause of such encounters. Indeed the various histories of modernity are crucially determining of those very kinds of cosmopolitanism, where groups of humans conceptualize themselves in relation to one another through ideologies of colonialism, nationalism, and simultaneously more and more globalizing marketplace and labor forces. In the next portion of this chapter I develop a sense of what is at stake in relation to modernity for the localized cultural practices I observed during my
research, and which were negotiated with and often subsumed within notions of larger national projects, while also serving as grist for the mill of a global cultural market. As part of this explication, I will point to how musical practices are indicators and enablers of those very aspects of modernity.


My consideration of music here is intrinsically bound up with multiple aspects of modernity. Many of the salient characteristics of that modernity are intertwined with procedures of capitalism as a basis for cultural production, distribution and consumption, including the impact of conceptualized and reified “markets” in modern form. The fundamental importance of marketplace considerations on subjective consciousness and social relations has been noted by Gaonkar (2003:390), among many others historically.

Such developments of abstract “marketplaces” in modernity figured prominently in both Spain and Morocco, where they were also significantly bound up with and inflected attitudes and techniques of musical practice. Examples of musical practices as ethnic, regional, and especially national cultural patrimonies (e.g., flamenco and the long-developing Moroccan form of al-Āla) were explicitly deployed and promoted as parts of ongoing definitions of social ideals. More than mere icons, the performance of these genres in late-modern eras became contested battlefields for access to individual recognition and status, material subvention, and social identity.

Modernity is not just a defining period of time or a set of lifestyle choices, but a mode of political and social coalescing that fundamentally organizes individual consciousness and group behavior. Varying notions of social ideology and political organization have been valorized and put into practice among groups of individuals during the modern era. These include industrial and
technological development, paternalist colonialism and, later, nationalism, representative
democracy, capitalism and rationalizing efficiency, and secular humanism, along with a host of
other human values and systems. Many values and systems for groups of humans, however, were
also promulgated with reference to the past, and at times purportedly even based on primordial
ideals of social, political or cultural existence.

In the case of contemporary Morocco particularly, certain aspects of its makeup prior to and
continuing through its encounters with modernity have made singular its inhabitants’ responses to
the social and cultural world they have helped produce. For instance, though conceptualized in the
form of a modern nation-state politically and culturally in many ways, Morocco is officially
monarchical, even while negotiations of power in the post-Independence era have provided the
structure for and at least some lip service to a parliamentary system that ideally co-functions with
the Moroccan King in shaping political decisions. As the central thesis to his overarching study of
the modern-forming nation of Morocco, John Waterbury (1970) explicitly credits a reactionary
approach to political power in Morocco prior to the Protectorate era as substantially informing
political structures and attitudes even following Independence.

Additionally, following the mass departure of 95% of the Jewish population there in the
1950s and 1960s, nearly every individual born in Morocco today is in some sense Muslim, though
the Arab cultural foundations for the practice of Islam have multiple factors of syncretic input and
interpretation, as well as different degrees of belief. Besides a long-standing and sporadically
resurgent indigenous Amazigh (“Berber”) cultural identity, Morocco’s position on the edge of
Africa has maintained a susceptibility for many Moroccan cultural practices to historical influence

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18 See Chakrabarty (2002:4), Ivy (1995:4-5), and Morris (2000:7) for some definitions of modernity that are both
broad and detailed. For a focus on the significance of technology in modernity especially, see Appadurai (1996:8);
on notions of nationalism and representation, see Anderson (1991), and on colonialism as an enabler of modernity,
see Mignolo (2000:723).
from other parts of the continent, not least in some of the Sufist practices of, for instance, the 

Obviously, the period of the French and Spanish Protectorates in Morocco (1912-1956) has 
had lasting effects on Morocco and Moroccans in an era perceived as increasingly modernizing. 
This also continues for Moroccans post-independence: one aphorism I heard repeatedly in 
contemporary usage in Morocco was “The colonizers left by the door, and came back by the 
window,” referring to continuing cultural, economic and political relationships between Moroccans 
and Europeans that often seemed to leave Moroccans at a disadvantage.

The same prior colonial relationship holds sway in the countries of Morocco’s former 
colonizers, who had built much of their own modern status with resources appropriated from 
Morocco as well as from other earlier claimed territories overseas. The continuing flow to former 
colonies of cultural influence from Europe, the subsequent economic relationships between those 
ex-colonies and their former colonizing states, and the human migrations (both legal and illegal) to 
European nations from the previously colonized territory of Morocco are several such ongoing 
developments directly connected to the colonial period just a few generations ago.

There was an exquisite yet painful irony in the evaluation offered me by a 30-ish French 
musician living in Granada, Spain when he expounded on the uneasiness he saw in social status for 
relocated Moroccans in Spain compared to those North Africans and their offspring then living in 
France: “They [i.e. Spaniards] are about ten or twenty years behind, in terms of accepting those 
coming from [their former colony in] Africa.” The ironic part of this evaluation manifested for me 
some weeks later during the days-long violence and social disturbances among the immigrants and 
offspring of North African immigrants in the banlieux of French cities in the fall of 2005. A 
prominent graffito I observed in Andalusia shortly after that social unrest had occurred in early
2006 — “francia ahora...pronto sera espana” (literally: “France now...Spain will be soon”) — testified that both Spaniards and North Africans in Spain might be highly aware of the position Moroccans had been placed in as immigrants living within the national boundaries of a former European colonizer, in addition to the different awareness either might have of some of the tensions — and political possibilities — surrounding that position.

Reflecting the Other: Modernity and Mimesis

Not having ever entered under the long-term political rule of the Ottoman Empire, which prevailed through most of the rest of North Africa and the Middle East in earlier centuries, Morocco’s proximity to Europe, and that special colonial history of governmental rule by both Spain and France during the first half of the twentieth century, has led to an historical legacy of contested cultural values partially derived from those colonial encounters. It has also set Morocco up to be uniquely vulnerable to international influences in the post-colonial era when increasingly globalized circulation for both financial relations and cultural interchange are noticeably more prominent. Some of this extra-colonial worldly influence in Morocco can be traced even prior to the end of the Protectorate era, when for instance, the U.S.-led Allied military invasion of North Africa during World War II opened the door more widely to cultural, economic and political impact from a broader range of sources than just those of the governing authorities of France and Spain.

The question of how individuals from colonized and formerly colonized nations have responded generally to the arrival of and perceived encroachment by outside influences in the modern era has been addressed at length in much social scientific literature of recent generations. Among many others, Appadurai (1996), Bhabha (1984) and Fanon (2002[1963]) point to the effects on and shifting positions for subjectivity in the cultural appropriation coming out of encounters in
the colonial and post-colonial era. Fanon noted how the spatially divided and thus socially defining character of colonial cities contributed to a strong sense of “Otherness” beyond the colonized self, and an “Outside” understood as external to the interior, native home. Zeynep Celik echoes Homi Bhabha’s observation that the colonial relationship, which contributed to the development of possible subjectivities among the colonized and former colonized even after the colonial encounter, is not “symmetrically antagonistic” (Celik 1997:5). This manifests in part through a profound ambivalence on the part of those colonized and their succeeding generations regarding their own hybrid cultural production stemming out of experiences with and emulations of those dominating foreign others (Bhabha 1984:126).

Bhabha portrays the “partial presence” of the colonial subject in such processes where “the observer [i.e., the colonizer] becomes the observed” (1984:129), but, for all the efforts at imitation, and however many cultural behaviors are appropriated by the colonized, something is lost in translation. Or, rather, something remains inaccessible or divergent, despite ongoing attempts at mimesis. This take on colonial subjectivity was presaged in Larouï’s warning of the insufficient basis for cultural identity among “Arabs” in the modern era, following their long-term interactions with the West, including especially among one of Larouï’s primary reference groups for “Arabs”: i.e., Moroccans in the post-colonial era (1973 [1967]).

The disparate native origins and enculturation of different individuals obviously provide some degree of difference in which cultural choices or possibilities are available, or more likely. Being born in recently former colonial or neo-colonial locales produces a different relationship to those aspects of modernity that are generated in geographically and culturally separate locales. This is true even while similar cultural products and ideas are more and more widely distributed through a burgeoning trans-national community of economic and cultural production, and however they are
brought to the attention of those indigenes in ex-colonial sites. The imperfect imitation by inhabitants in former colonial territories of practices derived from other realms of cultural repertoire, such as those developed in and disseminated from Euro-American locales especially, results in new hybrid modes of expression. These, depending on point-of-view, can be seen as often maintaining some sense of localized cultural identity while successfully integrating the tools and lessons of novel cultural possibilities, or of being awash in and overwhelmed by them.

Any recent generation of appropriative activity across perceived cultural boundaries is far from the first such iteration. In a more freely associative world, one long past those moments of initial contact cross-culturally, the taking up by non-Euro-Americans of Western-derived cultural forms and processes (e.g., language, media technology, cultural references, and musical genre styles) subsumes and surpasses any simple mimesis of encountered cultural difference. Such mimesis is part of a multi-layered process that serves for definition of self and identified-with group, as reflection of difference between that group and self in relation to perceived outside others, as well as, finally, as an attempted set of mediations not only to and from individual others or even any specific group, but to the larger conditions of social, economic and cultural possibility. And those conditions themselves are constantly shifting, as new elements and processes are brought in to play, and such shifts must be factored in or responded to in one way or another. The mediation of cultural particularities through novel technologies is one response to the modern that I investigate in looking at the larger parameters of contemporary Moroccan popular music in both Morocco and Spain, a focus especially of Chapters Five and Six of this dissertation.

Michael Taussig points to crucial iterations in “first contact” scenarios, where what transpires is not only contact between “primitive” humans of one locale and "unprimitive" men from elsewhere, but also contact between primitive humans and novel machinery: those outside-invented,
initially culturally-specific mechanisms that serve both as avatars and as enablers of the foreigners’ culture (1993:201). The appropriation of the apparatus of cultural production from other sources — and the both cultural and social processes that often come with them — is the subject of the majority of the examples of cross-cultural interaction I detail in the following dissertation.

That those peoples foreign to Moroccan culture (Spanish natives in situ; tourists to Morocco from all locales) might also look across a perceived gap of difference in order to reflect who they themselves might be, culturally, is very much part of a cycle of reiterating moments of contacts and developing mimetic capacity. I look to this cycle as one singular example of a cultural complex negotiating cultural differences in the modern era more generally. Its many layers and iterations are informed by a number of the same issues and cross-cultural perceptions that are densely traced by Taussig in his account of not only meetings of European cultural explorers with the Cuna of Panama and Colombia, but of multiple other encounters at different times in the annals of first and continuing contact across cultural divides in locales throughout the world, from the relocated Hauka in colonial-era Accra, Ghana to encounters of the Idjadjwe tribe of Papua New Guinea with Australian gold prospectors, along with the staged encounters between “Nanook” and an American trader in the Hudson Bay, sketching through this wide array, the range and variation of such “First Contacts” and resulting imitations and distortions across prior cultural boundaries.

These recurring iterations of contact led to a complicated series of political maneuvers between locals and foreigners in all milieus, but particularly in those arenas and encounters of the colonizer and the colonized, and the former colonizer and colonized. Janice Boddy, in glossing Taussig's notion of a later phase of cross-cultural interaction (one of so-called “second contact”) characterizes it as "seeing one's own ethnic group, material objects, and personal traits, in the images produced by others" (1994:425). Meanwhile, Bhabha complicates and problematizes the process of
cross-cultural mimesis, which he believes fundamentally informs the colonial encounter, when he states:

Mimicry is... the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation, and discipline, which “appropriates” the Other as it visualizes power. Mimicry is also the sign of the inappropriate, however, a difference or recalcitrance which coheres the dominant strategic function of colonial power, intensifies surveillance, and poses an immanent threat to both ‘normalized’ knowledges and disciplinary powers.” (1984:126).

His casting of mimesis as an ambivalent mechanism for almost transforming difference to allow for imperfect identification with the other thus foregrounds a deep and abiding irony for the production of subjectivity, and for possibilities and limits on agency in the colonial (and thereby post-colonial) state.

Taussig remarks on a similar dark cloud hovering over the encounters between representatives of non-Western cultures whose relations develop through unequal access to political power and accumulating generations of encounters with cultural aspects of the West. But Taussig concludes with an almost giddy perspective stemming from what he sees as the powerful latency in highly impacted cultural self-consciousness. He speaks of the positive potential of a “mimetic excess” – what he refers to as "reflexive awareness as to the mimetic faculty" (1993:254). And he proposes this excess/reflexive awareness as the means “necessary to break definitively from the fetishes and myths of commodified practices of freedom" (1993:254) in the modern age, following what he puts forward as Adorno’s more positive emphasis on the possibilities offered by mimesis, in contrast to that mimetic faculty trained in the period post-Enlightenment for use as a “tool of repression” (1993:254). In the realms of Moroccan musical practice I have witnessed in both Spain and Morocco, aspects of this knowing awareness and liberatory potential for coping with given cultural, political, and socioeconomic circumstances are exhibited through musical practices that
celebrate both customary and newer hybrid cultural performance possibilities, along with the ever-present threat of a homogenizing means of social containment and control. I will be narrating and interpreting both this liberatory possibility and deterministic threat in succeeding chapters.

_Developing Nationalism, Encounters with Cultural Difference, and Technologies of Communication in North Africa_

How these encounters with cultural difference have affected notions of individual subjectivity, but also of group formation in North Africa, has been the concern of political thinkers as well as musicians. The idea of coming to terms with what a meaningful indigenous, local, and especially national culture might become within former colonies following a move to political independence was a recurring theme for writers and thinkers about North Africa even prior to “liberation” of those locales from the oppressive political rule of their former colonizers. Fanon was concerned with this issue not only for Algeria or North Africa, but for all formerly colonized countries transitioning into nation-states with a semblance of the “modern” form of such modes of political organization that attempted to subsume lapsing colonies into the nationalist paradigm for state authority and cultural consciousness (2002 [1963]).

But particularly in that period immediately prior to the natives’ move toward political independence, the greater contact between enemies on either side of both military and cultural battle lines escalated the potential passage of cultural possibilities between the colonizer and the colonized, as Bourdieu has noted in relation to North African encounters with European colonizers in Algeria (1962: 160, 187). And, at the very least, some negotiation of difference is necessitated by the frictions experienced in the direct — however antagonistic — contacts of war itself, or by the differing positions adopted interculturally that occur between native populations in forming nation-
states such as Morocco, and those very groups that colonized populations like Moroccans were trying to expel from their lands (i.e. the French and Spanish).

Thus, in even the most positivist taking-stock of the status of what Morocco and North Africa have been and/or what they might become, many of the possibilities for self-definition seem to have rested on a reactionary base: self-definition by exclusion of that which any proposed or renewed modern version of a conceptual people or nation decides is outside or acceptable desired parameters, including the (partial) rejection of the previously invading foreign. In the case of Morocco, this meant the extrication of some of those foreign influences through a process of decolonization that was not only political and economic, but also cultural.

Indigenous thinkers in Morocco and elsewhere in North Africa differed on how to go forward in defining a post-colonial national culture in a more proactive sense. While some were skeptical that an Arabist basis (i.e., more officially and exclusively Arabic language-based, and looking toward the longer history of Arab culture, and politically and geographically toward alliances to other Arab countries to the East) -- however already predominant -- would produce a viable and efficacious society among the multiethnic decolonized in North Africa (Benyoussef 1967:12; Laroui 1973 [1967]), others promoted their belief in the future possibility of a Moroccan nation most specifically in racialized terms, decrying the miscegenation of human breeding across divisions of Moroccan and Occidental as prominent indicator — and dangerous creator, in part — of a larger challenge to define the nation of Morocco independently (El-Fassi 1974).

Starting in the mid-1960s, in the politically conscious Moroccan literary journal Anfsa/Souffles (whose very existence was an extended "call" for new cultural values in the Maghreb), various answers were presented to this question of how the present/future national culture of the newly independent nation should ideally be constituted. In one typical essay,
Muhammad Jabir addresses "a certain number of problems concerning an aspect that is very important and frequently falsified about our popular culture," proposing to achieve a "Folklorique Composite" or "synthesis" by way of a sort of expansion of the halqa, a long-standing presentation custom in Morocco for multiple genres of cultural practice, which has included music as a significant component. This was one of many contributions to a highly self-conscious mode of developing a Moroccan national culture across regional and ethnic borders. In Jabir’s case, he suggests a "study of the rhythmic constants of the folklore ensemble, by way of regionalism," going on to state that:

This would be above all [built] upon the base of new themes that this new rhythm should elaborate itself, conceived as reunification of expression (this should not exclude variety, but enrich each region by the contribution of others), because expression will become conscious (1966:46).

Rejecting any easy embrace of either the West, or an Islamic-based Arab culture as crucial means for defining a new Moroccan culture post-Independence, many writers -- not only those in Anfas-Souffles -- proposed variations on this more indigenous regional basis for making something distinctly Moroccan in the cultural realm. The dominating force among indigenous writers and intellectuals in this period of the idea of a national culture as something to be sought after and constructed, was demonstrated by the high percentage of articles appearing in this small but influential journal which were primarily focused on that idea through the late 1960s and into the 1970s, a general tack that was followed up by the more populist journal Lamallif in the 1980s, and then by Tel Quel, beginning in the late 1990s.

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19 The halqa is a traditional human “ring” or circle extemporaneously formed in an outdoor public space by musicians and other cultural practitioners and their audiences.
20 This and all subsequent translations from the French are mine.
More recently, Abdesselam Cheddadi (2003) has contemplated cultural issues similar to those evoked by Bhabha regarding an incomplete or partial doubleness for both the forming nation and for individual subjectivity in Morocco. Cheddadi’s notion of cultural possibility refuses to renounce either Islam or modernity as important foundations, or as dual means for developing a successful cultural milieu for the definition of Moroccan-ness. Unlike Laroui, he seems able to imagine a rapprochement of sorts between some aspects of modernity from “outside,” and of traditional means for educating and enculturating contemporary Moroccan society.21 But the question still remains for a forming modern ideal of culture on a national basis coming out of realms of cultural expression that have previously been primarily oral, local, tribal, agrarian-based, and spiritually-oriented: how to negotiate the differences between one set of prior and another of newly arriving cultural possibilities (that is, one that is literate, industrial, democratic, and secular), one not only newly arriving from afar, but already encroaching from earlier encounters?

Music, Modernity and Newer Media for Cultural Promulgation in Morocco

Specifically focusing on changes in the practice of music in Morocco as manifestations of a series of intercultural re-positionings in recent history, Carl Davila (2005) has identified a number of factors of the colonial era and the continuing modern period that followed. Prominent among these was a growing emphasis on written modes of musical transmission and Western-style music conservatories, which impelled shifts in both pedagogy and patronage for the practice of the musical genre of al-Āla in Morocco during the twentieth century. Alessandra Ciucci (2007) notes a change in attitudes about performance by female shikhat (performers of the musical genre of ‘Aita), coming

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21 However, like Laroui, Cheddadi seems prepared to elide a wide range of other cultural possibilities in post-independence Morocco (the non-Arab contribution to cultural production by ethnic, indigenous Berbers, for instance, not to mention the long-standing intertwined relationship of ethnic Jews in Morocco).
out of a previous “golden age” and a fade into disrepute in the Protectorate era due to the portrayal given by French authorities of the social context of their performances. Ciucci remarks that this change also correlated to a change in patterns of patronage bemoaned by earlier practitioners and aficionados of ‘Aita.

In my subsequent chapters, while noting representations of the performance of other genres by Moroccan musicians in both Morocco and Spain during my fieldwork in those locations, I concentrate especially on particular practices of the meta-genre of Sha‘bi in late modernity. Sha‘bi itself developed during the modern era as a strongly urban phenomenon, whose patronage and milieus were tied up with those urban contexts in the newly forming modern nation of Morocco.

Starting as a number of discrete genres played by smaller ensembles comprised of more long-standing customary instrumentation, Sha‘bi ramified in the middle part of the twentieth century into later incarnations that continued performing examples of prior musical genres, while also incorporating an even greater panoply of other genres’ styles and instrumentation into new hybrids. Such additions included instruments whose origins were outside of Morocco, including drumkits and electronic keyboard synthesizers. I detail the history and defining characteristics of Sha‘bi at greater length in the next chapter, with a survey of other relevant genres in the one following.

In considering some of the changes wrought in Moroccan cultural practice by encounters with modernity, I contemplate as well shifts in the recent history of musical practice relating to the Gnawa, formerly an ethnic group understood to be descended from sub-Saharan slaves, but also a complex of cultural activities associated with addressing the spiritual (often with curative intentions). The musical genre of Gnawa now also serves as a reference point or ethnic cultural foundation for an expanding set of popular music formations in contemporary Morocco, and it is
particularly germane to the study of popular music in Morocco in late modernity, given its own unusual degree of market success as a musical genre nationally and internationally.

Deborah Kapchan notes a shift in the performance practice of music of the Gnawa in relation to post-colonial encounters with other cultural ideas, practitioners and economic contexts arrived from abroad (2007). Even prior to this recognition of the effects of modernity on practices of the Gnawa, Kapchan identified the “small-scale displacements, replacements, and hybridizations of cultural forms” and the “incremental changes leading to larger paradigm shifts” that took place “in relation to the marketplace” in Morocco among social categories as diverse as healers, domestic servants, and the shikhat (1996:275). Her earlier recognition of shifts in cultural expression, however, was not so much a marking of the explicit appropriations from realms of behavior outside Morocco in the modern era, but of the “transgression” of cultural borders previously settled upon within Morocco, as, for instance, in the “collision of forms” and “revoicing of speech that [had] formerly been in the mouths of others” she observes in the practices of the majduba, or professional public soothsayer, who borrowed across formerly customary boundaries of gender in producing a modern amalgam of cultural practice to maintain their relevancy and efficacy, and their marketability (1996:275).

Kapchan equates the “magic” inherent in later, more widespread patterns of reading in Morocco (stemming from the deliberate nationwide literacy campaign initiated by Muhammad V immediately following Independence) with the formerly more “secret” knowledge of traditional herbalists there. She makes clear that aspects of a wider modernity from “outside” are involved with, or symptomatic of, these greater transformations in cultural practices and understandings within Morocco. Kapchan points to an end of an earlier period of relative exceptionality for literacy on the

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22 That is, modern marketplace values based entirely around monetary exchange among working and middle classes in public venues such as bars and cafes in addition to the more customarily long-lasting life-cycle celebrations or
part of the figure in Moroccan society of the *fqih* (or Islamic faith-based healing practitioner). The previously more singular ability of the *fqih* to work cures for physical, psychological and spiritual ailments had been based on inscriptions of texts taken from the Qur’an, and this vocational possibility in Morocco was based on the capacity to read and *write*, a specialty that Kapchan casts as no longer special in more recent periods, as literacy has become much more widespread.

This in many ways presaged the arrival and incorporation of other forms of media technology used to negotiate difference in Morocco, as in so many other parts of the world in the modern era. A greater prior reliance on oral transmission for expressing and disseminating cultural ideals in Morocco, for defining subjectivity and the idea of any larger political entity such as the nation, as well as for marking and negotiating with cultural difference, has given way to an at least *shared* basis with written inscriptions by oral means, with the increasing phenomena of telecommunication through media whose own difference both enables new understandings, and re-channels pre-existing cultural expectations and social relations.

Spadola (2007) has written about the variety of media resources used by spiritual practitioners in Morocco in the twentieth century, including those groups such as the Aïssowa, Gnawa, and Hamadsha for whom music is a key component in their healing rituals. Spadola links the use of such resources directly to a struggle over the nature of the modern nation of Morocco. His narrative of political actors in the middle period of the Protectorate era portrays them as engaged in an internal war of words and ideologies played out both in seminal native newspaper accounts and written legal doctrines promulgated among the population of a country with a developing sense of itself as ruled by an over-arching yet “outside” state authority in the first half of the twentieth century.
The debates themselves focused on the status of Berber ethnic communities under juridical law, as well as the propriety of some of the more extreme instances of practices by the Sufi brotherhoods, and criticism came both from those modernizing elements among Moroccan nationalists, as well as from more fundamentalist Islamic adherents who felt that the cults of personality and sensational behaviors involved in spirit worship were misguided and even sacrilegious. In proceeding to track a continuing power of the word, Spadola goes on to note the shifting means of mediating the words, of healing practitioners, from those in written form (as in the case of the fqih) through the more contemporary media of audio and video recordings, pointing especially to the reception part of a cycle of communication, understanding and recognition.

As part of my own project, I attend to examples of the mediation offered by several examples of electronic technology recently incorporated from outside Morocco for the production and distribution of particular genres of music in idiosyncratic sociocultural realms, and how they at the same time provide some difference in social context for cultural performance. I explicate the use of technologies in the production and distribution of contemporary Sha‘bi, particularly, in Chapters Five and Six. Additionally, in my final chapter, I look to several examples of specific musical works generated in different epochs through the twentieth century, songs whose texts specifically address the idea of the foreign as a theme itself, in order to track some shifting sense of the reception of ideas from “outside” in Moroccan musical practice.

The question of what isn’t a technology for humans remains open for scholars of modernity, but Walter Ong, in noting the important distinctions of written versus oral culture historically, is not the only one who has emphasized a possible paradigm shift in types of technology. As he puts it: “Technologies are not mere exterior aids but also interior transformations of consciousness, and never more than when they affect the word” (1982:82). More specifically, in differentiating the
technology of writing from a prior oral culture it might be purporting to represent, Ong notes:

“Visual presentation of verbalized material in space has its own particular economy, its own laws of motion and structure.” (1982:100). The capacity to address unknown others -- including those less, or differently, grounded in cultural reference points -- is one novel aspect prominently borne by such technologies, along with the capacity for miscommunication in the act of translating along such remediated channels (Silvio 2007).

Some of the direct physical and social effects of different technologies on cultural understanding can be seen in both the expanses and the limits that different media reach. Thus, while audience numbers in Morocco for public entertainment presented in the halqa might reach into the hundreds, as Philip Schuyler observes in his article on music in the old-style marketplace or suq of Morocco (1993), the limits for that audience are clearly how far the voice of entertainers can carry.

Electronic sound reinforcement systems have certainly augmented the range of communication by musical performers in Morocco, as have even earlier arrivals of technology there. One such instance has been the incorporation of a particular musical instrument such as the banjo, whose metallic resonating body rings out much louder than earlier musical string instruments in use in Morocco, such as the ‘ud or genbri. But additionally, the integration of such distance-augmenting instruments alters musical style in production, in addition to the quality of reception in musical practice.

As example of this, I recall the first time I heard live in Fez examples of al-Āla or al-mūṣīqā al-andalusiyya, a genre whose performance practice and accompanying rhetoric promoted its antique associations with its origins across the sea in Iberian Andalusia. Performed at a small municipal hall on the outskirts of the old city medina, the daytime event of my initial in-person encounter with the

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23 For other explications on the crucial difference of types of media technology in modernity, see Benjamin 1968
performed genre was a sort of prelude to the larger concerts of that year’s version of a quasi-annual festival devoted to the genre. This was a genre that the city’s and the nation’s cultural and political elite had long supported. The festival was presented primarily at a large international hotel ballroom in the *Ville Nouvelle* section of the city.

Upon my entering the preliminary concert’s smaller venue, which could have held at most two hundred people, I encountered another scholar from outside Morocco, whom I knew as an aficionado of the music. Since the performance had already started, it was difficult to say much initially to my acquaintance, but during the first break in the music, I asked what he thought of it. After some generally positive comments on his part regarding the skill of the musicians overall, he winced as the orchestra (some two dozen strong) started performing again with electronic amplification that seemed not just harsh but unnecessary, since they were already playing their acoustic instruments at a volume loud enough to be readily heard on their own throughout the small hall. My friend muttered something, which, because of the loudness of the sound system, I couldn’t make out. After I gestured to indicate I hadn’t caught his meaning, he leaned over and yelled in my ear, “I just wish someone would explain to Moroccans that they don’t have to always turn up their PAs as loud as possible! Distortion seems to be a part of their aesthetic, no matter what kind of music they’re playing!”

This instance was an indication of a significant change from the relationship of Moroccan public musical practices with audio technology noted by Schuyler in his doctoral project of the 1970s on *rwais*, professional musicians in urban Morocco. In his dissertation, Schuyler describes the limited access to and capacity of electronic sound reinforcement equipment at the time, stating that much music was inaudible in the mid- to large-sized venues (500- to 1000-seat tents or theaters) where music was sometimes presented, and how, there were often no microphones or amplification

for voice or instruments at all (1979:73).

The overkill of amplification at the al-Āla concert 30 years later was symptomatic of both the larger numbers for audiences that were increasingly expected to be able to be addressed by live technologies, and a larger range of potential reach (both qualitative and demographic). That is, the use of these technologies fostered circumstances where greater and greater proportions of those audiences were made up of individuals who were outsiders entirely to aspects of Moroccan indigenous culture, and/or of Moroccans themselves inflected by cultural interests from beyond Morocco. For example, the Gnawa Festival in Essaouira, whose attendance figures reached the half million mark by the tenth year of its operation according to some reports, not only contained a substantial quantity of foreigners, but also a significant percentage of native Moroccans whose own interest in Gnawa and the Festival were initially sparked by that outside, international interest.

It was not only the extent of the reach of musical practices that were augmented by newer technology: human relationships within and surrounding those practices were also affected. At the Fez Festival, there was a noticeable upswing in the number of personal video and cellphone cameras being brandished about by local audience members during the performances at the “Sufi Nights” portion of the Festival, from next to zero in 2006 to a relative proliferation the following year.

Though the Sufi Nights concerts were small-scale events that held at most a few hundred audience members, video projection screens had been set up for spectator overflow in the small surrounding gardens just outside the immediate environs of the performance. The intensely concentrated poses of individuals reviewing their recently shot footage on handheld devices just next to but ignoring the larger-than-life, still-performing images on screens demonstrated not only an instantly occurring mediated experience, but suggested also the possibly endless continuing layers of shared “replays” these amateur listener-producers might engage in later on for themselves and
unknown others at a greater and greater remove from direct experiential contact from the original live performance.

This “on-the-spot” mediation occurred at the same time as many Moroccan enthusiasts of the performed music used the sight and sound of the live performers as a taking-off point for socializing, for stared transfixed, and in some cases for impelling the movement of their bodies and heads, or beating their breasts in time with the music. And simultaneously a sort of “parallel play” was enacted by non-Moroccan Western visitors, some of whom stared curiously at the unfamiliar spectacle, while others would respond according to precepts of their own spiritual orientation, sitting cross-legged with eyes closed in apparent meditation – a highly unfamiliar posture for Moroccan onlookers or devotees of the music.

But – returning to the phenomenon of portable media recorders being newly deployed by audience members -- the mentality for even native attendees’ understanding – and performers’ production – must shift, however, when much of the retrospective memory of rituals performed as spectacle is perceived through the afterglow of one to five minute digital video clips excerpted and reviewed on tiny screens from hour-long live performances. And this latter duration itself has likely already shifted in relation to ritual musical ceremonies that previously had remained undocumented by electronic recording technology, but which in its only performed iteration (live and unstored on any medium except human memory) had previously lasted all night, or even took place over several nights. Beyond considering any aesthetic considerations, which might imply an autonomous formal basis for cultural production, I turn next to some of the implications for human actors in this changing cultural production and distribution.
Technology and Agency

I have already alluded to the integration of the use of new instruments into some musical genres in Morocco, such as the inclusion of keyboard synthesizers and drumkits into contemporary urban Sha’bi. I have referred as well to the employment of other novel production and distribution technologies originally from outside Morocco into a wide range of customary cultural practices there, including those noted by Kapchan and Spadola. The issue of aesthetic choice arrives concurrently with the extension of production possibility and distributive reach by such apparatus, as the addition of these new means of production and transmission catalyze discernable changes in formal and other stylistic features of those cultural practices. This in turn prompts questions of how deliberate such choices might be, or how reckoning of the consequences were their practitioners (as the complaint of my friend who was a scholar and fan of al-Āla connoted). The contested issue of how autonomous any individual actions are in decision-making processes in translocal and increasingly globalized circulation has been debated extensively.24

Appadurai, for one, states his belief in the “consumption of the mass media throughout the world” as often supporting “resistance, irony, selectivity, and in general, agency” (1996:7, emphasis in original). While Appadurai grants that there is some “drudgery” in the roles that globalized subjects take on as consumers, and he also allows that conflict does exist as part of the process of defining self through the means of electronic technology, Appadurai’s notion of agency is a highly celebratory one overall, though he is also quick to differentiate his notion from that of outright or total freedom.

More contested explanations of agency with less autonomy understood for individual will have been offered by scholars of the social basis for human activity, understanding and cultural
production -- from Weber (2004 [1919]) and Adorno (1973) to Foucault (1983). Other scholars, such as Paul Gilroy (1995), have also stressed the possibilities for human political agency of appropriation in the modern era. Michel De Certeau (1984) refers to one instance of this as “faire le perruque” (literally, “making the wig”) to indicate the inventive tactics of workers in even the seemingly most locked-down industrial or modern-era settings, where those workers take advantage of margins and cracks in the social structures of the workplace to assert some individuality and self-serving in their use of resource possibility -- even or especially in prohibited or illicit fashion.

In another, more recent and nuanced articulation of agency, Saba Mahmood (2005) takes Foucault’s idea of subjectivity as being formed out of the relations of power and synthesizes it with Judith Butler’s notion (1993) of any individual’s necessarily having to reiteratively enact versions of “self” in a constantly shifting series of contingent subjectivity, constituted through inclusions and exclusions of what transpires outside that subject. For Mahmood, like Foucault and Butler, the subjective self does not exist prior to individual exposure to the manifestations of social relations, but rather it coalesces out of and in response to those manifestations. Mahmood’s addition to these theorizations is to stress a lesser autonomy within modern subject formation than has been presupposed through ideals of individual resistance and opposition to social structure and social norms in many other conceptualizations of individual agency.

What I propose here for considering the agency of Moroccan musical practitioners in the modern age, when they are selecting from among a range of different repertoires, is that those choices themselves are restricted by a number of different conditional elements. As I will show in later chapters, Moroccan musicians in both Morocco and Spain performed canny and flexible maneuvers in their cultural practices — embracing or rejecting a wide range of possibilities — but

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24 See Tsing (2000, 2005) for instances of a critique of a too-easy embrace of ideas of “flow” and “circulation” in some recent social scientific analyses.
even that relatively wide latitude nonetheless wound up circumscribed by a number of different factors. These factors included market considerations for what was already understood and popular in any community or communities; economic resources necessary to purchase key manufactured technologies; and access to knowledge of certain forms, styles and genres of musical possibility themselves. Cultural choices by both producers and consumers were made with regard to what “made sense” in terms of conventions of existing practices and of practical possibility.

In the cases of Moroccan musicians facing choices of aesthetic and technological possibility in Morocco itself, as well as in settings such as a newly-arrived-at country of destination, the decisions to engage in particular genre practices, to represent certain performances as customary or not, and to incorporate innovations both formal and technological in nature, suggested by some limited degree of possible interpretation by agentive realization. Such decisions were fundamental indicators of social valuation, and were thus fundamental also in arbitrating the makeup of self and society, and of defining difference between self and others.

In contemporary contexts for Moroccan musicians in Spain and Morocco, native cultural practitioners on both sides of a geocultural divide have been confronted with such signs of difference: that is, the globalized possibilities of the “foreign” brought to the attention of different cosmopolitan awareness vs. perceived local, regional or national culture. The negotiation of those differences across gaps of cultural possibility involved in the decision to adopt or adapt a certain piece of technology or a certain genre practice in the performance of a musical form leads to processes that help define larger conceptualizations of society. Such negotiations with the “foreign” or Other occur constantly as an underlying aspect of even the most conventionalized genre practice. These mediations of self and understanding of difference occurred most noticeably where individuals gathered in contexts of ritualized performance. Such contexts had a particular
significance in their modern instantiations, where for instance larger and larger groups were brought together despite their individual differences to coalesce around common understandings of folklore communicated and mythologized by technical means on behalf of commerce and the nation. I will take up consideration of some mediating aspects of technology as an aspect of such communication through genre definition in the following, final section of this chapter.

4. Mediations of Identity and Difference: Technology as a Modernizing Aspect of Genre Definition in Moroccan Musical Practices

The ongoing intertextual, heteroglossic basis for any cultural production in relation to other prior or existing cultural products and possibilities suggests the importance of considering the “appropriation” of material or ideas perceived as coming from “outside” any other set of cultural practices. Such consideration reveals that cultural appropriation is not simply one technique for breaking or defining formal borders within real-world practices of culture, but is more part of ongoing social and political strategies that individuals use in positioning themselves in relation to both likeminded and dissimilar others. To make intersubjective sense within any circumstance of addressing another, humans must speak mostly in terms already defined; any innovations in formal bases for communicative understandings are necessarily incremental, and build upon the various strata of accepted means for expression, including for mediating the difference in experience between or among any group of individuals.

Standard practices — conventionalized sets of norms and expectations in cultural production — help structure a sense of independent categories or genres that bound perceptions of musical and other cultural production and consumption. In terms of discourse and conceptualization, different

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25 For numerous salient references to the political import of cross-cultural appropriations in music, as well as boundary-setting for conceptualized genres in music, see Born and Hesmondalgh (2000).
humans employ various versions of taxonomy for such categories, contingent on those individuals’ differing investment in the significance of those conceptualized categories, and on the extent or limits of their understandings of defining terms and elements.

Thus, in both Morocco and Spain, contention over what qualified as a correct or reasonable performance of al-Āla — based on choice of instrumentation, scope of knowledge and technique, and perceived political relationships of various individual practitioners — led to differing views regarding the rightfulness of any particular performers’ purporting to perform that genre. At the same time, the ready appropriation of particular stylistic components from beyond the prior limits of any genre practice produced a porousness at the edges of what were conceptualized as previously coherent, stable and insulated categories of cultural practice. That was the case of the pentatonic scales, three-against-four cross-rhythms, or specific musical instruments of qaraqeb or genbri “taken” or “borrowed” from long-standing Gnawa practices for use in newer, hybrid forms of popular music practice in both Spain and Morocco in recent years.

Fabian Holt (2007) has suggested a number of different conceptual realms through which genres for music become defined, offering up the vaguely-defined “shared values” (2007:23) about formal elements in musical production as one possible basis, but pointing as well to definition by marketplace consideration and large-scale corporate music industry practices. He also points to the importance of how particular types of music are produced, as a means, he asserts, for positing a greater agentive potential on behalf of musical producers, following Bourdieu’s idea of practice theory and a highly structured agency (Holt 2007:25). The use of particular techniques and technologies in the production — and potential changes in them as well — is one area for defining and analyzing generic distinctions for both production and reception of musical practices. To get the fullest sense of how musical genres signify, however, it is important to follow through the complete
technological chain of production and distribution, and continuing on through to reception.

Schuyler writes that as of the mid-1970s, "Electronic media play[ed] a small but influential role in the musical life of Morocco" (1979:79). Phonograph discs, radio, and cassette tapes were the three recording and distribution media Schuyler notes as significant for Moroccan music at the time. In his account of musical practices in Morocco, he remarks upon the effects of these media on social distance and attitudes between audiences and performers, along with the content of music performed live. As part of his presentation of the context of the changing professional performance of the rwais he studied, Schuyler also gives a summary of the development of the larger industrial concerns involved in presenting music in Morocco during this period, referring to a handful of preeminent commercial musical recording and distribution companies who, along with the three nationally-owned radio stations at the time, provided channels for public dissemination and consumption of musical products as an adjunct (or an interrupting wedge) to those more local, customary contexts for live performance that had long been the primary basis for popular music performance in Morocco.

Since that time in Morocco, the use of other electronic means for producing, distributing and listening to music has noticeably intensified, with CDs, VCDs, television, satellite broadcast, mobile phones, and use of the internet all now standard media for contemporary storage and distribution of musical performance. More locally, the much stronger presence of electronic sound amplification must be noted for even small-scale live performances, in addition to the increased reliance on electronic and computer-based systems for musical production in most forms of popular musical practice there. These technological means extend the cohering of larger groups of individuals in bonds of cultural solidarity beyond those induced among individuals in immediate co-presence. At the same time, the use of such means presents the challenges of new relationships with formerly strange and outside cultural and social possibilities, which must be negotiated by both producers and
listeners.

The political implications of genre practices — and the social power they rest upon and that they enable more generally — have been analyzed at length by Bauman and Briggs, who observe that:

The long-standing association between genre and order in Western discourse provides a strong sense of the impact of changing ideologies and social relations on intertextuality. The existence of a purportedly clearly defined and elaborate system of genres has often been associated with the social, political, and communicative value of national languages and literatures (1992:160).

Bauman and Briggs point to the political uses to which conceptualization and performance of cultural genres are put, comparing this sort of utility of genres to the part played in modern nation-making apparatus by vernacular languages (among other cultural products and processes), as outlined by Benedict Anderson: “Like the establishment of a standard language, the production of a presumably fixed set of generic conventions played a role in the creation of ’imagined communities’” (1992:160; referencing Anderson 1991[1983]).

The modern “folklorization” of various musical practices in Morocco has played just such a role in the conceptual creation and sense of interconnection among various population groups in Morocco since at least the early part of the twentieth century. Representatives from the colonial-era French and Spanish governing authorities in Morocco during the first half of the twentieth century, along with representatives of Moroccan nationalist political movements in that period (followed later by authorizing agents of the post-Independence Moroccan national government) have all abetted this process via rhetorical and logistical maneuvers that supported particular genres of musical performance and particular milieus for those performances. Such cultural brokers exalted specific genres of practice and canonized forms of performance through explicit written public accounts as
well as through government policies and subventions that offered material support for their performance. Through this process of folklorization, specimens and genres of arbitrarily-chosen customary indigenous cultural “folk” practice have been taken up and re-framed for more general consumption, and, as one result, helped produce and reproduce various forms of common social identity. In the process, such examples of generic practice become emblematic not only of different socioeconomic classes and ethnic groups, and of local and regional territories, but ultimately also of a Moroccan national “brand” more generally.

Music has been particularly prone to this sort of folklorizing, given its easily commodifiable and free-floating signification up-for-grabs nature, where both local and foreign, and small-scale and mass-market efforts, can be utilized as channels for public consumption and recognition. Schuyler (1979:83-84) has noted the incorporation of local and regional “folkloric” musical performance in the official nation-building project of Morocco in radio broadcasts (all governmentally-controlled) dating from the beginnings of the second half of the twentieth century. Ciucci (2007) narrates a history of reconfiguring the cultural role of ‘Aita music originally produced predominantly in the central western plains of Morocco into that of a national icon, with an accompanying transformation that shifted which musicians engaged in and were recognized for performing it. Similarly, Davila (2006) writes of the identification by a large portion of a listening audience for al-Āla with interests of the middle-to-upper classes in Morocco, and of a concomitant elevation of that genre to the status of a national cultural patrimony by featuring it on television broadcasts during national religious holidays and at large-scale public festivals.

Though I touch on a range of other musical genres, I focus in the coming chapters on the sprawling, multi-context musical meta-genre of Sha‘bi, whose iterations have been a staple for many

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26 One early notable instance of this was French Protectorate agent and founder of Morocco’s first musical
generations at weddings and other celebratory milieus in Morocco. Sha’bi has also played out in more mundane spheres of production and reception, and though not typically part of concert hall or festival offerings, through its more quotidian manifestations it has very much created a common field of cultural relevance in a shared Moroccan imaginary. Regardless of the positive or negative valuations that different individuals in Morocco might make of Sha’bi, its strong presence in daily life, in special celebrations, and thus in that realm of communal imagination, has marked for it a special role as both cause and effect of cultural sensibilities in Morocco. Given its expressive role in the popular imagination, I devote the next chapters to a history of “the popular” in Moroccan culture during the twentieth century, and its relationship to developments of modern Morocco.
Chapter Two – The “Popular” in Moroccan Popular Music: A Cultural History of Sha‘bi

In this chapter I offer an account of the musical genre of “Sha‘bi” while unfolding some of the history and social implications of the idea of “popular” more generally in the cultural realm of modern-day Morocco. I trace how “sha‘bi” as a modifying term for characterizing many different types of music came to be understood as a category of music itself based on formal characteristics, social milieus, and some of those larger characteristics of both folk appeal and mass distribution -- albeit, an especially broad and expansive category, one approaching a status beyond genre, but actually a sort of *meta-genre*. Through this I intend to provide the basis for an overarching narrative of Moroccan cultural history, beginning in the early part of the twentieth century, while pointing to the role that Sha‘bi played in that narrative, as symptom and as shaping agent.

Throughout my fieldwork I observed a number of characteristics of the production and reception of different genres of popular music in Morocco that reflected contrasting attitudes by individuals toward what it meant to be Moroccan in the modern world. These included aspects that were both fundamental and trivial, such as choices in style of clothing, the use of different types of technology in creating and listening to music, and different ways of making a living as a musician, as well as different degrees in the social status and social estimation of various musical genres.

For instance, on an early afternoon in the old city medina of Fez during one of my first times in that neighborhood, I had been taken aggressively in tow by Kamal B., my newest musical acquaintance in Fez. Kamal was a young singer of the popular Moroccan genres of Sha‘bi and Rai. More fundamental to his role in most of the groups he performed with publicly,
he also played the *darbuka*.\(^{27}\) As we walked quickly through the small streets of the old city medina to crowd together into one of the shared “*grandes taxis*” waiting on the edge of town to fill up, we were accompanied also by Bushta, a player of the *batterie*,\(^{28}\) and one of the musicians with whom Kamal performed most frequently. As the three of us made our way through the busy medina passages, we were eventually also joined by Tariq, a keyboardist and friend of the other two. Whether this coming together as a group that occurred while we were already in motion had been made by prior arrangement in person, or through one of the quick text messages, or short, shouted mobile phone conversations that sprinkled the days of these musicians, I didn’t think to ask at the time. Tariq, like the other two, had only recently turned twenty, and had been entirely self-taught as a musician. Also, like the other two, he made at best only a marginal livelihood as a professional musician, while still living at home with his parents, despite the fact that he played paying gigs as a musician nearly every day.

Among the several brief additional encounters we had with others along the way was one quick pause we took to speak with an older, middle-aged man, who, I was told, was a player of the *daff*.\(^{29}\) Following our conversation with him, after Kamal had identified for me the instrument he played professionally, I ventured one of the first observations I had made out loud during our short acquaintanceship by proposing to Kamal and the other young Sha’bi musicians that the music performed by the player of the daff might be “*taqlidi*” or “traditional.” They nodded and murmured affirmatively. My guess had been provoked by the fact that the outfit the musician had been wearing included the long-customary-in-Morocco *jelaba* (that is, a robe completely covering the body from shoulders to ankles) and a *tarbush* (the brimless, cylindrical hat, often known elsewhere in the world as a fez). These sartorial choices contrasted greatly with the bare

\(^{27}\) An hourglass-shaped hand drum; fundamental instrument for many forms of popular music in Morocco.

\(^{28}\) That is, the Western-style trapset, multi-part drumkit.
heads of the younger musicians I was with, and with their button-up shirts, covered by Western-style sweaters or zip-up jackets. It was clear both from the way the daff player was greeted by Kamal and the others, and the way he was referred to after the fact, as much as the fashion in which he was dressed, that, though he was a good acquaintance of the group I was with, this musician traveled publicly in much different circles than did my group in order to pursue his vocational niche.

In addition to that older musician, we had also met along our way another middle-aged man, who the others told me worked as a technicién. I gathered that part of his work included the repair of microphone cables and some of the other electronics for the band’s public address setups. Several nights later, when I joined the group to witness a performance they had been hired for at an all-night wedding party, I observed some of the integral nature of this electronic equipment for the group’s practice. When I arrived at the large, rented Salle de Fete on the outskirts of town, I was confronted with the sight of Bushta and Kamal staring dourly at the mute face of the amplifier that had come with them for their performance that evening. They told me that the channel on the gear for producing the effect of artificial reverberation was not functioning. When, like them, I had unsuccessfully poked and pulled at the various input jacks and control dials to try and prod a possible loose circuit back into connecting, and I asked if it was necessary to have reverb for their performance, Bushta compared its absence to a missing color in a picture or to a meat dish lacking har, the common Moroccan hot spice. As he put it, you could look at a picture and see what was in it even without all the color being present, and, in eating a dish of meat, you could be well fed and the dish might even taste good, but some additional significant sensual element would be missed in each.

29 A large frame hand drum.
At that wedding celebration performance of theirs I attended, about an hour after I arrived, and following some rather desultory soundchecking with the recalcitrant PA unit, a new amplifier was delivered. It was only then that the preparations by Kamal and Bushta, and the larger group of five or six other musicians who had joined them to perform, began in earnest.

As with other publicly performing Sha’bi groups in Fez at the time, though various aspects of such modern technologies that the group used for their live performances could be left out without disabling their practice entirely, some extent of this kind of apparatus was crucial to aspects of that practice where a particularly stimulating sensory environment was sought after and expected. After listening to a number of Sha’bi groups performing live in a variety of circumstances over the following months and years, I came to realize that a certain textural density of auditory ambience, beyond any formal considerations of melody, rhythm and musical arrangement, was part of the package of providing musical atmosphere by Sha’bi musicians for musical listeners in modern-day Fez, and modern sound reinforcement technology was a crucial component aiding in the production of that.

That density most often included overtone-rich timbres of the bowed violin as a lead instrument, but the electronic enhancement of the dynamic amplitude of performed music – that is, what is commonly referred to as “volume” – was also usually quite high, and most often came with a high level of distortion added to the original acoustic signal, by any Western standard, at least. Even in the smallest of live performance venues I would later visit, and augmenting the use of long-standing acoustic musical instruments originally of rural origins such as the three-stringed lotar (which in other circumstances might be called “folkloric”), the use of amplification and artificial reverb was part of a default mode of presentation, even if a single musician could
otherwise single-handedly sonically fill a space where people had gathered to listen, to drink and
smoke, and/or to dance to live Sha’bi.

Another aspect of popular music production that often struck me during my time in Fez
was the shifting recombinations over time of the personnel in the Sha’bi groups I observed.
“Membership” – that is, ongoing affiliation in a Sha’bi “orchestre” -- was loose and
impermanent, and contingent on a number of market factors in a shifting economy of possible
vocation and livelihood as musical practitioner, in addition to the usual range of personal life
factors and interpersonal dynamics. This was especially true when I compared them to the
steadier formations of those ensembles dedicated to performing the longer-standing “classical”
genres of al-Āla or Melhūn that I encountered. The membership of groups in these latter genres
demonstrated greater constancy in their engagement with their also longer-standing cultural
practices. Despite the popularity of Sha’bi as an expansive musical genre or overlapping set of
genres, its public reception, which was ultimately mixed or ambivalent, contributed not only to a
generally lesser prestige for that range of musical practices, but to lesser stability in the social
formations that made up its publicly performing groups.

The individual members within the larger community of professional or semi-
professional musicians in Fez certainly were acquainted with one another to a large degree, or at
least knew of one another, as Kamal’s encounter with the daff player indicated. While engaged in
pursuit of their trade, professional or aspiring professional Sha’bi musicians bumped into their
colleagues sporadically if not consistently at some of the many local bars, cafes, or wedding halls

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30 In the next chapter, I discuss some of the reasons behind conceptualizations of such a divide between the more classical genres and popular Sha’bi.
where they were hired to play.\textsuperscript{31} These layers of circulating human resource shifted most noticeably when different, better-known performers passed through from outside Fez and added to or replaced musicians for their regular working bands from local contacts while on tour.

In Fez, I witnessed the loosely changing cast of characters swirling around one particular meeting place where I first got to know individuals in the regularly performing musical group of which Kamal was a part. This group consisted of a core of two or three musicians whose membership remained fairly stable over a period of at least a couple years, even while the larger group underwent a number of replacements or substitutions in its more peripheral constituent members. That meeting place, which was a central node in a network of acquaintanceship and affiliation for many of these musicians, was a \textit{hanut} or “shop” in a densely-populated, residential working-class neighborhood of the old city medina known as Sidi Bou Jida, named after a Moroccan saintly figure who had died nearby centuries before.

The shop was managed by a small-scale musical entrepreneur named Tuhami, who, besides renting out sound systems to support hired bands at wedding performances especially, also contracted the musicians themselves for those performances. He would sometimes also then join these groups as singer and percussionist, usually wearing a particularly striking dark pinstripe suit. His choice of dress was emblematic of this type of group’s distinction as more modern than traditional in the continuum of cultural possibility in Fez at the time. The larger circle of musicians who frequented Tuhami’s shop at different times for various purposes – or just as a default stopping-in place between other engagements in the city -- included several

\textsuperscript{31} I attended one Fassi wedding as a guest in the company of Kamal, who used his acquaintance with one of the wedding’s hired videographers to gain us access to observe the particulars of that wedding’s context. After witnessing briefly the initial musical performance there, he dryly commented on the unsuitability of the band hired for the occasion, since he had identified them as members of the Aïssowa brotherhood, who had not entirely mastered the rhythm of some of the popular tunes typically played at such large-scale wedding celebrations.
keyboardists, a handful of players of the kemenja, as well as at least five singers and double that number of drummers who orbited about the hanut in some way.

During late 2005 and the first half of 2006, Tuhami’s music store seemed a stable site serving a small network of musicians, so I was surprised upon my return in the summer of 2007 to learn that the shop was closed. When I had inquired about the status of the shop with Kamal, one of the musicians formerly most frequently affiliated with the hanut, he had said, simply, “Terminé”: i.e., that it was “finished,” closed. In answer to my question of why, he had simply shrugged. And when I attempted to follow that up to find out what had become of Tuhami, the shop’s former proprietor, Kamal said only, vaguely: “Oujda,” referring to the city in northeastern Morocco near the border with Algeria. I recalled Kamal proclaiming to me the year before how he was himself planning to relocate there for the summer wedding season since the market for such life-cycle celebrations there was supposedly a particularly rich one. I imagined Tuhami in pursuit of the purported better business opportunities for popular musicians there, though whether he was working as a musician or might still be also acting as a booking agent, I was unable to find out, since Kamal apparently had no further news of Tuhami himself at that time.

This breakdown in communication, and the breakup of a busy economic concern and center node of an active and sprawling social network -- which, from my observations and other individuals’ comments, overlapped with other loose, larger associations of musicians not only throughout Fez, but also regionally and even nationally--represented for me some of the precariousness in the social and cultural formations around the performance of popular music especially in Morocco. The widespread recognition by Moroccan listeners and musicians alike of Sha’bi as a vital and popular cultural form was distinct in many ways from the daily experience
by musicians of Sha‘bi as a continually emergent musical genre vulnerable to changing market conditions and the exigencies in supporting oneself in the practice of it, if approaching it as a possible professional vocation.

Arguably, some of this precariousness – beyond even the socio-economic status of music in many other societies -- came out of a stigma associated with music in a predominantly Islamic society, a portion of which had not only considered music and its contexts as morally suspect, but held music responsible for a certain degree of licentious causation, for time immemorial This precariousness was latent for musicians even when the genre itself was one appreciated positively by fans for the seductiveness and power of its musical products, and the liveliness of the ambience it created in its immediate social contexts.

But there was additional instability in Sha‘bi’s social position given that it was also a cultural form of expression frequently reviled by detractors for its often meaningless or coarse lyrics, but especially because of the socially low milieus in which Sha‘bi was often performed, and which it was in fact often seen as instigating. That position developed in part also through a contrasting relationship developed with those other Moroccan musical genres such as al-Āla and Melhûn, which were generally recognized as of higher status in a cultural hierarchy. These latter were favored in the representation and promotion of Moroccan culture by governmental efforts at designating cultural patrimonies for the nation following the declaration of Moroccan independence in 1956. The channels for that representation and promotion included the programming chosen for radio, television and festivals for the public, among which official offerings Sha‘bi had remained a marginal presence until only recently.

That sort of precariousness for Sha‘bi in a vocational or commercial sense was even more notable among expatriate Moroccan musicians in European locales such as Spain, where
whatever cultural currency Sha‘bi held among musicians or audiences back in Morocco did not figure significantly in what those musicians would play overseas (publicly, at least), nor therefore for what audiences might hear from Moroccan musicians there. In the next chapter, I present some details of how Sha‘bi’s lack of currency in Spain was decided as part of a feedback loop of social negotiation between immigrant Moroccan musicians and prevailing tendencies among native Spaniards about what made sense in contemporary, local cultural understanding, even about what was performed by foreign “others”. I will demonstrate how, together with the reinforcing attitudes and predilections of native Spaniard cultural consumers, representatives of foreign North African or Arab musical practices defined and re-inscribed cultural stereotypes based on certain, highly limited historical narratives and ethnic mythologies.

Thus, music in Spain with references to antique genres understood to have been performed earlier in the history of the Iberian peninsula -- from muwashshah to flamenco -- as well as more contemporary, or timeless and vague categories of “Oriental” or “Arab” music, had dominated the repertoire performed publicly by Moroccan musicians for some time prior to the years of my fieldwork there (2004-2007). Meanwhile, among those expatriate Moroccan musicians in Spain, just as for those back in Morocco, Sha‘bi retained a position among their considerations of cultural practice and cultural hierarchy as a reference point for what musical genres could be presented and would be received in the new locale of Spanish territory, even if it was so much less frequently performed publicly on its own.

Before, however, moving on to the production and reception of music by Moroccan musicians in Spain, in this chapter I offer a description and social history of “Sha‘bi” music in Morocco, an encompassing category of musical practices that loosely included or overlapped with a wide range of other musical genres. The next chapter provides a lengthy overview of a
number of these overlapping genres, as well as a constellation of other musical categories of practice that are relevant in triangulating the social and cultural definitions of Sha‘bi itself.

Sha‘bi is not one singular category of easily bounded musical formal elements or social behaviors, but rather an evolving notion that is defined in relation to other genres. Like its corresponding linguistic parallels in English and other Western languages, “Sha‘bi” as a term for representing a set of musical practices can either serve as an adjective of more general description to indicate scale of cultural reception or social status in classificatory terms, or it can invoke varying conceptions of an irregularly-bounded category of cultural activity, the range of which is highly contingent on the specifics of those activities being referenced, and the position, presumptions, and intentions of those individuals doing the referencing.32

Music is only one form of cultural expression to which "sha‘bi" or its most overlapping French language equivalent "populaire" have been applied in modern Moroccan usage. Some of those other categories to which both terms have been commonly affixed include those of social and economic class, religious activities and beliefs, and any other "lower" or more vulgar modes of cultural practice. That is to say, lower within larger hierarchies of social valuation, including especially relative to those “higher” portions on a scale where written and scholarly modes of parallel but distinguished phenomena were produced and esteemed, whether it be music, storytelling, or religious knowledge and performances. Not coincidentally, much of the actuality of these different conceptualized categories were in fact intertwined, and the production of the various generative valuations through discourse came with efforts at defining both officially and unofficially the nature of what it meant to be “Moroccan” in particular periods of cultural and political organization. Such definitions went together with and stemmed from efforts at defining

32 The word “sha‘bi” is derived from the Arabic language root indicating “people,” among other meanings, including “folk,” “nation,” “tribe,” and “race” (Wehr 1994:552).
the Moroccan nation in both the colonial era, as well as through other, highly self-conscious efforts during the period of Moroccan Independence that followed.

In keeping with these simultaneous, overlapping meanings for the term “sha’bi” and its various definitions and translations, I address here both a core notion of “sha’bi” as a more general descriptor in late modern Moroccan cultural history, as well as its coming to represent a style of and context for musical production and reception in Morocco. I do so while keeping an eye on those parallel, overlapping and resonant meanings in other categories of cultural and social practice. Of particular interest among the latter definitions is the understanding of sha’bi, in one core meaning, to indicate a particular social context for cultural activities that transcend, or transgress, many norms of daily personal and interpersonal behavior.

Different Kinds of Popular

While both native Moroccans and outside observers have frequently used the word “popular” in reference to cultural practices in Morocco for at least the last century, I have found no written, well-developed theoretical consideration of the use of the term in relation to modern cultural practices there. Writers made numerous but casual use of the term in ethnographic accounts and travel writing focusing on Morocco in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries -- regarding, for instance, a distinction between upper classes and lower “popular” class participation in ceremonies and demonstrations of “popular” Sufi turuq, or religious brotherhoods:

The popular religious orders, the ‘Isawa and Hamadsha, closed the march. They proceeded with music first, followed by women and children who danced furiously, hair disheveled, transported by the cadence of musettes and
tambourines” (Le Tourneau 1987 [1949:85] emphasis added, quoted in Spadola [2006:303]).

In relation to religious practices, “popular” has been used additionally to differentiate between those beliefs commonly transmitted by word of mouth, as opposed to those derived from scriptural references in the Qur’an or hadith (though somewhat paradoxically, those written sources are understood to have derived originally from exclusively oral means of transmission).33

The related terms "sha‘bi" in darija and "populaire" in French were also used in both indigenous and foreign scholarly writing in the early part of the twentieth century to refer to “traditional” or “folk” musical practices (e.g., rural traditions and, separately, religious practices, as indicated in the passage from Le Tourneau above). These were differentiated from the “higher” musical culture of educated urban elites (e.g., Chottin 1931, 1939), a trend that continued on through the latter part of the twentieth century (see for instance Aydoun 1992; Cherki 1981; Conte 1996; Guettat 2000; Hachlaf and Hachlaf 1993).

Similarly, the word “populaire” in French was deployed early on in referring to musical production in the promotional discourse appearing in commercial record company catalogs and disc sleeves during the Protectorate period. In such instances, “populaire” was used as the sign of an umbrella category to describe both rural-based performance and those urban styles lacking the tradition of written transcriptions for either lyrical texts or notated music.

A later coalescence of the idea of “popular” in relation to music in Morocco thus formed in the wake of newer technologies for mass recording and distribution (e.g., radio and phonographs). These developments occurred nearly simultaneously with the takeover of governmental authority in Morocco by the French and the Spanish, and the many accompanying

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33 See, for example, Westermarck (1968 [1926]: 413) in his description of the sources for Moroccans’ understanding of the genealogy of Shaitan, or “Satan”.
large-scale cultural effects there, near the outset of the twentieth century. The wider distribution of musical production in Morocco to the more farflung audiences that these newer technologies of modernity were able to address did not eliminate the continuing transmission of musical performances and ideas about them through more localized, oral means. Both modes of transmission were contributing channels for the creation and dissemination of popular forms, and of ideas of the popular.

The arrival of examples of modern technology from outside was of course far from completely unknown even prior to the beginning of the Colonial Era in Morocco, but the reach of such technologies even during the period of the Protectorate was more limited and sporadic, and its effects arguably reached only a minority of individuals in the population for a long time. Political scientist John Waterbury remarks on the development by the French during the Protectorate era of Moroccan infrastructure for newly expansive industrial and commercially-oriented human networks, such as roads, railways and large-scale manufacturing concerns, but not for the amenities of everyday life for the average Moroccan (1970:43).

Thus, industrially-aided systems of distribution and transmission among different segments of a population spread across what would be become the modern nation of Morocco were neither uniform nor complete well into the twentieth century. Just as audiences addressed by farther-reaching technologies for the distribution of musical products such as radio or phonograph recordings did not become converted entirely to some simply uniform, mass-scale community regardless of class, education, ethnicity or religious beliefs, the most recent phase of cultural production for at least potentially global distribution of musical practices that originated locally in Morocco did not generate a full-scale shift in performance practice for producers of that music. However, the performance of a variety of popular forms, including especially
spiritually-oriented, ritual musical works, did in fact undergo some shift in intention as well as form and context, when they became generated for audiences imagined in an ever-widening scope in the modern era.

Commercial recordings from as early as the first decade of the twentieth century give evidence of incipient mass-scale practices of popular music in Morocco. Hachlaf and Hachlaf (1993:327) list examples of regional product lines of European-based international recording companies (e.g., HMV and Pathé) in Morocco, and in Northern Africa generally, dating back to 1906. Though Morocco was listed in French authorities’ summary of shipping manifests as receiving substantially fewer imported records from France in 1930 than the half a million or so that arrived from outside to Algeria, by the start of the second decade of the twentieth century, hundreds of recorded titles had been issued in North Africa by the French company Pathé, as Pekka Gronow states in his survey of early commercial recording and distribution initiatives in “the Orient” (1981:266). Gronow notes as well:

Special catalogues were issued for...Morocco, featuring artists from the main localities such as...Tangier, Marrakesh, Fez and Tlemcen. The emphasis is on Arab music, but again one can note an attempt to attract minority audiences: recordings of Berber, Kabyl, Shluh, Gnaoua and North African Jewish music were also included." (1981:263-64).

This address to specific regional and ethnic interests gives one sense of an early circumscribing conceptualization of what could be considered as “popular” in the age of mechanical reproduction. “Popular,” in a nascent mass marketplace, included as one significant strain what would become “folkloric.”

But notions of “the popular” in modernity were comprised of more than what came to be known as folkloric in many parts of the world, especially in the post-colonial era, as has been
discussed at length by Ana María Ochoa Gautier (2006). The movement to urban centers in Morocco during the first half of the twentieth century (Laroui 1977) by the large numbers of “folk,” who both made and listened to such music in the years of the Protectorate and well after, was a key condition for the formation of later, developing iterations of popular music in Morocco. These forming styles drew upon both those regionally and ethnically specific, often rural musical antecedents, but at the same time they responded to the arrival of new musical instruments, new styles and genres from abroad, along with taking advantage of new forms of production and distribution.34

It was in these urban meeting places for multiple aspects of modernity that the gestation of popular music in Morocco in a modern sense really took place. Among those aspects of modern change that figured most prominently in popular music’s formation in Morocco were the coming together and increasing integration in dense metropolitan centers of large numbers of formerly more ethnically separate groups of individuals, an increasing incidence of encounters with the culturally and technologically novel and foreign by Moroccan cultural practitioners and consumers alike, and shifts in the nature of governing authorities and political formations, starting from a colonial basis and then entering a phase of intense nationalism. In the era of Moroccan Independence, this meant a pro-active shaping by government policy of which genres and what kind of practices had cultural currency. And in the colonial period, it meant the part played by French and Spanish authorities in setting policies and cultural promotion allowed for a selective reflection of what went on in Moroccan cultural practice that also in fact helped shape ideas of developing forms of popular music in Morocco, aided by more modern means for its production, distribution, and reception.

34 In his survey of the “musics” of Morocco, Aydoun (1992), for instance, places the regionally-based ‘aita, taqtuqa jabaliya, as well as musics of the Rif and Middle Atlas mountains in the category of “popular,” in addition to musics
While discussing the development of popular music in European metropolises of the nineteenth century, Derek B. Scott argues for “an interpretation of the chansons modernes that locates their meaning and value in the context of debates about the modern, the popular, and the avant-garde” (2008:12). He goes on to note "artists' increased dependence on the cultural market capitalism was creating" in those nineteenth century European locales he studies (2008:15). This “increased dependence” by cultural practitioners on market capitalism was a general condition that came to pervade practices in Morocco as well, albeit at a somewhat later date and in relatively more diffuse manner.

I propose here that the development of Moroccan popular musical practices in the twentieth century was tied up in many ways with economic, political and social phenomena similar to those occurring in Europe during that earlier period. At the same time, cultural conditions and consequences in Morocco diverged considerably, not only in terms of the timing for the development of a mass audience (given the later and more slowly developing capitalist enterprise on the part of indigenous people in Morocco), but diverged also in several of the specific factors in its political and social organization. Foremost among these, perhaps, was the earlier shift in many parts of Western Europe especially to relatively more egalitarian ideals of self-government in the form of the modern nation-state, while Morocco was administered as a loose association of smaller regions in Northwestern Africa ruled by a series of monarchs, with these latter often contested by various more localized tribal and religious leaders. Eventually, just following the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century, this volatile “system” lapsed to rule by outside sovereignties in the form of the occupying powers of France and Spain.

In one instance of both similarity and divergence between Europe and Morocco during of religious brotherhoods--along with more contemporary “chanson” or “song.”
this early modern period, the faster long distance transit that became more and more available in Morocco during the first half of the twentieth century through imported automobiles, buses, and trucks, as well as through the train systems initially built by the French, no doubt contributed to the viability and spread of popular music and professional musicians in and across different individual urban sites in Morocco, no matter how unevenly. However, a significant difference broadly between modern metropolises in Europe and in Morocco was the maintenance of a stronger connection by those Moroccans who migrated to the city with a continuing rural basis in their life choices and possibilities, especially among those many individuals who continued to move back and forth between town and country.

As Clifford Geertz has noted (1968:4), this meant that the two geographic, social, and cultural realms in Morocco continued as very much intertwined.\(^{35}\) This back-and-forth movement was impelled by those who adhered to seasonal growing and harvest possibilities while simultaneously taking advantage of the trade of goods in developing market centers, and it meant that city and country populations did not become so fundamentally isolated from one another, despite the overall shift to a higher concentration of people in urban centers in the last half century. This led, for one thing, to a greater continuing reliance upon, or adapting from, older customary musical practices from rural locales by Moroccan urban musical culture, but also more interchange between the city and countryside than occurred in many European urban centers that experienced exceptionally explosive growth in the nineteenth century.\(^{36}\) How practices of musical culture were communicated among such different contexts is of primary concern, since those methods by which they were supported and transmitted necessarily affected

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35 See also Porter (2010) for reference to the back and forth movement between urban Fez particularly and rural parts of Morocco during the 1930s.
36 Loopuyt (1999) traces such a connection particularly in relation to musical practices in the Northern mountains of Morocco continuing late into the twentieth century.
the nature of the music itself, along with the social relations around its production and reception.

**Different Media of Musical Transmission and Exchange**

Another significant divergence from what transpired within modern Western European cultural circumstances, and one that undoubtedly affected musical practices historically in Morocco, was the absence there of any significant mass trade in sheet music or musical instruments (most conspicuously, the piano) through the first half of the twentieth century. This was due in no small part to the lack of a substantial middle class in Morocco educated and capable of purchasing and using such technologies through much of the twentieth century at least. While numerous commercial concerns generated and sold large quantities of both mass-printed musical notation and mass-produced musical instrumentation in urban centers of Western Europe in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (both of which served as integral parts of the developing commercial music industry in Europe and a larger system of popular musical production and distribution), such items were not widely bought and sold in Morocco during the same period. This set real limits on the production and transmission of popular music more generally, as well as on the formation of commercial possibilities in the production of music.

Though the phonograph and radio played a role in the distribution of popular music in Morocco in the first half of the century, musical production there nonetheless also lacked the extensive relationships to other media and technologies in combination with and in promotion of music that prevailed in many European locales, making for yet another difference with those modern-era European contexts developing for popular music. Technologies and cultural forms

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37 Certainly stray experiments incorporating the piano in both popular sha'bi prototypes and self-consciously innovative compositions in the al-Ala tradition showed up in live and recorded compositions as early as the 1930s in Morocco, but these were the exception to the rule, proving inaccessibility either unaffordability or aesthetic indifference – or both.
that were longstanding in their interaction with and support of production and transmission of popular music in Europe, or that quickly became quite prevalent there in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, included both newer media such as film, as well as continuing forms such as musical theater. Commercial moving image production barely existed in Morocco until well into the second half of the twentieth century (see Dwyer 2004), and the closest indigenously-produced equivalent to staged theater during the same period was the halqa, that long-standing tradition of audiences forming a circle around freelance entertainers in outdoor spaces in cities, towns, and markets of Morocco. The coalescence of any such “ring” was in response to the instigation of public performers of all types, not only musical practitioners, while the various cultural forms presented in it, and their relatively improvised formats, were divergent in many ways from contemporary European theatrical traditions (see Schuyler 1993).

However much commonality the form and style of such Moroccan performance contexts had with modern European practices, both their products and their contexts lacked the uniformity of mass-produced cultural products associated with modes of mechanical reproduction such as film. They also lacked, for the most part, the high art pretensions and habitus of theater productions based on literary conventions played out in dedicated enclosed spaces as were more conventionally staged in Europe. As Khalid Amine has differentiated the halqa from other entertainments: “It is a space of popular culture that is open to all the people from different walks of life. Al-halqa hovers between high culture and low mass culture, sacred and profane, literacy and orality...” (2004:1). Perhaps most significantly, the payment of musicians and other performers in the halqa, as noted by Schuyler, was accomplished by those performers’ many stratagems built in to the structure and flow of the performance itself, and of direct address to the audience in front of them. However customary likely amounts of “offerings” to those performers,
the underlying basis was “pay what you wish,” or in many cases, not paying at all.

In Morocco at the time of my fieldwork, the halqa still survived at least residually in many locales, and it still relied on the same method of performers’ receiving compensation directly from audiences, though this had long since become a minority practice for obtaining payment as a professional musician in Morocco generally. Nonetheless, other contexts of musical performance still accessed this method of direct payment from audience members too: notably private and semi-private ceremonial and festive occasions featuring Sufi and other musical groups. Even in public milieux with the performance of the most mass-market of musical styles, the offering of tips, or “gharamat,” (Ar.; sing. “gharama”) was not uncommon. Indeed such tips were both courted by performers, and proffered by at least a minority of audience members, usually those most engaged with the performance or the performers themselves, in a spontaneous, more instantaneous kind of voluntary gift exchange. In most cases, however, these offerings were the lesser portion of musicians’ wages, and those venues where musicians relied primarily on them were seen as particularly precarious in a financial sense and, to a large degree, less desirable.

I recall visiting in 2006 a sort of resort bar nicknamed “Camping” (spoken in English, though its customers were almost exclusively Moroccan),38 which was located just outside of Fez on the route to the nearby market town of Sefrou. I went there in the company of Kamal B., the young working musician whose own typical bookings as a musician around town included wedding performances and cafes. These were usually fairly poorly paid in terms of monetary compensation, but payment for the musicians’ services at these venues were both more reliable and, at a minimum, several times more lucrative than the 25 dirham base pay (about $5 US at the

38 In a different cosmopolitan turn, its official name “Mirador,” played on traditional Spanish themes of leisure and hospitality, though Fez was historically and spatially far distant from any colonial-era influence from Spain itself.
time) each musician received at Camping. There, musicians were expected to sufficiently enliven the atmosphere so that patrons would be moved to make substantial enough offerings of cash to supplement the miserable fee guaranteed by the bar’s management. Kamal B. (just visiting himself) made it clear that this was among the lowest of professional engagements for musicians that he knew of.

To elaborate a bit on a hierarchy of performance possibility for musicians in Morocco at the time, that same night, when the subject of the large annual Fez Festival of Sacred Music came up in conversation, Kamal boasted of how he had performed in its context at least once in the past. When I pointed out how a once-a-year festival hardly seemed like a good basis for making a career or even making a living, he mentioned another high-paying and high-profile job he had had a few summers before. For this, he had played the Sha‘bi sub-genre of jibali in a group formed around Abdelrahim Sinhaji, one of the nationally-known performers of Sha‘bi. Kamal related to me how he had been paid 500 dirham a day for fifteen days for his part in this multi-city tour in the north of Morocco including to Tangier, Tetuoan, Oujda, Taza, and several other urban centers. Such a subsidized tour was also an unusual occurrence, however, and, in this case, entirely dependent on the specific sponsorship of it by the national telephone company, Maroc Telecom.

It was evident, however, that the cultural and financial capital intertwined within certain such coveted paid performance opportunities came with different channels of mediation and with an even greater remove characterizing interactions between audience and performers than were customary in contexts such as the halqa, as well as within other earlier forms of patronage in support of musical practices in Morocco. This distancing between audience and performers included, of course, the channels of monetary compensation for the performances themselves. I
later heard a similar story of the discrepancies in degrees and kinds of financial remuneration among different types of performance context in relation to the Fez-based chapter of the Hamadsha, whose total fee for their performance at the Fez Festival in 2006 was estimated by one of the musicians in the group to be between 2000 and 5000 dirham, some four to ten times the usual compensation they received for less official festive events and traditional ceremonies.

In these latter the Hamadsha depended on direct offerings stimulated by the effects of their ministrations among participating devotees and onlookers. Not incidentally, those other high-paying, high prestige performance possibilities had the backing of municipal, regional, and national governmental authorities, whose interest in promoting economic investment and development was at least as strong as their interest in cultural development and promotion. The structure of these festivals and official tours thus changed both the terms and the relationships through which musicians were paid, along with some of the range, depth, duration and type of music being performed.

To return to a larger perspective on changing contexts of cultural practice in Morocco in the modern era, the most fundamentally far-reaching influence on the development of popular music there, as in Europe, was just this shift in the socio-economic basis on which music was produced and consumed. According to Scott, regarding Europe:

"The biggest and most obvious change musicians faced in the early nineteenth century...was that they had to deal with markets and market relations rather than patrons and patronage. Musicians were now placed in a situation that gave rise to...their need to affirm capitalist relations, in order to earn a living (2008:39)."

This was also true for Moroccan musicians, though the most dramatic shift from older forms of patronage to an emerging “need to affirm capitalist relations” occurred for the majority of musical performers in Morocco in the century following that sort of “affirmation” of capitalist
relations in Europe. And this was a “need” – or rather, a responded-to demand – which arrived in large part from outside, as part of the efforts at establishing a new basis for economic and political organization in Protectorate-era Morocco. As Waterbury contends: “In 1912 the Moroccan economy was stagnant, had few foreign trade outlets, and had developed nothing approaching a national market system” (1970:34). Waterbury adds that “what Morocco lacked, the French possessed,” concluding in no uncertain terms that it was European influence that enabled in Morocco “the development of the economic infrastructure of the country and some basic steps towards a modern economy” (1970:34).

Outside Powers, Foreign Influences

Nineteenth century Morocco had had necessarily, as well as in many cases by choice, to deal with numerous commercial incursions from both European traders and, at times, more forceful invaders from outside, including military. Zakia Daoud traces the “opening” of Morocco to European commerce and the negotiations around effects of capitalist enterprise and accumulation to the middle of the nineteenth century (1980:40). It is less evident what significant changes might have been effected culturally in a general way because of these earlier confrontations. Parmentier (1999) notes a pronounced upsurge of activity in international trade in late nineteenth century Tangier, with a defensive cultural insulating trend among both Jewish and Muslim Moroccan natives in response. Waterbury (1970) suggests as the fundamental and repeatedly iterated thesis of his book on the political history of modern Morocco that despite the increases in foreign trade in the nineteenth century, and even during the era of increased contact with cultural ideas from outside during the protectorate period, in many ways Moroccan political culture during these periods of contact followed channels proposed by models of understanding
and behavior dating back centuries.\footnote{Spillmann suggests that a fundamental aspect of this political culture has long been the influence of various religiously-oriented zawiyat, or lodges of spiritual brotherhoods in Morocco (1951:109).}

Some aspects of a larger confluence of cultural, economic and political attitudes and behaviors did change however. Davila, in referring to the shifts in systems of economic support for the long-standing musical genre of al-Āla, writes:

Since the colonial period, these informal institutions [i.e. of aristocratic patronage] gradually gave way to formal, modern-looking institutions. Today, personal patronage by a prince or a wealthy family has been replaced by royal patronage through the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, and by collective patronage through private jam‘iyyat [organized social associations] of Andalusian music lovers. Just as the ancient hassa-‘amma divide [that is, elite versus common folk] has been redefined (some might say reified) in terms of modern economic relations, so has support for the music been reshaped by modern discourses of economy and modernity, and relationships defined by social class (2006:362).

Certainly the arrival of both European political oversight and European commercial concerns planted the seeds that would ultimately introduce new species, or help generate new varieties, of existing cultural practices in Moroccan daily life. Spadola (2007) points to the significant impact in the portrayal of cultural customs of life in Morocco by French colonizers in the first half of the twentieth century through postcards, and both scholarly and popular journals, as well as through official government reports. Such customs promoted by the French notably included the ritual ceremonies of popular religious brotherhoods such as ‘Aïssowa, Gnawa and Hamadsha (all reliant on substantial musical components) as a series of folklorized spectacles for consumption by a diffuse global audience. That audience included French populations back home, potential foreign tourists to the region more generally (already a substantial source of revenue for Morocco even in the first decades of the twentieth century), and, however incidentally, Moroccans as well.
There was, however, some native contention over this outside influence in defining a course for “Moroccan” culture. Spadola narrates at length the rising interest in Sufism by Moroccans themselves during the early and middle periods of the Protectorate, that is, from the mid-1910s through the late 1930s (2007:111-127). Moroccan critics in the period understood this phenomenon as prompted in no small part by official Protectorate policy in portraying the ceremonial performances of *hadrat* (Ar., sing. *hadra*)\(^{40}\) and *mawsim*\(^{41}\) as typically Moroccan. Indeed, the authorities of the Protectorate went so far as to actively promote and validate such activities by way of their official attention to and support of them, which included the French organizing a series of “foires” or expositions in the urban centers of Fez and Casablanca featuring examples of Moroccan culture for local consumption, along with providing opportunities for commerce of all types. This policy was pursued by the French, despite some initial misgivings on their part about the lack of order that threatened some of the more effervescent and extreme public gatherings, since such gatherings were seen by colonial authorities as ultimately desirable in their serving as means for channeling popular sentiment, and in demonstrating that the Protectorate was simultaneously beneficent towards Moroccan culture, as well as in control of it.

In response, an indigenous counter-current of criticism for the most raucous of Sufi practices, along with a fundamental disagreement with the French support for them, was published by literate, elite Moroccans in early examples of native newspapers originating in that period such as *Le Cri Marocain* and *L’Action du Peuple*. This disagreement between representatives of educated native upper classes and the exotifying perspective of a governing group from outside the country about the scope and nature of what might be appropriate cultural

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\(^{40}\) In this context, meanings for hadra can be translated as “presence/attendance,” ritual séances invoking spiritual possession.
manifestations for a modern Moroccan national popular culture produced one stream of thought leading to later post-Independence conceptions among native intellectuals and government officials about what shape and content Moroccan culture should take.

Back in the colonial period, parallel objections to those lodged against practices of Sufi worship, which were intimately and pervasively tied up with popular musical practices, were also raised through editorials in such indigenous publications against the 1930 so-called “Berber” Dahir (or “edict”) by the French authorities. This edict newly declared an official adherence to “customary” law among the Berber tribes rather than that of Islamic-based sharia. Those indigenous diatribes against the favoring and manipulation of aspects of Moroccan culture by outside authorities during this period would set the stage for later such debates about what might be appropriate tendencies for developing Moroccan national culture post-Independence, including musical culture. But, during the Protectorate period at least, an accepting embrace by the majority of Moroccans, and an uninformed voyeurism on the part of the French, prevailed for such manifestations of indigenous popular culture, which were seen as good for the smooth and profitable functioning of the colony generally.

The developing business of culture in Morocco was thus demonstrably intertwined with the interests of the new political order established and managed by Morocco’s colonizers starting in the early part of the twentieth century. The European-controlled companies that recorded and marketed musical recordings during the era of the Protectorate exercised a near-monopoly over distribution of recorded musical projects until national independence in Morocco in the second half of the twentieth century, when some national and regionally-based companies for recording and distribution in Morocco began producing discs first in 78 rpm and then later in 45 rpm and

\[41\] An annual pilgrimage gathering to commemorate deceased saints.
33 rpm formats. These earlier media for storage and distribution of musical sound gave way to the cassette tape as a primary medium for transmission, and the ease of non-professional, illicit and ultimately illegal reproduction through the cassette – and later the compact disc – undermined many of these industrial commercial concerns, the products of which gave way to those of a larger “gray,” or underground, market that coalesced as a result (see Ciucci 2008; Schuyler 1979).

With the forming of the newly sovereign political nation-state of Morocco in 1956 came not only new capacities for competitive production and distribution of music within the country, but also new initiatives for defining what constituted worthwhile types of music for recording and distribution. Beyond the hazy and indistinct “market” of musical interest on the part of audiences and consumers, a top-down effort to clarify and canonize what was “Moroccan” in musical practices received the benefit of initiatives from a newly formed national Governmental Cultural Ministry, along with professional cultural workers and entrepreneurs more widely in the period after Independence was declared.

Government-controlled radio and television, as well as officially-sponsored cultural festivals, all played a part in bringing to audiences examples of wider and wider ranges of musical practices, which had previously had more local origins and distribution within diverse corners of the country. As one example of the effects of these “educational” efforts, Ahmed Aydoun, in the acknowledgments that serve as a frontispiece for his book surveying Moroccan music at the beginning of the 1990s, credits some of the influence of such official policies on further developments in discourse production regarding cultural patrimony, including his own, when he offers this thanks: “To the town of Essaouira and to its first festival of music that confirmed me in undertaking this work” (1992:7). Though the festivals in particular received
generally positive acclaim, many contrasting viewpoints were offered by other intellectuals and would-be Moroccan cultural brokers, however, in ongoing debates about directions for both cultural policy and cultural practice during this period, as well as for many of their consequences. These debates were often explicit, divisive, and pronounced, and very much caught up in ideas about the cultural formation of the nation of Morocco in the modern era following decolonization, as the next section traces.

*Modern, National or Resistant: Ideas of Popular Music in Morocco Post-Independence*

Ciucci (2008), in referring to ‘aita, one particularly popular Moroccan musical genre, writes of the cultural elitism inspired by Moroccan nationalism among many of those who actively conceptualized Moroccan culture post-independence, even while they were attempting to decolonize and liberate Moroccan cultural attitudes from the primitivist Orientalism fostered by colonial authorities during the Protectorate period. The impulse to arbitrate appropriate cultural values post-Independence caused more than one Moroccan intellectual – and many actual cultural practitioners – to deliberate publicly upon the challenges of locating and building upon likely cultural foundations for decolonization within modern Morocco. Writing in *Anfas/Souffles*, the small, but provocative and highly influential Moroccan journal from the 1960s and 1970s, Ahmed Bouanani (1966) defined “popular” for both Moroccan poetry and song by offering that the chief characteristic of those forms historically was that they had always been *oral*. In a sign of the times he was writing in – just after the long history of colonial rule by France – Bouanani also credits much of the fame of the rwais, the itinerant professional singers of Morocco, as being tied to their effectiveness in providing “early warning” communications to
outlying rural districts regarding larger invasions by “enemies,” as in the case especially of the French in the period leading up to Independence.

The circle of thinkers that gathered around the standard of *Souffles* during this generation post-Independence was very different from those earlier elites who had decried the promotion of Sufi or Berber indigenous culture. Inheritors of the ideas and goals of Third World thinkers such as Franz Fanon, and at once more literary and more politically firebrand than the Moroccan Islam-oriented educated class from the 1920s and 1930s in Morocco, the *Souffles* writers were more embracing of the possibilities of popular culture for an evolving modern Morocco, while equally cognizant of the stakes inherent in the choices of foregrounding cultural aspects of the newly nascent nation.

Writing in French himself, Bouanani suggested that indigenous Berber dialects were particularly germane to the spoken basis of Moroccan poetry in its utility for conceptualizing a national culture. He noted also that Moroccan oral poets had been emphatically “driven back” in retreat to “the interior of the country, within the small localities and the marketplaces” by antagonistic “modern” phenomena (1966:6). But he proposed a strong part was still to be played by such figures of oral transmission in the new nation-state: “Speaking of the wandering troubadour,” he says, writing in the present tense: “his role is crucial when it is a question of his tribe combating the enemy” (1966:5). The enemy, it should be made clear, at this point in time in the mid-1960s -- still after Independence -- was any agent or element that might threaten a Moroccan cultural sovereignty. The significance attached to these questions about the place of orality and of Tamazight or Berber language as aspects of popular culture in Morocco, and as potential components of national patrimony there, was demonstrated through such questions
continuing to be publicly discussed and debated decades later (see, for instance, Benaissa 1981; Boukous 1981).

Among the many considerations about which direction Moroccan culture should head in order to achieve the healthiest or most self-sovereign outcome post-Independence, Mostafa Nissaboury, also writing in *Souffles*, suggests a more abstract and nuanced approach to defining a national culture pro-actively:

A cultural decolonization wouldn’t be effective only by way of a language accessible to a mass or even to a zone of consumption, but of a consciousness pushed to the extreme limit of the cosmic dimensions of being, as much as flesh, blood, gender and history (1966:35, emphasis added).

His suspiciousness regarding a mass aspect to the popular is every bit as strong as in the polemics by Adorno and Horkheimer against the culture industries in the West as instrumental in a homogenizing dumbing-down of cultural value and cultural thinking generally (1997 [1979]), and it is an attitude that is demonstrated further when Nissaboury goes on to write:

Universalism is not a revolutionary aesthetic for the problems of the Moroccan culture. Universalism is unavoidably the result of a culture that has its base in a world already made, structured, producer-consumer [sic]. It would be a question of deliberately attributing to oneself an identity of socio-historical realities that one doesn’t have, when even those situate themselves at the level of a common struggle...We need a rooted culture without it being an anachronistic folklore, which translates our aspirations and our contradictions without it plunging us into the populist statistics (1966:35).

This radical denial of the universalist, “populist” impulse is itself motivated – somewhat ironically -- by an ambition to have it all, or at least deal with it all: cultural roots without

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42 This and all other translations from the French that follow are my own.
obsolete tradition, and the best of both indigenous political (and cultural) liberation and an updated mode of enabling it, to maintain its relevance and efficacy of expression in modern times. Nissaboury shows his recognition that such an ambition is in fact a necessity, given that the effects of long term incursions from the colonial project in Morocco will never go away, as he concludes: “Cultural colonization is a permanent phenomenon” (1966:34).

Some of the ambivalences and conflicts regarding the definition of national culture in Morocco are shown in Salah Cherki’s proposing a multiplicity of different musics as examples of “national patrimony” in his generalist survey of Moroccan music (1981). A principal himself of the Rabat Conservatory and National Radio Orchestra, and taking a leaf from French colonialist writer Alexis Chottin, he devotes the greatest portion of his work to a history and description of the “classical” Moroccan musical genre of al-Āla, including a number of pages devoted to European-style musical transcriptions of selected nawbat (“Suites”; Ar., sing. nuba”). His much less in-depth descriptions of other musics often proclaim their status nonetheless as part of that Moroccan patrimony, including even in the case of the ”modern song” he recognizes as heavily borrowing from Egyptian music.

He also reluctantly credits a resistance toward the foreign when considering newer popular music groups of the 1970s such as Nass El-Ghiwaine and Jil Jilala, whom he applauds for how “they have come to attract the masses' attention and to turn regards away from other occidental currents,” acknowledging that “We must pay homage to them for the unique reason that they have refused the foreign influence” (1981:212). He goes on to decry, however, the dangerous pursuit these groups make in their less-than-thorough study and follow-through of Moroccan musical traditions.

Often technically weak in their performance practice as musicians and with a mix-and-
not-necessarily-match sensibility to instrumentation, these bands seldom generated song forms whose individual parts or overall composition reached the complexity or intensity of the majority of other prior genres of Moroccan musical practice. The musical performances of these groups usually consisted of foregrounded vocals, with a single melodic instrument\(^{43}\) and one or two hand drums as accompaniment, together generating a loose, shambling “jam” feel, played in single rhythmic and melodic modes comprising the whole of most of their songs. This musicianship, which was recognized out loud as lackluster by more than one musician I met in Morocco, seemed to stem from these groups’ amateur origins as less musically oriented theatrical performers, with a continuing sort of do-it-yourself ethos well into the 1970s. But that lack of technical proficiency did not seem to dispel a wide popularity with audiences that made several of these groups iconic for generations to come, primarily for song lyrics that were as politically relevant as they were often poetically elliptical.

It is perhaps most significantly in the political sense that Cherki raises objections to these groups, pointing to the themes of those groups’ allusive lyrics’ calling attention obliquely to widespread corruption and the failure of official policies in providing jobs and food for the larger part of the population. This veiled social criticism offended sensibilities of power enough to run afoul of the government of King Hassan II, landing some of these bands’ members in jail in the midst of their early careers.\(^{44}\) As Cherki puts it, taking the unusual step of addressing the aesthetic (and political) offenders directly in the course of his writing:

But, it is our duty to mention to these groups that they shouldn't abuse of [sic]

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\(^{43}\) The traditional Moroccan genbri, in the case of Nass El Ghiwaine, or sometimes the more generally Middle Eastern ‘ud, along with Western-originating instruments like the mandolin or banjo in the case of Jil Jilala and other similar groups that followed – for instance, Lemchaheb.

\(^{44}\) The editor of the *Souffles* journal, Abdellatif Laâbi, also ended up in jail in this same period of the early 1970s – and later went to live in exile in France -- due to Government disapproval of the political tendencies of his publication.
people's confidence. We make them notice that all serious works should be the result of deep searches founded on scientific bases [sic]...Our popular literature isn't limited to fixed rhythms, short of all meaning...We admire within these groups their desire to return to the origins, but we can't accept their pessimism, their superfluous ideas and their sense of mystification" (1981:212).

Cherki, who lavishly dedicates his volume to the King himself (an apparent patron of Cherki’s efforts), acts as one lesser example of an enforcer of the cultural order on behalf of an idealized Moroccan national patrimony. Besides the euphemistic term of “pessimism” that he offers to describe the attitude in the texts of these newer popular groups, he extends his own critique with a gibe about these popular ensembles’ purported “mystification” – referring to the incorporation and celebration by them of components of the less-than-modern Sufi orders such as the Gnawa, Hamadcha, and Jilala, after whom the popular musical group Jil Jilala (literally “Jilala Generation”) was named. Other commentators on this tendency in modern popular Moroccan music more generally to appropriate and borrow value from other popular Moroccan spiritual pursuits (i.e., Sufism) meanwhile disagreed with Cherki’s negative pronouncements. With a much more positive appreciation of the effects of the popular Sufi brotherhoods and their effect on musical practice, Mahmoud Guettat writes: "The development of these brotherhoods didn't only have consequences on the political and social life of the population. It contributed as well to the safeguard, even the enrichment of the musical patrimony" (2000:223).

Another more laudatory description of the use made of popular spiritual antecedents by contemporary popular musical practices appeared in a 1980s article in the equally influential and perhaps more popular cultural and political journal Lamalif. The written piece by Mohamed Jibril discussed a feature-length film documenting the group Nass Al-Ghiwaine titled Al-Hal.45 In the review, Jibril discusses how:
Ghiwane familiarize themselves with the inhabitants and the songs and stories of the "raw", recalling for themselves and indicating to us the foundational materials that are, finally, reworked by them. Out of madness, they confer on the figure of Aicha Kandicha [a prominent spirit in the cosmologies of a number of Sufi brotherhoods, and a longstanding mainstay of common Moroccan popular cultural mythology] a particular dimension, in making her a symbol of resistance, a positive figure, vengeful, just (1981:38).}

Thus, long past the objections to Sufi cultishness and to “small tradition” practices of more local Berbers put forward by modernist (and orthodox Islamist) nationalists in Morocco during the Protectorate period, contention over what defined not only appropriate Moroccan music but Moroccan national culture continued on through such conflicts and debates in the post-Independence era, as cultural brokers attempted to re-orient the new nation-state. Such efforts to put into print some of the aggressive assertions of officially-defined culture can be seen as part of a continuum of practices that extended to the sometimes extensive jail sentences and torture experienced by many who spoke up during the so-called “annees de plombe” (or “years of lead”) in the course of Hassan II’s long reign from the beginning of the 1960s through the end of the 1980s.

In the realm of the rhetorical again, much of the impetus of these newer popular music groups came as a self-consciously developed product of intellectual currents similar to those expressed by writers for Lamalif and Souffles, following directions pointed to earlier by that liberationist thinker Fanon in his reflecting upon conditions in North Africa especially. To trace some of the genealogy of the Moroccanist intellectual views on culture, it is also worth noting a review of an experimental theater production by Taïeb Seddiki, the mentor of several members of

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45 “Al-Hal” can be translated literally as "Trance"—itself a sign itself of the important part played by Sufi heritage and goals for this newer and especially political manifestation of popular culture.
46 The original in French reads: “Ghiwaine se familiarisent avec les habitants et les chansons et contes du ‘cru’ qu’ils se remémorent, nous indiquent les matériaux de base qui sont, ensuite, retravaillés par eux.”
the Nass El Ghiwaine (some of whom later split off to form the other prominent popular musical group from the period, Jil Jilala). This item appeared in an early issue of *Souffles* and was written by Abdellatif Laâbi, the journal’s founding editor himself.\(^{47}\) The title and source for Seddiki’s theater piece (“Diwan Sidi Abderrahman Mejdoub”) referred to a 16\(^{th}\) century Moroccan Sufi mystic, whose own outsider status and social criticality were taken up several years later by members of these newer musical performance groups such as Nass El Ghiwaine as an indigenous cultural model, along with numerous other aspects of Sufi and other native culture.

*Sha'bi (Im)Proper*

This more self-conscious compositing in new forms of indigenous practices – colloquial language, musical rhythms and instruments, religious and spiritual references, along with conspicuous outside cultural additions\(^ {48}\) – paralleled a more organic, decidedly non-polemical development in contemporary Sha‘bi production, which also relied on local and regional forms and instruments, while adding discrete elements borrowed from outside. Additionally, the same means of mass distribution for much of the musical material was used by both these self-conscious practitioners, who Aydoun refers to as “*neo-populaire*” (1992:140, 151-154), and those other less “neo” popular music groups (that is, Sha‘bi), which rose to greater prominence nationally in Morocco during this period. One channel to that prominence was through national television and radio broadcast (when, in the case of Nass El Ghiwaine, their music wasn’t censored or banned.

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\(^{47}\) Laâbi’s review appeared in issue five of the journal in early 1967. The year before, in an article titled “*Où va le théâtre au Maroc?*” (“Whither Moroccan Theater?”), Abdallah Stouky also lavished a good deal of attention on Seddiki, tracing his roots in the Workers’ Theater of Casablanca supported by the National Unionist Party, and noting his early decision to mount French avant-garde work along with diverse international fare from Russia and England before opting to present work whose texts, including his own, were written in colloquial darija, as opposed to classical Arabic, with its limited accessibility for audiences.

\(^{48}\) For Nass El Ghiwaine and Jil Jilala, the use of the banjo and mandolin were two notable elements, though imported Western stringed instruments such as these had already made fitful appearances among North African
outright), as much as live appearances and recordings alone, just as earlier iterations of musical promulgation had played out through in the first decades of the newly formed nation.

Sharing the designation “Sha’bi” at times in more casual usages, but divergent in many respects from other examples of the genre, the music of groups such as Nass El Ghiwaine and Jil Jilala (sometimes also called “mūṣṭaqā ihtikajiya” or "protest music") was certainly popular in mass terms. It came to be iconic of certain cultural ideals of Morocco in the 1970s, and there were many more musical imitators following in their wake. But its origins from avant-gardist circles was only one difference from that other complex, larger category of music popular not only with students and other younger generation audiences sensitive to injustices of the regime they lived under, but also among working and middle class audiences, who, as Aydoun states in distinguishing Sha’bi from other genres, were for the most part:

...[an] urban population, more and more numerous, more and more heterogeneous, demanding above all a music to divert itself. This population comes from different regions, consuming, in addition to the folklore, a middling genre drawing from all the popular styles and exclusively privileging dance rhythms. The music should play all roles save perhaps that of intellectual pleasure (1992:141; emphasis added).

That one role Aydoun finds lacking does not cause him to dismiss Sha’bi’s significance entirely in daily urban life in Morocco in the decades leading up to the end of the twentieth century – as he states unequivocally: “In the shops and in the popular neighborhoods situated in the medina or on the periphery, the music that you will hear most frequently is sha’bi [sic].” (1992:141). But Aydoun nonetheless makes clear Sha’bi’s lesser appeal to more sophisticated musical ensembles dating back some decades. For a more detailed description of the cultural differences that these groups enacted during the 1970s, both from inside and outside of Morocco, see Schuyler (1993a).
taste cultures in Morocco, such as the socio-cultural milieu he himself comes from and values. Acknowledging its power to give pleasure – and to cause “Boys and girls (and sometimes even adults) to abandon themselves completely to the call of its rhythm” (1992:143) – Aydoun credits in backhanded fashion Sha‘bi’s social function, with a disparaging summary description that takes away as much as it offers:

Neither the repetitiveness, nor the throbbing rhythm, nor the frequently mediocre texts count for the audience, it is above all to find oneself with friends of the family and above all to have interesting encounters under the pretext of the party (1992:142).

The ambivalent social regard indicated by Aydoun – that is, both appreciation for and some hint of a problematic social laxity inherent in the conviviality of Sha‘bi, along with a merely utilitarian appreciation for its crude sensory and formal particulars – was perhaps the most common defining conception of Sha‘bi generally in Morocco. That some conceptual distinctions existed for use of the term of “Sha‘bi” in marking a particular musical genre – beyond referencing any cultural product that was merely well-known or favored among a large audience – was also made clear to me through a number of different conversations I had about contemporary music in Morocco. During one such conversation in the fall of 2005, Naima, a middle-aged waitress at a restaurant in the Nouvelle Ville in Fez, told me that though “of course” she liked the Berber music of her rural origins, it was Sha‘bi which was “first” all over Morocco: “Because it wakes you up, when you are asleep; it animates you and reminds you of a party, even when it’s not.” Her co-worker -- another woman, somewhat younger than Naima, and much shyer – overhearing our conversation while she set places at a table, murmured her agreement.

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49 A Division Head of the Moroccan Cultural Ministry, and official Inspector for “artistic recordings,” and director of multiple cultural festivals, Aydoun also coordinated a project to record an anthology of al-Âla in the 1980s.
At the opposite impulse of aesthetic appreciation, but still recognizing the boundaries of a category of musical practice that was popular, a college-educated worker in his mid-twenties at a small *funduq* (or hotel) in the old city medina of Fez was highly critical of the themes contained in lyrics of Sha‘bi, implicitly drawing the boundaries of the genre by distinguishing it from other genres of music in which, he said, the themes were more poetic and worthwhile (i.e., al-Āla and Melhûn). Somewhat similarly, Adil, a young worker at the American Language Center in Fez, objected to the superficiality and “nonsense” of the lyrical attempts in most Sha‘bi songs.

Non-professional in his musical aspirations, but a highly active musician nonetheless, Adil was perhaps the most emphatic about the distinctions among musical genres of anyone I met in Morocco. This stemmed in part from the fact that he was conversant in a number of styles that could be called “popular” too – from the rhythms of the folk-oriented celebration of the *daqqa* to the rhythms, scales and instrumentation of the Gnawa, and including references to the examples set by earlier popular groups like Nass El Ghiwaine and Jil Jilala. Adil’s practice included as well many non-Moroccan genres that he integrated into his own musical practices at various times, including blues, rock, reggae, and hip-hop. The clear divide between his references to the “popular” styles he employed in his musical practice and musical appreciation, and the “popular” that was “Sha‘bi” in his estimation, reified a category of Sha‘bi/popular with its own tokens of performance practice and social aspect. Likewise Ciucci (2008) gives evidence of this presumptive category, when she refers to examples of modernized ‘Aita, whose musical characteristics caused the practice of it to have “entered the realm of Sha‘bi” (2008:34).

Nonetheless, despite these distinctions, the term “Sha‘bi” as a category of musical practice in Morocco seemed to stem in part from the range of other genres it could be understood to have incorporated, or to have diverged from. Thus, however particular the social associations with a
narrower understanding of it as a category of cultural practice, a more general sense of Sha‘bi
musically as an umbrella term for many types of other genres could also be employed
simultaneously.

A Turn Toward Egypt

Sha‘bi musicians’ own hierarchy of taste sometimes put Sha‘bi itself at a decidedly lower
position than other musical genres on a scale of value judgment. Several Sha‘bi musicians I met
endorsed the work of Egyptian-born musical icon Umm Kulthum more noticeably and
enthusiastically (and idly sung her songs more often in off-hours for their own entertainment)
than they either sung or appreciated aloud any of the Sha‘bi numbers they made their living
performing.\footnote{\textsuperscript{50}I was struck particularly by the exaltation by one such musician -- Kamal B., the young working sha‘bi drummer
and singer in Fez -- regarding “classical” Arabic musical icons from outside Morocco such as Umm Kulthum,
whose work held little relevance to his own daily practice of musical genres. Upon my mentioning \textit{“Inta Umri,”} a
well-known musical composition written by Egyptian composer/performer Muhammed Andelwahab, and performed
by Kulthum in the 1960s -- twenty years before he was born -- Kamal energetically pressed me to recollect out loud
any other compositions I knew which were associated with Umm Kulthum.} This strong presence of Kulthum in the Moroccan cultural landscape gave evidence
to the continuing legacy of earlier trends in the reception and production of popular Moroccan
music from at least the 1930s on, along the lines of what Aydoun refers to as “The Egyptian
model,” which he puts forward as both the progenitor and exemplar of the \textit{“chanson moderne”} or
“modern song” most broadly throughout the Arabic world, including in Morocco (1992:145-
149).\footnote{\textsuperscript{51}For other references to the prevalence of Egyptian music as influences in Moroccan listening and production, see
Cherki 1981; Hachlaf and Hachlaf 1999; regarding Egypt’s highly developed system of industrial recording and
distribution throughout the Arab world see also Racy 1977; Danielson 1997.}

For both musical producers and listeners in Morocco, notions of such “modern” music
suggested more explicit connections to dominant stylistic influences from abroad, as opposed to
the more organic notion of an indigenous and still developing notion of Sha‘bi. Guettat, in his
magisterial study of al-Āla or al-mūsīqā al-andalusiyya, which he refers to as “Musique Arabo-Andalouse,” defines “Sha‘bi” by specifically referring to “populaire” in North Africa at the start of the twentieth century, a “synthesis of local and foreign forms” (2000:517).

More widely, however, the use of the Arabic word “Sha‘bi” by Moroccans generally to indicate a still-coalescing genre dating from the middle of the twentieth century seemed to separate a set of practices from other musical genre practices understood under the French version of the same word “populaire,” which extended to cover a distinct range of musical performance conventions. Musical styles in this range borrowed more either from French popular chanson and other European music hall, radio, and commercial song styles (perhaps most noticeably, a certain tendency toward an intimate crooning, or close-microphone, intimate talk-style address by singers). Elements of these styles were adopted along with, or indeed overlapping, those chosen aspects of well-known Egyptian musical production. Such dual tendencies were evident in the output of celebrated Moroccan singers and composers of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s such as Abdelwahab Doukkali and Abdelhadi Belkhayat.52 Much of the notoriety of the more nationally-renowned of these “modern” musical artists could be attributed to the publicizing efforts of a series of competitions sponsored by and featured on governmental-run national television and radio beginning in the late 1950s, following Moroccan political independence from France and Spain. The nexus of these popularizing means evinces some of the top-down construction of this form of the popular as part of a national project of culture, given the officially-sponsored and officially-selected basis of cultural programming for these mass media broadcasts.

52 For brief biographical sketches of these figures, see Hachlaf and Hachlaf 1999; Aydoun also mentions, in relation to the Egyptian influence in Moroccan music, the composers-performers Abdessalam ‘Alami, Ahmed Al Bidawi and Abdelwahab Agoumi (1992:145-146).
In more specific formal terms, the impact of Egyptian musical practice could be heard in the few if any traditional Moroccan instruments that showed up in the large-scale orchestras of performers like Doukkali and Belkhayat; in their songs’ generally wider ranging melodic ambitus than what had been employed in most Moroccan musical compositions previously; in the fewer modal and rhythmic changes within a single musical composition; and in the texts written and sung in more classical or modern standard Arabic registers (instead of or in addition to the more usual colloquial darija of nearly every other type of popular song in Morocco), which dominated many of these lengthy, highly arranged, and more homophonic than heterophonic pieces. As stated, these instances of noticeable Egyptian influence sometimes overlapped with a more European-inflected style. For instance, many of the works of Doukkali, such as his well-known “Montparnasse” (circa 1970), whose text sung in Arabic mourns the large number of North Africans killed by police in Paris in the early 1960s, provided for a unique blend with European-style large-scale orchestras emphasizing grand string sections made up of dozens of instruments playing in unison, in addition to more Western melodic contours.

Appreciation of the highest avatars of this “modern” style from Egypt stemmed from the fact that such models had become somewhat “classical” in general Arab cultural consideration as well as in Moroccan cultural estimation, since that style could to some degree be traced back to practices in Egypt of the late nineteenth century. That appreciation in Morocco was no doubt attributable to movements toward a Moroccan cultural Arabization that reached a self-conscious peak in the period leading up to national independence and immediately after. In this way, a set of popular musical practices congealing in Egypt especially in the first half of the twentieth century among performers such as Umm Kulthum and Muhammed Abdelwahab had achieved a

53 Doukkali was also notable for having spent an extended period of time working and studying in Egypt, making the connection of likely musical influence from that source even more direct.
more elevated status in a cultural hierarchy in Morocco than many local idioms of popular musical performance. Such was made clear to me in Morocco by many listeners as well as by musicians working in those other genres who would spurn the coarser offerings of Sha‘bi or other popular musical categories, which were considered lower on a scale of cultural achievement or worthiness.

This was demonstrated by Sha‘bi musicians themselves in many instances: Abdellah, a singer of Sha‘bi I met at the “Camping” bar outside Fez, told me that singing Sha‘bi was only a job for him – that is, he only did it for the money. What he liked to play ("for the heart," he said) was al-mūṣṭqā al-sharqiyya ("Eastern Music") on the ‘ud. He was referring to qasaid (poetic sung texts, sing. qasida) written and/or made famous by the likes of Umm Kulthum and Abdelwahab. Somewhat incongruously, he also mentioned an appreciation for American country-pop singer Kenny Rogers, whose music he claimed to play on the guitar, though he admitted to being challenged by the multi-string stopping efforts involved in forming chords for the latter, suggesting that perhaps he was not as deeply invested in performing such music from the West even for his own sake. Meanwhile, outspokenly contemptuous of the Sha‘bi performed at his place of employment, he nonetheless gave a very persuasive impression of someone deeply engaged in the musical material he performed during the actual sets I witnessed, when he clapped and smiled and energetically encouraged the crowd to respond.

Beyond differences in repertoire and song-style, and in instrumentation and lyrical content, cultural capital and social context were most crucial in the estimation of value for the genre of Sha‘bi by various practitioners. As the following sections of this chapter will show in describing various aspects of Sha‘bi, many of those differences actually came out of other existing styles of musical practice in Morocco as well as those arriving from abroad. I will
conclude the next several sections of this chapter, then, with a description of the formal characteristics of modern Sha'bi itself, along with a history of its origins and aspects of its social contexts in Morocco to clarify some of the evaluations Moroccans make of the genre.

Origins of Sha'bi

Starting from often quite small ensembles, dating back at least to the nineteenth century, rural antecedents of Sha'bi often consisted of only one or two musicians utilizing hand percussion and a single melodic instrument such as the ghaita, a double-reed wind instrument; or the genbri or lotar, plucked string instruments, as accompaniment for singers. The movement into urban locales by musicians and more concentrated potential audiences prompted over time the embrace of new instruments formerly associated with realms of practice among more cultivated artistic elites, including especially those of the ‘ud and the kamenj (or Western-style violin). Larger performance ensembles, though seldom exceeding half a dozen individuals together up through the first half of the twentieth century, also began forming to play more popular music in the cities of Morocco, and the examples of art music practices of al-Āla and Melhûn, as well as of imported Egyptian music, were influential models for both this increase in size as well as some of the particular choice of instruments for performing forces (see Aydoun 1992). A “melting pot” effect developing in the greater and greater urban conglomerations of

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54 In addition to the evidence provided in still extant recordings from the earlier part of the twentieth century, these prevalence of these various ensemble arrangements are borne out in numerous photographs documenting musical ensembles, both those which accompanied commercial recordings and their promotional apparatus, as well as those collected in historical accounts such as those by Cherki, and Hachlaf and Hachlaf.

55 Notable among such instrumental choices influenced by both Egyptian and Moroccan art musics were stringed instruments such as kamenj and ‘ud, the latter of which faded from frequent popular use in the latter half of the twentieth century, without quite disappearing entirely even in the early 2000s. Other Egyptian influences – perhaps by way of more classical Moroccan forms such as al-Āla -- included the occasional use of the more cultivated instruments of ney or qanun (see for instance, “Yali Fik Demoui” by Zohra El Fassi), which essentially disappeared entirely as time went on. Western influence included the sporadic use of the banjo, the accordion and even the piano, but these latter were especially rare.
Morocco was blatant in the cross-cultural influences and polyethnic mix comprising different practitioners, which included among the early “stars” of Sha'bi (or proto-Sha'bi) performance beginning in the first half of the 1900s such well-known Jewish musicians as Zohra Al-Fassi, Raymonde, and Sami El-Magrebi, as well as prominent practitioners such as Hussein Slaoui, whose dark skin sometimes elicited passing references to his apparent African ancestry among listeners.

In the decades that followed, a number of different outside cultural influences affected popular musical production in Morocco, as well as the continuing development of performance styles stemming from a set of more customary performance practice among popular urban forms. These were in addition to that more self-conscious return to “crude” root sources represented by groups such as Nass El-Ghiwaine and Jil Jilala. Besides a broader range of sources from elsewhere overseas (from pop music on radio, vinyl disc and cassette from Lebanon and Egypt to soundtracks from imported Bollywood films), the growing penetration of American and European popular recordings had a greater and greater impact on musical reception and production in Morocco. Among the more novel Western foreign musical influences in Morocco during this period were those of Western rock and folk guitar-based bands featuring chordal harmonies, which had been noticeably rare in prior decades of popular music practice in Morocco. For instance, the Megris Brothers, popular in the 1970s and 1980s, and still referenced as a musical touchpoint by Moroccan musicians on occasion in the 2000s, employed 12-string guitars, a I-IV-V rock chord progression and frequent vocal harmonizing, recorded with a highly compressed studio technique for their commercial releases, all of which were clearly influenced by American and British progenitors of a 1960s “sound” that had spread globally to many locales.
Such innovations represented only one stream of popular musical development in Morocco. A most narrowly defined category understood as Sha'bi still hewed more closely to those practices starting from rural progenitors and continually updated with smaller incremental novelties in instrumentation, subject matter and performance style. The continuing interplay of the sort of catch-all developing urban musical genre of Sha'bi and some of its more rural progenitors can be found more recently and continuing also, as in the case of Lahcen Laroussi, a nationally-known musician from the jibal (i.e., the mountains of Northern Morocco) whose career began in the later part of the twentieth century. Laroussi himself came from a family of musicians (both his father and brother were also well-known musical performers). As a leader of an ensemble of musicians also hailing from the jibal, his earlier public performance involved playing in a more long-standing style known as jibali or taqtuqa jabiliyya (see Aydoun 1992:111-16). This was performed on acoustic instruments only (e.g., the various stringed instruments of hajhouj, kamenj, suissen, ‘ud, along with hand drums, and lead vocal and a chorus of responsorial vocalists among the musicians). The manufacture of the instruments for this ensemble’s performance, though ostensibly more “traditional,” took place not in the rural locales of the genre’s origins, but through the efforts of craftsmen “in town” (Loopuyt 1999:9). Marc Loopuyt also credits developments in urban locales for the influence on the “musical language” of the system of more artful modal development, while acknowledging rural sources primarily for rhythm and textual bases for the musical genre. In this style, Laroussi had toured and recorded extensively, starting in the 1980s, including his involvement in projects that had brought his ensemble to Europe for live performances and a commercial recording released

56 A smaller indigenous cousin to the genbri of the gnawa.
57 A particularly small three-stringed relative to the genbri and halhouj.
through the Paris-based Buda Musique label, distributed through the international corporate conglomerate Polygram.\textsuperscript{58}

Later on, beginning in the early 2000s, Laroussi had commercially released through the Moroccan Fezmatic distribution label a number of CDs and VCDs, also under his own name but performed in a decidedly more modern Sha‘bi style, while also touring nationally with different groups of musicians who performed this Sha‘bi version of the music. The urban orientation of the more modernized perception of Sha‘bi as a performance genre in comparison to its overlapping progenitor of jabaliyya was indicated in part through the adoption of Western-style clothing when the ensemble performed publicly (i.e., button-down shirts along with suits and ties, and bare heads), as opposed to the traditional Moroccan jalabiyya and covered heads featured in promotional photographs of the earlier jabaliyya version of the ensemble.

Much of the musical material of these groups’ performances in the incarnation of a Sha‘bi orchestra included the same songs that had been performed by the jibali band under Laroussi’s leadership, a primary auditory difference being the switch to electronically-based instruments, including amplified kamenj and keyboard synthesizer, along with Western-style drumkit. One example of this sort of re-arrangement occurred with the song “‘Ain Zora” (“Eye of Zora”), which Laroussi performed live in both acoustic jibaliyya and electrified Sha‘bi ensembles, and recordings of both of which appeared on separate commercial releases with different ensembles and in the different styles.\textsuperscript{59} In another deviation from one style to the other, (and perhaps as a move in the direction of the highly vocal-oriented popular music of the mass-market), Sha'bi versions of the ensemble seemed to omit from their regularly-performed


\textsuperscript{59} Another noticeable difference between the different genre versions -- besides the instrumentation -- was the much faster tempo of the sha'bi recording. Lyrically, a significant addition was the chanted version of the shahadah -- or
repertoire the traditional jabiliyya instrumental number of “El Raila,” which historically had been an introductory part of the performance of the more customary jabiliyya.\textsuperscript{60}

These kinds of renovations to still-appreciated musical styles were part of the ongoing appropriation of various rural, localized and ethnically-specific genres out of which Sha’bi developed. Other specific genres that came to be borrowed from and, indeed, even overlap with Sha’bi as a musical genre included versions of the ‘aita, of which jabaliyya has also been considered as one example. This larger category included also sub-generic examples from the Atlantic plains (see Ciucci 2008 for extensive formal analysis and social history of this area for the genre), in addition to the Middle Atlas musical genres of izlan and tamediazt, developing out of Berber traditional musics and typically employing only one melodic instrument such as the lotar along with a single handdrum as instrumental accompaniment for a single vocalist, or occasionally one primary singer with a second vocalist as respondent (for references to these genres, see Aydoun 1992:116-118).\textsuperscript{61} Such musical developments of newer genres, associated under a meta-genre label of “Sha’bi” and based on older forms occurring through appropriation or evolution, occurred over many generations in urban locales particularly, and as examples of these different, earlier, and more regionally distinct musical practices achieved greater familiarity among listeners and musical performers via those genres’ wider distribution through mass media.

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\textsuperscript{60} This was demonstrated in multiple live performances in 2005-06, as well as from multiple commercial releases by versions of Laroussi’s sha’bi ensemble. The Buda Musique recording of Laroussi’s jabiliyya ensemble contains a recorded version of a live performance that featured the piece at the outset of the disc. For a brief description of the “raila” and its place in jabiliyya music, see Aydoun 1992.

\textsuperscript{61} One highly cosmopolitan Moroccan informant originally from Tangiers, when discussing modern performers of these musics such as Muhammed Rouicha, referred to examples of these genres somewhat derisively in English as “hillbilly music.”
In some ways one could say the integration of these different styles in a wider and yet more and more common repertoire of elements developed organically with an eye or an ear toward market concerns. They also occurred through the implementation of governmental policy-defined national broadcast on radio and television, which helped spread on a countrywide basis the knowledge and appreciation of more localized genres. Some time towards the middle of the last century, Sha‘bi, however much it also continued to serve as a catchall category, a sprawling genre subsuming many other genres, began to take on an identity as a discrete genre itself in many ways through some of the recognized formal characteristics of the genre described next.

**Instrumentation of Sha‘bi**

Instrumentally, a typical Sha‘bi band of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries was centered around a kamenj or kamenjah (i.e., the Western-style violin) as primary melodic instrument, which often alternated in performing the melody or doubled it heterophonically along with a lead vocalist, or with a series of several vocalists in different songs, or less often, one vocalist alternating with another in the same song. Quite often, but not exclusively, the lead vocalist himself also played the kamenj. In the early years of the twenty-first century, the violin and voice in Sha‘bi bands in both live and recorded incarnations were usually augmented by an electronic keyboard synthesizer (“al-org” in darija), which also tended to play a heterophonic version of the lead vocal melody, while occasionally taking solo turns of its own, and even more occasionally providing a sort of figured bass or rudimentary harmonic fills. The digitally-based sounds that keyboard players chose to trigger from their synthesizers varied
widely from those sampled or synthesized creations meant to evoke “real” versions of traditional Arab instruments (such as the plucked string zither qanun, or the double-reed ghaita, common in North Africa) to more Western-sounding organ and string sounds, as well as extending at times to more abstracted or less identifiable sounds proclaiming themselves more clearly to have been synthesized.

The enlarged orchestra of Sha’bi bands in more recent decades -- multiple hand drums played simultaneously with a Western-style drumkit and electronic keyboard, sometimes still featuring an ‘ud as a lead or accompaniment instrument, and on occasion, an electric guitar – was further enhanced by the use of electronic amplification and electronically produced audio effects (e.g., artificial reverberation, and notably, on the kamenj, a wah-wah pedal). For recorded vocals, the pitch-correcting software of Auto-Tune was frequently used to achieve a warbly or vocoder effect on the voice of many singers of Sha’bi beginning in the early 2000s, following its prominent appearance on a number of popular music recordings from Europe and the U.S., starting with Cher’s “Do You Believe,” and preceding the later prevalent use of the software to create marked vocal effects in hiphop recordings.

Among the hand-percussion instruments carried forward from earlier rural and folk traditions of musical practice in Morocco into regular use in contemporary Sha’bi performances were the tar, a small tambourine-like hand drum with inset metal cymbals; the large frame-drum of the bendir, which had a buzzing rattle attached; and/or the medium-sized but quite heavy

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62 Female singers themselves were a rare enough phenomenon to begin with, but they were even more rare as instrumentalists: out of the dozens of sha’bi bands I saw or heard perform in the years of my research, only one -- headed by Zeena Daoudia -- had a female singer who also occasionally played the kamenj.

63 One manufacturer of keyboard synthesizers that was very popular with sha’bi musicians during the period of my fieldwork was Gem, which was notable both for being inexpensive, but also for its well-developed banks of Arabic instrument sounds and ability to generate the three-quarter tone intervals frequently used in Arabic music. More deluxe Roland synthesizers were also highly prized, but much more expensive, and thus less frequently used in working bands.
goblet-shaped clay and animal skin-covered (later plastic) *darbuka*. In some performances, the rhythm sequencer function of most keyboard synthesizers (known as *al-boite*, a combination of Arabic and French terms together meaning “the box”) was used to produce a rhythm track, either by itself, or in conjunction with one or several of the more customary hand drums.

Rhythm was a key component of Sha'bi performances, which were generally understood to be promoting not only a festive social atmosphere and relaxed mental state for individuals, but a physically stimulating experience oriented toward dance. Judging by recordings from the first half of the century, the average tempo of a popular song had increased markedly by the end of the century. A combination of asymmetrical rhythmic accents in chosen meters, and the frequent use of compound meter or three-against-four polyrhythms (an aspect often emphasized by listeners who would spontaneously clap along in cross-time to the performers’ percussion in live performances particularly), added to the compelling aspect of rhythm in many Sha'bi songs. The scope and scale of the performing ensemble would obviously effect some degree of difference in the effectiveness of such attempts at enlivening sensations through rhythm.

Though electronically-enhanced amplification could sometimes make up some audio amplitude more generally and of some lack of rhythmic momentum for Sha'bi groups that were more circumscribed in size, the lack of complexity or impact in having, say, a single percussionist of perhaps only mediocre ability accompanying a singer wasn’t always improved upon with the brute force of a sound system turned up to extremely high volumes. Nonetheless, the size of performing ensembles varied widely: a small urban club or bar performance by a Sha'bi “orchestre” might comprise only two or three musicians, whereas larger venues and special occasions (notably wedding and Ramadan celebrations, not to mention television
appearances by a group) would usually feature six or more musicians to offer a denser musical texture and the sense of a richer, more lively atmosphere. For Rai, a separate genre, nonetheless frequently associated with Sha’bi, this set-up devolved to just a singer and a single keyboardist (or more rarely, two keyboardists), the latter of whom would initiate pre-sequenced rhythm tracks along with performing the more melodic and harmonic choices on the keyboard they used to accompany singers of Rai.\(^{65}\)

*Other Musical Characteristics of Sha’bi*

Though widely ranging in formal characteristics musically, many performances of Sha’bi shared some common tendencies over the greater part of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. After an often unvocalized, unmetered introductory section (along the lines of the mode- and atmosphere-setting instrumental introduction or improvisatory *taqsim* of Arabic music), the main sections of a Sha’bi song began with attention centered around a single vocal part with primarily syllabic delivery while the pitched musical instruments played, heterophonically, versions of the main melody, along with sometimes adding *lahzimat* -- brief instrumental extensions of phrases finishing off the melodic line begun by the voice. The vocal timbre of most Sha’bi singers was often nasal and tense, deliberately strained sounding, and with only a slight amount of nonetheless forceful vibrato. The melodic ambitus of most Sha’bi songs was usually quite narrow, often extending no farther than an interval of a fourth, perhaps encouraging listener participation and/or easy recollection of a tune for audience members.

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\(^{64}\) This phenomenon was remarkably similar to the performance of “*las palmas*” (“the palms”), or clapping by both performers and audience members more extemporaneously in flamenco performances across the Mediterranean in Spain.

\(^{65}\) A brief history of Rai in Moroccan popular music performance can be found in the next chapter.
Many Sha‘bi songs featured a series of calls and responses between the single primary vocalist (who in at least 95% of the cases was male during the period of my fieldwork) and a backing chorus. This last was usually provided by the other male musicians of the performing ensemble; in some instances, however, either a portion of the lines of a song’s sung text would be repeated, or the ululating cries known as zigarat or “yu-yus” were provided by a small group of females, usually some also hired as professional dancers by Sha‘bi ensembles for live performances. This antiphonal organization of vocal parts embodied a style that was particularly Moroccan, absorbed, it would seem, from Berber music of the Atlas Mountains, rather than from the more easterly Arabic influences of Egypt, the Levant or the Gulf; or from European colonizers or the Western impact of more later-day globalizing influences. Occasionally, Sha‘bi songs were structured as a sort of alternating duet between two lead vocalists, often with a second voice contrasting with that of a primary vocalist by adopting a higher register: “comme une femme” (“like a woman”), as a Sha‘bi musician remarked to me one time of his own performance, after his colleague had boasted that the first musician was one of only two male singers in Fez who could consistently perform in these higher registers.

The length of Sha‘bi songs could be fairly short: sometimes just a few minutes long, as had become a standard both in many folk songs and also much commercially-produced popular music around the world in modern times. However, more typically, Sha‘bi song durations were significantly longer, frequently ranging from five to six minutes to more than ten. These greater durations seem to have stemmed from two basic templates: for one, the extended lengths of al-Āla nawbat and of narrative Melhûn qasaid, which latter usually extended between ten and fifteen minutes, and for the former over two hours to complete a full cycle. A second template seemed to have been the longer time frames of both Sufi ritual and folk genres, where sufficient
duration was a necessary attribute to allow for the feeling of physical and psychological
exaltation and catharsis that can arrive from sustained bodily movements (i.e. dance) over time.
Additionally, song lengths of Sha’bi tunes frequently differed between live and recorded
versions of the same pieces: when the latter such versions existed, they often curtailed the
medleys and stretched-out single-song durations of live performances.

Melodic modal developments, or at least modal shifts, though fewer and with more abrupt
changes from mode to mode than occurred in a comparative length Arabic qasida, mawal,\textsuperscript{66} or
samat,\textsuperscript{67} were also typically present in Sha'bi songs, though the relative paucity of often-used
modes in Moroccan music was commented on to me by more than one Moroccan musician,
sometimes defensively. Such was the case when one Sha’bi drummer in Fez, a member of the
Orchestre Farhan, or “Happiness Orchestra, proclaimed to me in conversation that what
Moroccan music lacked in modal variety, it made up for in the prolific number of rhythmic
patterns frequently employed. As part of the modal “strategy” of Sha’bi songs, usually after
several sung verses and at least one modal shift, a fragmentation of a main modal motif or motifs
performed instrumentally on the kamenj signaled a sort of climactic section in the song, akin to
one prototypical aspect that occurs in the development stage of the Western-style sonata form.
Similarly, the sense of urgency in such sections was usually also heightened with an accelerating
tempo (and to some degree, crescendi). This acceleration of tempo and eventual peak in dynamic
level sometimes occurred multiple times in the course of a single song, and these were
techniques that Sha’bi practice also generally held in common with, and likely borrowed from,
practices of the Moroccan Melhûn and al-Äìa.

\textsuperscript{66} Mawal is a long-standing improvisatory vocal form in pan-Arab practice.
\textsuperscript{67} Samai is a multi-part instrumental form dating back to nineteenth century in Eastern portions of the Ottoman Empire.
These shifts in tempo often simultaneously accompanied the shifts in the modal basis for melodic instruments, and the anticipation of these by audience members was abundantly demonstrated when dancers to live music would instantly intensify their physical gestures at the moment of modulation, often without seeming to miss a single beat. The expectation and understanding of these signals within the musical “code” implied how learned such corporeal responses by listeners were, no matter how spontaneous such effervescence in contexts of Sha'bi performance seemed to be. The highly interactive feedback loops of performed live music, which both instigated and responded to sought-after altered consciousness among listeners, held many parallels to the even more directed and culturally-established performances of Sufi rituals, which also involved music, and led to changes in states of both physiological and psychic states. The most extreme of these were referred to by both its Moroccan subjects and their outside observers as “trance” (“hal,” in Arabic), or “possession” (“sakan”).  

\[\text{Places of Sha'bi}\]

In writing about the incidence of trance among listeners to the Sha'bi-related musical genre of ‘Aita, Ciucci has suggested: “A performance of the shikhat [the female performers who have historically been most associated with the ‘aita] can be described as a crescendo in both musical and non-musical terms” (2008: 91). In approaching Sha'bi with a parallel musical term that also signifies non-musical phenomena, I would offer that the consciousness-shifting or excitement-inducing effects of popular musical performance practices more generally in modern Morocco were as much the accelerating tempi of most Sha’bi songs, which occurred so often in examples of other song forms across many genres of Moroccan popular music as well, and which

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incited quickening effects in individual physiology and psychology as well as in group social dynamics.

Such accelerations did not occur in isolation either, but functioned simultaneously with the more and more overlapping antiphonal call and response patterns of multiple singers performing short repeated chant-like melodic turns of voice, approaching a hocket-like alternation at certain peaks, in addition to highly abbreviated melodic and rhythmic figures from the kemanja or keyboard, which together contributed to a common trance-inducing atmosphere in popular musical performance. Again, such atmosphere, and many of the gestures performed by audience entered in it, resembled what could frequently be found in many Moroccan popular Sufi ceremonies as well.

These states of altered consciousness and social ebullience in Sha‘bi went beyond the conditions of active pleasure sought in the more intermediate pleasant sensation of conviviality and effervescence described by the term nashat, a state that also occurs and is also sought-after within Moroccan social gatherings animated in part by music (Kapchan 2003). The conditions supporting more extreme states of ebullience and individual uninhibitedness have been part of a continuing larger context for cultural expression in Morocco from pre-colonial times, which has been perpetuated, and in some ways expanded or diversified, in contexts of recent performance and reception of Sha‘bi music. The time constraints caused by the physical limitations of the modern media of phonograph recordings (and to a more irregular extent by radio and television conventions in twentieth century practices), did not entirely dispel practices that promoted the extended sensory experiences that helped to generate the trance-like conditions in audiences for Sha‘bi sometimes so similar to Sufi ceremonial practices. In addition to tending toward frequently stretched-out song lengths in comparison to recordings in their shorter form, live
performances of Sha‘bi, especially in weddings and other festive occasions where dancing was sought or expected, quite often also transitioned without interruption through multiple individual songs to create a continuous stream of sound stimulation. Newer technologies that replaced the older medium of phonograph recordings (i.e., cassette tapes, compact disc and video recordings) also allowed lengthier uninterrupted sound performances in recorded media, and helped support the continued cultural possibility of accessing this altered states for some listeners. Employment by Sha‘bi groups of professional female dancers in some settings not only added to an overall festive atmosphere on those occasions where they appeared, but also physically encouraged embodied effervescent behavior by audience members through the professional dancers’ modeling it and explicitly encouraging imitations of it themselves.69

Musicians and audiences performed and experienced Sha‘bi to its fullest individual and social effects in multiple milieus, but these remained nonetheless highly circumscribed. While recorded Sha‘bi tunes might play out of places of business such as a shop or taxi during working hours (though not so much in restaurants and higher-class stores in urban centers), outside the confines of club, bar, or party it was rare for individual demeanor or social behaviors to shift radically to the uninhibited atmosphere induced by a live performance of Sha‘bi. Due in part to a general lack of portable sound playing devices owned by individuals during this period, but also to general social injunctions against loud demonstrations in shared spaces, urban streets and parks, as well as public transportation in the form of city buses or intercity trains, these all very seldom reverberated with the local broadcast of Sha‘bi music. Only once, on an intercity bus between Chefchaouen and Tetuoan in the North of Morocco, did I notice a teenager carrying a

69 Industrially-produced splitscreen and cross-dissolve video effects on commercial releases of video recordings of sha‘bi suggested a move to extend the range of techniques to imply or trigger states of altered consciousness similar to those effects sought through sound production.
large portable cassette player who shared publicly with those strangers sitting around him his preference for listening to Sha’bi.

Nor did youths or individuals of any age generally “hang out” playing music of any kind on the street or other locales outdoors, outside officially sanctioned sites for festival performances or long-standing customary sites such as those of the halqa. Of the dozen or so moments of more spontaneous or ephemeral musical street performance I have observed in Moroccan cities over the years, none could qualify as Sha'bi music in the most focused, particular sense of the genre term. This suggests that Sha’bi remained very much constrained in its physical and social settings, however much its energy offered the possibility of spilling over usual boundaries of individual and social comportment.

Given the commonly understood, primary functionality of Sha'bi for purposes of entertainment and transformative individual and social states of being, it is no surprise that the vast majority of locations where Sha’bi was publicly performed and consumed during the early 2000s were spaces dedicated to ludic pursuits, or sites that were turned over to life-cycle celebrations and other festive events. The most uninhibited aspects of this tendency in contexts of live Sha’bi performance had generated a complex reputation/status for Sha’bi as a genre in public discourse and understanding in Morocco. Though it was popular among people of many age groups and socio-economic classes, Sha’bi was frequently performed live in contexts that were considered less than wholesome for the general public: i.e., in bars, where despite legal prohibitions against it, alcohol was nonetheless served to Muslims, and where there was a higher degree and different kind of interaction between men and women than was customary in other public settings. With on average only one female for every twenty individuals present at venues given over to Sha’bi performances, the presence of women in these venues was much rarer than
in other quotidian settings such as streets, markets, bus stops, or parks. And that presence was usually tacitly licensed a much greater latitude in socio-sexual behavior. Often, though not exclusively, the participation of women in such sites was read as at least a prelude to prostitution.

The somewhat unsavory associations of Sha‘bi in Moroccan society generally didn’t prevent it from being widely appreciated as acceptable “party” music in less controversial settings as well: at wedding celebrations, for example, where versions of Sha‘bi have long been a staple performance genre, though somewhat diluted in range and intensity than might occur in other settings, and interwoven within a range of musical styles provoking less transgression of social norms. Though there was also a higher degree of intermixing between men and women at wedding celebrations, including a great deal of dancing in the fundamentally festive coming together that was the ideal of wedding parties in urban Morocco, much of the time the dancers at these events stayed relatively segregated by gender. This separation by gender was true of the attendees more generally, where the norm was for each gender to sit apart from one another in one of the several large alcove spaces that were a standard feature both in larger, older private dwellings in the medina, as well as in the more recently built-to-order architecture of the Salles de Fetes (or reception halls) where most wedding celebrations took place. In Fez, many of these latter were located at the outskirts of the Ville Nouvelle or “New City,” a small, relatively new, commercially-specialized sector of town. Unlike the previously mentioned nightlife contexts for Sha‘bi, in wedding celebrations the consumption of alcohol was not usually part of the officially organized event and was often vocally disapproved of when prior signs of its use among guests were noted by other attendees.

During the nighttime celebrations of Ramadan in urban Morocco during this period, Sha‘bi was probably the most common entertainment at the many events specially scheduled at
multiple venues, such as music halls, cafes, hotel discos, and converted gymnasiums. These were specially rented/set up for live performances during the evening celebrations of that month-long period of daytime fasting: one of the five tenets of proper Islamic behavior, and one which is taken seriously -- even if, for some percentage, only for public display - in a country that has been, since the 1960s, 99% Muslim.

Sha‘bi could also be heard in contexts somewhere in-between the two kinds of performance venue mentioned above: i.e., the rough-and-tumble of illicit bars versus the more wholesome settings of lifecycle celebrations and general holidays (i.e., weddings, circumcisions, and Ramadan). For instance, in Sidi Harazem, in the hills some fifteen kilometers east by northeast of Fez, surrounding the purported burial site of an ancient holy individual by the same name, and where natural springs around that site were said to produce waters blessed by the baraka (“blessing” or “power” from God) of the saint, there were a number of cafes set up in a growing resort catering to mostly working-class day-trippers, who came to collect the holy water for their own benefit,70 to swim and picnic, and to generally relax and get away from the cares of daily life in the city.

In these cafes, performances occurred in the daylight, avoiding many of the most salient characteristics of settings for more transgressive public performance of Sha‘bi: that is to say, nighttime, behind closed doors and with the presence of alcohol. Nonetheless, many of the same tendencies for the loosening of individual inhibitions and social proscriptions were demonstrated, including mingling across gender lines (including among strangers), dancing that blatantly displayed physical attributes of the body normally kept hidden, and a generally “freer” atmosphere. They were not venues, however, where “anything goes”.

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70 Bottled versions under a Sidi Harazem brand name were also sold commercially on a national basis.
Unlike the strong-arm tactics I witnessed bouncers resorting to in order to evict patrons nightly from the live Sha’bi performances at the Brasserie Empire in the Ville Nouvelle, during the ten or so occasions I attended performances at the cafes in Sidi Harazem I observed only a single customer who was ejected for intruding too insistently in someone else’s space (this was attributed by other patrons to the fact that he had been drinking alcohol, which, again, was not served in these daytime cafes). Though the interactions between members of different genders at the Sidi Harazem cafes could also supersede the usual boundaries for daily social behavior elsewhere in Fez, and men and women would meet as strangers even while reveling in extremes of public demonstrations of physicality and sexuality, the handful of young women who attended, took off articles of their outer clothing, and often danced in these contexts, were not the same kind of professional or semi-professional habituées as were the prostitutes or bar girls in the nighttime venues of bars and clubs where alcohol was served along with the musical performance of Sha’bi.

Song Lyrics and Social Context of Sha’bi

Sha’bi in urban Morocco was the music of choice for parties, especially during Ramadan and at weddings. These latter tended to run all afternoon or all night, and in the course of these extended settings, familiar, customary songs particular to weddings (e.g., “Larousse Oulaaroussa” -- “The Groom or the Bride”) were alternated with more general, well-known “hits” of Sha’bi, including songs made famous by more recent stars of Sha’bi such as Stati, Asri, Daoudi, Sinhaji, and either of the Laroussi Brothers. These musicians themselves often became famous initially by starting out in the wedding circuit, commanding larger and larger fees and

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71 The presence of an outdoor swimming pool attached to one of the larger of these cafes made for an unusual degree of self-conscious bodily display unlike anywhere else I have seen in urban Morocco, in the context of dancing
becoming known beyond the merely local arena of any single city as they generated reputations for particularly lively and feelingful performances. The leaders of these groups were almost invariably the primary singers and kemanjah players. Recordings of these performers circulated widely, and could be frequently heard emanating from homes, shops, and cars during the course of ordinary daily life.

Song texts for Sha‘bi have been sung almost exclusively in *darija*, the Moroccan dialect of Arabic, with very occasional lapses into French. For instance, the song "*Avec Moi*" by the group, *Noujoum Sha‘bi* ("Stars of Sha‘bi"), in which only the title was in French, while the lyrics were in darija, or the mixed language of Said Rami’s “*Gouli Je T’Aime*” (“Tell Me ‘I Love You’”). Though it is worth stating that darija itself was already replete with obvious as well as less explicit loan words from French and Spanish, as in Cheikh Younsi’s older Sha‘bi from the 1960s, “*Passeport Lkhdar*” (“Passport of the Traveler”). The themes of song lyrics in Sha‘bi have ranged widely over the decades of the last century or so, including both spiritual and profane realms, touching on sentimental concerns (e.g., Sami El-Magrebi’s “*Omri Ma Nenshak Ya Mama*” [“Oh Mother, My Life, I Don’t Forget You,”] from the 1950s), as well as sporadically focusing on social concerns. Such larger issues have included multiple issues of social change (e.g., Raymonde’s 1950s’ recording “Telephone,” as well as Mwizo’s 1970s’ recording “*Tanjiyya,*”72 and Hussein Slaoui’s 1940s’ “*Dahlou L’Merikane*” [“The Coming of the Americans”], the last two of which I will pay some attention in the penultimate chapter of the dissertation), and political and economic disempowerment, in addition to reflections of more immediate relations across gender difference in narratives of smaller, interpersonal scope, these latter often risqué in tone or content (one example hearkening back is El-Magrebi’s earlier

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72 The title is the name of a traditional Moroccan food dish.
“Kaftanek Mahoul” (“Your Open Caftan”), or suggesting social limits and/or transgression in their texts.

A sort of populist celebration of the spiritual aspects of shared social life has also been highly notable through the recurrent references to Sufi saints and spirits in Sha‘bi: a kind of intracultural intertextuality. This occurs as well in many other genres of Moroccan music that are not strictly or directly oriented toward devotional practices. In a section titled “Religious inspiration of the Popular Music” as part of his larger survey of Moroccan music from the first half of the twentieth century, Chottin went so far as to assert that: “A common character of the popular songs is their religious inspiration, that seems to fill all Moroccan life, animate all its acts, even the most insignificant in appearance” (1939:171).

Some of this religio-spiritual interest in popular song has been expressed in references to God directly (“Allah”, “Rebbi”, or “Moalna” – “Our Master”); as well as to Muhammed (“al-Nabi” – “the Prophet”; or “Rasullah” – that is, “Messenger of God”), the orthodox, final prophet of Islam; along with some of the historically earlier prophets recognized by Muslims (e.g., Moses and Jesus). But much of the “common character” of that “religious inspiration” indicated by Chottin has been channeled through the intertextually borrowed value of more casual references in Moroccan popular music, including Sha‘bi, to some of the larger and better-known of the socio-religious brotherhoods such as ‘Aïssowa, Gnawa, Hamadsha, and Jilala. These latter are groups that have coalesced in Morocco during centuries past, promoting a general cultural awareness and influence in Morocco by their activities and tenets, if far from universal individual participation in them. The rituals and ceremonies of these brotherhoods were understood as “turuq” (Ar. singular, “tariqa”) or likely “paths” in pursuit of proximity to baraka, and as attempted antidote to any number of personal afflictions, physical or psychological (see
This underlying cultural basis of spiritual concern in so many of the texts of Sha'bi might appear to contrast with many of the more corporeal pursuits associated with sites of active Sha'bi production and consumption – pursuits which on the surface seemed decidedly unspiritual in their indulgence. Nonetheless, a degree of overlap across the different sets of practices was evident in some of the physical stimulations and gestures of listeners/respondents in both realms. This meant for the non-secular ceremonies of Sufi brotherhoods the highly saturated sensory environment created through repetitive chanting and musical sound, as well as the frequent extremes in physical engagement (i.e., movements of unusual bodily extension and extended duration – to the point of collapse -- trance and trance-like states, along with occasional self-mutilation). Within the ostensibly secular rituals of listening to Sha‘bi, there was also, as in Sufi ceremonies, the auditorily highly stimulating environment, in addition to the particularly uninhibited physical movements of dancing and other bodily displays that were a typical response to live renditions of Sha‘bi. Some of the highly specific gestures performed by participants in Sufi gatherings which indicated bodily/psychical inhabitation of individuals by extra-bodily spirits were also observable as part of a common repertoire of movement in dancing to Sha‘bi. Any strict separation between notions of the secular and non-secular, despite the adherence to such distinctions by at least some native Moroccan cultural practitioners, were thus difficult to maintain in the face of some of the clear intertextual drift between these different cultural forms of expression.

73 By secular rituals, that is, I mean without the expressed goal of communing with God or supernatural entities, but performed in certain times and certain places, and with certain conventions of its own contexts that included some which transgressed social norms in other contexts.
Though many of the venues where Sha’bi musicians performed were spaces that allowed or encouraged behaviors that were illicit or licentious in nature, the musicians themselves, for the most part, didn’t indulge obviously in the majority of such excesses publicly. Most noticeably, the consumption of alcohol, which was served as a staple to customers at a handful of bars and hotel discos in Fez, was something that the vast majority of musicians I observed partook little of, or not at all. Lest it seem that this was simply a pragmatic decision on the part of musicians, due to cost or injunction by the management of the venue, critical comments regarding alcohol by several of those musicians who played at these venues made it clear to me that there was a moral line drawn conceptually between performing in such establishments and actively participating in the consumption of alcohol. On one occasion, Kamal B. explicitly told me that he avoided not only alcohol, but for the most part, playing in venues where it was served. Having spent time with him in more than one bar where both Sha’bi and alcohol were equally featured, I developed an impression over a long period of time that in such circumstances he was highly attentive to the band as an audience member, but also highly disdainful of the context generally, something borne out in his unusually sour expression and stiff, uncomfortable demeanor.

At one of the first weddings I attended, when I commented to Kamal on how lively the atmosphere seemed, he shook his head and snorted contemptuously in judgment of the context, proclaiming not only that it was a “mal” (i.e., “bad”) wedding, but a bad family. When I asked why, he mentioned how one of the siblings of the bride had shown up drunk, and it was obvious that this was no small infraction of his own code of conduct. In all the many hours and days I spent in his company and that of the rest of his band, I did not observe a single one of the many musicians partake of, or even mention consuming alcohol themselves, though Kamal did indulge frequently in smoking fruit-scented tobacco in the water-pipe or shi-sha commonly part of a
number of cafes in Fez, as well as struggle noticeably with a habit of snorting *talaftiyya*, also known as *tahba*, which he and others in Morocco referred to as “Moroccan cocaine.” This was a light brownish powder concocted (apparently) from herbal sources, with a taste that was at once sweet and acrid, and that provided a potent jolting sensation when inhaled. It also caused teary eyes, runny nose and a pasty residue in the sinuses as less pleasant side-effects. The positive stimulating effects provided a very strong but very short-term buzz, and it was easy to understand how musicians might become somewhat addicted to it, working in contexts like wedding parties, cafes and bars, since they were required to exert themselves energetically many times over the course of an afternoon, evening, or sometimes literally all night.

One telling marker of the cultural context occupied by Sha‘bi musicians was that of clothing, as pointed to at the beginning of this chapter: where most performers in more highly esteemed, classically-oriented genres such as al-Āla or Melhûn would dress in traditional Moroccan *jalabiyya* (ankle-length gowns covering the body completely), every Sha‘bi musician I met or observed wore Western-style clothing – pants, boots, button-down shirts and/or sweaters – both onstage or off. Older, more successful Sha‘bi musicians tended toward full, sometimes three-piece Western-style suits with ties and highly polished Western-style shoes (as opposed to the *babouches*, or Moroccan style slippers frequently worn by musicians of more long-standing genres) and generally went bare-headed, as opposed to the customary fezes worn by musicians of genres marked as “*taqlidi*” or “traditional”. Adil, the younger, non-Sha‘bi musician who appreciated a wide variety of other popular musics and who himself wore more casual Western-style clothes, criticized the use of ties as a particularly specious costuming pretension on the part of Sha‘bi musicians.

74 The one exception I observed to this modern, Western-style sartorial tendency was Naima, an older female singer who occasionally performed with Kamal, who always wore a more traditional kaftan.
Onstage, Moroccan Sha‘bi musicians were almost without exception especially undemonstrative in bodily posture and overall affect during performances. Besides any emotional content in the lyrics of the texts they sang, and occasional exhortations through hoarse vocable cries to listeners to suggest the potentially enlivened spirit they were trying to impart through the musical performance, lead singers would usually stand quite still as they sang, without noticeable expressions of emotion in their facial features. Sha‘bi instrumentalists almost invariably remained seated to play their instruments, save the occasional kemenja player who would put a foot up on a chair while resting their instrument vertically on the top part of their upper leg while they continued to play. There were none of the expressive gestures of many Western popular or classical instrumentalists.

During this period, I did witness on a handful of occasions vocalists who would leave the stage with their microphone to pass among the audience, sometimes while still singing. This was an activity that allowed them a greater possibility of receiving the occasional “offerings” of gharamat, a parallel with the reception of “baraka” in monetary form by Gnawa in both healing ceremonies and more casual musical encounters with audiences. On rare, especially animated occasions at bars in Fez, Marrakech, and Tangier, singers would move into the audience in this way too, acting more as masters of ceremonies, permitting audience members to sing a stanza, one line, or even a single word of whichever song was already underway. Like the leaders of Sufi ceremonies, Sha‘bi singers did not enter trance or act wildly uninhibited in other ways themselves. Rather, they acted as mediators of a kind of exchange, serving as liaisons with a non-mundane world of pleasure as well as of the possible therapy provided by the music’s function as entertainment. These lines of communication produced by and presided over by the Sha‘bi

75 “Hai! Hai! Hai!” was a frequent vocable recurrence among sha‘bi singers I heard in the years 2005-2007, as were unusually hoarse, forced sounds of laughter – and of dogs barking – along with shouts of “Waha” (darij for “OK”).
musicians were channels for a set of different systems of exchange: culturally symbolic, with those song texts referencing specific spiritual figures (a topic I address in later chapters), but also the sound stimulation itself promoting a crossing over to different states of consciousness and different social relations than usually transpired in daily life.

_Porousness of the Stage in Sha'bi Performed Live_

One defining characteristic for much live, performed Sha'bi was a degree of casual atmosphere in listeners’ relationship to the performers. This is not to suggest a free-form, open environment with no separation between musicians and audience. For much of even the most loosely-organized performances, the divide between audience and performers was clear: the one facing the other, and the effort to produce music almost without exception uninterrupted by interactions between the two groups. But the “stage” for Sha’bi performers was not always a sacrosanct place. “_La securité_” (bouncers enforcing the limits of the stage, even for well-known performers) was generally a minimal undertaking. In-between sets at one Ramadan concert by Lahcen Laroussi, the twelve-year old stage assistant of the production company who rented the chairs and sound system setup for the show “sat in” on the drumkit, playing rudimentary patterns to accompany an impromptu session of singing by one audience member (who appeared affiliated in some way to the organizers of the show, but was clearly not part of the official program of events). The lack of clearly circumscribing limits for performers vs. audience and formally–defined programs within live Sha‘bi performance was notable on other occasions: in more than one venue, a kind of publicly-staged amateur talent show took place between sets by the featured performing ensemble, in which individuals from the audience took turns at the microphone singing _a capella_, or with rudimentary accompaniment of a performing ensemble’s usual keyboard player (or, again, the young stagehand’s drumming, as mentioned above).
Besides more planned guest singers (often younger musicians seeking experience), who were occasionally invited to join the official band for the performance of sometimes just a single song, there was the porousness between stage and non-stage activities embodied in the sort of live karaoke performed when singers offered, or yielded, their microphone to zealous audience members who wished to participate by singing themselves while the band’s instrumentalists continued to play. The approach of audience members to the stage was not just tolerated, but even anticipated and sought after for the purpose of receiving the sporadic cash offerings of gharamat from audience members. These sorts of interactions were escalated with the increased accessibility of singers who left the confines of any designated stage area for musicians to join the audience. Frequently building human bridges across any gaps between performers and audiences, hired professional female dancers most often moved among the audience itself rather than onstage, both dancing and attempting to engage listeners to move themselves, and to offer gharamat.

I was struck by another incident at one of the first live performances of Sha‘bi I attended that illustrated an unusual degree of openness compared to the more formal attitudes of other musical genres’ performance in Morocco and elsewhere: an interruption in what I had already become accustomed to in the usual vocal call and response pattern in some songs between two singers (in this case, Kamal B. and Muhammed, also the group’s kemanja player) when Muhammed, the lead singer, received a call on his mobile phone in the middle of the song. Halting both his singing and violin playing, and taking up his bow in the same hand as his violin while he put his phone to his ear and began a conversation, Muhammed signaled Tariq, the young keyboard player, to take over the melody while he answered the call, still seated center stage. After listening to the phone a little further, he then left the stage for a period, while the rest
of the band continued on with their performance of the song. He came back two or three minutes later to resume his participation in performing the rest of the musical set.

This was not the only time I had witnessed the ease with which “real-life” events intruded in to the tenuously framed contexts of live musical performance in Sha'bi. During Ramadan, in 2005, at the large upstairs ballroom in the Empire complex on one of the Ville Nouvelle’s main avenues (the Boulevard Hassan Al-Thani), the well-known performer Lahcen Laroussi had also taken a call on his cellphone while on stage. In this case, rather than leave the stage, Laroussi simply stopped his own playing to cover one ear with his hand to try and muffle somewhat the (extremely loud) musical performance of the remainder of his band, who continued with their playing around him while he engaged in a series of responses to the voice he was listening to on the other end.

Such sessions of Sha'bi performance during Ramadan were particularly liable to a different kind of condoned, more ritualized porousness, one which supported the livelihood of a small number of professional photographers who haunted such events with cameras around their necks, offering for a fee to photograph audience members wishing to have a souvenir featuring themselves at the performance. There were two levels of technical possibility in terms of such photographic commemoration: an instant Polaroid or a higher-quality but delayed-delivery single-lens-reflex shot, which the photographer would have to hurry out to get developed at a nearby lab when a roll of film was finished, sometimes only returning prints to habituéés on later days. But of more interest here was the typical pose primarily engaged in by those who contracted for the photographs: moving on to the stage area to stand next to the star performer of the moment, even while the music continued. The ease with which these temporary visits by audience members were received (and even welcomed) by musicians was shown in the ready
smiles they offered, their faces compliantly turned toward the camera, while continuing to play the kemanjah or even to sing. Obviously highly motivated to engage in this extra layer of mediation to the live production and reception of music, these performers on both sides of the audience/musician divide were able to mark their physical co-presence and validate their cultural activities in this way.

This marked self-memorializing and other more direct interactions between audiences and musicians in the performance places of Sha’bi were some distinctions among many which Sha’bi held from other genres of musical practice in Morocco. Other differences that have already been noted include the shifting basis of personnel among many of the performance ensembles of Sha’bi, in addition to the more ambiguous social status of Sha’bi as a genre, along with many of its contexts of performance. In the next chapter, I offer an overview of several genres whose formal characteristics and social understandings provided Sha’bi with some of its relative distinction. These are genres that either overlap with, or are prominent in some ways in practitioners’ and listeners’ perception of the practice of Sha’bi in Morocco.
Chapter Three -- Other Genres of Moroccan Popular Music: a Cultural Survey

In the years 2004-07, while I was conducting my fieldwork in Spain and Morocco, I observed hundreds of different Moroccan musicians performing, and an even greater number and wider continuum of individuals listening to, a profusion of different types of music. Because I am proposing the larger contexts of Moroccan Sha’bi — the complex of popular musical practices that I conceive of as a meta-genre — as one primary set of musical milieus for consideration, it is useful to map out the attributes and social understandings surrounding several other musical genres as well. These include genres with which conceptualizations of Sha’bi commonly overlap or subsume, as well as those to which Sha’bi can be productively contemplated as in opposition.

The range of genres summarized here can be taken together as a sketch of a larger matrix of cultural possibility, across which multiple versions of something called “Sha’bi” could be read starting in the second half of the twentieth century. The relationship of Sha’bi to any other named category of musical practice in Morocco during this era was ambiguous and even contradictory: even a genre such as al-Āla, which served in most cases of direct comparison as a sort of antithesis to conceptions and performance practice for Sha’bi, nonetheless also served as foundational reference point and specific influence while “Sha’bi” coalesced in urban spaces as a broad swath of musical category itself—inserting instruments such as the Western-style violin and the qanun, formerly associated with “higher” art genres – into a morphing set of practices more fundamentally derived from rural origins.

Ongoing, the complicated overlap/differentiation between Sha’bi and a larger set of other specific musical genres (e.g., Melhûn, Rai, and a range of Sufi musical practices) provided a larger pool of resource and reference, which Sha’bi relied upon both early on in its history as a
sort of meta-genre, as well in its developing more discrete iterations over time. This larger matrix of possibility established a strong underlying basis for even more farflung choices appropriated from genres previously foreign not only to Sha‘bi’s founding parameters, but to Moroccan cultural practice more generally.

Language is one of the most general classificatory markers for popular music in Morocco. While al-Āla, the genre of Moroccan music with arguably the greatest amount of cultural capital for the last hundred years and more, is based on texts primarily in anachronistic Andalusian Arabic, the more populist musical forms of Sha‘bi rely primarily on Moroccan dialect for song texts, though lapses into French, more occasionally Spanish, and even more infrequently, English, stand out from the majority of lyrics delivered in darija. Debased forms of a different kind of “classical” music from farther East in the Arab world (“al-mūṣīqā al-sharqi”) also became integrated erratically into popular repertoire beginning especially in the 1950s, though only in exceptional cases was lyrical content in such popular songs vocalized in other registers of Arabic besides darija.76

Al-Āla

Among those musical genres that are widely considered in Morocco as antitheses of sorts to Sha‘bi, al-Āla (or al-mūṣīqā al-andausiyya) is the genre of Moroccan music that came to be most elevated as both high art form and national patrimony.77 The body of poetic texts understood to be the basis for the almost millennium-old musical genre incorporates multiple

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76 The vast majority of musical practice in Morocco – popular and otherwise – prominently features vocal performance as a primary component. Outside the range of different linguistic signifiers in musical practice, I heard early twentieth century Egyptian composer Aryan’s well-known instrumental Samai Bayati played by more than one live sha‘bi group in Morocco in the years 2005-2007, invariably as a sort of concert prelude for warming up, or interlude, given its extremely slow tempo compared to most Moroccan popular songs, as well as its lack of vocals – also usually present in one form or another in Moroccan musical performances.
linguistic registers or dialects. Numerous instances of this variety are manifest, notwithstanding the genre’s primary use of archaic versions of Andalusian Arabic. The latter’s predominance in al-Āla texts contributes to a “classical” association that is strong enough to impel many Moroccan listeners, as part of their reception of the genre, to experience the (re-)inscription of certain social histories stemming from their imagination of earlier eras during Moorish rule over the Iberian peninsula. Though much of the generally accepted performance practice of al-Āla has seemingly been long codified, it has actually only been since the 1920s and 1930s, to take one instance of how that codification has taken shape, that the present-day ideal of a jawq (or large-scale orchestra of a dozen or more instruments; pl. ajwaq) has come to dominate public events. A smaller-scale group format known as a farqa (“group” or “band”; pl. furaq) still enjoys some currency on certain occasions, but the larger ensemble is, as Davila has phrased it, “generally considered the premier format for performing the Andalusian Music” (2006:31).

In recent generations, these ensembles most often feature one or more of each of the following instruments: rabab (a boxy two string bowed fiddle with a sound remarkably like a braying donkey); ‘ud (the six course predecessor to the European plucked lute); the kaman or kamenj (violin and viola); the tar (a tambourine-like frame drum mounted with cymbals); the vase-shaped darbuka hand drum; and frequently the qanun, or plucked zither; in addition to lead vocalists, and a choir of either dedicated responsorial singers, or a number of instrumentalists who do double-duty by also singing.

Earlier versions of public performing ensembles were not only comparatively scaled-down in size from this modern larger grouping of performers, but they also relied on different versions of those instruments actually played: instead of the larger, conventional pear-shaped ‘ud

77 Literally, “the instrument.” An extensive poetic formal analysis and social history of the genre, oriented toward the twentieth century, is available in Davila 2006; see also, in French, Guettat 2000 for an even more thorough
built to specifications corresponding to those from farther east in the Middle East, earlier incarnations of al-Āla ensembles in Morocco played the ‘ud al-ramal, which was not only tuned differently, and strung with fewer courses, but had a less bulbously proportioned body made of different materials. Similarly, a variation on the kemanj with an extended scale, which was commonly used to perform al-Āla prior to the second half of the twentieth century, was the zaid naqt (Arabic for literally “one more”). Writing of a more recent period, Cherki laments regarding these instruments: “It is really sad to acknowledge that our fears of the disappearance of the rebab are also our fears of the loss of two equally basic instruments in Andalusian music, namely the violin called “zaid naqt” and the lute called “Ramal” (1981:211). In reference to the “zaid naqt,” Cherki writes: “We hope that rising generations will take a particular care for this instrument and they will succeed to bring it back to the place of choice it always occupied,” but regarding the ‘ud ramal: “As to the lute called ‘Ramal’, everything is over, for it thoroughly disappeared from usage” (1981:210).

During the time of my study, only the rabab remained regularly in use for standard performance practice of the genre, and indeed, that instrument had become iconically linked to performance of the genre more generally. However, I did meet (by chance) one Moroccan musical performer who specialized, I was later informed by another musician, in playing the ‘ud al-ramal, though I never got to witness this firsthand. I also accompanied Carlos Paniagua, a Spanish luthier, on a visit to the Fez Museum of Andalusian Music to research and sketch copies of the instrument on display there, to inform one of his many re-creations of such antique instruments for use in contemporary musical ensembles (primarily by non-Moroccan musicians, it should be noted).
Obviously, performance of the genre of al-Āla in Morocco had remained less than static: in addition to those changes in specific instrumentation, occasional novel compositions were still creeping into publicly performed repertoire at the time of my fieldwork, albeit marginally and with some controversy regarding such changes in a set of practices that had become highly canonized. By the time I witnessed the festival in Fez devoted to al-Āla in 2006, earlier generations’ experiments with piano, clarinet, and saxophone seemed themselves to have become out-dated, somewhat quaint experiments. And while the resistance to a certain orchestra leader’s arrangements to incorporate the piano was referred to in conversation by audience members as an unnecessarily short-sighted and conservative impulse, that reactionary tendency seemed to have won out overall. Every orchestra I observed, both live and in nearly every recording, lacked the presence of either the piano or any other instrument outside a very narrow, established range.78

The earlier developments in expanding the size of al-Āla ensembles, while also simultaneously re-defining their modern instrumental makeup, had come about while European colonialism was making its cultural influence felt in many ways throughout the Arab world.79 It is not surprising then that Alexis Chottin, a researcher surveying different musical forms and practices in Morocco for the French government in the 1920s and 1930s, was also the Director of the Arabic Musical Conservatory in Rabat, at which tutelage was modeled in many ways on French-style pedagogical methods. As part of both of these projects, Chottin continued to exalt the “prestige” he claimed for certain Moroccan musical genres he eventually described in his

78 An even more elusive flirtation with the guitar had apparently managed to gather even less traction in the terrain of contemporary performance practice of al-Āla, according to conversations I had with the music’s aficionados in 2006 and 2007. Among others informing this conservative tendency in print, Guettat writes of “orchestras seduced by a certain modernism and by the desire to obtain more brilliant effects, reorganizing themselves to integrate new instrument, frequently disparate, incompatible with the foundations of this music, even if some consider such intrusion without danger” (2000:236, fn. 50).
Tableau de la Musique Marocaine, including especially al-Āla (Chottin 1939:99). It was during this same era of the late 1920s, as the Protectorate entered the middle period of its own history, that similar European-style conservatories were also founded in Fez, Marrakech and Tetouan (Cherki 1981:211). Also dating to the 1920s was the first Moroccan usage of that alternate genre term of “al-mūsīqā al-andalussiya” instead of al-Āla. The use of “al-mūsīqā al’andalussiya” referred specifically to the genre’s purported originating locale, and use of the term by Moroccans in this later era was related to a previously European-bestowed term, as reported by Guettat in a footnote to his table listing modern al-Āla orchestras (2000:235, fn. 49).

Official institutions (i.e., conservatories, museums, and long-standing government-supported official festival celebrations) in urban centers of contemporary Morocco had clearly been instrumental in defining and maintaining prevailing performance practice of al-Āla there, in addition to preserving a core canonical status for the genre overall. Meanwhile, more socially marginal engagements with the body of existing musical work making up that canon could be found as well. For my purposes here, it is not crucial whether these had primarily been more the result of a sort of trickle-down effect from the more institutionalized tiers of cultural definition, or were perceived as some grassroots re-instantiation of a cultural patrimony whose history was understood as connecting that currently reigning monarchy of Morocco (as well as some dominant common cultural idioms and ideology) to the Moorish courts of the middle ages in Andalusia. More germane is the simple fact of the existence of more casual versions of education, enculturation, and performative interpretation related to performance of al-Āla in Moroccan cities such as Fez and Tangier. These more locally-generated manifestations included small-scale offshoot groups from more established orchestras in addition to philanthropic

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79 See for instance El-Shawan (1980) on the growth of Arabic music orchestra size in Egypt during the 1920s and 1930s in apparent reaction to Western musical orchestra practices.
foundations, metropolitan learning centers, and social clubs made up of amateur, semi-professional and professional musicians (who otherwise often worked in other musical genres as well).

Guettat (2000:235-6) writes of the creation of self-declared *associations* in support of the classical music of al-Āla in urban centers of Morocco beginning at least in the 1940s, following the first Congress of Moroccan Music in Fez in 1939. Indeed, he characterizes a so-called “Association Movement” in Morocco beginning even earlier and as being more generally responsible for part of a “Renaissance of the greater Maghreb” (2000:229). Pointing in a more political direction, he credits that “Movement” also as part of a “cultural resistance” to the brutal destruction and deprivations visited on Moroccan patrimony by the French occupiers (2000:228-230). Guettat characterizes this effort, however, in a manner that would appear somewhat paradoxical as “resistance”: i.e., specifically by those associations allowing in and promoting the adoption of new attitudes and techniques. These associations’ “new union model,” as he describes it, was one that “succeeded to harmoniously realize the passage from the traditional to the modern” by way of “their opening to other cultures, by their reforming tendency, seeing to adapt the music to the realities of modern times” (2000:229).

The impact of these un- and semi-official associations was demonstrated across a fairly wide continuum of socio-economic class in more recent years too. Thus, while I witnessed any number of working and middle-class shops and restaurants in Fez whose television sets were tuned to broadcasts of al-Āla during the month-long period of Ramadan (and at other times as well), at another end of the continuum, I was also startled upon leaving a concert at the 2007 Fez Festival to be on the receiving end of a statement of more continuing upper- and even higher class identity claims associated with the music. This occurred when I met for a second time the
architect who had been the orchestrator of the grand renovation of Dar Bennani, the just-inaugurated Museum of Andalusian Music in the Racif section of the medina of Fez. In response to some innocuous pleasantry I had made about the concert performance we’d just both attended (a performance of European “Early Music” from the medieval era), the architect suddenly declared to me, “I am the prince of Andalusian music!” In his case, the creation of a new jama’a or philanthropic society to support the establishment of the new museum as a showcase for the music of al-Āla as a Moroccan heritage was instigated to large degree by a wealthy Casablanca-based family, who had wanted to simultaneously generate a prominent contemporary presence for themselves in a public cultural way, while ostensibly memorializing the legacy of an ancestor who had written a volume some century and a half before, titled _The Spirit of the Rabab_. This last collected a good portion of the poetic texts that were still sung as part of the tradition.

With those texts frequently based on Arab poetry (themselves often already classicized separately) from all parts of the Arab world, and/or in an archaic, otherwise obsolete Andalusian Arabic, the idea of al-Āla for contemporary Moroccans contained an undeniable sense of a preserved tradition through a highly canonized body of works that primarily stemmed from previous eras. In keeping with this traditional aspect, for public performances al-Āla musicians usually wore what Davila calls “a particular costume” (2006:31), which consisted of light-colored jallabas (that is, the customary Moroccan style of robe worn by both men and women) and bright-colored babouches (or traditional Fassi fancy slipper-like footgear for outdoors), usually along with the cylindrical-shaped red darboush or fez.

As already stated, the genre of al-Āla had enjoyed a relatively large degree of Moroccan state sponsorship, dating back even to the period of European colonialism, when those European-colonialists...
style conservatories were established in several major cities in Morocco. Long before the time of my field research, al-Āla had become a regular feature on Moroccan television shows featuring music, most notably when video recordings of concerts from previous years were broadcast around the time of the evening breaking of the fast during Ramadan. Most major cities also supported at least one more or less firmly established practicing jawq, and sometimes several.\(^{81}\) Large and animated audiences, composed almost entirely of individuals from the upper socioeconomic classes, could be found at the many festivals held annually for many years in cities around Morocco. While access to events at such festivals was usually not restrictive in terms of monetary cost, information about events could be scarce, as in the case of the festival in Fez I attended in 2006. In the case of those events, no formal procedures for obtaining tickets seemed to have been set up at all, and the relied-upon social network required connections at certain higher levels of socioeconomic strata.\(^ {82}\) That the majority of events were held at a five star hotel in a somewhat exclusive neighborhood of the Ville Nouvelle\(^ {83}\) (or “New City”) of Fez, undoubtedly would have dissuaded many native Moroccan individuals unfamiliar with such a milieu from even contemplating entering that space and attending any of the concerts.

For all the high cultural value accrued to the genre, there were also less positive reactions to al-Āla, as when I asked some Moroccan listeners why they preferred other, more popular genres such as Sha’bi. More than once, such questions would elicit a feigned yawn or a show of pretending to sleep to show their response to the primarily low-key and slowly evolving dynamics and fairly static tempi typical in performances of al-Āla. Ultimately, many more

\(^{81}\) Davila writes of the disappearance of the main al-Āla ensemble and conservatory in Marrakech, apparently some time in the 1990s (2006:31, fn 14).

\(^{82}\) I obtained my own, only by chance, after inquiring at random among ushers at the Fez Municipal Cultural Center during another event, and being led to the Director of the Center, who passed on to me a ticket she had received through her social network.
Moroccans expressed a disinterest in a music that seemed distant in possible significations, and dull in formal and stylistic characteristics for them.

Thus al-Āla provided a particularly prominent example of a differing and even contrasting position of cultural estimation from that of Sha'bi and other popular forms in contributing to informal cultural hierarchies. For the purposes of this study, the greatest relevance of al-Āla otherwise, given the historical origins in the Andalusian “Spain” of antiquity, was in its performance as a likely representative genre in practices among Moroccan expatriate musicians in more contemporary Spain. Though the heyday of such projects had passed prior to the period of my fieldwork, the generations just prior to my arrival had seen a relative proliferation of “Early Music” re-creations in Spain, which paralleled similar projects that performed and recorded pre-Renaissance music from throughout Europe (Reynolds 2009). These usually European-conceived projects provided a common reference point for Spanish and expatriate Moroccan music producers alike in Spain to perform versions of “Moorish” era music. That is, such versions were conceived of as culturally and ethnically “Moorish,” but frequently interlinked in vague or overlapping conceptions referencing a range of historical realities when the entire Iberian Peninsula was shared and/or contested by the rivalries of Moorish and Christian rulers. In the next chapter, I consider instances of the negotiations and conflicts surrounding the perceptions about such performances and their representations. But before turning to that, I continue here with the survey of several other genres relevant to contemporary Moroccan musical practice.

83 Such “new cities” were originally built during the Protectorate era as separate residential, business and administrative centers in most major urban areas by the French for themselves.
Gnawa

The slowly evolving and insular canon of “high art” music of al-Āla can be counterposed to the recently fast-growing and highly integrative genre of Gnawa music.\(^{84}\) This had been a particularly expansive genre of Moroccan music in terms of the stylistic parameters absorbed into various iterations of its performance in the several years during and immediately preceding the period of my research. Orally transmitted, and historically the product of a marginalized, lower ethnic class of the same name in Morocco, Gnawa music has certainly qualified as “popular” in more than one regard. While the origins of Gnawa were traced most directly to Morocco itself, and prior to that, to the sub-Saharan part of the African continent, the production and reception of contemporary Gnawa musical practice had been extended internationally, and it had been catalyzed in many ways by global circuits of production and listening promoted both internally to Morocco and abroad by its recognition in cultural marketplaces as farflung as France, Germany and the United States.\(^ {85}\)

Previous to this more global turn, Gnawa music had been strongly present in public life in Morocco more generally for some centuries, and live performances of it were still occasionally audible in random public moments during my fieldwork on the streets of Morocco, as, for instance, when wandering musicians offered the \textit{baraka} or spiritual power that they are believed by some to have accrued through their extensive participation in activities with spiritual bases, in exchange for the “baraka” of monetary currency. Prevailing belief among Moroccans held that the ethnic group of the Gnawa was descended from slaves brought to Morocco from sub-Saharan

\(^{84}\) See Kapchan, 2007; Pâques, 1991; and Spadola, 2007 for extended discussions of Gnawa in Moroccan culture.

\(^{85}\) For one set of stories about the successful importation of Gnawa music to European locales see Kapchan, 2007.
Africa in earlier centuries. At the time of my fieldwork, a mystical brotherhood that developed from this population still referenced ideas and historical personages from Islam, but they did so within a syncretic context that was based on other mythologies and ceremonial practices that were particular to this Sufist group, as well as overlapping at times with the practices of other Sufi brotherhoods in Morocco and North Africa. Music has been a primary identifying component for members of that brotherhood, especially in the milieus of Gnawi ritual healing gatherings.

Most recently, both audiences and musical performers drawn from an increased range of socio-economic classes (and more and more frequently from outside any ethnic group understood as Gnawi) have come to appreciate versions of an expanded genre of Gnawa music. The range of iterations of the genre that grew to achieve market success both in Morocco and internationally in recent years incorporated more and more hybrid versions that added stylistic attributes from Western popular genres such as rock, blues, and jazz to a more originary genre. This last had customarily been oriented toward evocation of spiritual experiences (often with a healing intent in mind), and/or held a rootsy sort of authenticity (that is, strictly lineage-based and simultaneously underclass) among some listeners and, at least in discourse, among some musicians as well.\(^{86}\) Musically, such authenticity was communicated through formally generic elements such as the use of specific (compound ternary) rhythms, intervals selected from within a pentatonic scale, and customary lyrical themes including especially invocation of specific spirits and saints, as well as a highly limited instrumentation: the three-stringed genbri (also known as sintir or hajhuj), for instance, historically serving as the only non-percussion

\(^{86}\) Kapchan writes about ascriptions of, and debates about, performative authenticity by the name of “tghiwaniyya,” or “Gnawa-ness” among musicians working within the cultural complex of Gnawa practitioners (2007). The Moroccan musicians I observed performing Gnawa in Spain had no qualms about performing Gnawa-style music, and no concerns about lineage or education-based markers of authenticity.
instrument of choice. In more recent hybrid musical productions usually categorized as one of a series of hyphenated genres (e.g., “Gnawa blues,” “Gnawa reggae,” “Gnawa hiphop,” or “Gnawa fusion”), most of these more originary musical attributes were retained in combination with the newer additions from Western practice and technology.

The relative crossover market success of different versions of Gnawa music for Moroccan cultural practitioners more generally occurred in large part through the global channels of world music markets, coming out of the deliberate development of those markets by the commercial music industry in the 1980s (see Frith 2000; Stokes 2004). Such versions that achieved wider commercial success most often did so while using instrumentation formerly foreign to the genre, such as acoustic and electric guitars, Western style drumkits, and electric keyboard synthesizers. This mass-market development of Gnawa through international attention coalesced most spectacularly within Morocco in the rapidly growing festival focused on Gnawa music that was initiated in Essaouira, Morocco in 1998, with accompanying increases in government support and control.87 The number of attendees at the Essaouira festival reportedly approached the half million mark in the years 2006 and 2007, including a high percentage of foreign tourists visiting from abroad, with the festival itself often serving as targeted destination. These figures were reported in the festival’s own promotional literature, as well as in mass-market media, and arrived to me additionally by word-of-mouth from various Moroccan music fans.88

87 See Schuyler 2004 and Belghazi 2006 for reference to some of these political dimensions in the establishment of many cultural festivals in Morocco during this period; for earlier reviews of festival organizing activities, see Daoud 1978; Jibril 1980; and Saddiki 1978.
88 For one such reference to audience numbers reaching such levels “sans aucun doute” (“without a doubt”), see the popular Moroccan weekly cultural and political weekly, Tel Quel: http://www.telquel-online.com/263/arts1_263.shtml
This wider dissemination of a form of cultural performance that, however well-known it had been in earlier generations, had previously been transmitted through more direct, local and limited means, signaled a shift to a new kind of “popular” from either that earlier ethnic and religious mode, or even the folkloric mode that was caught up in presentations promoted by the government. Instead, this newer mode was one that played out more and more within the realm of commoditized spectacle. In this fashion, the musical form itself changed, as did the scale and range of audience and performers, but additionally so did the cultural and social bases from which the musical practices emerged. Without leaving behind the spiritual components altogether, and indeed capitalizing to some degree on a sense of authenticity promoted by the spiritual as well as other folkloric associations with a former ethnic and economic underclass, new instantiations by Moroccan musicians on both sides of the Mediterranean stretched both style and conceptualizations of what the genre comprised.

The success of some Gnawa musicians both in achieving a certain status of the folkloric, and, with it, government support and some international recognition and marketability, did not go unnoticed by other musically-oriented spiritual brotherhoods, such as the Hamadsha and ‘Aissowa, some of whom also re-oriented their performance practices to become more accessible in what had previously been non-customary venues of concert and festival stage, television broadcast, and a variety of new modes of hybrid style. Besides influencing several generations

89 Probably the most successful Gnawa performer to “crossover” to mass-market success was Hamid Al-Kasri, who in festival and television broadcast appearances in the early 2000s not only included Western instruments such as keyboard and guitar, but also a section of brass instruments played in an American funk or Afrobeat style, and with choreographed stage show featuring stylized turns by individual dancers on expansive stages widely separating the performers from one another.

90 Abderahman ‘Amrani, the leader of the Hamadsha Sufi lodge in Fez, and a former sha‘bi musician and wedding band broker was especially prolific and adept in recombining Hamadsha-style musical practices with other genres of performance, including both sha‘bi and Gnawa, as well as in recontextualizing live performance of Hamadsha practices for concert stage and video. I discuss his participation in some of these modes at greater length in later chapters.
of Moroccan musical performers and listeners in Morocco through its greater and greater entry into newer concert and cultural festival settings, and through participation in commercial audio and video recordings and broadcasts, Gnawa musical practices came, through their larger market success in both Morocco and internationally, to serve as part of a repertoire of possibility for Moroccan expatriate musicians in Spain, most of whom had had little or nothing to do with performance of the genre previously. In the next chapter I present more detailed incidences of several such “cross-over” attempts with Gnawa in the careers of some of those Moroccan expatriate musicians in Granada, Spain. But first, in completing this survey of genres relevant to Sha‘bi, I turn my attention to several other genres of some import to ongoing practices of Sha‘bi in Morocco especially.

Melhûn

Melhûn was another long-standing category of musical practice that was well-known, often performed, and held in generally high esteem in Morocco. It was regarded by some, in many ways, as even more quintessentially “Moroccan” than the genre of al-Āla, despite the latter’s long history of being put forward as exemplary national cultural patrimony, and despite the latter’s generally held position as being somehow a “higher” artform. The appreciation of Melhûn as iconic derived in part from Melhûn’s more manifestly Moroccan origins, compared to al-Āla’s specific association with the distinct political and cultural history from which it stemmed on the other side of the Straits of Gibraltar in Moorish-era Andalusian courts.

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91 As illustration of this relative hierarchy of cultural status, I recall the comments of one al-Āla aficionado when I told him of a performance program I had witnessed at the Cultural Center of Fez, where a comedian had “opened” (and in fact actually dominated) the evening’s entertainment, ostensibly featuring performance of Melhûn. The al-Āla fan, who had been speculating aloud about the maneuvers between rival supporters of Melhûn and al-Āla to access government funding for competing concert festivals, contended that “No one would ever have dreamed of scheduling a comedian before a performance of al-Āla,” as they had done for the Melhûn concert, given the al-Āla’s already established, more exalted cultural position.
Additionally, in terms of the question of the language used in texts of the form, though often in a higher, more poetic register, the songs of Melhûn were performed almost entirely in darija, as opposed to forms of Arabic more distant in time or space as in al-Āla. Perhaps because of the length (up to and sometimes surpassing several hundred lines) and obscurity of its poetic texts, but even more so because of the basic difference of dialect, and especially the history of the genre’s evolution entirely outside of Spain, the performance of Melhûn in any public setting seems to have been rare in Spain through the dates of my research.92

Historically, in Morocco, the genre has also been appreciated in a broad range of milieus physically and socio-economically, from casual performances out-of-doors to the meetings of rarefied groups of connoisseurs, and done so in contexts that were both sacred and profane. Reference to the ambiguous term of “Melhûn” (which suggests both the pronunciation of the poetic texts as well as of a fundamental manifestation of those texts as being chanted or sung) dates back to the sixteenth century in Morocco. Aydoun excludes Melhûn from the larger category of popular music, placing it rather among the “higher” musical art forms, including especially al-Āla, and justifying this in part by pointing to how Melhûn has historically borrowed some from the more “savant,” or learned, of musico-poetic forms in Morocco, crediting how:

The encounter of the malhun with the andalusian zajal, the muwashshah and classical poetry made it progress little by little: it developed new themes, new meters and rhythms and knowledgeable and rich versification (1992:54).

This was a tendency that, he claims, was “accentuated by the interest brought to the genre by literary and erudite citizens” (1992:54). Aydoun goes on to state, somewhat contradictorily, that

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92 In the many years of my paying attention to performance contexts of Moroccan musicians and Moroccan-affiliated music in Spain, I have not encountered a single instance of live public performance or recording of the Melhûn in Spain.
Melhûn “remains nevertheless in the domain of simple people, of illiterate poets producing their work by the introversion of a strong oral tradition” (1992:54).

John Wanbrough has proposed distinguishing Melhûn as “vernacular” rather than as “popular,” though his concern is primarily with the linguistic construction and genealogy of the poetry, not so much with consideration of the classes of public reception for the musical production with which that performed poetry is associated (1969:477). In tracing those genealogies of composition and performance, and making further evident the far-ranging ethnic and social participation in the cultural form of Melhûn in Morocco, Wanbrough also makes clear the substantial engagement by Moroccan Jewish musical practitioners with the larger tradition of Melhûn, and thus the intertwining historically with Moroccan culture more generally by Jews (1969:477, 490). Jewish cultural practitioners have also had a strong presence in performance of Sha‘bi up through and even past the mass exodus to Israel of most Moroccan individuals of Jewish background in the 1960s. That history has left a streak of nostalgia in Morocco about the era when Jewish musicians performed most forms of popular music there. In Chapter Six, I detail some of this context in the modern era through the analysis of “Tanjiyya,” a song text by Sheikh Mwizo, one Jewish musical performer whose practice overlaps straddles the genres of a sort of offshoot of an elevated form of Sha‘bi and/or kind of bastardized or lower form of Melhûn.

Hassan Jouad characterizes definitional and affiliative bases for Melhûn in this way:

In Morocco, the word malhûn designates a kind of urban, sung poetry, composed in dialects Arabic [sic] and which comes from the exclusively masculine working-class milieu of craftsmen's corporations. Long reserved to a very restricted public of fans, its audience has enlarged to a public which is more and more numerous and young, particularly under the influence of radio and records (1999a:3).
Melhûn’s diffusion has been widespread in Morocco, even prior to the appearance of modern mass media, spreading from its origins at the edges of the southern deserts of Morocco in the town of Tafililet several centuries ago to the urban capitals of power and trade in Marrakesh, Fez, and Meknes, and indeed throughout the country. The cultural presence of Melhûn has coalesced both in a category self-consciously understood as something distinct and apart, as well as in its appearance in and influence on other genres of musical practice. Crapanzano, for instance, notes the overlap of texts of Melhûn with some of the songs opening Hamadsha ceremonies (1973:191); and Schuyler comments on the instrumental makeup typical to performances of melhun in the zawiyat (lodges) of the ‘Aissawa Sufi brotherhood (2001:498). 93

The many themes of Melhûn’s poetic texts have sprawled across boundaries of sacred and profane, of moral seriousness and social parody. Aydoun identifies four rough categories of thematic concern for Melhûn: “faith and its multiple dimensions, social gathering and its ludic dimension, social themes, and a documentary, narrative, historical and political dimension” (1992:57-58).

One strong recurring strain, however, has been that of a religiously-based and moral proscriptive. Jouad, for one, gives precedence to the social/moral aspect among the lyrical themes of Melhûn, seeming to conflate and collapse distinctions between the spiritual Moroccan brotherhoods and the corporations of artisans and other workers long connected to the practice of Melhûn:

93 Additional stray sources have indicated examples of repertoire considered by Moroccan performers and audiences to be Melhûn performed in association with trance ceremonies of other Sufi brotherhoods, such as the ‘Aissowa and Jilala, as well. In live performance, this has come to include the very abrupt switching from a typical melody and arrangement of instrumentation for Melhûn to radically different group chanting accompanied only by the ghaita, hand drums played by ‘Aissowa, as in the following video recording, an unusual musical combination, made especially for television: http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x5whjd_aissawa-?????_music
The poetry of malhun talks about religious themes inspired by the brotherhoods' devout mysticism: passionate desire of spiritual communion with the Prophet, celebration of holiness as a moral ideal and a model of individual life worthy of survival in memory. But it also deals in a large manner with profane themes which, in an elliptical language, attest to a deep penetration of the contradictions and deadlocks of society (1999a:3).

In subsequent chapters I will address the combination of spiritual pursuit combined with revealing if not unraveling entirely the “contradictions and deadlocks of society” in Morocco -- not only regarding Melhûn, but other forms of popular music in Morocco. I turn my attention next to distinctions between Melhûn and these others, including the larger form of Sha‘bi.

What’s in a Name: Distinction and Overlap in Categories of Popular Moroccan Music

Like “Sha‘bi,” the term “Melhûn” has been used liberally by Moroccan musical producers and listeners alike to cover a broad range of genres and styles, whose main commonality would seem to have been performance of sung texts in Moroccan darija, and texts that have not usually been composed in written form. Stricter measures of what qualified Melhûn as a stand-alone genre have certainly existed for centuries (e.g., the application of rhythmic conventions adhering to division into three larger sections with three different meters within each qasida, or song; the use of any of a number of antique poetic texts; or the employment of particular instruments, especially the swisda, a small plucked string instrument, and the tarija, a small hand drum). And indeed the usage of “Melhûn” to designate a range of musical works whose characteristics are somewhat rigorously understood, has been one that has predominated in references within a great part of public discourse, as well as among specialists. Nonetheless, a certain slippage developed in the most general use of “Melhûn” to refer to different pieces of music – as in the self-categorization within his songtext itself made by Sheikh Mwizo towards the end of his recorded performance from the late 1970s of “Tanjiyya,” (a half-
frightful, half-humorous, and quite lengthy narrative of spirits and the modern world in
Morocco). Mwizo’s performance contains many attributes of more strictly-adhered-to Melhûn
conventions, but lacks some key characteristics, including in the choice of instruments, the
failure to follow a conventional shifting between rhythmic meters in different sections, and those
shifts in melodic modes that were customary for typical Melhûn.

When I questioned the Moroccan music aficionado who first introduced me to Mwizo’s
recording about the appropriateness of Mwizo’s own use of the categorizing term of “Melhûn”
within the song text itself, his response was far from unequivocal: “I guess you could call it kind
of a lower form of Melhûn, or a particularly ‘high’ version of Sha‘bi,” he said, obviously not
having articulated that degree of nuance even to himself before, though these categories were
clearly part of the reckoning of his own musical reception. His comments indicated to me the
latent sprawl in the meaning of both “Melhûn” and especially “Sha‘bi,” as well as indicating
again the ambiguity between the adjectival “popular” and its usage as a noun designating a
particular genre category. Another Moroccan musician, who had previously been unfamiliar with
Mwizo himself, tentatively identified the qasida in “Tanjiyya” as something performed by Al-
Haj Hussein Al-Toulali, one of the most preeminent Melhûn musicians in twentieth century
Morocco, though that attribution was far from clear-cut, the first listener having also asserted
strongly that I was mistaken when I suggested that I thought I’d heard it in some public space in
Tangier, since the piece was recorded (by Mwizo, at least) long after Mwizo had departed
Morocco for Israel.94

94 Mwizo was reportedly born in Meknes, also home to Toulali, making the possibility of the qasida being
performed by both all the more likely. I have listened to dozens of recordings of different qasaid by Touali,
however, and to date have yet to encounter a version by him. A recording called “Tlata Deshbab” (“Three Youths”) with the same melody but entirely different words by another singer, Albert Sussa, was also apparently recorded some time in the 1960s.
In conclusion, while vagueness in conceptions of these popular styles meant that references to instances of Melhûn as “Sha‘bi” and vice-versa were possible, or that the two genres might be construed as adjacent or overlapping on a continuum of cultural possibility, ultimately there were differences not simply in repertoire and song-style, but even in instrumentation, lyrical content, and musicians’ sartorial choice. But perhaps most importantly, the social context and cultural capital accrued to each differed. These elements figured crucially in the estimation of value and distinction for each genre by various practitioners and listeners in Morocco. Turning attention now to a genre with quite different origins, and radically different social associations, I will briefly describe some aspects of a category of musical practice with a much different overlap with Sha‘bi in Morocco.

*Rai*

Another, more recently developing popular genre of Moroccan music that had coexisted with or could be thought of as neighboring in some ways to Sha‘bi was *Rai*, and this was true in more than one sense. *Rai* (literally, in Arabic, “my opinion”) as a musical style began in Algeria, dating back at least to the turn of the nineteenth into the twentieth century (Mazouzi 2001). Parallel to those forms of rural music in Morocco often performed with only a single melodic instrument and some hand percussion, but which also came to serve as the basis for other urban musics in the twentieth century, Rai’s origins can be traced to the countryside of Western Algeria. Starting from the middle of the twentieth century, Algerian musicians transformed Rai into an urban genre particularly through developments in performance practice in the port town of Oran, by integrating more and more instruments from outside the earlier borders of Algerian music (for instance, the accordion and later the electronic keyboard synthesizer replacing the
reed zamr). In a few decades, this more modern, city-based style of “pop-Rai” had spread worldwide through attention paid to, and industry support of, performers like Khaled and Mami, both expatriates from North Africa, to new bases of performance, production, and distribution in France. Much of Rai’s earlier history was very much tied to place, as shown in highly topical and place-specific references in recordings from the 1950s through the 1970s (Schade-Poulson 1999). Even as its production and reception became more widely disseminated, much continuing reference to Algerian locales left behind, or to cultural and social concerns specific to Algerian immigrants and their offspring -- especially in France but also occasionally among Moroccans relocated to Spain -- could be heard in newer productions (Marranci 2000; Nair 2006).

In Morocco, performance of Rai clearly developed from the circulation of both people and music over a shared border in North Africa, but also through mingling of expatriate populations and cultural landscapes in Europe (McMurray 2000). Its entry into common performance practice in Morocco clearly began fairly soon after the surge of popularity of pop-Rai in Algeria, though Aydoun, for instance, only gives brief passing reference to it in his overview of music in Morocco (1992:144). Cherki (1981) and Hachlaf and Hachalf (1999) give it no mention at all, whereas the latter source, at least, credits some influence on Moroccan Sha‘bi and chanson moderne by early performers of Algerian Sha‘bi such as Muhammed Al-Anka in the 1940s and 1950s.

Rai in Morocco shared some of the earliest characteristic arrangements of Algerian Rai, usually relying primarily on a keyboard (sometimes multi-tracked in recordings) and the looped, built-in rhythmic sequencer of the keyboard to accompany a single vocalist. One of the advantages of this stripped-down instrumentation was obviously the smaller number of musicians necessary to form a group, or to coordinate the logistics of (i.e., to squeeze into a car,
or a small performance space at a bar and restaurant), and perhaps especially, to be paid. While the default two-person Rai ensembles usually performed publicly as distinct entities; or in sets, venues, or evenings devoted to them, some Sha‘bi groups included players who would perform a set of Rai following or between sets dedicated to Sha‘bi and separate sets of more sprawling genres of popular Moroccan music. Zeena Daoudia, one nationally prominent Sha‘bi performer working in the early 2000s, got her start performing Rai and released some early commercial recordings in that genre, before becoming more definitively associated with Sha‘bi.

The usual insulation of live performance sets, if not always of performers of Rai, however, reflected the fundamental difference in performing forces towards producing a distinctive style in the genre. There were thus other differences in style: tempos in Rai songs were usually slower on average than most Sha‘bi songs, rhythms more “straight” – that is, lacking the complex interplay of three against four, and off-beat syncopations that were often fundamental to Sha‘bi songs. Lyrics also seemed to center on more secular, contemporary themes in Rai lyrics: there was seldom the resort to the sort of evocation of saints and spirits that showed up in Sha‘bi and Melhûn, nor did anything like the more timeless narratives of the qasaid of Melhûn occur much either. The two genres of Sha‘bi and Rai weren’t strictly separated as classificatory schema, however, and more than once when I asked a Moroccan listener about the genre of a recording that was playing in a store or café, the hybrid name “Sha‘bi-Rai” was used.

Rai was not typically performed at wedding and other life cycle celebrations for family and friends, but was more often found in venues of more commercial entertainment, such as bars, restaurants, clubs, and (in recorded form) discos. Occasionally a song or two might sneak into a more customary set of musical performance for a wedding, say, and, more often in other milieux, when a larger typical Sha‘bi orchestra was playing a range of genres, Rai would be one of those
types of music rotated through in the course of a band’s repertoire. One group I spent a good deal of time with in 2006 and 2007 would regularly give over the stage to two of its members for a short set of Rai after the main performance of Sha’bi by the whole band.

Perhaps because it was generally slower in tempo, or as a by-product of its more straightforward rhythmic patterns, the live performances of Rai I witnessed in Fez in 2005-2007 seldom got as many people dancing as typically occurred with Sha’bi. From the observations I made of audience attendance, and anecdotal references from musicians and listeners I spoke to, it was apparent that Rai was more exclusively a young person’s music than Sha’bi, whose appeal spread across a wide range of ages. This was perhaps due to Sha’bi’s lengthier genealogical connections with other long-standing genres in Morocco, or possibly due in part to Rai’s history being associated with a younger generation of listeners.

Interestingly, there were signs of more material support and commercial energy expended on behalf of promoting some Rai performers than with any other genre I noted. While even inexpensive, small-scale black-and-white posters were rarely mounted in public places to advertise an impending concert or tour by a Sha’bi performer, in several cases, in different cities, I observed lavish, large-scale four-color advertisements – often for a single show – by both established and more up-and-coming Rai performers. A certain extra glamour seemed to be sought by and sometimes adhered to some Rai performers as well: Bilal, a France-based, Algerian-born Rai singer, was especially popular among Moroccan listeners in several urban locales in the early 2000s, and recollections of his live performances evoked an enthusiasm demonstrated by some audience members that would have been unusual when listeners spoke of even the most prominent Morocco Sha’bi performers.
Part of an extra aura around Rai may have had something to do with its history among its earliest practitioners and proponents in Algeria, where it was seen as a cultural expression of youth and rebellion against a stultifying economic, political and social system in the decades of the 1970s and 1980s. These were conditions that were certainly parallel to many of those in Morocco during the same period and continuing on into the next decade. Additionally, some glamour had accrued to Rai as a genre since its origins in Algeria to its ramifying cultural contexts in Morocco since the genre had made a place for itself globally while also retaining many characteristics of its North African sources – as had so many of its most successful international practitioners. It was not simply the basis of its simultaneously neighboring but slightly foreign origins that positioned the genre in Moroccan listeners’ minds as relevant and appealing, but that odd combination of familiar yet different, together with a rich, notorious and relatively recent history of political resistance, social transgression, and individual licentiousness.

Importantly for the next chapter’s look at Moroccan musical production and reception in Spain, I will first summarize here one last musical genre to which Moroccan cultural consciousness had a particular relationship. That relationship developed not only in Morocco itself, due to the long-standing larger relationship to Spanish culture, but also coming out of direct contact through the specific migrations back and forth between Morocco and Spain by Moroccan individuals, and Spaniards as well.

*Flamenco*

Flamenco, originating across the Straits of Gibraltar in Spain, had a marginal yet persisting presence in Moroccan cultural life generally, but figured especially prominently among those Moroccan expatriates to Spain who engaged in musical practices after their
relocation. The geographical proximity of Spain (and the dense, ongoing movements of goods and people back and forth from there), certainly contributed to some of the music’s familiarity among Moroccan listeners. This was particularly true in parts of the north of Morocco, which was also affected by exposure to examples of the genre in practice during the era of Spanish colonialism, with its even more pronounced effects of human interchange in the same locales. So, despite a long history of divergent cultural and political development between the two countries, a longer-standing tie with Morocco in relation to flamenco was part of recurrent discourse.

Legends still circulated orally among music aficionados insisting that the murky origins of flamenco could be traced in part to those Andalusians known post-**Reconquista** as “*moriscos*” (“little Moors”), who had in centuries past purportedly gone into hiding among *gitano* (“gypsy “) populations to escape unwanted attention and increasing Catholic persecution. These legends have been passed along, even while sometimes questioned, in a number of written sources concerned with the history and status of flamenco as well.95

The mythology of interconnectedness between flamenco and a purported Moorish influence was still trumpeted occasionally by musicians and fans in the 2000s, most often referenced through perceived or imagined stylistic similarities between flamenco and Andalusian-Moroccan musical forms such as mawal and al-Ăľa, both of whose origins antecede that of flamenco.96 The musical elements referenced in this way include a modal basis for the musics’ performance (though, in fact, intervallic distances between scale degrees differ across the two musics), as well as the idea that the existence of microtonal scales in Arab music

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95 See, for example, Duran Muñoz 1962; Infante 1980; Lafuente 1955; Ortiz De Villajos 1949. Washabaugh (1996) rehearses both sides of a debate that further questions the association of flamenco initially with gitano performers more exclusively.

96 See Cruces Roldán 2003 for an especially focused comparison of flamenco and al-Ăľa.
indicates a genealogical relation because they parallel the fluid ranging between fixed intervals common in flamenco vocalizing. These references are sometimes invoked along with vaguer attributes such as “passion” and “feeling” in the vocal styles of both flamenco and mawal.

This certainly informed audiences’ understanding of and response to some of the concert events at the Festival Internacional de Música y Danza in Granada in 2004, which was one of my first exposures to the performance practice and discourse that had some currency in relation to music in the area. During the Festival various incarnations of the idea of a common cultural past in the region were “played out” not only in musical performance, but also in a series of festival-sponsored seminars and discussions attended by audience members and performers alike. Rhetoric along these lines echoed in conversations outside the formal concert events. Several of the dozen audience members I spoke to before one performance (by Jewish Moroccan expatriate singer Emil Zrihan) told of being made more aware of the festival-set themes for the concert of Convivienca and Las Tres Culturas both of which had been explicitly promulgated in a prior formal Festival seminar/discussion. After the concert, when I asked one middle-aged listener what she liked about the music in Zrihan’s performance, her answer — “pasión” (i.e., “passion”) — made clear the connection in her mind between the North African-derived songs she had heard performed by Zrihan, on the one hand, and the genre of flamenco, on the other. She followed up on her description by offering me a demonstration of that quality of “pasión” by performing herself next to the stage after the show some flamenco dance steps she had learned elsewhere.

A commercial and artistic resurgence of the genre had been expanded in Spain beginning at the tail end of the Franco era, during which period flamenco had become exalted officially but still somewhat ambiguously as an icon of national cultural patrimony in a folklorish mode. Some
aesthetic developments in the performance of the style were also caught up in aspects of self-conscious presentation of the musical form to outside audiences. In one sign of this, Washabaugh, following Steingress (1993:332), writes of “gitano ‘wannabes’ [who] profited handsomely from the windfall of European tourism to this Orient [i.e. Spain] that lay within the boundaries of the Occident” (1996:75).

Developments that were at once more aesthetic and more mass market were led by the “experiments” of flamenco performers Paco de Lucia and Camarón de la Isla in fusing jazz, rock, classical and other more pointedly ethnic musical components. On the margins of this experimentation, a tributary of cultural fusion grew in Spain that attempted to “re-marry” the purportedly related genres of flamenco, from one side of a divide, and that of popular North African musics, on the other. A spate of self-consciously established fusion projects for public consumption peaked in Spain in the 1980s, with collaborations among musicians from both sides of the Mediterranean, such as the prominent 1983 live performance and subsequent recording release titled Macama Jonda,97 a phrase combining a Spanish version of separately established terms for Arab and flamenco musical practice.

Awareness of flamenco had certainly been one eddy within the larger currents of cultural reception generally in Morocco, and not just among musicians. Daily life in the years 2005-07 included many moments during which different versions of flamenco were broadcast over the radio or by street vendors of cassettes and CDs, at Internet cafes, and also via occasional live performances at concerts and festivals. This was especially true in the northern part of the country, which had had more interactions with Spanish cultural influences during the Protectorate era and after (many of the more official public manifestations of flamenco in

97 Originally a live performance stage show, an LP recording was also produced by José Heredia Maya, Sevilla: Ariola, 1983.
Morocco in more recent years were supported by Spanish cultural agencies, such as the Cervantes Institute in Tangier). Such presence was also true of more globally popular groups such as the Gypsy Kings, whose inroads into Moroccan listening habits were undoubtedly more a product of world music industry developments than a direct connection with a more national Spanish cultural production from directly across the Mediterranean.

In general, easily available recordings of flamenco were not only imported to Morocco from across the sea in Spain, but also included projects from throughout the Arabic world (e.g., those of Wadi’ Al-Safi, a popular Lebanese singer, who has incorporated substantial elements of flamenco into his recordings and live performances, which are well-known in Morocco), and more indigenously, from within North Africa itself. Some examples of this latter include Abitbol, the Casablanca-based Sha‘bi singer of the 1980s and on, and Sami El-Magrebi, the popular Moroccan Jewish singer, who performed and recorded across a range of styles from the 1940s through the 1980s, including several numbers explicitly tinged with characteristics of flamenco, such as his early Sha‘bi hit, “Kaftanek Mahoul,” recorded versions of which featured an introductory improvisation on the guitar, and the use of a descending chord progression and cadence commonly heard in Andalousian flamenco.

However, in terms of more contemporary musical production, I did not encounter a single individual among the hundreds of professional or semi-professional Moroccan musicians I met or listened to in the years 2005-07 who demonstrated even the slightest hint of using flamenco form or style in their performance practice, though a couple of musicians claimed to know how. Tariq, the young keyboard player who sometimes performed Sha‘bi professionally in Fez, told

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98 Muhammed Benaboud writes of musical works from during the Protectorate period by Tetouan-based composer Haj Mhammed Bennuna (also the composer of the hymn of the early Moroccan nationalist political party Istiqlal,
me that he played a little “Spanish” guitar — meaning flamenco, he confirmed, after I had asked explicitly. When I suggested it was difficult, he explained a little earnestly: “In Morocco we listen to music from all over the world.” This was an inversion of a leading question he had put to me previously suggesting his belief that people in the U.S. didn’t listen to much Moroccan music, while U.S. artists such as Eminem and Tupac were well-known – and emulated – in Morocco.

But there were few indicators that practice by Moroccan musicians during this period embraced flamenco as a style worth pursuing: no public performances by natives either on the street or in venues such as concert hall or cafes, no ateliers devoted to flamenco music in any of the large cities I stayed in or passed through. Most significantly for the purposes of study here, this apparent lack of knowledge was part of the larger dynamic for those Moroccans who desired to perform music in Spain, and Granada and Andalusia especially. Even those immigrated or visiting Moroccan musicians who worked with flamenco musicians in Spain apparently lacked the knowledge or technical facility to perform the music themselves, much less the ability to direct musical projects that involved flamenco in a substantial way. The cultural currency of flamenco in Granada, Andalusia, and to some extent, Spain generally, put Moroccan musical practitioners wishing to be well-received and even supported publicly for their practice at a disadvantage in terms of both a cultural and social hierarchy. As the next chapter demonstrates, the valuing of only certain vectors of local cultural history in Granada and Andalusia set limits on the participation of Moroccan emigrants in cultural possibilities in their new homeland, and this in turn reinforced many of those limits of perception of Moroccans by native Spaniards in the first place by promulgating highly limited stereotypes of cultural understanding.

during the Protectorate period), with “its combination of flamenco with other varieties of popular Tetuowan and Northern Moroccan music” (2002:299).
Chapter Four — Across a Divide: Cosmopolitanism, Genre, and Crossover among Immigrant Moroccan Musicians in Contemporary Andalusia

…here the question of hospitality begins: must we ask the foreigner to understand us, to speak our language, in all the senses of that term, in all its possible extensions, before being able and so as to welcome him…?

Derrida

In this chapter I investigate cultural production by Moroccan immigrant musicians in Granada, Spain, and the larger reception of their practice in that locale during the years 2004-2007. In addition to indicating some of the social utility of various choices of musical genre, I describe the social context for Moroccan expatriates in Granada and southern Spain more generally during this time. The perception of different kinds of cultural categories, and the playing upon them by expatriate Moroccan musicians during this period, embodied a diverse set of cultural and political negotiations that were both official and unofficial.

In explicating these, the following chapter is not so much a delineation of the formal aspects or complete histories of any specific genre or genres, but rather an attempt to show the disparate attributes of cosmopolitan behaviors and attitudes. These include behaviors and attitudes displayed through social and cultural interactions of both Moroccans relocated to Spain during this era as well as of the native Spaniards with whom they interacted. I examine multiple cases in the performance and understanding of musical practices within this milieu, demonstrating how these activities functioned simultaneously as modes of attempted social integration and of social insulation.

As one primary focal group, I describe these cosmopolitan behaviors by Moroccan musicians relocated to Spain. The vast majority of these addressed expectations of the exotic on the part of listeners in Spain generally, while leveraging vague ideas of musical genre particularly by blurring or ignoring many of the parameters of any sharply defined genre. I
consider this syndrome to have been one iteration of an evolving response to the social and political positions of Spaniards who were differently cosmopolitan, and whose own control of resources (including possibilities of public cultural performance) set the limits on what was perceivable and what was not in the local Granadian culture landscape. That cultural space was the context into which those Moroccan musicians I was tracking might cross over and participate. Moroccans’ participation in different sorts of “self-exotification” and the newly hybrid cultural forms that resulted were both signs and continuing instigators of cosmopolitan perspectives necessarily inculcated at various points in individuals’ different life histories. But they were all very much in reaction to the possibilities and restrictions presented by the cultural context of contemporary Granada, a context disproportionately defined by native Spaniards and the cultural notions they already held.

This hierarchical division of cultural valuation was one structuring aspect of an ongoing social and political process through which Spaniards could select to consume from within the confines of a safe worldly awareness those cultural components that they would be most able to digest, understand, and enjoy. One result of this process was the avoidance of radically disrupting a social and cultural system in which Spaniards generally maintained a hegemonically superior position relative to any immigrant community in Spain at the time. This position was especially significant relative to the conceptual offspring of prior claimants to the cultural legacy of the Andalusian region—that is, contemporary Moroccans—because these latter were especially threatening both to standard notions of Spanish national history and to a current social status quo. In this way, while a strong “spirit” of that priorness that Moroccan immigrants represented was apt to haunt portions of a cultural imaginary in Granada, it remained just that—a spirit only, a ghostly presence, which could only hover at the margins of power in any political,
economic and social imaginaries.

The sorts of cultural negotiations that resulted from this ongoing unequal cultural hierarchy manifested as components of daily life in urban Spain: what was broadcast on television and radio, along with what was featured for more destination-oriented attendees at festival events and tourist locations of museums. This was in addition to what was seen or read in newspaper, magazine and billboard advertisements generally vs. the very local neighborhood cultural economies that might feature rhetoric that reflected differently concerns of a recently immigrant population. Together, the ensemble of commercial programming, signage and other, more casual discourse served to set up a social equilibrium for varying populations from across the divides of sea, state, and social status, an equilibrium that distinguished those who had originated separately in Spain and Morocco.

In addition to the more local history of the Iberian Peninsula that affected cultural perceptions and cultural activities among different groups of individuals in Andalusian Spain at the time, some of the larger geopolitical factors impelling the cultural equilibrating function that musical choices served in this unbalanced, sometimes tense social order, were the imperatives of more global forces, including the runoff from the particular post-colonial relationship between Spain and Morocco. One large impetus of such human “runoff” of the era was the movement north across the Mediterranean by hundreds of thousands of migrants from North Africa in the prior several decades in pursuit of new work and new life possibilities. Crucial in the consideration of such movements is the idea of cultural, geographic, and political boundaries, whose resilient significance lends an ironic aspect to ideas of contemporary globalizing circulation’s supposedly overwhelming momentum of “flow,” as suggested by Appadurai

Gaonkar proposes, citing Lee and LiPuma, that "cultures of circulation" act as an enabling matrix for contemporary understanding of emplaced self, a matrix "within which social forms, both textual and topical, emerge and are recognizable when they emerge" (2003:388). He goes on to refer to Appadurai for identifying place-making processes in late modernity, crediting him for extending:

crucial insights in his theory of “flows” (and its counterpart, “the production of location”) to explain how the circulation of people, ideas, media, technology, and finance provides the generative matrix for creating myriad and disjunctive "imaginary worlds" when modernity goes global (2003:390).

Tsing, on the other hand, calls attention to some consequences of the adoption of “flow” and “circulation” by social theorists, whose use of such metaphorical frames precludes analysis of real-world sources and human arbitration in political decisions by normalizing discourse that reflects agent-less causes for human phenomena. “‘Circulation,’” she says, “…calls forth images of the healthy flow of blood in the body and the stimulating, evenhanded exchange of the marketplace.” She goes on to state that the use of such terminology is part of:

…how bourgeois governments and social institutions have promoted market thinking to naturalize class and other social distinctions. By training the attention of citizens on the equalities and opportunities of circulation and exchange, they justify policies of domination and discrimination" (2000:336).

The implications of such conceptions for the borders defining state and citizenship—and the concomitant notions of “home” and “guest”—are therefore of the greatest importance in efforts to understand both what such mechanisms are for, and what is at stake in the creation of
divergent categories of groups of people and types of cultural activities perceived by any individual as “native/foreign” or “familiar/strange.” The limits of cosmopolitan behaviors that might supersede the dichotomies of such bordered thinking are inherited from the foundations of earlier cosmopolitan projects (e.g., most famously, that of Kant), whose own bases became firmly embedded in developing instantiations of modernity, including that Western-oriented exaltation of rationality, nationalism, and “free” market capitalism (see Mignolo 2000a).

Thus the cultural stakes in the drawing of perimeters, and the possibilities for opening them up or overstepping them, are larger than the idea of any one, singular culture itself. Examining the setting of borders for different groups of humans is not merely a case of contemplating the spectacle of competing ethnicities or nationalisms, or even merely a vying for resources among competing groups, but rather a consideration of an epistemic and political development that can be traced from pre-national modes of thinking by Europeans about foreign Others (whether African, Oriental, Native American or any other indigenous Other), through manifestations of late capitalism with the interpenetration of liberal economic organization and the accompanying governance of human society. The often failing promise of the most idealistic cosmopolitan attitudes, as much as the complex array of frequently self-serving cosmopolitan behavior in the milieu of Granada, then, suggests cosmopolitanism as a key conceptualization for the investigation of difference there, and for this reason I take cosmopolitanism as an important frame of reference, and disparate types of cosmopolitanism as objects of analyses in what follows.

As a roadmap for what is to come, in the course of this chapter’s examination of ideas of the maintenance of Moroccan musicians’ positions culturally and socially as part of divergent ethnic groupings in Granada, I will narrate a series of examples in the performance of musical genres that were instrumental to local cultural and social understanding of those musicians, and
thus key to those musicians’ relationship with that adopted locality. In their attempts to “cross over” not only to the physical or geographical territory of the potential new homeland of Spain, these cultural practitioners played out a circumscribed sort of pragmatic-minded cosmopolitanism, where awareness of cultural values and stereotypes from beyond their own originary cultural contexts played a key role. Those key genres whose manifestations I will consider in this chapter include versions of the Muslim-era al-Āla (or al-mūṣiqā al-andalusiyya); the originally ethnically-oriented Moroccan genre of Gnawa; and the post-Muslim practice of flamenco, which had become emblematic of contemporary Spain. I present as significant as well a handful of examples of musical practices associated with the dance genre of danza del vientre (belly-dancing), also known as danza oriental. In all the occurrences of these genres noted here, performers engaged to different degrees in hybrid cultural practice by combining aspects of them with other musical genres, and in the following I will portray some of the practical choices by émigré musicians in making their aesthetic selections of which specific musical genres to perform, or which musical components to combine. Questions of cultural authenticity thus arose, adding to the tensions surrounding the social status and identity for many of these “guests” from outside the borders of the country to which they are newly arrived, and around which hovered the idea of crossing over not only physically, but culturally, socially and economically as well.

*Citizenship through Categories of Ethnicity and Categories of Culture*

In the open interior of a Renaissance-era palace situated across the wide ravine from the former fortress/palace complex of the Alhambra in Granada, four seated Moroccan expatriates played musical instruments, while wearing long dark robes that were highly unusual in Granada daily life at the time. One, and sometimes two of the musicians together, sang in Arabic the
words of renowned poet Ibn Zamrak, who died in the period of Muslim rule a century and a half before the palace had been built. As the musicians performed for the 150 or so members of the seated audience, a Spaniard couple – costumed in even more elaborately decorated white robes and employed in these roles for the occasion -- strolled conspicuously through the covered walkways laid out around the building’s central atrium as though enjoying the cooler evening airs and pleasing vistas in their expansive home on a warm summer night centuries earlier.

Three of the musicians working in the courtyard below were playing musical instruments of Arab or Moroccan origin—qanun, darbuka, and ‘ud—types of instruments that had been contemporaneous with Ibn Zamrak himself. The leader of the group of musicians, however, performed on other instruments with different or more specific regional and temporal origins: for instance, an amplified saz (a long-necked lute of Turkish origin), and the American-invented electric bass guitar. These latter instruments could only have manifested themselves in this place during the much later period of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Confirming the anachronistic attempt as the product of a deliberate if messy mélange of cultural representation were the several appearances during the musical performance by a Japanese bailarana de ventre—a belly-dancer—along with the highly self-conscious static poses that the hired couple in “Moorish” garb struck when pausing periodically in their perambulations to create tableaux vivantes for the visual consumption of the spectators.

The occasion was a June 2007 concert staged Casa de Castril (the above-mentioned former palace, whose construction was completed in 1539). At the moment of the concert, the Casa was the home of El Museo Arqueológico y Etnológico, the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in Granada. The event was organized to celebrate, nearly seven hundred years after its

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99 For a brief recounting of Ibn Zamrak’s history as a poet and political power in the court of several Nasrid-era rulers in Granada, as well as quotations from some of Ibn Zamrak’s poetry, see Motoyoshi Sumi (2004).
original production, the artistic work of Ibn Zamrak, a poet and a politician of fourteenth century Andalusia. Taken as a whole, the musical performance of the four Moroccan musicians, though inflected with North African rhythms and Arab melodic motifs, borrowed more heavily from recent groove-oriented world music (e.g., unvarying rhythmic meters, absent any melodic modal changes as well) than from the “classical” al-mūṣīqā al-andalusiyya settings that might have been more contemporary with the poetry of Ibn Zamrak. The leader of the ensemble, Souhail, had organized and fronted numerous different musical groups since arriving in Granada two decades before, most recently while relying for his primary livelihood on a job at the main branch of the Municipal Library.

Collectively known as Al-Ta’ir, several of the individual musicians held “day” jobs, though two of them had recently quit their vending of Moroccan-produced or Moroccan-looking craft items (leather goods, lamps, fabrics, etc.) in different locations throughout the city, thanks in some part to the runoff from their successful performance in a national concurso, or competition, for young musicians sponsored by a bank in Catalunya. Their achievement in this competition designed for youthful musical projects had occurred despite the fact that all these musicians were middle-aged, and, more crucially against the tenets of the concurso, despite the fact that each had been playing in one group or another for more than twenty years.

The music produced for the event at the Casa de Castril by these musicians, (all immigrants to and long-time residents of Granada), alternated with translations of Ibn Zamrak’s Arabic language poetry read in Spanish to the audience attending the concert. The reading was performed by a native Spaniard, who set off the texts with his own instrumental accompaniment on Spanish acoustic guitar. As significant for the form of the event, perhaps, was the fact that this

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100 For more on the relationship of this antique musical genre from the Iberian Peninsula to modern-day “revisiting” of this medieval period, including at least one earlier, prominent re-purposing of Ibn Zamrak’s texts, see Reynolds
performer had formerly been Director of the locally-based Fundación de Documentación Músical, an organization headquartered nearby, and one which was devoted to archiving and presenting information about historical forms of local and regional musical practice.

The Fundación, in fact, was the primary sponsor of the event. And the ready-made musical fusión, mixing far-ranging modern and invented cultural products with hints of the antique, was accepted and even embraced by the performers, the Fundación, and the audience alike -- by and large very enthusiastic, the majority lingering long after to savor and prolong the aftereffects of the mood created by the ensemble, and drink the artificially-sweetened and industrially-produced lemonade with bits of mint that was offered up as post-concert refreshment in vaguely “Moorish” style. While ostensibly marking and celebrating the archaic accomplishments of an erstwhile cultural practitioner (whose own native cultural status had been eclipsed due to political-cultural shifts over time), this event demonstrated not only the practical willingness or limits in that present-day locale to achieve or to attempt a kind of historical as well as cultural crossover, but demonstrated also the limits to social understandings for and integration of the expatriate performers hired for the occasion.

Rather than serving simply as an embodiment of a burgeoning global cultural smorgasbord, the event signaled the uneven dispersion of cultural knowledge and access, as people and ideas moved through an imagined social landscape that was as profoundly political as it was cultural, constantly inflecting the determined and determining possibilities of the circulation of both in highly specific fashion. The dim potential of this spectacle suggested recognition of some cultural characteristics about times past, but these remained latent, masked or distorted for most individuals in the moment of the Ibn Zamrak event. This was true for

[forthcoming].
producers and consumers alike, since, for both of those, the chosen repertoire sidestepped and superseded significant cultural elements that might otherwise have been shared from the past.

The performance instead confirmed the status quo of a contemporary synthesis already dominant, in which the distinctions of taste cultures helped structure and reflect patterns of class and social hierarchy, via what John Hutnyk has called “the multicultural trick that sells exotica as race relations and visibility as redress…as cultural product and cultural flavour become the seasoning for transnational commerce” (2000: 3). Both those (natives) enjoying their exoticized others, as well as those being exoticized, (that is, the “visiting” immigrant guests of the local culture of Spain), participated in the making of this “multicultural trick.” Both groups were also among those doing the “tricking” and those being “tricked.” The earlier genesis of those cultural dispositions—world-beat music standing in for any “Other,” along with clichéd popular stereotypes of Orientalist sensuality—stemmed from a Spanish cultural complex that was steeped in and based on particularist ideas of local history played out through regional iterations of a worldwide music industry. Alternative perspectives on that history became murky, if any view didn’t disappear altogether, as one approached the temporal border between eras of pre-Catholic and post-Muslim rule in the region.

Cultural representations in contemporary Spain, despite a highly multi-ethnic society, remained highly skewed there. This held true even when the attempt was made to relate to something other than the most recent nativist cultural default already established in pre-existing cultural markets, with their often limited cross-cultural understandings. Such limitations prevailed in both discourse and in practice on the north side of the Mediterranean. And most expatriate Moroccan musicians who wanted to perform publicly in Spain during this period were caught up in and went along with the cultural givens presented them in their new “host” country,
with however much or however little enthusiasm. If they had any ambition to play music for general audiences in Spain, and in the process seek to find or make places for themselves in this adopted cultural and social terrain, they apparently had little choice.

Moroccan Migrations to Spain

Most generally, people move because they want change. They cross borders and transcend limits, seeking new trajectories, and novel or expanded vistas. They want to take on new guises and/or appear more themselves in a fresh location. Or they cross over boundaries because they want it all: to retain what is a kind of birthright given by or taken from a native homeland and culture, while adding to that what an adoptive foreign socio-economic and political order can offer.

Perimeters of various physical and social categories for individuals are sometimes superseded when their starting places are left behind in this way, even while some distillation of their points of origin is carried forward internally with them. In the process of relocating, though individuals may be seeking some renewal of possibility particular to their personal circumstances, there often occurs simultaneously a heavily determining projection of ethnicity onto those individuals by natives in the lands in which they are newly arrived.

Louise Schein puts it this way:

…things take place conceptually when peoples cross state borders…they become recognizable as “peoples” who putatively possess as much internal congruence as those territorial nationalisms from which they have purportedly broken away. (1998:185).

Moroccans who made the voyage across the Mediterranean to Spain, and to most other parts of the European continent for extended stays in the late part of the twentieth century and beginnings of the 21st, became, willingly or not, part of various categories of ethnic grouping: in Spain: inmigrante (i.e., “immigrant”) or marroquí (“Moroccan”) or even árabe (“Arab”) or moro (“Moor”). This last was a still-used, if mostly obsolete, designation during the period of my
fieldwork, usually taken to be hostile and/or pejorative, by contemporary Moroccans at least. These categories frequently preempted or overwhelmed many subtler or more idiosyncratic possible attributions for identity. And, conversely, archetypal projections onto Spaniards and Europeans generally by those who had migrated from North Africa, included charges (often difficult to counter) of cultural insensitivity, intolerance or hedonism, and of obsession with self-indulgent material consumption and comfort.

Large numbers of people have relocated to Spain from North Africa during multiple eras over the last millennium and more, beginning most notably in the early part of the 8th century when Arab and Berber forces crossed the Straits of Gibraltar in large numbers. Many of those relocations in earlier periods were undertaken explicitly for the purpose of invading territories of the Iberian Peninsula to achieve military conquest and/or political domination. More recently, the social and economic motivations that have driven large-scale immigration across this portion of the Mediterranean have been administered by the structuring policies of formal governing bodies at all levels, as well as surged beyond the margins of any channels officially sanctioned by authorities. Public consciousness has developed on both sides of a geographical and political divide concerning the consequences and implications pertaining to immigration: the impact on individual, regional, and national economic conditions; on social welfare; and on those factors affecting the cultural makeup of local and national polities. That impact has included an erratic integration of cultural and economic precepts and procedures in Morocco – e.g., lycée education and urban planning in the French-style, industrialized agriculture, and the idea at least of parliamentary congresses for political representation – originating during the colonial period and continuing post-Independence. Back across the Mediterranean, the impact of immigration has

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101 For additional references to this phenomenon of derogatory naming of North Africans in Spain during this era, see Flesler and Pérez Melgosa (2003) and Silverstein (2005).
included as well a growing apprehension about the influx of foreign arrivals among a Spanish population relatively long-insulated from such direct daily interactions with outsiders due to governing principles pursued in the era of the Franco regime.

Given Spain’s relative incapacity during the Franco years (i.e., 1936-1975) to serve as a receiving destination or potential host for migrants from other countries (including those from Spain’s own former colony in Morocco), Spain’s relationships to those locales of large-scale emigration elsewhere in the world differed during this period, compared to those of many other western European nations. The less robust economy of Spain during its relative isolation through much of the Franco period made immigration to Spain especially less likely, as remarked upon by many observers, who often note twentieth century Spain’s position as a net exporter of labor populations until the period after Franco (see, for instance, Flesler 2006). Spain was thus not part of a “new” Europe developing in the post-war era, one which accepted a large quantity of foreign immigrants, not only in host countries from their former colonies (as was the case of France receiving Algerian and Moroccan workers), but within other European locales such as Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Scandinavia, all of whose burgeoning economies’ development relied very much on cheap imported labor from other parts of the globe, and particularly from Africa.102

Of crucial importance in distinguishing the relationship of Moroccans who have recently immigrated to Spain is the question of periodicity. The lapsing of the Francoist authoritarian state in the late 1970s allowed a swift rapprochement between Spain and the rest of Europe, and shortly after, the booming years of Spain’s economy would support, and indeed, depended upon, the importation of new, less expensive labor resources from outside Spain. Building on earlier

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102 See, for instance, Janet Kramer’s accounts of changing demographics in Europe in her Unsettling Europe (1972), in which mention of Moroccans relocating to the former colonizing country of Spain is noticeably absent.
folklorized traditions of minority cultural practices to promote cultural tourism during the Franco era (notably the performance of flamenco associated with gitanos of southern Spain), cultural entrepreneurs in Spain during the 1970s publicly produced their conceptions of historical overlap and influence between prior morisco populations and their cultural traditions with the performance practices stemming from a gitano cultural complex. The timing of Spain’s opening up to new arrivals from outside—including, most prominently, to individuals from its former colony of Morocco just across the Strait of Gibraltar—allowed it to soon be caught up within the influence of a developing global music industry developing both in Spain and internationally, beginning in the 1980s.

This last was part of a deliberate effort in the creation of “world music” as a meta-genre by subsuming multiple localist practices worldwide as one set among many increasingly cosmopolitan translocal encounters at a particular moment in the modern era, and as part of a turn toward globalized capitalist marketing of cultural difference. So the question of the timing of the large-scale migration of Moroccans to Spain is critical for contextualizing the potential reception of cultural practices and practitioners from Morocco in Spain, including especially music and musicians.

Equally important is attending to the sites of both destination and origin, and perceiving of the latter as not simply a static originary reference point both physically and culturally, but itself as a site of shifting cultural practices and signification. Attention to these larger loops of movements back and forth between the two locales—of both people and of ideas, as well as how they affect one another—is a crucial aspect of what I consider relevant to migration, as well as in my larger examination of practices of popular music by contemporary Moroccans and others. In my first chapter, I summarized key points contained within analyses of migration studies at the largest

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103 See Frith 2000 and Stokes 2004 for some sense of the history of that effort musically.
theoretical level (e.g., those of Kearney and Silverstein), as well as a number of more on-the-ground studies that have specifically concentrated on the movement of Moroccans into Spain in recent generations.

Each example among this latter set of studies presents aspects of both origin stories for Moroccan and/or African migrants to Europe in addition to presenting aspects of those European destination sites as compelling, worthwhile, and even necessary facets in understanding migration among these communities. Ultimately, however, each consideration emphasizes the impact on immigrant arrivals of that place of landing and would-be settling. Here I attempt to point back to more critical background information among immigrated Moroccan musicians in Spain from prior personal histories in Morocco, as well as recounting aspects of their musical practice and cultural context in their newer host country.

Despite having crossed physical and national boundaries, many expatriate Moroccans in Spain remained in a cultural and social borderzone that was not fully integrated on either side of an originary/destination divide. This ambiguous status allowed for some sense of a state of overlap combining aspects of places both past and present, places that were felt, remembered, and engaged with. That is, these expatriates continued engagements with both those places from which they had come (and to which they sometimes returned), in addition to those new locales in which they now resided and integrated more or less, but in which they also ultimately would not likely fully assimilate, no matter how long they might live there.

As for any expatriates, for Moroccan immigrants to Spain their country of origin was not enough, or they would not have left in the first place. But whether compelled by their own internalized logics, or forced by others, the new host country also could not meet their needs entirely either, as evidenced by whatever amount of recurring reference to the past that informed parts of their daily exchange in that new environment. By this I mean both references to each individual’s past, in addition to those of a far-flung collective history, one that was often perceived and spoken of by immigrants as already much intertwined with their new locale.
Such retrospective references were evident throughout Spain during the years 2003-07. They occurred where immigrants had relocated in large numbers in recent prior decades with regard not only to the practices of culture in the most artful and self-conscious sense but to the activities that come out of individual cultural enterprise or commercial industries, projects that drew upon a larger cultural past in the everyday environments of expatriates’ jobs, careers, and businesses. Examples of such workplace embodiments for Moroccan musicians I met while in Granada included their paid employment as interpreters and translators (e.g., for projects designed to publicize and proselytize Islam within Europe), their selling of tourist goods (North African designed and/or manufactured clothing, furniture and crafts), their establishment and management of entertainment venues (bars, cafes, and restaurants with “Moorish” names including “Ziryab” and “Sahara”), as well as their running small telecommunication shops catering predominantly to North African and other immigrants in their relocated-to neighborhoods of Spain and especially Andalusia. These signs of an “inherited” local past for these immigrants—one that was imbricated with if not exactly held in common with local native Spaniards—were thus kept in currency in a practical, vocational realm of the everyday. And thus any North African individual, however previously oriented (or not) towards those “common” histories, would have also been reminded on a daily basis by those signs of likely affiliations for possible integration in this site of relocation.

In a novel or foreign milieu, it is generally true that individuals take on for themselves (or are assigned by other, native individuals and social institutions) roles for social and cultural functioning. These are roles that they might perform to greater or lesser extent, and with greater or lesser capability, but which often circumscribe possibilities of their performing and being understood in their new social and cultural contexts. These newcomers’ participation in various cultural practices sometimes alters, but more often abets those cultural stereotypes projected onto them. So conceptualizing boundaries of musical genre, their porousness, their utility, their

104 Literally, “Blackbird,” in Arabic, the nickname of Abu l-Hasan ‘Ali Ibn Nafi’, a ninth century musician, originally from Persia by way of Baghdad, and the most celebrated historical cultural figure in Muslim-era
policing, or their perceived transgression in Spain during that period (both on the part of those newcomers as well as by the natives of the host country where those newcomers arrive), was a crucial business in the making of identity for those individuals and groups who felt that something was at stake for themselves or for others in such definitions.

Just as “Moroccan” or “immigrant” became categories of ethnic grouping and cultural formation by unconscious human prejudice or willful intent, the idea of difference in genre supported the function of arbitrarily setting parameters for the grouping of cultural forms. Despite being open to play and manipulation, any performed iteration of genre understood as part of a cultural category is frequently bound up with various types of naturalized, not-fully-conscious, “know it when you hear it” comprehension, which suggests fixed points of reference. Far from being fully insular or nearly static, however, even the most conservative cultural genres possess capacities for integrating or assimilating elements, techniques, and formal organizing principles formerly perceived as “foreign” or outside the limits of that category labeled by some generic name. Any genre can also shift or subsume layers of meaning diachronically from across a range of cultural understandings developing over time (Bauman and Briggs 1992:147-149).105

The decisions by many Moroccans, once in Spain, to play examples of musical genres to which they often previously had little or no relationship were not simply individual attempts to grasp at different cultural aspects for possible personal affiliation or evolving taste. Rather, or additionally, they were a recognition of and an engagement with those genres’ perceived social utility. At the same time, these efforts became a contributing factor in the expansion of those genres’ social signification. Whatever personal affinity or aesthetic esteem they felt for each of

Andalusia. For some complicating views of the creation of his legend, see Reynolds (forthcoming).

105 Mikhail Bakhtin (1981), of course, also writes of how decisions within or reception of any particular performance of a genre relies on layered understandings of practice and manifold idioms over time, and also how suggestions of ideology and power—or at least, social hierarchies—are manifested through them.
those genres of music, any musician’s choice to include them as some of many possible components in their repertoire, no matter how limited or fuzzy their knowledge of a particular genre, was a practical decision to equip themselves with a range of cultural touch points that could be deployed by them and then understood by a not-necessarily-too-discerning potential public audience. The fact that al-Āla’s history, for instance, could be linked to earlier eras of Spanish history made it more likely to be a potentially accessible vocational/avocational resource to share cross-culturally with Spanish listeners. Similarly, Gnawa music’s “rootsier” back story, and its proven success in contemporary commercial markets (which already included other internationally far-flung, non-Moroccan listeners), offered it a better chance to be accepted by Spanish audiences, and thus become one more likely means by which Moroccan musical performers themselves might be taken up into Spanish cultural milieus.

As Anna Tsing has aptly summed it up: “[P]oor migrants need to fit into the worlds of others; cosmopolitans want more of the world to be theirs” (2002: 469). The second proposition of this statement can obviously apply to those Europeans who are privileged in being able to pick and choose among the marketplace of cultural possibilities brought to their apprehension by an increasingly interconnected world. But this same statement becomes ambiguous when migrants themselves are considered as cosmopolitans, in however disparate fashion from those other, more privileged cosmopolitans who control a greater access to desired resources. Both halves of this statement are true for migrants who must necessarily adjust their daily practice to prevailing regional patterns of understanding and local structures of feeling in order to survive and thrive, to participate in the acknowledged cultural currency of that region’s markets of exchange, and to better enable themselves to consume while being consumed themselves.
 Movements Over Borders: the Efficacy and Limits of Cosmopolitan “Crossover” among Moroccan Musicians in Andalusia

The vast majority of Moroccans who played music publicly in Spain during the period of this study did so across a wide range of genres and hybrid styles, not all of them conventionally or specifically North African in origin. These hybrid tendencies stemmed from a cosmopolitanism already broadly indicated by those travelers’ own movements over the political and geological borders of Morocco/Spain or North Africa/Europe. Those musicians who had crossed cultural boundaries as well as geographical ones demonstrated their apparent willingness to act on knowledge gained about cultural and social milieus beyond the most immediate one into which they were born.

To “cross over” in Western popular music jargon signifies passing beyond the genre boundaries of one’s customary practice or of others’ outward perception/acknowledgment of the same, and it usually denotes as well entry (or attempted entry) by a performer into new commercial possibilities for their musical practice. The notion of crossover also includes connotations in two opposite directions: in one, toward an idea of dilettantism and/or corruption of some generic category—“selling out” and the loss of integrity for some individual or ideal—where signification is lessened or rendered meaningless by its dilution; and in the other direction, toward a utopian ideal, where all forms and genres are fair game and open to exploitation in some sort of cultural commons (Gilroy 1995; Hall 1990; Hebdige 1987).

As Stuart Hall asserts while discussing social formations and cultural forms in diaspora: “this is a conception of identity which lives with and through, not despite, difference, by hybridity” (1990:235). The idea of crossover itself is premised on the fundamental assumption that “there must be discrete boundaries between musical styles,” as David Brackett has summarized it (1994: 777), and suggests that there is something at stake within those differences
beyond perhaps the most abstract or “merely” aesthetic—some desire for the increase in capital, cultural or otherwise. Put simply, in Brackett’s words: “some stand to benefit from the way the hierarchy is constructed…while others will lose out” (1994: 777). This echoes analytical perspectives in debates among ethnomusicologists and other social theorists of the 1990s and early 2000s, where hybrid world music practices were analyzed as simultaneously signifying pro-active assertions of identity difference and of accommodations to market considerations (Erlmann 1996; Frith 2000; Guilbault 1993; Taylor 1997).

Applied to Moroccan musicians in Spain, then, the idea of “crossover” can include movements or attempted movements into different musical marketplaces and greater public notice in Spain, often with accompanying shifts in performance practice, while highlighting in so doing delimited ways of perceiving themselves and of being perceived by others through those commercial/aesthetic categories they choose to work within or are forced to consider and maybe “try out.” Whatever internal divisions might have existed among these expatriate cultural practitioners, there was some cohesion within their practices taken as a group in the common use and fundamental utility of genres of music that were heard as “Moroccan,” or “Arab” or “Oriental,” or as some unspecified sub-genre of “World Music” or “fusión.”

Advertisements for musical performances featuring Moroccan musicians and the venues in which they performed in Granada during the first decade of the 21st century usually resorted to meta-generic terms such as these. In this way Moroccans consistently declared in a public way a more basic affiliation that reinforced dim, general perceptions about Moroccans (or “árabes,” “inmigrantes,” or “moros [Moors]”) among non-Moroccan natives in their host country of Spain.

Such obscure (and at times inaccurate) references were almost a constant in cross-cultural discourse since they were felt to be necessary in attempting to communicate the barest modicum
of understanding of “difference.” The recourse to this type of rhetoric for public dissemination was a default mode, no matter how much more specific the discourse might become among the musicians themselves, along with those handfuls of other, non-Moroccan musicians and music scholars “in the know” enough about genre differentiation, or even national or regional divergence within the Moroccan, North African, or Arab “worlds.” In this way, Moroccan expatriate musicians in Spain promoted an identity that hovered on the edge of or outside a mainstream culture, one maintained as “Spanish” or “European” or “Occidental.” Somewhat paradoxically, their goal for much of this musical practice was not only to represent cultural aspects of being Moroccan but also to establish or increase a status within that mainstream, recipient, non-Moroccan social world through the identification as someone or something from outside that culture—a playing upon the factor of novelty that is a constant within commercial popular culture markets, and at the same time a continuation of classic Orientalist exoticism.

The pragmatics of such ascriptions—writ through contemporary modes of globalized commodification—fit, however uneasily, with the origins of the term “cosmopolitan,” as defined by Kwame Appiah (2006). Appiah credits the originating idea to the Cynical philosophers, whose own use of the concept emphasized a skepticism toward the notion that a civilized individual should necessarily remain strictly contained to any singular locale, culture, or ideology.

In recent years, social scientists have grappled with expanded notions of cosmopolitanism, extending the designation of “cosmopolitan” beyond those originating from a specific part of the world (the West), from within particular socio-economic classes (middle to upper), or from certain socio-cultural contexts (those of liberal humanism/capitalism)—with all the attendant privileges such parameters suggested (Appadurai, 1996; Chakrabarty, 2002;
Clifford, 1997; Mayfair, 1997; Mignolo, 2000; Robbins, 1998). In part, developments of the idea of cosmopolitanism have been rendered in (sometimes defensive) reaction to the very charges of privilege and exploitation that have come to characterize the label of “cosmopolitan” in last two centuries. As Pratap Bhanu Mehta states: “Contemporary invocations of the cosmopolitan ideal have…attempted to distance themselves from universalism…[t]he suspicion of universalism in part stems from its association with imperialism” (2000: 622).

Tsing uses the metaphor of friction to suggest the effects of translocal forces in impelling global circulation of products, ideas, and people—but as importantly, to stress how the particularity of those forces in any context, locale, or combination might determine how those various elements of the human world actually travel, in addition to what actually travels, and to where, and how far (2005). Focusing this notion somewhat more in attending to the contexts of both Southern Spain and Northern Morocco, I propose a kind of pragmatic cosmopolitanism that becomes necessary or desirable to those individuals buffeted by flows of globalized phenomena, but who still remain somehow peripheral to a perceived mainstream, as well as to accessing resources in global circulation more generally.

Cases of Friction and Crossing Over

The sights of many Moroccan immigrants to Europe had become fixed in the several recent generations leading up to the early 2000s on future international trajectories, both geographic and cultural, from a young age. Middle and upper class children especially were often enrolled by parents in Moroccan schools based on European curricula and taught in European languages; many more attended to radio and television broadcasts and audio and video recordings from abroad while growing up. Some visited various countries in Europe, or heard of
episodes of travel or relocation there from returning relatives, friends, and neighbors. In the course of my fieldwork, I encountered countless individuals on both sides of the Mediterranean whose formative experiences had specifically equipped them for physically and mentally crossing over from North Africa to Europe, and to Spain specifically, influenced by the examples of friends and kin tracing in body and speech the possibilities and the realities of various cultural, familial, financial, political, and other links to the continent to the north.

To mention just one instance, where the example of someone else’s experience laid the groundwork or provided some traction for future personal growth or worldly movements: Kamal A., who had relocated from Tetuoan, near the Northern Coast of Morocco, to pursue medical studies in Granada in the 1980s. It was a move he spoke of having been prepared for from his earliest days of speaking the Spanish language, learning in Spanish educational institutions, and generally pursuing a Spanish orientation, prodded by a grandfather who had pushed Kamal in the direction of Spain geographically and conceptually. Kamal’s grandfather had served the Spanish military during its decades-long presence in the colonial era of Morocco in the first half of the twentieth century, and he had upheld an unwavering belief that the cultural connection offered by this historical overlap would best serve the life course of his descendent.

Lessons from this sort of bi- or poly-cultural reception became integrated into the worldviews of many individuals destined to cross over to significant life engagements with aspects of the other sides of cultural and geographic borders from those realms into which they were born. Such channeling early on in individuals’ histories helped set the vectors for personal expression and the formation of cultural taste for likely Moroccan immigrants, with the imagining of possibilities of life in these locales abroad for themselves and others often surpassing the range of knowledge of cultural resources on the part of the Spanish natives with
whom they came to interact.

Thus, for example, at a rehearsal in Granada of a hybrid popular music band still in formation, Med, a singer in his late twenties, who had immigrated in recent years from Al-Hoceima (on the Moroccan coast just across the Straits of Gibraltar from Spain), evidenced frustration at the efforts of a young Spanish percussionist trying out for the group. The Spaniard was steeped in flamenco and Latin rhythms but unable to play correctly a Western drum-and-bass rhythm any better than a Berber or Gnawa one. Led by Med, the group of musicians had been engaged in a fitful series of aborted attempts to update some “classic” American jazz and soul songs, the group effort breaking down every time after a few bars or a couple minutes when the percussionist couldn’t keep track of the beat. With these infusions of components from differing cultural backgrounds, the failed rehearsal demonstrated one distinct moment of friction in the negotiation of multiple crossover attempts occurring simultaneously.106

Such efforts at generating the culturally hybrid were practical attempts to address larger cross-cultural contexts and the cultural markets associated with them, and attempted by “crossover” individuals drawing on their own cultural background, while not remaining exclusively confined to any singular cultural givens presented to them from their immediate, native environment. Expatriate Moroccan musicians had to be especially pragmatic in response to their relocated-to contexts, as in that moment of botched would-be musical fusion in Med’s rehearsal, in which differing cultural awareness yielded products or processes that were not only unsatisfactory aesthetically, but commercially and socially as well.

However, as Tsing also suggests, it is necessary in tracking the friction produced in meetings between representatives of any two different cultural contexts generates to note not

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106 The drummer was no longer playing with the group shortly thereafter.
only the negative forces of resistance and entropy, but also how friction in cross-cultural 
encounters can also provide a necessary traction to go forward. In Med’s telling, his 
cosmopolitan capacities developed through a self-chosen and self-guided path starting from his 
youth in Al-Hoceima, and his earliest musical group’s mixtures there of Berber cultural elements 
and Northern Hemisphere rock and soul. This trajectory was catalyzed in large part by the 
appearance of specific cultural products arriving through particular channels of mediation both 
local and global: he recounted his earliest encounter with musics from overseas when a friend 
brought back commercial popular R & B recordings from a European sojourn.

Shortly afterwards, Med began creating his own musical material, which was also at once 
global and local. His disappointment at the initial prevailing incomprehension on the part of 
potential audiences for the unaccustomed musical assemblages he produced was one significant 
éarly check for his musical ambitions. Nonetheless, he persevered, his eyes (and ears) already 
attuned to a more worldly set of potentially resonant possibilities. His early groups in Morocco 
did achieve greater recognition and appreciation from regional audiences.

Eventually, however, his disgust at the failure of a recording company to compensate 
Med and his fellow musicians in the group for what he said was eventually a phenomenal 
success by local standards in terms of sales for the three albums they produced, led him to 
contemplate more proactively horizons other than that presented by Morocco. “People there talk 
talk [sic], but nothing goes in the pocket,” he told me, in what seemed a relatively light-hearted 
fashion. Ultimately, both these factors, coupled with a desire to advance his knowledge about the 
latest recording technology (following a limited stint as a technician at a Tangier radio station), 
propelled him to figure out how to cross the Straits in order to attend a Spanish vocational 
institute for audio engineering, which is how he had found his way to Granada (personal
communication 2006). His movement as a relocating musician, then, was an exceptionally
trepreneurial one: in cultural terms as well as in technical and logistical.

Having crossed the geographical distance between the two locations, his interest in the
possibility of crossing over to address new audiences from his own newly developing cultural
position impelled him to continue producing his own musical syntheses, both with the more
modern technological means of electronic musical synthesizers and computer-based sampling
and sequencing, but also with a more disparate group of musicians than he had previously
worked with, including, variously, a British-born jazz keyboardist and arranger, a Syrian-born
‘ud player, a variety of Spanish percussionists and DJs, and (sometimes) a virtuoso Chilean six-
string electric bass player. This always provisional group was “formed” only long enough to
produce a handful of demo recordings oriented toward European and North American festival
performance possibilities before Med relocated to Málaga, on Spain’s southern coast, where he
began work for a company booking and promoting tours for other bands.

This job, no doubt, was a welcome way of making money after the dead-end, low-paying
work he had done previously in a sandwich shop in Granada, but it was obviously also an
attempt to enter further into a network of Spanish national, European, and international cultural
presentation for his own musical practice (an envisioned trajectory he delineated out loud more
than once in my hearing). Med was also unusually adept at exploiting newer technologies for
promoting and distributing his work: an early adopter of applications such as MySpace and
Youtube, the human networks of both other musical artists and fans he connected to through
these were very real.

He generated music most often in a style that at once foregrounded elements of Berber
language and Moroccan rhythms and folk instruments, at the same time as it embedded these
among musical instruments (e.g. piano, electric guitar) and production techniques (for instance, sampling and computer-manipulated rhythm sequences) already in globalized circulation. He spoke of the genesis of one of these recordings called “Lalla Bouya,” (the name of a “Berber queen, “ in his telling), a song the original of which he discovered on a cassette of his grandfather’s, dubbed from an earlier recording from the 1950s, or, in his words: “Really old, maybe like the first Berber recording.” The choices he made in producing his updated version of this music weren’t decided upon casually, and they caused a certain degree of tension for him, as evidenced in his representation and rhetorical defense of those choices, in comparison with references he made in conversations to the aesthetic choices of other expatriate musicians there in Granada.

At one point, he declared to me, “I don’t like this thing where Arabs try to play all kinds of Arab music and do none of it well.” He went on to mention another Moroccan musician who had a long history in Granada, and how this latter tried putting “atlası [music from the Atlas region of Morocco], rifi [music from the Rif mountains], whatever, all together.” In support of his own seemingly similarly syncretic practices, Med spoke not only of expanding a two-note Berber tune into a longer melody for his recording project in Spain, but also of tacking on a “Gnawa” section at the end—taking some pains to point out the three year period when he lived with a Gnawi family in the southern part of Morocco, and attempting to establish through this some additional credibility in his accessing music customarily performed by individuals understood as ethnic Gnawis.

He spoke also of the issue of possible resources, speaking of how that other Moroccan musician in Granada had some special connection to the mayor and thus access to “whatever he needs.” This allowed the other to produce cultural projects such as a recent music festival at a
municipal theater—the outcome of which for Med was worthy of ridicule. He was critical, for instance, of the other musician’s last minute inclusion of Med himself as a token of contemporary fusión when he invited Med to sing in Berber with a Spanish rock band he hadn’t even met until the day before the concert. When questioned how he himself felt about the product, Med shrugged and dismissed it as an insignificant attempt to reach the claims of the concert’s publicized theme of Northern-Southern fusión. His response implied it was a sign of the Moroccan organizer’s lack of discrimination in conceptualizing and implementing what such an aesthetically successful musical hybrid might consist of. When I asked what the audience or promoter thought of this assemblage that he himself seemed unimpressed by, he smirked and repeated an aphorism—first in darija, then in Spanish—about a blind man eating without complaint whatever was rolled up in a ball of cheese that was presented to him.

Moroccan Musicians’ Use of Gnawa in Spain

Perhaps no address to or appropriation of musical genre had expressed the pitfalls of such synthetic appropriation of their “own” culture possibilities for immigrant Moroccan musicians in Spain than that of the music of the Gnawa. Like many popular cultural phenomena that are conceived of as originally ethnically-based, the reach of Gnawa music had been erratic, fitful, and tenuous—even for native practitioners and aficionados. For instance, Omar, a young Moroccan university student I met in Granada, who had lived in Spain for four or five years, and who was a non-musician but an enthusiast of popular culture generally, held forth at great length about the healing powers of Gnawa practices to give to a new acquaintance an example of the power and effects of Moroccan culture more generally. To illustrate his point he cited a newspaper article he remembered only poorly himself about a Moroccan Gnawa practitioner who
had been flown to Germany for a successful twenty-four hour long session of treatment on behalf of a patient diagnosed with a terminal case of cancer. In telling the story, however, he couldn’t recall the name of the primary Gnawa melodic musical instrument known as the genbri. Once he had been reminded of it, he exclaimed, “I haven’t thought of that for a long time!”

Though he had been expatiating for pedagogical purpose at great length and in heartfelt fashion on what he suggested might be an ignored or unappreciated cultural form, much of the specifics of what he was representing had been lost to him as well. As Thomas Turino writes in his study of nationalism, cosmopolitanism, and musical practice in Zimbabwe: “…levels of meaning, value, and practice are more important than formal features for identifying different cultural formations” (2000:346). The symbolic value of the idea of the cultural practice that Gnawa music was part of held primacy over the actual musical elements themselves, even in the example of its efficacy while being offered up as patriotic representative in this real world cross-cultural encounter (the just-met acquaintance he’d been lecturing was a Mexican New Age hippie traveler). And in fact, in terms of musical interests, Omar’s own listening habits since living in Europe had veered toward decidedly non-Moroccan genres ranging from rock to flamenco, as I will touch upon further somewhat later.

Meanwhile, the majority of Moroccan musicians who had taken up residence in Spain by this time had integrated some version of Gnawa music into their repertoire, or, at least, considered it. Kamal, for example, who was known as a bit of a dreamer among some of the other Moroccan expatriate musicians, mused out loud several times about the idea of developing Gnawa into an additional component of his already diverse set of repertoire possibilities.

The most common ascription for learning practices among these musicians was to
speak of Gnawa music as having “been around”—that is, heard as part of their personal soundscape while they were growing up in Morocco.\footnote{This was an explanatory phrase I heard from several Moroccan musicians in Spain.} This was far from the more extensive initiation prescription for those who might typically identify themselves as Gnawi in Morocco. Gnawa music nevertheless became something that most of the less initiated or adept expatriate musicians eventually worked into the repertoire of possible genres they mixed into their public performances, though the actual music they produced tended to be limited and/or awkward in the use of elements that more long-standing, familiar Gnawa devotees actually considered to be Gnawa.

For example, Mustafa, one of the first arrivals among an older generation of immigrant musicians in Granada in the early 1980s, played pentatonic Gnawa riffs as one style among many during sets of his public performance on the ‘ud—arguably nearly as unconventional a choice of instrument for the genre as the electric keyboard. And when questioned, he had no explication for his references to Sidi Mimoun, the saintly figure often invoked in Gnawa song texts (including his own), though he seemed quite comfortable in seeming to need none.

In another instance of attempting to integrate stray components of Gnawa musical practice, Souhail, a Moroccan musician who had also arrived to Spain almost two decades before, had invited onstage with him one time a younger Moroccan friend of his to play the qaraqeb, the large metal castanets that are a staple of much Gnawa performance. This was during a 2005 benefit concert organized against world hunger at the University of Granada. But his friend was apparently unaware of the subtleties of the rhythm expected of him, impelling Souhail to cross the stage from his center position as frontman/singer and attempt
to adjust his friend’s performance with his own body language and clapping while hovering nearby.

Shortly after that night, while hanging out in his apartment, Souhail, who had just played an impressive version of the blues on his ‘ud for me, declared, “There is no good or bad music, only good or bad musicians.” Implicit in this was that being “good” as a musician included not only the ability but also the right to play with aspects of any conventionally-defined genre, a cosmopolitan attitude inherent in musical practices performed by those who are comfortable crossing borders of all kinds. “There is no such thing as ‘pure’ in life,” he told me, “and not in music either. That word is a joke.” Pointing to a specific musical genre of local and regional interest, he proposed that flamenco become well-known in large part through its mixes with other genres, jazz especially.

In such a schema, Gnawa is just one such “resource” musical genre, more recently understood by Moroccan musicians working abroad to offer the specific potential for representing “their” difference to non-Moroccans. Musicians employed such resources because they perceived them as useful in attempting to cross over to new cultural realms, and to achieve all the capital that might accrue to such successful maneuvers: cultural, social, and otherwise. It was quite likely for this reason, along with its recent success in world music markets, that the music of Gnawa was more and more frequently borrowed from by so many Moroccan musicians. This was a model of practice employed by many of the more transnationally-oriented musicians in Morocco I met, and patently a lesson learned by most of those expatriate Moroccan musicians who had been playing in Spain. As I shall describe next, this more recent tendency toward “fusiones” encountered during the time of my work in Granada echoed prior instances of performative crossover by Moroccans in Spain who also
engaged in consciously hybridized genres.

Flamenco and its Relationship to Moroccan Musical Collaborators in Spain

In an earlier case of crossover musical activity among Moroccan musicians in Spain, and one with a larger and long-running narrative, the genre of flamenco, which benefited from its own expanding possibilities as an absorbent practice and its increased presence in the Spanish musical marketplace of the 1980s, noticeably boosted awareness and acceptability in Spain of music from North Africa and the legacy of Muslim-era Andalusian cultural history. During the period of my fieldwork, legends still circulated insisting that the murky origins of flamenco could be traced in part to those Andalusians known post-Reconquista as “moriscos,” who had in centuries past purportedly gone into hiding among gitano populations to escape unwanted attention and increasing Catholic persecution (Duran Muñoz 1962; Infante 1980; Lafuente 1955; Ortiz De Villajos 1949).

Certainly, after arriving in Spain, and especially Andalusia, immigrant Moroccans couldn’t help but experience an intensified addition to whatever exposure to flamenco style might have made up part of their sound environment while living in Morocco. Flamenco, of course, abounded in Andalusian cities generally: the sounds of live performances and recordings of the genre emanated from cars, stores, ads on radio and television, and at festivals and other special cultural events, not to mention from busking street musicians camped out in various out-of-the-way and prominent public spots alike.

As one example of Moroccan expatriates’ possible exposure and relationship to flamenco, I recall again Omar, the twenty-something university student from Fez. When I first met him, he was appreciating a particularly sunny day, in the steep mix of antiquity and self-
consciousness that is the “village” of Albaycín, the original population center proximate to the official Alhambra complex, both of which had been incorporated administratively as part of the growth of the modern city of Granada. More specifically, Omar was celebrating the good news he had just received: following many years of roistering around and enjoying himself, paying little attention to his studies, he’d discovered somewhat to his own surprise that he was actually close to fulfilling the requirements to graduate. After wandering into the Mirador, the small public square in front of the Church of San Nicolás, high up above the rest of the city, I soon overheard him lecturing about the history of Muslim influence generally in Andalusia to the same young Mexican New Age traveler toward whom Omar would promote Gnawa music’s healing possibilities.

Omar’s insistent pride in the legacy of Muslim culture in the region coexisted with his willful contrariness in reaction to the idea of fulfilling the tenets of Islam. He had abandoned Fez and Morocco, he told me, because he could not stand the pressure to behave within the limits of certain social norms: for instance, when people would hassle him about his red eyes, knowing it was a sign that he had been partying. The day I met him was one of the first days of Ramadan, and he was outspokenly pleased to be able to live where he could ignore the injunction to fast, not to mention to be free to smoke and drink from a big, one-liter bottle of beer outdoors in the middle of the day while listening to the local gitano musicians nearby in the square, performing their versions of well-known flamenco numbers for the tourists. Omar didn’t reject the worthiness of Islam outright, but only said that while these particular ideas of observant behavior might have made sense for many individuals thousands of years ago, they were no longer relevant (to him, at least) on this day. As he quickly sketched out his own self-portrait in words, it was clear that his cosmopolitan awareness had allowed him to be selective in mixing elements
of cultural practice and self-identification. His mother, an unusually cosmopolitan Berber herself, had taught English in Casablanca, where he had grown up, and he had been in contact with Peace Corps volunteers and other Americans from an early age.

Omar was one of many individuals who had come to Granada from Morocco in recent decades to study. Unlike other students from all over Europe who tended to “visit” the city for only a year or two, Moroccans often ended up remaining in their new “country of welcome” after finishing their schoolwork. Indeed, many of the earliest wave of Moroccan musicians who landed in Granada fifteen to twenty years before had begun their lives as expatriates while attending university. These immigrants thought of themselves as pioneers of sorts, having entered uncertainly, (but ultimately, it turned out, more or less permanently), a territory mostly unknown from firsthand experience, however half-familiar by way of information gleaned from school, family, and friends while growing up. This was back when things were different for Moroccan musician arrivals from across the Straits of Gibraltar: when the novelty their musical attempts held for many Spanish musical listeners approached the allure that Spain itself held for these immigrants.

Since that era, as part of the North African immigrant experience, more recent generations of Moroccan listeners had continued to assimilate foreign musical genres as well. For instance, the next time I saw Omar, we met at his suggestion in an “underground” bar devoted to bootleg recordings of classic Western rock bands. He was excited by the prospect of entering business himself, taking over another nearby bar/cafè named for a prominent Moorish thinker of the Middle Ages. He expanded on his future plans, looking forward to what he proclaimed would be his first real experience of winter, when he would be accompanying his Scandinavian girlfriend, who was currently studying flamenco dancing in Seville, to her family
home in Norway—a further set of global vectors following through on his longer cosmopolitan trajectory.

As we talked at the Underground Bar the last time I saw him, I recalled the moment of my departure from the Mirador of San Nicolás at the end of my first meeting with him. That time, I had left Omar—who was fully aware of his position as still-integrating relative newcomer to the peninsula, and who was cognizant as well of the attributions of morisco impact on the genre of flamenco—while he was singing along softly to himself as some of the local gitanos in the square performed “Como Agua.” This was one of the popular, canonical songs performed by Camarón de la Isla, arguably the iconic figure of flamenco in the last fifty years, and after all our talk of Moorish influences in Andalusia, Omar had a big, self-conscious grin on his face while he sung the words in Spanish half under his breath. That grin signaled to me a particular cosmopolitan turn on his part, which was conscious of the irony of his echoing in that specific site his own exoticized self-celebration by means of the industrially-mediated cultural practice of a different, conventionally-defined romantic Other—another Other—one vaguely connected in residual popular mythologies to his own exoticized ethnic identity.

In this same period, odd public leftovers still surfaced from those earlier collaborative attempts at cultural melding between the genre of flamenco and musical components represented as some part of a North African musical legacy. For instance, for the last several years prior to my arrival there, the Upsetter club at the bottom edge of the Albaycín hillside facing the Alhambra had been alternating nights of live flamenco with DJ-spun reggae. The Upsetter was a tiny cellar of a venue, and the flamenco there was usually played by younger, lesser-known musicians, often including attempts at a variety of cross-genre experimental fusions. I went there one night in the company of Kamal. Performing inside on a low stage were a percussionist, a guitarist and a singer (all middle-aged Spaniards), who, Kamal called my attention to as we entered, were doing a version in Spanish of “Jibuli Habibi” (“Bring Me My Love”), also known as “El Anillo” (or “The Ring”). This was a song from one of the better-known projects attempting to fuse Moroccan and
flamenco music, which first reached public attention twenty years before through the 1985 commercially-released recording, *Encuentros*. Afterwards, Kamal informed me that this music was inspired by Sha‘bi. The particular variety referenced through the recording, he said, came from the Jibal, a mountain region in the north of Morocco, with a rhythm taken from the rumba form of flamenco but modified with rhythmic accents and syncopations like those employed in the hadrat occurring in zawiyat in the cities of Tetuoan and Tangier in the North.

When Kamal (who mentioned later that he had previously performed in other venues with the Spanish singer at the Upsetter that night), called out from where we stood at the back of the audience, proposing the song be sung as it had been originally—in Arabic in addition to in Spanish—the Spanish performer onstage didn’t hear, because the cave-like room was packed and raucous with so many other people also calling out, chattering, and dancing. Even many of the younger listeners knew the song well enough to sing along with it—again, in Spanish. But quickly that song gave way to a Cuban number and then a Brazilian Bossa Nova, which segued in turn into another rumba-ish flamenco, and the glimpse where contemporary or continuing “Moorish” influence revealed itself had passed, having resurfaced from within another already antiquated retrospective moment, itself now lost in the blur of a multi-cultural medley.

This moment was redolent with a sense of the limits to cultural power that Moroccan musicians in all their poly-cultural capacity would typically run up against. On an earlier occasion, while we were sitting together talking at a tetería, Kamal had pointed out to me the entrance of an original participant from one of the flamenco-Andalusian fusion projects of that


109 Another Moroccan expatriate in New York later refined this genealogy further for me, saying he had grown up in Tangier hearing a version of “Chibuli Habibi” as a piece segueing out of a classic Sha‘bi tune “Bint Bilad” (“Country Girl”) by Sheikh Abdelsalem Cheqara, the leading Moroccan collaborator on the *Encuentros* project. Interestingly, in addition to pronouncing the Moroccan version of the song’s title in a Spanish transformation of the first syllable from “J” to “Ch,” this informant manifested the impact of the Spanish side of the project by recalling the name of Juan Lebrijano, the Spanish flamenco leader of the project, much more readily than that of Cheqara, despite eventually describing the latter as “the guy” among Moroccans for a type of Sha‘bi in this period.
period when such projects flourished in Spain in the 1970s and 1980s. Kamal, re-introducing himself from across the room to the sixty-something-year old flamenco letra-ist, producer, and impresario, discovered that the Spaniard had come to the tetería looking for its owner—another Moroccan musician, and friend, and sometime collaborator of Kamal—to discuss a possible new fusion musical project.

When I asked a few weeks later (on the way to the above-described episode at the Upsetter club) about the older flamenco-ist and whether Kamal had heard any more about a new project developing, he responded by saying. “People here like to make castles in the air: to talk and talk. But then they do nothing.” He signaled an end to the topic of conversation by laughing. But later when I asked why more Moroccan musicians weren’t trying to initiate such collaborative projects themselves (knowing that Kamal himself had written a number of flamenco-tinged hybrid musical pieces, as yet unperformed publicly), he replied simply, in more serious summary: “Moroccan musicians need flamenco, not the other way around.”

The realpolitik of culture performed locally in Granada that was summed up by Kamal, as he understood it, left little room for any illusion that the human and material resources to support a musical undertaking by Moroccans in Spain were open and unrestricted; nor that such restricted local political actualities wouldn’t affect aesthetic choices. Part of the savviness of practitioners from the lesser-resourced side of North-South divides tended to include an ability to recognize, negotiate, and compromise on the terms set by market forces on the other side of such divides.

As Scott Malcomson has observed about a continuum of translocal phenomena in his consideration of cosmopolitanism and some of its causes:

...actually existing cosmopolitanisms involve individuals with limited choices deciding to enter into something larger than their immediate cultures...More narrowly market-driven choices usually derive from a desire not to be poor, or
simply not to die. Entertainment choices are based on a range of options frequently beyond the control of the individual…(1998:240).

Choices made on both sides of this geographical and cultural separation of the Mediterranean between Morocco and Spain demonstrate some of the limiting factors or abrasive interactions coming out of cultural specificities: e.g., the relatively exclusive musical dedication by many young Spanish musicians to the nationally exalted genre of flamenco as described above in the case of a percussionist’s failure to cross over to a cultural capacity for the ready production of musics from non-familiar sources, versus the increasingly international pop culture sensibilities on the part of ambitious Moroccan musicians. This is where personal passions and market-driven motivations come together (or collide) to help form cultures of taste, or as Bourdieu portrays the process: “...how the cultivated disposition and cultural competence that are revealed in the nature of the cultural goods consumed, and in the way they are consumed, vary according to the category of agents and the area to which they applied” (1984:13).

This is also where demonstrations of what James Clifford has termed “discrepant” cosmopolitanisms can be seen—those that, in part, “begin and end with historical interconnection and often violent attachment” (1998:365). And no matter how adroitly any individual might manage their own position vis-à-vis their native cultural background and locally prevailing conditions:

Discrepant cosmopolitanisms guarantee nothing politically. They offer no release from mixed feelings, from utopic/dystopic tensions. They do, however, name and make more visible a complex range of intercultural experiences, sites of appropriation and exchange. These cosmopolitical contact zones are traversed by new social movements and global corporations, tribal activities and cultural tourists, migrant worker remittances and e-mail. Nothing is guaranteed, except contamination, messy politics and more translation (1998:369).
The intensive yet conflicted immigration to contemporary Spain by hundreds of thousands of Moroccans in the last quarter of the twentieth century activated resonances with differing, contested ideas of political, military and cultural regimes past and present in the same locale known formerly as *al-Andalus* (in Arabic), then more recently as *Andalucía* (in Spanish). And through these changes the intense identification on both sides of a perceivable gap in divergent cultural histories—of identified ethnic group, of birthplace, of nationality and of culture—became constructed out of intertwined cultural realities. And such constructions proliferated despite the frequently maintained contradistinction to opposing narratives on the part of others’ equally insistent narratives. For example, it seemed that for each iteration of a common Spanish proper name such as “Medina” (originally an Arabic word for “city”) or its many equivalents, which were arguably neutral legacies of Moorish-era influence from North Africa that had been retained in contemporary Spain, there were also still negative denotations or at least connotations: for instance, “Matamoros” (“Killer of Moors”), or other terms as inherently antagonistic.\(^\text{110}\)

In the case of Moroccan musicians, those who oriented toward the North learned from an early age how to read and perform cultural signs from across the borders of country, continent, and hemisphere—from beyond their native culture and their most immediate milieus. Meanwhile, much of a native Spanish population managed to overlook, remain indifferent to, or outright deny an historical overlap and cultural influence in their own country—even in Andalusia, the heart of the region where that overlap occurred.

For most Spaniards during the early 2000s, the history of their country and culture really

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\(^{110}\) During one of my first visits to Andalusia, I noted graffiti reading “*arabes robos!*” (“Arab thieves”), among other hostile phrases, prominently painted on a brick wall in a highly rural area. For other anecdotal information regarding contemporary Spanish discourse antagonistic toward Arab immigrants, see Rogozen-Soltar (2007) and Erickson (no date), as well as the already cited Flesler and Pérez Melgosa. (2003); Silverstein (2005).
had begun approximately 500 years before (or rather skipped a period of some 600 or 700 years following the era when Visigoth rule within the Iberian peninsula collapsed), when the era after that of the Moors came to a close with the taking of Granada and subsequent expulsion of first Muslims, then Jews, and ultimately even many of those who had converted to Catholicism in an ultimately failed attempt to integrate or assimilate.

What acknowledgment there was in the period of a former, less European, non-Christian cultural influence in the region in terms of language, literature, architecture, and music, stayed mostly relegated to signs of a distant, mysterious Other in classic Orientalist fashion, whether it came with inflections of fascination, indifference, or of hostility. These signs manifested, however, with a number of inversions of the archetypically established paradigms for Orientalizing (including self-exoticizing) behaviors, as I illustrate next.


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Continuing Exoticisms and Recent Hybridities

It would have been difficult in Granada in the early 2000s not to notice the prevalence there of danza del vientre. In fact, it was perhaps the most prominent cultural mode for encounters by contemporary Spaniards with something they perceived as Moroccan or Arab. And, indeed, many Moroccan musicians had found accompanying such “Oriental” embodiments to be one, more likely and continuing stream of public performance possibility in Granada and Spain generally at the time. Something akin to these various versions of danza del vientre is referred to in Arabic as al-raqs al-sharqi (literally “The Eastern Dance”—pointing, that is, to the eastern part of the Mediterranean), thus indicating its usual association with locales far from the extreme Western portion of North Africa and the Arabic world that is Morocco: i.e., Lebanon or Egypt. These kinds of “Oriental” performances were not entirely unknown in Morocco, but there
they were performed most often and most pointedly for foreign tourists at luxury hotels and restaurants in major cities.

Within these contexts, however, continuing cycles of intercultural performances circulated in involuted permutations. Among such “reads” and/or “takes” stemming out of the guesses that individual actors of one culture might make as to what agents of another culture might be expecting to encounter through contacts with that first culture were those at the most upscale discos in Tangier during this period. In such venues, one more usually saw the dancefloor used without apparent hierarchy or staging by international visitors and small handfuls of Moroccan “professional” club-goers alike. ¹¹¹ This was especially true in those dance clubs attached to pricier hotels in Tangier catering primarily to foreigners—a high percentage of Spanish tourists among them, since their access to the exotic destination of Morocco was made easy by both geographical and also historical proximity.

But occasionally, the flow of free self-expression on the dance floor would be interrupted by a formally designated stage-show interlude, often featuring a dark-skinned female performer with draped veils and bared navel. In one instance I observed, where a seemingly inexperienced or unversatile dancer performed al-raqs al-sharqi in very basic style, among the other viewers closely following the performance was a twenty year-old Moroccan habituée of such upscale “international” nightspots who whispered pointedly to me, the Western visitor nearest her, “No es marroqui en verdad,” (“It’s not really Moroccan”). She was nonetheless herself clearly entranced from the outset of the performance, and half-consciously began to copy the moves of the “official dancer,” unable or unwilling to take her eyes off the “exotic” display.

It was easy to imagine this actively-engaged audience member, and other Moroccan

¹¹¹ Most of these last, younger females, were understood by management, staff and other clientele alike as prostitutes.
individuals like her, continuing to participate in such re-inscriptions of awkward cultural stereotypes, propagating them further, however initially half-parodically.\textsuperscript{112} Such moments were far from the last in a chain taken up in turn from a mimetic performance intended to reflect the stereotypes produced by one culture (in this case, that of some Moroccans) in projecting or attempting to grapple with their cross-cultural understanding of another’s understanding (i.e., Spain’s) of the first. Or, as Kelly Askew describes stereotypes, such moments served as instances of “cognitive strategies employed to streamline an excess or scarcity of information” (2004:54).

The reiteration of such manufactured cultural clichés, which were received via the contrivance of spectacles generated from “top down” sources, as demonstrated in the cycles of cultural stereotype projected at the Moroccan disco, served both visitors’ pleasure as well as local re-enactors’ own livelihood and entertainment. The perpetuation of these clichés occurred when audience members like the above nightclub habitué took up aspects of the spectacle they witnessed initially, and then later, on the dance floor themselves, regaled with their own impressions succeeding generations of those recipient, visiting others: that is, those many pleasure-seekers to Morocco from the European continent, with whom mimetic Moroccan cultural practitioners brushed elbows, exchanged glances, and performed further embodiments of cross-cultural communication and miscommunication into the future. And in this fashion such ascriptions and self-incorporations continued to be re-inscribed again and again on both sides of a conditioned and reinforced geographical and cultural divide.

Thus, in similar fashion, visiting Moroccan-themed teterías, bars, and restaurants back in Granada during this period, one could frequently encounter self-taught Spanish \textit{bailarinas del}

\textsuperscript{112} See Taussig 1993 for comments on the effectiveness of cultural mimesis even with such distortions.
vientre (“belly-dancers”) manifesting an interest in the cultural “Other” of the exotic Middle East by performing their takes on this cultural form. These manifested as well in commercial dance studios and exercise gymnasiums, and Moroccans often served as musical performers who lent an “Oriental” flavor while accompanying Spanish “oriental” bailarinas, however arbitrary or ignorant these musicians might feel those dancers’ demands for certain rhythms, or combinations of rhythms might be. This was communicated to me by multiple Moroccan musicians through ironic, derisive smiles as well as explicitly through critical comments they shared about dance performers’ limited understandings of the music they played.

One site for such activity, a busy tetería in the lower part of Albaycín, regularly featured a Spanish “Oriental” dancer who performed to the accompaniment of two Spanish musicians playing a version of Hindustani music on the North Indian instruments of tabla and sitar. On the night I went there, Souhail, the middle-aged Moroccan musician I was sitting next to (introduced at the beginning of this chapter as the leader of the hybrid musical group Al-Ta’ir), repeated out loud for my benefit that the show was “for tourists,” who, he said, “don’t understand” what they were seeing: an unknowing echo of the comment by the young Moroccan disco-goer on the other side of the Mediterranean.

In the setting of this venue that traded so conspicuously on vague and distorting ideas of past or distant exoticism, the truth was that we were all tourists: his two Spanish friends; his Russian girlfriend in attendance that night; myself, his American ethnographer; and the cosmopolitan Moroccan musician himself, someone who had decades ago settled in Granada and integrated successfully after landing in a civil service job in the main municipal library while sporadically maintaining a performance career in a series of different groups with shifts through different musical mélanges. Despite the reservations he expressed that night at the tetería, this semi-professional entertainer clapped and sang along with the Spaniards’ performance of a musical style originating in the Indian sub-continent intended to be read in toto as Oriental, all for the benefit of a
mixed audience that filled the house. And, there, the female on display (who would normatively in any Orientalist schema of human relations serve as the body/object for sensual or decadent consumption) acted at once as the imitator and avatar and, at the same time, as a manipulator of this image/embodiment, as channeled as she might have been herself into this behavior. This was an example of the dense packing of love and theft and possession by way of mimesis that has evolved in post-modern modes of popular cultural consumption and understanding. There was power being articulated there that night, multiple layers of cultural possibilities and limits being presented, examined, and felt.

Perhaps most prominently, in this instance at least, among the audience was Souhail himself, an erstwhile candidate for exoticized appropriation, a potential for exoticization never depleted no matter how long since he’d landed this side of the straits. In the context of this exotic version of the performed “Oriental,” he was made into the spectator of another’s acts of essentializing. At the same time, he was reminded of his own marginal position, while also implicated in the ongoing series of set-pieces that made up the spectacle of local cultural life of which he was only one enactor or component. This Moroccan friend of mine coyly and self-amusedly tried out a couple of chanted “Salaam Alaikums,” in harmony and rhythm with the Indian raga we were listening to, in echo of the hybrid style of one of his own performance modes, where he sang that standard phrase of greeting in the Arabic world, accompanied by the reggae-jazz played by his band of entirely Western-born musicians.

*Other Oriental Turns toward the West*

Turning to consider Souhail’s role elsewhere as a practitioner himself, the groove-oriented ensemble he had settled on as a default mode for his own live performances, after

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113 See Lott 1993; and Taussig 1993 for prior examples of self-identification in other locales produced through ambiguous and ambivalent cross-culturally reflective means.
twenty or so years of trying other combinations of musicians both in fusions, and as more stripped down attempts to represent something “folkloric” or traditional from Morocco and elsewhere, was fundamentally a group playing popular music of the North and West hemispheres with a flavor of something “different.” This last was most prominently delivered by its leader singing at times in Arabic, but also in a slew of other languages, not all of which Souhail even spoke himself. The show presented thus didn’t just emulate the successful formula of highly polished and even virtuosic musicianship of an African-American form (i.e. jazz) played by Europeans, along with the already widely disseminated and easily recognizable musical signifier of reggae’s slow groove; it replicated both the quality and specificity of familiar exoticness presented by a range of already established popular musical “others.”

In what were among the more market-aware attempts at addressing possible receptivity on the part of Western audiences, many Moroccan musicians in Spain engaged in more pro-actively syncretic musical practices, choosing selectively among components of Moroccan music, rejecting what might be heard by Western ears (the native audience sought by entrepreneurial immigrant musicians) as ugly or unfathomable. Thus Souhail had explicitly and consciously decided to eschew North African Rai or Sha‘bi (both massively popular in Morocco itself) as likely crossover genres to perform in Spain. This was because, he said, the songs were too long and the rhythms too monotonous (personal communication 2005).

Cognizant of other cross-cultural successes in world music markets, North African immigrant musicians in Spain such as Souhail had in many instances taken up not any general overall style to inform their own repertoire, but the individual songs by specific icons of already successfully

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114 One stillborn project, for instance, attempted to wed Argentinian folksongs with elements from a Moroccan/Arab musical mélange.

115 As opposed to the world pop stylings of those, such as Khaled, who were formerly seen as Rai performers, but who had long before crossed over to a more international style.
traveled musical culture from other parts of the world: not only the pop stylings of fellow North African Khaled (“Didi”), but also Bob Marley (“Get Up, Stand Up”), Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan (“Mustt Mustt”), and both songs and song forms from Cuba and elsewhere in Latin America.

Such prototypical exemplars of the world music market were able to cross over themselves in the first place with the mediating influence and resources offered by Western or Northern hemisphere producers, record companies, journalists, and other cultural brokers. These intermediaries worked through and helped develop networks of distribution leading to U.S., European and, ultimately, in many cases, global markets for these formerly esoteric cultural products, while at the same time assisting or enforcing the evolution of musical production style for such potential crossover artists. Such evolution included expanding, sometimes spectacularly, the range of musical arrangements to include synthesizers, electric guitars, brass, and drumkits, where none or few of these elements had previously been. At the same time, promotional rhetoric emphasized purportedly culturally transcendent qualities of spirituality or “soul” in the musics, also at times playing up reputed “revolutionary” or “rebel” political stances embodied by the musicians themselves. And no matter these stylistic and rhetorical adjustments, the artists who succeeded most spectacularly, did so in part by manifesting musical traits familiar and accessible to Western audiences, especially danceable rhythms with which they were already well-acquainted. After twenty odd years living and playing music for public consumption in Spain (having recorded for Spanish subsidiaries of several multinational record companies, both for his own projects and as collaborator in support of others),116 Souhail had become highly conscious of how Spanish audiences might or might not respond to a variety of musical performance styles.

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116 This included one group of his in which the roles of all the other Moroccan immigrant musicians save one, the leader of the group, were eventually replaced by Cuban musicians.
Once, while we were watching a video I had made of one of his concerts, I observed out loud to him how he seemed to have no fear of the audience, in reference to his starting the performance by plunging down the aisles, attempting to engage the seated attendees in some impromptu introductory call and response (including several rounds of “Salaam Alaikum”) with the aid of the microphone he periodically extended. He responded, “Yes, but the audience is afraid of the singer,” noting how tentative they were in reacting to his prompting to chant back the rudimentary foreign phrase of greeting he offered up as lyrics.

In Granada, as in cosmopolitan urban Spain generally, potential audiences might have been in theory fairly polyglot, but in practice Spanish was of course the only language held in common among all individual members. Granada in particular had a high percentage of students from other parts of Europe, since in the course of the prior two decades, tens of thousands of them had arrived to attend temporarily at different times the city’s university through the Erasmus exchange program.

Granada was also a destination spot both for middle-class tourists from all over Europe, and for those seeking the gratifications of prominent historical and cultural landmarks such as the Alhambra and the medieval-era hill village of Albaycín. This latter had been incorporated into the larger, modern municipality of Granada by this time, along with the integration of a residual gitano culture that was still celebrated, however little or much that was derived from a population that was still demographically marginal there.

This integration occurred more so than through any other means via the continuing commercial offerings in local stores of both cheap tourist goods and haute couture knockoffs based on gitano cultural artifacts (brightly colored, ruffled dresses; castanets; and, of course, guitars), as well as the highly self-conscious, commercial versions of staged tablao culture of
restaurants and bars that featured the music, dancing and atmosphere of gitano style. The experience of culture by listeners (whether international or domestic) in such settings was usually that of entertainment rather than any elaborate or in-depth investigatory elucidation, and this was a fundamental factor in the sociocultural context of a competitive marketplace for eyes and ears and minds that Souhail and other Moroccan musical performers were attempting to engage with at the time.

Thus a conscious and shifting address to audiences with awareness and sensibilities understood as “European” or “Western,” no matter how native or how “just visiting” as tourists of one kind or another they might be, was a likely default for practical-minded Moroccan musical performers in a market that provided only highly limited access and support for musicians of any kind. Such was the case with Tarik, another musician from Morocco who was an “older hand” at playing for Spanish audiences, who had also lived and performed in Spain on and off for twenty years before more recently relocating back in Tangier, and who had released multiple recordings of his work to international markets. Tarik told of having to counsel a fellow Tetuoani violin player to cut short the violinist’s long-developed performance mode of playing introductory solos, which (Tarik hyperbolically claimed) threatened to last upwards of ten minutes. This occurred in the context of a tour the two had undertaken together in Europe, and during a piece that was itself only supposed to last seven or eight minutes altogether according to the regime of their performance program (personal communication 2006).

The story might be seen as illustrative only of the practical side of one working musician, and it is true that such choices are made constantly by any musician attempting to play publicly “in the real world.” But add the conflict with the incomprehension and/or resistance of the chastised musician (and a foundering of the collaboration), along with the criticism that Tarik,
the cross-culturally “tutoring” musician, had unknowingly received behind his back from other Arab musicians and aficionados of the Andalusian style he was purporting to represent, and lines become more sharply drawn in considering the results of a competition for recognition and cultural capital as well as the more immediate market gains. It is worthwhile emphasizing the shrinking rather than expanding loops of possibility that resulted from attempts to communicate what was already more familiar for audiences, the contexts for whom kept foreign performers relegated to the passing image generated by the “quickie” cultural entertainment presented by a traveling show.

Such shifts in performance practice can be seen as desperate or pathetic tactics in a cultural market and a social milieu where there was no likely strategy for trying to sidestep a fundamental marginality. Moroccan musicians’ irrelevance to mainstream practices of popular culture in Spain could not be avoided altogether, however. Besides the usual limits of genre pastiche against which their most frequent modes of musical performance bumped up, the economic results of that practice were also typically lackluster and unsustaining. Almost without exception, the Moroccan musicians I met in Granada started off and/or wound up finding work in vocations other than music to provide material support for themselves.

In some cases this included starting their own businesses and developing contexts where they could also play music, thus engendering reciprocal fields of activity: where for example a musician’s teashop or a bar provided a physical setting in addition to other material means for its owner’s or others’ performance of live music. The inverse was also true: the music supported the business of, for instance, a tetería itself, providing a defining and potentially appealing (however marginal) cultural activity for that business, infusing an idiosyncratic substance and texture to the image of the commercial enterprise. These performance modes hinted also at the novel channels
opened up in the new locale of Granada and Spain for the practice of music by Moroccan immigrants, who might not have previously put themselves forward to perform music publicly, making music in their new locale a vocational strategy rather than one that might also have been more avocational.117

In Morocco, movement through multiple styles and genres (e.g. Rai, chanson, jibali, and al-mūṣīqā al-sharqīyya) in the course of a single afternoon or evening of performance was not uncommon in public presentations by groups there (most notably among “popular,” Sha‘bi orchestras). However, the degree of genre-hopping engaged in by most of the Moroccan musicians living and performing in Granada and other parts of present-day Andalusia was unusually quick and broad: in addition to those genres just mentioned, takes on Gnawa (which no working professional Moroccan Sha‘bi band would have attempted to incorporate in performances there), short excerpts from al-Āla (al-mūṣīqā al-andalusiyya), and other antique canciones, with words sung alternatively either in Spanish or Arabic, were also likely to be presented by the same Moroccan immigrant musicians in a single set or show. The mixture of elements and styles extended beyond the music itself: Moroccan-run teterías in Granada tended toward an eclectic décor (unlike what would be found in almost any café in Morocco). The Spanish teterías included wall displays of musical instruments, the origins of which ranged far into Central or Eastern Asia, as well as ancient tools and domestic furnishings whose provenance might be from any geocultural source—a European one more likely than any from the Maghreb.

This pragmatic eclecticism incorporated background décor in the audible realm as well. At Café Ziryab, one prominent and long-standing Moroccan-run tetería in the lower slopes of Albacín, decades-old tapes of Fairouz, the pop diva and national cultural icon of Lebanon, whose

117 Thanks to Dwight Reynolds for reminding me of this possibility.
musical arrangements from the 1960s and 1970s tended to feature Western-style instrumentation, were insistently dominant. Meanwhile, a newer tetería, Café Alquimia, opened in late 2005 by the same owner, and positioned to take advantage of tourist traffic in the center of Granada, featured a mix of more international-style New Age, pop, and Western-style jazz fusion recordings when they weren’t featuring live, one-off duos and trios of flamenco and/or “Oriental” music performance.

The owner/manager of the Sahara, a Moroccan-run bar located at the time in a working-to lower middle-class suburb of Granada, provoked much more dancing among his clientele (which included some Moroccans, but mostly Spaniards as well as other Europeans, in addition to the occasional sub-Saharan African), with an eclectic mix of CD tracks from Europe and the Americas (reggaetón was a seasonal favorite there as seemingly everywhere else in Spain during the fall of 2005 and spring of 2006, and hip-hop from the U.S. was a long-running staple). The sporadic live performances there by Moroccan musicians of Sha’bi and versions of “revolutionary” music (as Mosleh, the bar’s owner and frequent performer himself termed it), made famous by iconic practitioners such as Nass El Ghiwane, the popular Moroccan group from the 1970s, did get some of the bar’s customers moving on the nights I visited there, but not nearly as many as did the latest recorded pop hits from the West succeeded in doing.

Mosleh was generally credited within the Moroccan expatriate musician community as one of the very first to make the move across the Straits of Gibraltar from Morocco in the early post-Franco era. He stated explicitly that he did not want his bar to be a place just for Moroccan customers (personal communication 2005). And the choices he made in his role of in-house DJ bore out this ambition to appeal to a diverse clientele. These were decisions made while playing upon both sides of a unique personal history that combined claims on representing something
“Moroccan” or “Arab” in aspects of the venue’s style, and at the same time channeling a practically-informed awareness gleaned from his experience living in the country, starting at a school for hostelry he had attended—his initial basis for entering Spain from Morocco in 1985, when immigration possibilities had loosened up sufficiently after the Franco years.

He had also sporadically pursued a professional career as frontman for a series of his own musical ensembles that had toured widely throughout Western Europe and Northern Africa, and recorded several albums worth of musical material that were released commercially. These had featured, at different times, mostly other Moroccans as supporting musicians, but also various Spanish and Latin American performers as well. These personnel changes were initiated, he said, in part by interpersonal rivalries and animosities within the band, shifting his own priorities in choosing collaborators, but more so due to marketplace considerations at the insistence of record company executives (this included the addition of several Cuban instrumentalists, who were believed to be exceptionally capable of appealing to a dance music audience). This era of his most commercial success—the late 80s and early 90s—corresponded with the early history of world music’s promulgation as a self-conscious industrial category. The demise of the vocational possibilities for his performance of popular music hybrids coincided with the end of a novelty factor associated with the significant numbers of North African musicians newly arriving on the music scene in Spain, and the moving on of record company interests and/or market tastes to other horizons of exotic cultural practice during a period when such attempts at “world music” fusions had peaked in number and popularity.

_Ghosts of the Past: Cultural Phantasms and Cultural Speculation_

Looking, or rather, listening further back in time, Moroccan musicians and practices of
Moroccan music in Spain have been part of a renaissance in the performance of “Early Music” in recent decades. In the case of music specifically relating to an earlier, pre-Reconquista period in the Andalusian region, iterations of this have usually been “reconstructed” by a sort of contrafacture, taking present-day melodies from the North African traditions understood to have derived from more antique predecessors originating from North across the Mediterranean, or imagined from vague references in historical documents to musics in court practices there dating back 500 to 1000 years. This is one necessary response for those interested in generating modern-day versions representing these bygone practices since, as a number of scholars have pointed out (e.g., Reynolds, forthcoming; Trend, 1929), no musical notation exists of actual music from that era and area. In several instances, these contemporary projects provided some spotlighting of Arab or North African contributions to both ancient and current musical life on the European continent, with recordings and public performances by members of the Spaniard Paniagua family spearheading and producing much of the genre’s more notable products. Many, but far from all of these projects, had been realized in collaboration with Moroccan musicians, though ultimately without creating much critical mass of knowledge regarding even the arbitrariness of such projects’ aesthetic choices, much less developing larger cultural historical understanding on the part of Spanish audiences. What awareness these projects created did so also without significant on-going institutional support, according, at least, to Carlos Paniagua, one of the younger members of the family, and a frequent performer and primary instrument builder for recordings by the Paniaguas and other early music “reconstruction”

118 The question of such genealogies has been contested in writings about the musical history of Andalusian music in Morocco (see, for example, Aydoun, 1992:26; compare Guettat, 2000:133).
119 Notably their 1977 Harmonia Mundi release, Musique Arabo-Andalouse, which featured four different members of the Paniagua family, and several other Spanish musicians playing a wide range of Arabic, Moroccan, but also “early” European musical instruments, however arbitrarily assigned they might be in the actual arrangements. For
projects from the period (personal communication 2007). Despite vague connections referenced at permanent iconic cultural landmarks such as the Alhambra, or perennial cultural projects such as the Festival Internacional de Música y Danza in Granada, communication of and support for ideas of a cultural heritage not only of the single largest minority population of Spain during this period, but also of a heritage Spaniards could also (knowingly or not) trace to their own antecedents as well, was highly limited.\textsuperscript{120}

The lack of awareness or sometimes explicit dismissal that many visitors and native Spaniards alike evidenced toward the Muslim-dominated cultural past of the region, alternately amused or challenged the patience of many, more culturally-concerned and knowledgeable Moroccan immigrants in Andalusia, along with often provoking, unasked for, detailed explanations from them. The dim historical figures and turbid cultural currents that populated these explanations flowed through the landscapes of imagination for many living in Spain. Andalusian scholar José González Alcantud has called such recurring figures “cultural phantasms,” referring to the Muslim history of Andalusia. The invisible presence of such figures seemed to keep whispering also (albeit less insistently, from the background) even for those contemporary native-born Spaniards whose perspective looks toward the rest of Europe for the cultural histories that inform their country’s originating mythos. González Alcantud has compared a syndrome of conflicting attraction and repulsion for Spaniards to that history (and its modern era representatives) to the relation of individuals to a “phobic object” á là Freud (2002; see particularly pages 123-4, 172).

And, of course, the living, breathing, moving immigrants from North Africa who had themselves become more and more prominent in daily life throughout much of Spain in the decades leading up to this period also seemed in some sense unreal, living ghosts for Spanish-born individuals: both because of those immigrants’ later-day marginality and the holdover threat they

other examples of similar recordings (including even earlier releases), as well as an extended discussion of the arbitrary particularities in recent historical developments of such projects, see again Reynolds (forthcoming).

\textsuperscript{120} In its more than fifty years of existence thus far (its program literature traces its own origin to symphonic concerts at the Palace of Carlos V in 1883), the Festival had programmed musicians from North Africa only once or twice,
represented from prior epochs. This was especially true for those Spanish natives who were reminded by contemporary immigrants from North Africa of earlier eras when “Moros” had (however temporarily) deflected the greater part of the Iberian peninsula from playing out what was understood by Spaniards as a Christian-based, European-leaning historical narrative and cultural complex.

Most Moroccans I met in Granada during this period were outwardly accepting, whether cheerfully or fatalistically so, about the roles they had managed to carve out for themselves from the limited cultural understanding of any mainstream social status quo at a local level. Along with these both notional and corporeal “phantasms” in present-day Andalusia, Moroccan musicians (and Spanish musicians and producers) engaged also with a process of “cultural speculation” (another phrase borrowed from González Alcantud 2006:20), attempting to leverage some social status by way of a generic version of their cultural origins. Through this sort of process, abstract or psychological aspects of identity were produced for immigrants’ worldview.

But more practical choices about self-presentation and livelihood were also generated through such speculative enterprise, utilizing a knowledge of cultural practices from Morocco both as credentials of particular, proud ethnicity and as resources toward vocational, material ends.\(^{121}\) Such attributions were particularly prominent within contexts of contemporary Moroccan musical activity in emblematic sites such as Cordoba, Sevilla, and Granada, which supported modern-era evocation of historical eras when Muslim ancestors were not only influential but actually dominant in local cultural practices because they were also dominant politically in much of what is now Spain during the half millennium and more after Muhammed.

One prevalent stream of discourse on which floated many cultural ideas, social interactions, and pragmatic hopes of Moroccan cultural producers in relation to the presentation and reception of Early Music in the Spain (and Europe) of the preceding decades was rhetoric and despite the frequent highlighting of classical music repertoire from Western Europe from all eras, it has ignored that earlier Muslim-informed cultural legacy from its own locale entirely.

\(^{121}\) Though, as implied earlier, the depth of knowledge about those cultural practices might be questionable and nonetheless employed in more crass and calculated movements towards attempted musical careers.
suffused with the idea of “Las Tres Culturas”. This idea explicitly pointed to a purportedly more golden, utopian socio-political era accompanied by various parallels, exchanges, or intermingling of musical ideas and practices, among other cultural aspects. The invocation of such rhetoric, centered on the notion of an antique “Convidencia,” was one strategy employed by those in the roles of contemporary producers or would-be producers\(^\text{122}\) of “Moroccan” music in attempting to aid its crossover into possible arenas of greater reception for genre practices that a Spanish public might likely be previously ignorant of or resistant to. Beyond that, however, the same strategy via these reassuring references was also used to construct possible cultural bridges across the perceived ethnic differences between Spaniards and the many Moroccans who lived among them in modern Spain (see Comín, 1985; García Matos, 1987; Infante, 1976).

Allusions to that medieval period of lesser cross-cultural strife held particular interest and resonance for both Spanish citizens and Moroccan immigrants after the events surrounding the March 11 Madrid bombings in 2005, and in the period coming out of the aborted Spanish military adventure in Iraq. But, additionally, the utopianism that was indicated when Moroccan musicians cited this earlier period of now-lapsed, supposed tranquility, carried the imputation of an implied right of “belonging” on the Iberian peninsula for those contemporary Moroccans who were engaged in the promulgation of the story of that purportedly happier period when predecessors of theirs in the region lived as natives while speaking Arabic, practicing Islam and playing music more or less similar to what they were performing or listening to in the present. Such references could be understood as claims to supersede those tenuous positions in which even long-term immigrants to the region might have felt at best “guests” in more recent periods,

\(^{122}\) Erickson (nd) refers to those “professionally engaged” with the theme of Convivencia in Catalunya. Examples already referenced in this chapter include both the Granada mayor’s office and the Moroccan organizer of the mini-festival of fusión compared by Med to cheese given to a blind man; organizers for the Festival Internacional in
no matter how permanently resident they might be (and indeed the majority of Moroccan musicians I met in Spain had relocated there to stay). The tensions stemming from those contemporary social and cultural positions that were felt as marginal, and that were attained and maintained only precariously, could come to inform relationships within the group of Moroccan expatriate musicians (for whom Spain in general also often served a phobic object), as much as in inter-ethnic contacts and conflicts between Moroccans and their native Spaniard “hosts,” as discussed in the next section.

Recurring and Contested Nostalgia of al-Musiqa al-Andalusiyya

Claims of overlapping cultural terrain by Moroccans in Spain were nowhere more explicit than with al-Āla, the genre of Moroccan music more popularly known as al-mūṣīqā al-andalusiyya (in Arabic) and música andalusí (in Spanish). The very name, of course, specifies the origins of the genre in what is now Southern Spain, though the greater part of its history has occurred in North Africa following more than five hundred years of self-conscious development, codification, and preservation of the genre in the wake of the great exodus of Muslims and Jews to North Africa from Andalusia in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Many contemporary Moroccans considered al-mūṣīqā al-andalusiyya as a primary idiom of national heritage and as a point of pride: a sort of patriotic “classical” music, with many of the elitist connotations that come with that latter designation.

In contemporary Andalusia, the genre of al-Āla generated especially intense critical judgments and defensiveness among Moroccan musicians regarding one or another practitioner’s legitimacy to represent this traditional form. Such criticism revolved around training and

knowledge—with the amount of repertoire memorized by any one individual being a particularly salient factor in evaluating a given musician’s purported mastery or even appropriateness in performing the tradition, though other telltale signs existed: for instance, the technique (or lack of it) used in fingering a musical instrument such as the ‘ud. The frustration of one older, conservatory-trained musician, originally from the northern part of Morocco and relocated to Granada, was evident when he talked of trying to teach another Moroccan instrumentalist he often hired for performances to remember anything more than five-minute-long sections of the conventionally hours-long nawbat from the al-Āla repertoire at any one time. This bandleader angrily expanded on the theme of musical insufficiency when he discussed the dearth of accurate knowledge about the genre among expatriate musicians generally, mentioning several of what he considered to be the many impostures around it in present-day Spain. He used the epithet of “mentirosos” (“liars”) repeatedly to me in response to the mention of other Moroccan musicians’ claims that they performed something categorizable as “música andalusí.”

Such judgments fed back into evaluations by Spanish musical collaborators and critics as well, some of whom have spoken and written publicly, questioning the representations and authenticity of particular Moroccan musicians. The implication was that, often, such cultural speculators were exploiting what small knowledge they did have of an ancient tradition to make themselves more competitive in a perhaps not too discriminating cultural marketplace in contemporary Spain. By performing components of al-mūṣīqā al-andalusiyya for audiences who were predominantly ignorant of the conventionally defining aspects of the genre (and especially by embedding excerpts from that genre within a stream of other, often unrelated genres—e.g.,

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123 I recalled when he spoke in this way to me how one of the accused “liars” had claimed to play a performance shortly before that was “100% pure” andalusian. Another accused the accuser of being a “tyrant” as bandleader.  
contemporary popular songs from Morocco and Algeria, Gnawa, and Gnawa-style vamps),
Moroccan musicians in Spain took on the role of cultural purveyors for a sort of meta-category
of “Moroccan” music, or even more broadly, “Arab” or “Oriental” music. Their sometimes
contested claim to represent the specific genre notwithstanding, the ultimate goal of being able to
portray themselves as cultural authorities more generally was won in new-found guises as
“Moroccans”, or “Arabs” or even “Orientals”, following their cosmopolitan crossing into Spain.

The social self-positioning achieved through such “aesthetic” choices by cultural
practitioners re-located to new countries recalls the assertion by Scott Malcolmson quoted earlier
in this chapter that, among “actually existing” types of cosmopolitanism, matters of
entertainment and “market-driven choices” are far from being the by–products of total free will
or agency. “Cosmopolitan” in this sense acts as a mask that effectively covers something
contained underneath, a response to the pressure exerted by the long reach of global consumer
economies and a response to the fear of being marginal, irrelevant, and threatened with
extinction—not only in a larger cultural sense but in an individual human one as well.
Incorporations of culturally cosmopolitan behaviors by immigrants in this mode function as
caricatures of their own native culture, or the taking on of adopted personae offered them by
their new host society. The impulse for either can be traced to a pragmatic concern for survival.

But this type of engagement with the manipulation of given or received cultural forms is,
of course, a fundamental aspect of genre production and of its utility: the capacity and even
necessity for de-contextualization and re-contextualization of genre attributes (i.e., style) and
attributions (that is, discourse) as part of the asserted meaning in genre functionality (Bauman
and Briggs 1992). These same shifting de- and re-contextualizing processes also generate open-ended possibilities for ambiguity in actual performativity of any chosen genre attributes. Features
of genre in this mode of practice can thus become less a straightjacket than a badge or temporary bridge—movable and malleable. And however restrictive the stylistic parameters said to define any genre are held among some in theory, the use that such attributes imply is as much for the “who” that is performing as the “what” performed.

A telling irony in the particular case of the production of música andalusí in Spain was the small degree to which it was a meaningful part of reigning cultural history in its purported place of origin: modern-day Southern Spain. It was ironic also that it had been “brought back” to Spain, however marginally, and performed in large part by a Moroccan cosmopolitan minority for a potential Spanish listening public who had set parameters to its own worldliness—pushing back that cultural Other which was close at hand and threatening, to be kept somewhat at bay by banishing it conceptually to another realm of the imaginary, an effective distancing maneuver, however unconscious.

One testimony to such cultural disconnect between and among native Spaniards and non-native yet nearby others came from a Moroccan immigrant I met at a small, commercially-oriented Medieval Fair organized in Granada in the fall of 2005. His normal social demeanor while doing the job of running his movable tea concession (which he set up around the country to celebrate similar anachronistic celebrations, often under the thematic banner of “Las Tres Culturas”) usually ranged from distracted to diplomatic. But his polite aspect shifted to sharply critical umbrage when noting that, in his fifteen years in the country, no Spaniard had taken even a superficial interest in the pre-recorded North African music he played from cassettes at the various incarnations of his itinerant tetería.

What had started as a rather indifferent seeming workaday attitude on his part to the cultural specifics of background décor for his business exploded into a manifestation of great
concern. In moments like this, tensions masked by surface appearances among immigrants and natives alike were revealed on many occasions in this period in Granada.

Conclusion: Musical Reception at Home and Abroad

Even those native-born Granadians who had some passing encounters with people and contexts associated with expatriate Moroccans and different forms of their culture, had startlingly circumscribed knowledge of what that culture was constituted of, for all that audience’s capacity otherwise for globally omnivorous consumption. This was true of several of the attendees at the afore-mentioned Café Sahara, including, for example, one middle-aged native Spaniard, a veterinarian by trade, who I met on a particularly noisy and crowded evening. This local resident appreciated the venue as a neighborhood hangout (the only other nearby option was a biker-themed bar), not as a place to experience the cultural expression of its dominant Moroccan-themed musical nights. This was true for him despite the insistently loud sound levels at which all of the musical performances tended to be performed. Upon being pressed further, this “regular” stated that he had neither an acquaintance with nor any actual interest in North African music, preferring classic, global rock and well-known flamenco performers such as Carlos Santana and Paco de Lucia.

Another, younger Spaniard (a student in his late teens) whom I met at the bar during one of the Sahara’s live performances, earnestly avowed an unusually strong interest in “Arab” music, but could identify only the industrial-purpose theme song from the highly manufactured ((in Europe) North African cross-country desert road race media event as music he thought of as specifically emanating from Morocco. Uncertainly, he also alluded to Natacha Atlas, the Belgium-born, London-based techno pop diva, as another possible example.
This tentative (and erroneous) identification of music from Morocco was echoed by another young woman (in her twenties) I met at another Granada cafe, who sheepishly admitted that, though she had gone to school in Granada most of her life with at least some Moroccan classmates, and had in fact been drawn to study danza del ventre as a teenager (abandoning attempts at flamenco dancing as “too difficult” somewhere along the way), she could also only offer Atlas as an example of “música marroqui” or “música árabe” that she might have heard on the radio or at the disco. When I asked her why that might be, she hesitated and ultimately deferred her answer, beyond stating that it was complicated. Though she was headed abroad to study in Japan, so was clearly intrigued by other cultures, this neighboring culture, examples of which were actually all around her, had not motivated her to investigate to any great depth.

Despite an interest in and ability to digest the likes of Japanese food, American films, Ethiopian blues, and even Moroccan vacations, a tunnel vision and muffled hearing occluded for most Spaniards a cultural heritage that could be considered as coming from their own backyard, and at least from their nearest neighbor geographically and historically. This can be seen as a case of making more palatable, desirable or safe the menace of the foreign by creating a greater sense of perceived distance for something that was already culturally distant in the present but both culturally and physically threateningly close in the light of larger historical and contemporary political considerations. And of course, this was an instance again of those “discrepant cosmopolitanisms” of Clifford already referred to, different vectors of which can include not only the limits in access to resources and cultural potential for those “necessary” cosmopolitans who have immigrated from one resource-poor area to a richer one, but also the restricted field of perception for even those privileged with extraordinary access to global possibilities. The pragmatics of many Spaniards’ cosmopolitanism allowed for and even required
this distancing, this masking, this occlusion and elision of much of the substance of what was held in check by these sorts of operations as more a phantasmic presence in their midst.

The Cynics, and following them, the Stoic philosophers, proposed a schema for imagining an idealized “cosmopolitan” humanity: a series of concentric rings of consciousness starting at a circle most narrowly-drawn to contain a single individual, then expanding outward to encompass larger and larger ranges of social and cultural possibilities—from family, neighborhood, and community to nation, countries, and humanity at large, with a more or less highly developed ability to pass, subsuming, from one realm of cultural and moral activity to the next. However divided individual Moroccan expatriates might have been within the community of musicians in present-day Andalusia, theirs was a world (and a worldliness) that had been outwardly expanding since long before they landed on the Spanish shores of the European continent. Conversely, for most Spaniards, in crossing over toward appreciation of the particular cultural “Other” that is Moroccan, some insular tendency kept the realm of their cosmopolitan understanding surprisingly constricted. To trace back in the opposite direction that homology stated earlier in this chapter: just as genre is the exclusionary gathering into a coherent group of various examples of cultural products with reference to characteristics of style, the idea of ethnicity served similar functions in Granada in attempting to define difference while categorizing by “type,” or, rather, typing through use of pre-existing categories.

But the distancing effects inherent even in efforts by Spanish natives to perceive across a gap of difference in order to “understand” non-Spanish Others showed recourse time and again to superficial, distorted and arbitrarily defined indices of those Others. And this was an ongoing feedback cycle of stereotyping reinforcement that enlisted both Spaniards and Moroccans in its vectors: just as the cultivation of a genre such as música andalusí was the exemplifying (or
diluting) of a cultural form, then the use of it in characterizing any person as being “Moroccan” (or “Oriental” or “Arab”) had social and political implications as well as cultural ones, as Moroccan musicians themselves knew well. And Moroccans’ participation, no matter how conflicted it might be among any group of individual expatriate cultural practitioners in maintaining these stereotypes, often seemed quite active.

The year following his angry denunciations, when I got together with him again at the Bar Lisboa near the Plaza Nuevo in Granada, the same musician who protested the falseness of other Moroccan expatriates passing themselves off as performers of Andalusian music was distressed to learn that some of those other Moroccan musicians about whom he had expressed the most doubt were part of an initiative to present schoolchildren in Southern Spain with their version of Andalusian music. According to the musicians, who were acting as “guest teachers” of this music, the students they performed for had been very excited about a cultural novelty—just as they would have been for anything “different,” to use the description with which one of these musicians himself described it. This was a difference and unfamiliarity that had been socially maintained despite decades of recent immigration (and previous colonization) and centuries of prior overlap. Competition and professional envy aside, part of what this moment of slight unfolding of the cultural stereotype of the “Moroccan” in Spain signified for that critical bandleader, who was trying to maintain some purity and rightness of the genre known as música andalusí, was how he might be associated with it as member of a (false) category it iconically represented. Negotiating these changes in and perceptions of genre was part of the social practice of not merely any cultural or ethnic category representing or being represented by Moroccan expatriates in Spain during this period, but a core feature of the sort of crossover cosmopolitanism they enacted.
And in that part-nostalgic, part-alien realm of the new hostland they had entered, regardless of how far they might have succeeded in crossing over and sharing the cultural baggage they brought with them, this group of relocated immigrants, no matter what their individual disposition might be, would always be alien in their adoptive country, no matter how potentially overlapping their cultural reference points might be. As Derrida has suggested: “a guest, even when he is well received, is first of all a foreigner, he must remain a foreigner” (2000:73).

The degree of integration for immigrants in this multi-ethnic society depended very much on polarizing agencies that pulled in two seemingly opposite directions: as foreigners who wished to enter social, cultural and political life as fully as possible, such “permanent” visitors had to represent themselves through cultural performativity both specialized (e.g., musical or dance performance) and quotidian (daily customary conduct), in modes that “fit” within a pre-existing, pre-emptive range of conceptions that allowed local comprehension. At the same time, some of the limits of that range were fundamentally disposed towards keeping the performers themselves at a distance, and thus always strangers, from far away.
Chapter Five -- Technology as Mediation; Mediation as Culture: Appropriation in Contemporary Popular Moroccan Music

After his usual afternoon job performing Sha‘bi and Rai at a café in the Sidi Harazem day resort outside Fez, and when he wasn't working evening jobs playing weddings, Kamal and I often met (at his insistence) back in town at the Pasha Café in the Ville Nouvelle, halfway on his way back home to the newer housing blocks on the western outskirts of town. Highly modern by café standards in Fez, the two-storied, split-level interior setting of the Pasha catered to a generally younger crowd, featuring the ubiquitous-in-Morocco, highly-sweetened mint tea as the beverage of choice, but also the somewhat more rarified shi-sha, a tall, free-standing water-pipe that offered a variety of mostly fruit-essence-sweetened dried herbs for smoking.

The café also featured a great number of large, flat-screen television monitors that alternated between showing international football games and foreign-produced feature films. During the broadcast of one of the latter, which starred a Latina actress extremely well-known in the West, a discussion ensued at the table Kamal and I were sharing with several other Moroccan men in their twenties and thirties, when someone observing her features wondered out loud if she was Moroccan. I thought at first he might be joking, but he and many of the rest of those at the table seemed bemused or unconvinced when I insisted that I was certain she had not originated in Morocco.

This demonstration of a small cultural claim, a partial cultural crossover, or perhaps simply a cultural misunderstanding, was just one instance of the awkward, vague, and sometimes less than fully-informed relationships that many Moroccans in this era of a greater, insistent global cultural circulation had with outside cultural elements. These relationships frequently involved strong ambitions to appropriate some of those elements that had previously been
foreign. Such appropriation was one way of mediating the often palpable differences across separately established and maintained cultural realms, which however murky or distinct, nonetheless presented themselves as both cultural antagonists and cultural possibilities. The swirling, sometimes dense array of possibilities that coalesced erratically in places such as that very urban café in Fez was a product of a complex cultural context that had developed very singularly in Morocco. It came out of the long trajectory of a fitful, yet continuing invasion there of European and Western-originating ideas and practices in modernity, starting prior to the Protectorate but accelerating through that era and even further into the post-Independence period of greater and greater global circulation.

Among those practices and attributes on which not only was the production of local culture dependent, but upon which a larger developing national culture in Morocco coming out of meeting places like the Pasha also relied, was the integration of a continuing stream of novel technologies and cultural forms arriving from afar. That integration of technology was a crucial factor in the formation of Moroccan culture, as was the dense urban environment, newly unfolding in the hundred or so years before, which served as the café culture’s foundation and breeding ground. In many ways, the Pasha itself exemplified (as did hundreds more cafés around the city and throughout the country), the modern age that was so influential in Fez and Morocco, and that arrived in greater or lesser degree from outside even while it filtered and fed a cultural production that arguably kept evolving as something specifically Moroccan.

In addition to the international satellite broadcasts that the Pasha’s television monitors were usually tuned to, the café also often played various popular music recordings both Moroccan and foreign through its sound system, and this was the setting where Kamal once proclaimed one of those songs we had been listening to idly as “hiphop,” even though it would
have been identified in much of the West as the highly distinct category of British-produced House. Again, when I tried to correct his identification, there was a look of uncertainty on his face, but no further discussion took place, whether out of lack of interest or his feeling a lack of knowledge in the subject.

I mention this second of two small occasions of cultural mis-identification to illustrate that during this period, although inundated with multiple streams of cultural products from abroad as were most Moroccan cultural practitioners, there were limits on what and how much of any particular example of foreign culture that many Moroccans took in, and on how it might have been comprehended by them.

It was also at the Pasha that Kamal introduced me to Said, a slightly older violin player about whose musical capacities Kamal was extremely laudatory in general. Said's long-standing unemployment had to do with bad luck perhaps, but also, Kamal intimated, because of his specific inability to perform the Sha'bi sub-genre of jibali. Where Kamal was young and intensely energetic—Said’s demeanor was relentlessly lower key, save when he entered into the tale of his sojourn abroad.

Said, in representing his own story of misfortune, told of losing his ability to work in France, where he had lived previously, because of some legal trouble having to do with another immigrant’s undocumented status, and then, after returning to Morocco, how he had lost a standing job at a five star hotel in Fez, where he had been playing “classical” music of the Maghreb and the East (that is, Egypt and the Levant). Though in public discourse in Morocco such genres of music were usually held in high esteem, and though examples of it were occasionally included in sets of live musical performances by popular music practitioners, the
kinds of music Said specialized in were generally seldom listened to in most public contexts in Morocco.\textsuperscript{125}

As we were parting from Said that night, Kamal held forth energetically about the effect on audiences of the new wah-wah pedal (a small electronic device for transforming and manipulating a sound signal), which had been purchased by his oft-times bandmate, Muhammed.\textsuperscript{126} Kamal became highly assertive about Said’s need to obtain a wah-wah pedal of his own, implying the acquisition of this novel bit of technology would somehow allow him to attain sufficient mastery of more popular genres such as jibali.

Muhammed had in fact earlier replaced Said as the lead musician in a group of musicians performing at the café at Sidi Harazem that served as one of Kamal's primary on-going public performance venues, though this substitution had long preceded the advent of the wah-wah pedal as part of their performance practice, and apparently had more to do with the ability Muhammed possessed of being able to sing and play violin simultaneously in the jibali genre. When Said seemed uncertain about Kamal’s aggressive suggestion, expressing reservations about the price and availability of such a piece of unusual technology in resource-poor Morocco, Kamal insisted that it wasn’t expensive and would be easy to locate, turning to me both for an estimate on price and as a possible intermediary in bringing one back from the United States.\textsuperscript{127}

During my fieldwork in Fez, I probably spent more time with Kamal than with any other local musician. As a working singer and drummer in styles affiliated with the meta-genre of Sha’bi, Kamal knew well and adhered without significant deviation to the given limits of the range of genres

\textsuperscript{125} A seemingly more top-down exception were the video recordings of al-Ala that would be played on national television just before the breaking of the fast at the end of each of the days of Ramadan.

\textsuperscript{126} When he told me of the wah-wah pedal, Kamal spoke of audiences’ enthusiastic response, miming how they leapt up to dance when they first heard it during a song, shaking their heads like those in a trance. To avoid any uncertainty about this latter, he made gestures of cutting his own arms as with imagined shards of glass, common reference for behaviors by those said to be possessed during ceremonies of Sufi brotherhoods such as the Hamadsha and Jilala.
that he worked in, (Rai and jibali most prominently). Kamal had no formal musical training -- had “always” known how to sing, as he put it — but really became publicly noted as a musician while a student in high school.

One evening, on a borrowed electronic musical keyboard synthesizer (not his main instrument), he ran through for me demonstrations of another half a dozen or so other genres he was less accustomed to performing -- a rudimentary series of arpeggios in both hands playing parallel octaves, for instance, to indicate al-Ala -- which music he had nothing to do with professionally. On another occasion, with just his hands and a tabletop, he slapped out for my benefit examples of a dozen different rhythms associated with specific genres of music he knew: a Sha‘bi, the shleuh, (associated with Berbers of the South of Morocco), the rhythm of a Sufi dhikr ritual, a wedding rhythm, a sharqi rhythm from the East, and several others of ceremonial or regional specificity. "Comme avec Umm Kulthum," he offered as explanation for one of these rhythms, referring to the iconic Egyptian diva from the twentieth century, still arguably the most preeminent musical practitioner in the Arab world more than thirty years after her death.

This range of cultural reference for Kamal -- not only across ethnic, secular/religious, and socio-economic strata within Morocco, but from across North Africa and the greater Arab world at large -- rather than indicating some vast sprawl of his own repertoire, suggested more an awareness of what lay just beyond the borders of his own usual practice’s limits. This was a boundary he would rarely cross in the day-to-day utilization of his musical knowledge and interests. In some ways the wah-wah -- a device that effected movement through an established range of sound possibilities, selecting in response to the input of a “signal” from outside the mechanism itself in a series of regular yet shifting patterns from within that given range -- is an apt metaphorical embodiment of the cultural process of working within genre and repertoire, and particularly in the intercultural mode through which so many postcolonial contexts have

127 My own visits to half a dozen music shops in the cities of Fez and Tangier in the years of my fieldwork
coalesced historically.

The characteristic of a mostly continuing adherence to given forms was true for most working Sha‘bi musicians I met during this period. For a typical working Sha‘bi band, the enterprise of adding elements newly-becoming customary (whether expanding song repertoire or different sound-producing technologies such as the wah-wah) was less consciously innovative, but rather more part of an ongoing, collective process that shifted general practice by accumulation, through gradual accretion of unusual components that were assimilated into existing practice. The addition of the novel technology of the wah-wah to Moroccan cultural possibilities was simply an extension of the range of various music-making components that aided the enactment of the sound and atmosphere associated with the successful performance of the genre or genres within which it became deployed, rather than a major generic renovation or aesthetic revolution.

The sense of some felt necessity of hybrid cultural practices was clear nonetheless from Kamal's exhortations to his friend and fellow musician, Said, suggesting some felt need to integrate previously foreign technology even while maintaining a clear sense of the genre boundaries in musical performance. This "updating" of a prior cultural form of expression with means adopted from outside was a striking response, however indirect, to the pervasive encroachments of newer cultural idioms from outside Morocco, which cultural practitioners of all types could ignore only at peril of losing cultural relevancy.

Impelled by this pragmatic attitude, most individual performers mixed longer-term cultural "givens" with only minute increments of more recently evolving, received conventions, which combination of "changing same" was highly typical of working musicians in popular

determined that none of them regularly had this item of Western-produced technology regularly in stock.
music in contemporary Fez at the time. This role of unself-conscious mediator among cultural possibilities, which Kamal took on as a popular musical performer and which he pressed upon his friend and fellow musician Said, points to the ongoing relevancy of intercultural relationships. The not-always-conscious mediation of those relationships was part of every cultural performer’s role in Moroccan popular music dating back to a long time prior to Kamal’s negotiation of cultural realities in his own career.

More blatant and self-aware attempts of cultural innovation could be observed in genres of Moroccan musical practice where the majority of stylistic attributes were derived wholesale from an outside culture, with singular indigenous components asserting some aspect that could still be held as fundamentally “local.” Such was the case with a burgeoning hiphop movement in Morocco during the early years of the new millennium, where the majority of musical markers in the performance practice (e.g., rhythms, tempi, computer-generated instrumental sounds) by those engaged in producing this type of cultural expression indicated references to an international style at the same time as other elements they used also referenced key markers of Moroccan identity (e.g., place names, Qur’anic invocations, everyday phrases in darija).

Such syntheses were audible in numerous sound choices and song texts during this period by popular Moroccan hiphop artists such as Fnaire, H-Kayne and Bigg. These cultural producers, mostly born and bred in the larger cities of Morocco, such as Casablanca, Marrakech, and Tangier, managed to adapt the aura of “underground” authenticity accruing to the genre globally, simultaneously “nationalizing” the genre of hiphop with those markers of Moroccan singularity, sometimes celebrating “being Moroccan” patriotically, even while often speaking out against such social issues as unemployment or governmental incompetence and corruption.
Such a deliberate approach to cultural synthesis demonstrated itself in rarer cases through other foreign genre choices, where a greater cross-cultural reach for musical elements and forms from outside existing conventions of locality and nationality was embodied by musicians in their compositional and performance choices. David Samuels (1999:464) makes the distinction between a sense of “shared history, rather than one of shared culture, that informs identity” in any particular community encountering aspects of modernity and negotiating these in an intercultural mode. The distinction between “history” and “culture” here is one that attempts to foreground the “everyday circulation of cultural…forms” as opposed to that of an “explanatory force” of culture…in its sense of ‘heritage,’” as Samuels puts it (1999:469).

I would argue that a further crucial point of consideration in formations around new cultural ideas is the different degrees of purpose any cultural producer might have. In the case of Sha'bi, marketplace concerns underlying the adoption, or conversely, the conservation of cultural attributes from “outside” or “inside” an existing cultural practice or context might prevail because of a pervasive impetus to succeed in terms of the sort of cultural currency that would lead to better public performing opportunities, to radio and television broadcast, and to recording sales. Class adds layers of interpretive/pragmatic possibilities to this equation: hiphop, for instance, becoming a genre of choice for individuals from lower socio-economic classes not only because of the underclass associations it held ideologically, but also for its low-cost entry point – requiring very little in the way of equipment.

Market considerations, though highly dominant in shaping general practices as well as individual practitioners’ attitudes, were not the only motivating factor in musical production at the time. Charting a different tendency of purposeful direction, I will take up in the next chapter a consideration of Boohallee (née Kifash), a musical group in Fez whose mélange of influences
and styles were somewhat sui generis, but which I propose as exemplary of a particularly self-conscious hybrid trend, and for whom an interest in social change, or at least social perspective -- usually a luxury -- was explicitly the most crucial characteristic for developing performance practices, along with projecting a cultural persona. Like the group of Sha‘bi musicians orbiting around Kamal and Mohamed, but with a different degree of willingness to take up from a wider range of sources, and with different avocational intent, the musicians in this other nexus of musicians were negotiating the cultural possibilities and demands of the particular time and place into which they were born and enculturated.

From a wider perspective, music’s malleability, as much as its mobility, make it an ideal example of the sorts of intercultural negotiations that impinged upon not only various Moroccan musicians’ choices, but upon those of most music listeners as well as of most practicing musicians in Morocco during this period. Music’s exemplification of these processes across cultural boundaries stems from what Martin Stokes has called its “perceived capacities for simultaneity and heterophony (and thus, pastiche, irony, multivocality, and the embrace of contradictions), its collective nature (and thus, imbrication with everyday lives), and its capacity to signify beyond the linguistic domain” (Stokes 2004:59). Such instances of resolving upon cultural repertoire and resources (and thus impelling significant aspects of individual and group identity formation), as the musicians mentioned above had, occur as just one set of choices faced by participants in modern societies. These choices are de rigueur for all individuals coping with their positions in serving simultaneously as both targets in addition to as employers of the range of cultural possibilities generally offered up (and in some cases insisted upon) by more globalized currents of translocal movement of cultural possibility via multiple specific and local cultural milieus.
To point back to a more specific example of musical practice evidencing such an intercultural relationship, the highly absorbent cultural complex of Sha'bi made its capacity for adoption of the wah-wah pedal an especially ready one. In seeking to present illustrative technical and aesthetic choices in the practice of Sha'bi as a contemporary genre, one could as easily have chosen to highlight through additional individual sketches and anecdotes a similar adoption or adaptation of many examples of sound-producing and other material technologies -- e.g., *la batterie* (the Western-style drumkit), Autotune and Vocoder emulation (frequently employed on vocals in recorded Sha'bi), as well as the complex uses of al-org, the electric keyboard synthesizer -- as striking incorporations from non-Moroccan sound technologies into prevailing formal characteristics of the genre of Sha'bi. It is important to note, however, that not just *any* instrument or other technology that might work in the developing range of Sha'bi practice necessarily “made sense” in the course of adoption. The intentional distortion of any musical instrument in the mode that Western-style rock guitar had fetishized for multiple generations in the West, or the deliberate, intense, and varying use of artificial reverberation in live performance or sound recordings of Moroccan popular music had been rare through the date of study.

This is why the choice to take note here of the use of the wah-wah pedal by Moroccan musicians during this period is particularly germane, especially given the basis of that apparatus’ own technical functioning as a device that *selects* from across a given range of sonic input within a larger continuum of possibility, producing in this process a distinctive effect to be incorporated along with other stylistic givens in the larger form of cultural expression that is Sha'bi. As metaphor for the mediated and mediating choices made by Moroccan musicians themselves in a variety of realms (technical, aesthetic, generic, and market-oriented), the wah-wah embodies not
only the general cultural process of adoption of novel impulses and influences, but also the signs of Moroccan popular culture’s particular relationship when confronted by the input of novel, foreign sources of cultural possibility, and its capacity and functionality in responding to, incorporating and transforming that input, while itself becoming transformed in the course of that response. This process of appropriation was one that was as naturalized by Moroccan musicians and listeners as was any other aesthetic, technical or genre choice in cultural practice.

To return to that story of the two musicians considering the turns of their careers and the tools of their trade, at the moment of our discussion coming out of the Pasha, the commonly-occurring usage of the wah-wah in Sha’bi practice in Morocco was less than two years old. But its rapid assimilation as part of a long-standing if also long-evolving genre was strikingly demonstrated in Kamal's adamancy as to the efficacy of the device. This efficacy was both aesthetic, while contributing to the definition of a genre, and practical, by stimulating listeners to get up and dance. Both aspects were bound up as parts of a rhetoric of advice from one musician to a fellow musician who presumably wished to access more public acceptance and greater possibility of vocational livelihood.

What was being negotiated in such maneuvers and considerations was the integration of cultural possibilities brought forcefully to the attention of these cultural practitioners by global systems of exchange: that is, the continuously recycling and developing products of worldwide manufacture, a burgeoning international marketplace of tourism, and the multi-national practices of media industries. All of these worked together as more or less likely resource potential for cultural production by Moroccan musicians in a range of local genre choices.

These channels of mediation -- the resources presented for appropriation, integration and assimilation; those individuals utilizing them; and the forms generated from and by both -- will
be further demonstrated in this chapter through specific examples of the production, the
distribution and the reception of popular music. In addition to tracking some of the practice and
attitude of Sha‘bi musicians such as Kamal and his ilk, this will include later discussion of the
praxis of the shifting cohort of musicians gathered under the group names of “Kifash” and
“Boohalee,” whose own styles and intent in popular music practice diverged in many ways from
that of typical Sha‘bi musicians. These divergent examples will point out some of multiple
possible iterative trajectories in modern cultural performance in Morocco.

Together these offer some sense of overarching attitudes and behaviors within the
production and reception of popular music in Morocco during the years 2005-08, focusing
primarily on contexts of musical practices in contemporary Fez. In looking to examples of some
of the range of those choices made by individuals in their cultural pursuits, I provide a view of
the larger processes of mediating influences from inside and outside their immediate cultural
milieus, along with the cultural products that issued from them, in addition to some of the
different ideological associations by which aspects of more far-flung cultural practice succeeded
in their movements to arrive to and adhere in local practice.

I proceed by summarizing some of the relevant historical and social aspects that have
been crucial to the cultural formations and social understandings of music in the location of Fez
and, to some degree, in Morocco at large. Following this I offer an explication of theoretical
ideas on both appropriation of the cultural foreign in post-colonial contexts, as well as questions
on the use of technology in mediating social practices, all on the way to discussion of the
incorporation of more particular instances of technologies in Moroccan musical production and
reception.

I am interested in showing that in Fez at this time there was a high level of exposure to
and interaction with cultural products and processes from overseas, even while overall cultural practice in Fez (and urban Morocco generally) was felt by most individuals to be maintaining something distinctly Moroccan. I am particularly interested in the incorporation of novel technological means from overseas for shifting practices on the part of contemporary Moroccan musicians and their audiences. The salient negotiation and integration of these elements from “outside” not only still allowed but actively supported individuals in their continuing capacity to emplace and contextualize themselves culturally and psychologically in local spaces. Such spaces thus paradoxically became defined in part by the utilization of those “foreign” elements, recalling some of the issues of cosmopolitanism and hybridity in critically approaching the topic of music in these locales that were addressed in the previous chapter.

I take up here the ideas of intercuturality and mediation as twin lenses for understanding the social contexts and political processes that Moroccan musical practitioners must engage with in playing out their cultural potential. For those who engaged at any level with making musical choices in contemporary Morocco, coping with the necessity for selecting from among a range of cultural possibilities helped create different ethos in relation to market consideration both for professional and avocational musicians, and for musical listeners alike. In many cases, particular affects associated with these choices developed as part of the process of creation, however much toward one of another local or national market, and whether in celebration of some aspects or calculating some utility of their possibilities, or in disappointment regarding such consideration, as I have already touched upon briefly in introducing the story of Kamal and Said.

The degree of exposure to cultural aspects from abroad for most Moroccans in urban settings during this period can be seen as a consequence of increasingly globalized possibilities brought to different points of access in Moroccan daily life during a period of significant
transnational interchanges within various realms of physical, economic and cultural activity (e.g., migration, tourism, media streams, investment, and other commerce). As addressed in my earlier chapter on the history of the “popular” in popular music in Morocco more generally, a consciousness in Morocco (as in other postcolonial locales) of the varying degrees of cross-cultural exposure to foreign systems, products, and ideas had appeared both in local discourse and in more scholarly rhetoric as a nearly ineluctable consequence of earlier eras of modernity leading especially to the formal period of colonialism and post-Independence in those colonies in the generations following. In the next section, I trace some of the contextual history that contributed to Moroccan reception of cultural influx from abroad during these periods.

Some Aspects of Morocco and Its Historical Relation to Outside Cultures

Broadcasts through national media channels in Morocco in the early years of the twenty-first century were almost exclusively in Arabic, with occasional snippets of French, Spanish, English and Berber. However, substantial ownership of the national networks for radio and television such as 2M and Medi1 had remained, post-independence, in the hands of European conglomerates (Ziyati 1995). The polycultural influence (and polyglot delivery) of mass media in Morocco is complicated by a newly emergent regional cultural movement of indigenous Amazigh ethnicity: in the first ten years of the millennium, brief slotted television and radio programs had begun appearing in versions of Tamazight “Berber” dialects.\textsuperscript{128}

With the increased reception of international satellite broadcasts, with an abundant traffic in black market CDs and DVDs, and even more with the growth in interactions through the

\textsuperscript{128} The complex relationship of Berber identity within the rest of Moroccan cultural politics from the colonial era through post-independence has been well-discussed elsewhere. For summaries, see Gellner and Miacaud (1972) and Spadola (2007).
Internet in recent years, a multitude of English language programs and cultural products also become more and more familiar, especially among younger generations of Moroccans. These variegated streams of cultural possibility became the resource pools from which Moroccan individuals, each always playing the dual role of cultural “producer” and “consumer,” obtained the raw cultural material and forged different alloys of contemporary cultural synthesis.

In order to portray the status of various cultural practices in a more recent moment when an even higher amount of input from abroad was generally perceived in Morocco, it is necessary to consider prior and continuing influences from outside the country, including the legacy of French and Spanish colonialism and the subsequent impact from the shifting relationships between each of those countries and Moroccan cultural life. The residue of colonization was still unavoidable in Moroccan cities during the early part of the 2000s, particularly that originating from colonialism’s peak period when large numbers of Spanish and French individuals lived or worked in Morocco, and when the fundamental institutions of government were generated and controlled by these European overseers. Signs of the colonial period in present-day Morocco are prominent still: in architecture, through place names, in educational curricula and methodologies, and the use of (along with darija) Spanish and French especially as tertiary or secondary and in many cases even as primary languages, including for official business and daily commerce.

Inheritances from the colonial era influencing specifically musical practices in Morocco included aspects of a synthetic culture fostered or forced by the French presence especially throughout much of urban Morocco, in which French modes of pedagogy as well as cultural

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129 See Abu Lughod 1980; see also Celik 2000 regarding French impact on colonial and post-colonial era architecture and urban planning in North Africa generally.
forms such as the popular French-style chanson were established in parallel with the hierarchical exaltation of more long-standing Moroccan practices. A notable example is Alexis Chottin’s project in the 1920s and 1930s documenting Moroccan music at the behest of the French colonial authority. These efforts resulted in the publication of seminal Western texts in the study of Moroccan music, including Chottin’s *Tableau de Musique Marocaine*, which helped establish a hierarchy of value for Moroccan musical practice emphasizing and exalting some genres over others, a hierarchializing that can be seen in indigenous writings of later generations on Moroccan music (e.g., Aydoun 1992; Guettat 2000). The impetus from these French-influenced values also included the establishment of conservatories in some larger towns and cities devoted to newly standardized training for the Moroccan “classical,” art genre of al-musïqa al-andalusiyya, along with Western solfege.

A somewhat gentler cultural impact came from the long-developing relationship between Morocco and Spain coming out of the looser colonial control exercised by Spain over the northern part of Morocco in the first half of the twentieth century, where cross-cultural influences were produced by the movements of individuals and ideas between the two locales, primarily in the direction of Morocco from Spain. Such ongoing interactions back and forth promoted a continuing flow of influence culturally. These movements included the historical exoduses of Andalusians from Spain to Morocco in earlier centuries, a tale of origin that had become a legendary touchstone for some Moroccan cultural self-identifications. They also included on-going commercial trade between the two regions, as well as a fitful series of settlings in Morocco by Spanish-born individuals in pursuit of different kinds of livelihood, or

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130 Recall from the preceding chapter, for instance, the reception of the collaborative project of North Moroccan “Andalusian” music performer Abdessalem Cheqara with Spanish flamenco artist Lebrujano.
some who merely followed through inertially on the period when Spain attempted to govern large areas in the North of Morocco in the first half of the century.

The integration of relocated Spaniards within northern Moroccan economic and social life, and the integration of at least some aspects of Spanish culture there too (flamenco, notably; tapas, occasionally; and the Spanish language, to name a few) was repeatedly emphasized by many Moroccans I met in the course of doing fieldwork both in Spain and the North of Morocco. That other Kamal -- Kamal A., the Granada-based Moroccan musician I probably spent the most time with in the course of my fieldwork in Spain -- would periodically hark back in his recounting of how he perceived that the intertwining of cultures in Morocco had produced a mixed society during his youth, and how normal it was for him to have Spanish neighbors while he was growing up in the northern Moroccan town of Tetuoan, near the southern coast of the Mediterranean. Many of these expatriates, he offered in explanation at one point, had become refugees during the Franco era, fleeing into exile because of their political affiliations back in Spain, a surreptitious flow of migration in the opposite direction of what it would come to be in the generations shortly following.

The most recent of these has been a massive migratory movement from Morocco to Spain during the thirty years or so preceding, which movement made Moroccans among the most numerous immigrant minorities in Spain in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, with many of those individuals returning home to Morocco periodically (or sometimes for good), and bringing with them a multitude of newer cultural possibilities garnered from their Spanish ventures. For instance, Kamal A., though he visited his family in Morocco several times a year, had become established in Granada over the period of more than two decades when he had been living there. During that time he developed a transnational axis of “home,” which included a
usually more physically distant relationship with the Moroccan side, but which also maintained a strong consciousness in him of his native place in all its poly-cultural orientation dating back to his youth.

All such more modern-day relocations, of course, were part of greater cycles of large-scale movements of humans across the Mediterranean, including the series of Arab-Moorish invasions from North Africa starting in the first century after Muhammed’s death, as well as the later series of Catholic-forced expulsions/exoduses “back” to Africa of large numbers of Muslims and Jews from the Iberia peninsula. Most recently in Morocco, overlaying or interspersed within this layer of primarily twentieth century colonial cultural presence, signs continued to manifest of the continuing interactions between Moroccans and those European successors to the twentieth century colonial project, as well as of the more recent incursions by representatives from still other international sources.

Tourism has been a significant industry for generations in Morocco, and in Fez particularly, which has made for a high level of self-consciousness among Fassis (that is, inhabitants of Fez) and other urban Moroccans about local culture, but which also opens the door to large-scale influences from abroad. This corresponds to Fanon’s sketch of how a national economic elite in a “newly independent” colony “establishes holiday resorts and playgrounds for entertaining the Western bourgeoisie,” and how “this sector goes by the name of tourism and becomes a national industry for this very purpose” (Fanon 2004:101).

In addition to serving as a destination for international tourists, the medina of Fez became a substantial playing field for international real estate speculation as well in the first years of the twenty-first century, especially since a similar, earlier boom in Marrakech had purportedly “finished” much of the “available” (read: cheap) properties desired by European and U.S.
visitors. Those acquisitions of usually centuries-old buildings by foreigners were used to establish vacation homes and/or small-scale hotels, or as business investments within a real-estate market that had quadrupled its valuations on such properties in the matter of a scant few years. This commercially-oriented activity accelerated the contact for Moroccan natives with cultural elements from abroad that were brought in by the new owners and other visitors from overseas. Besides being two of Morocco’s major cities with large-scale, old-style atmospheric medinas still functioning with sizable “authentic” native populations within them, Marrakech and Fez both had rich histories as cultural representatives and former ruling seats of Morocco dating back upwards of a millennium. Through these attributes accrued to them a cultural cachet that had become translatable into financial capital through the surge in European and Western awareness of and interest in these exotic locales in the last decades of the twentieth century and the beginning years of the next one.

Another striking, more formalized field for cross-cultural interchange played out through (and was clearly abetted by) the Fez Festival of Sacred Music, whose stated mission of bringing together and promoting different “spiritual” musics of the world carried a strong undercurrent of marketing the city itself as a means of attracting foreigners to Fez and promoting business ventures there on the corporate level. The exposure of foreign visitors to Moroccan culture through the inducements of the Festival was marked, if ultimately limited in depth and range in most cases.

Meanwhile, the exposure of Moroccan listeners to foreign music genres and practices through the Festival was continuing and quite large-scale. Among musicians, too, the Festival had made some inroads in terms of musical influence: to greater and lesser degrees, Kamal B.
and Adil -- another musician I will describe at greater length in the next chapter – felt the
influence of music heard in this rarefied setting,

Here, however, I will concentrate on the practices of popular musicians and of the
audiences who listened to and interacted with their music primarily at a distance from the
Festival context, with various ideas of Moroccan music and with differing relationships to the
different cultural components brought from outside by socio-economic developments in the
modern era. In doing so, I note practitioners whose attitudes, methods, goals and degrees of
consciousness toward their use of outside technology and toward ideas of adherence to
parameters of multiple musical genres might vary, but who all fundamentally felt compelled at
some level to integrate the possibilities of cross-cultural influence in their own musical practices
as part of a requisite negotiation with forces of modernity from “outside,” which in turn
inflected the cultural conditions of the “local.”

Theorizing Cultural Arrivals from Abroad

Confronted by the signs of such a welter of cultural influence, with the impact of the
international, often Western importations seen as ascendant, to the point of threatening
dominance in non-Western or non-“First World” locations, analysts have sometimes sounded
alarmist notes of cultural “grey-out” (see, for instance, Lomax 1968; also Foster 1991): that is,
of a global homogenization by way of Americanization and/or commodification.

James Ferguson, in his discussion of developing cultural production between rural and
urban Copperbelt locales in Zambia, has asserted a distinction there between “localist”
understandings and cultural attitudes among those individuals who, even if they do not travel
outside local borders, are “seeking worldliness at home.” Ferguson deems “cosmopolitan” “those
stylistic modes that refuse or establish distance from those [localizing social] pressures” (1999:212).

Debates in ethnomusicology in recent decades have frequently parsed the significance of various other, similar models offered to attempt the depiction of what is at stake in political terms of such culturalist understandings of localized, authentic or traditional musical practices as opposed to more perceivedly cosmopolitanist, globalized, or hybrid forms. In response to the strictest dichotomies of culturally-sited space versus spatially-detached cultural practices, or in answer to the direst warnings about loss of some cultural “local,” some scholars (see for instance Appadurai 1990; Hannerz 1987) have proposed a further, more nuanced consideration of the phenomena of global interactions of this sort, one that still allows an assertion of local, regional, and national cultural singularities. Arjun Appadurai has commented at length on the idea of cultural hybridity, stating for instance:

…as rapidly as forces from various metropolises are brought into new societies they tend to become indigenized in one or another way: this is true of music and housing styles as much as it is true of science and terrorism, spectacles and constitutions (Appadurai 1990:50).

The idea of this “indigenization” process is one which Ulf Hannerz, extending a term coined in linguistic contexts, complicates even further. Or perhaps, conversely, he merely simplifies it by attempting to naturalize such a process in his suggestion to consider such “creolized” cultural forms as the norm for contemporary cultural practices constantly buffeted by and necessarily assimilative of globalized influences. In Hannerz’s

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131 See Stokes 2004 and Frith 2000 for a summation of much of this literature; for a detailed view of hybridity and music see Erlmann 2003; for particular case studies considering degrees of movement away from singular individuals, ethnic groups or places to employment in mass-mediated spheres of activity, see Feld 1994, Meintjes 1990, and Taylor 1997.
representation, there is an analytical potential to be gained in differentiating a diversity of cultural modalities, less perhaps in the manner of opposing poles that is implied by Appadurai’s portrayal of “indigenized” as in some way fundamentally “other” than those “forces” that are “brought into new societies” of the indigenous, and more in the nature of a dialogue:

While far from immune to the charms of the metropolis, they [the putatively non-metropolitan individuals] respond to them critically as well, self-consciously making themselves the spokesmen and guardians of Third World cultures (at least some of the time). What they may broadcast about metropolitan culture through the channels of communication reaching into their society, then, is not necessarily that culture itself, in either a pure or a somehow diluted form. (Hannerz 1987:12)

These tropes and metaphors of “indigenization” and “creolization,” which other social scientists have deployed recently in attempts to counter “seemingly more rigidly exclusionary folk typologies of human kinds and communities” (Palmié 2006:441; see also Classen and Howes, 1996:179), have not continued their own trajectories as vehicles for cultural analysis unchecked by others’ critical concern. An awareness of the development of a “creolization paradigm” in anthropological and other social scientific description and explication has produced a backlash of sorts, where “creolization theory” is called out as being no “remedy for the alleged or real reifications of an older anthropology” and not “anything that we ought to project carelessly into peripheral scenarios” (Palmié 2006:448).

The implication here is that the very impulse to label “mixed” cultural activities far and wide as “creole” or “hybrid” is simply a symptom of the very issues such labeling seeks to address, and in fact may well both mask and help perpetuate social inequities and power
imbalances. That is, the appearance on a local scene of cultural materials and processes from far off bring with them also a certain insistence that such things be “indigenized,” a response so demanded upon by the necessities of survival in (post-)colonial and marketplace systems of social and economic ordering, that it in fact undermines suggestive claims of agency in the sorts of “talking back” promoted in analytical renderings by the likes of Hannerz and Appadurai.

One critical way that debates have been framed about differing understandings of the mixed use in non-Western, non-Northern locales of cultural forms and technology seen as foreign is to posit them fundamentally as responses to ideas of modernity, of capitalism, or of cosmopolitan ideals and behavior, however much limited or expansive these might be (see, for instance, Comaroff and Comaroff 1993). Such framing often resorts to ideas of different kinds of “double consciousness” among human subjects in contexts where more than one stream of cultural history is perceived and must be engaged (see, for example, Gilroy 1993; following Dubois 1999 [1903]).

Paul Gilroy, for instance, while referencing Richard Wright, has rhetorically questioned how “being both inside and outside the West” might affect the conceptualization and conduct of political movements of African subjectivities everywhere, not only in Africa. While specifically concerned with “political movements against racial oppression and towards black autonomy,” Gilroy’s interrogatory mode also frames concerns for how, and with what, individual and group consciousness in locales formerly considered “Third World” might have to contend. Gilroy lays out some relevant terms, and points to various non-human actors driving the seemingly antagonistic conceptions confronting those who are not of the elite in the West when he asks how

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132 These terms of “hybrid” and “creole” have etymological histories, as pointed out by Stewart (1999), among others, which are also fraught with schemes of deliberate human breeding, including prior notions of deliberate commingling of the “savage” and the tamed, with a sense of loss imputed to the former.
“struggles [of such non-elites would] be periodised in relation to modernity: the fatal intermediation of capitalism, [and] industrialization” (1993:30).

In reaction to such polarized conceptualizations of the encounters by “others” with iterations of modernity, post-colonial scholarship has turned in some instances to further problematize or complicate ideas of modernity, yielding theorizations about so-called “alternative” modernities (e.g., Gaonkar 2001). Part of this tendency is the suggestion that any locale, culture, or “life-world,” is bound to have specific contingencies and exigencies from which individuals in it would respond in highly specific fashion to whatever incursion of modernity might manifest (Taylor 2000; this is resonant also with Tsing’s idea of “friction”), and thus, references to such “incursions” as fundamentally-defining only aid in reifying the purported difference through which capitalist culture of the West manages to extend its hegemonic force. And in fact, this sort of argument continues, many of the same attributes which are used to signal what makes that Western culture of modernity purportedly different from the non-Western world -- e.g., from Gaonkar: “market-driven (if not industrial) economies, bureaucratically administered states… mass media, and increased mobility, literacy, and urbanization” -- have in fact existed for quite some time in many of the locales understood as previously “non-modernist” (2001:2).

Theorizations of such alternative modernities propose that the consequences of denying the parallel existence of such characteristics in non-Western locales, prior to a profoundly different and more fundamental modernity arriving from European shores, leads to notions where the particularity of any such non-Western locale is seen as encroached upon by the overlapping juggernauts of first colonial and then globalized capitalism, which signaled the arrival of that seemingly more undeniable modernity of Western civilization (see Piot 2001).
Contemporary Morocco -- African, Islamic, formerly colonized -- has served as very fertile conceptual ground for those looking to witness signs of the meeting of the modern and something understood to be “pre-modern,” or not yet fully modern: i.e. as two distinct, potentially oppositional cultural systems. Ideas of “developing” locales like Morocco serving as zones of contact between these two differing systems reached a certain height around the last turn of the millennium in considerations by social scientists, such as, for instance, Ted Swedenburg, who proposed utilizing the term “Interzone,” taken up from its somewhat more hallucinatory use by Beat-era fiction writer William Burroughs (Swedenburg 2005:251). The usage by Burroughs some half a century earlier was in specific reference to the Moroccan port city of Tangier, which for much of the first half of the twentieth century was administered as an international region in a shared arrangement among multiple other, non-Moroccan, Northern hemisphere nation-states (Burroughs 2004 [1959]; 1989). This arrangement was a political harbinger of sorts to an expanding cultural and economic impact on Moroccan realities and Moroccan possibilities by influences from abroad in the latter half of the twentieth century and beginning of the twenty-first, in an era oftentimes perceived by some Moroccans as not simply a novel one of increased globalization, but a succeeding one of neo-colonialism.

More productive perhaps as an analytical taking-off point is the theoretical framing of interculturality, promoted most prolifically by scholars of Latin American culture such as Nestor Garcia Canclini and Alejandro Grimson. Thus, for instance, Grimson, in considering the impact and status of “border theory” on social scientific analysis of hybridity, states:

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133 I recall here again the oft-cited quote I first heard in Morocco: “The colonizer leaves by the door and comes back by the window,” indicating how the impact on Morocco and control by colonizing forces was perpetuated in policies and economic relationships after the official end of colonization proper there.
Cultural contact is crisscrossed with different kinds of power, inequality, and hegemony. This has led Garcia Canclini to suggest that when analyzing inequalities in societies and cultures, hybridization as ‘a process that can be accessed to and abandoned [sic], that one can be excluded from or become subordinated to’ (2001, 19) must also be taken into account (2006:115).

Grimson is responding here to his perception of others’ too giddy celebration of hybridity on the part of those cultural “border crossers” and their observers: those who see both political and cultural boundaries being surpassed or elided by contemporary hybrid cultural practices. Grimson’s proposition is that, in order to yield more specificity about some of the political dynamics in hybrid cultural practices, one must focus on subjects and cultural terrains at hand, attending to them with a similar specificity.

Some application of this type of theoretical orientation has been attempted with specific contexts in Africa as foci, too: for example, by Wim van Binsbergen (1991), who has looked at cultural practices of rural Tunisia, and healing rituals in Zambia and Botswana, among others, through the self-conscious lens of his own position as a European ethnographer, even as he became intimately and intensely involved in some of the ritual practices and local politics he was observing. As mentioned earlier, the impetus behind intercultural explication includes the critique of notions of the hybrid and of multiculturalism, where embracing the notion of the naturalness of cultural amalgams tends to lose sight of the power imbalances that make such appropriations from one culture to another less a matter of choice and more one of necessity -- and a necessity that comes out of interactions that are sometimes conflicted or conflictual in nature. Approaching the dynamics of cultural politics in an intercultural mode ideally looks at the places of contact, of adoption, and of resistance as zones of negotiation, highlighting the inter-relationships within and across perceived cultural boundaries as crucial to producing real-world choices and social significations about cultural practices and their interwoven ideologies.
In the case of Morocco, any pride through participation with transnational cultural styles and conventions has been mixed with ambivalence about the questions of national and regional ideas that the relationship with these outside forces impelled, rather than serving as a sign strictly valued for its indexing of modernity arriving from outside. At another pole on the continuum, even individuals who attempt to maintain cultural forms in isolation from other outside cultural conventions (as in performance practices for more traditional or classical genres such as al-musiqqa al-andalusiyya), nonetheless play out within a social context that includes and is formed by other, more global phenomena, where performance possibilities and performance practice might rely on or have to respond to social, economic, or political forces outside any would-be culturally autonomous context they are trying to inhabit.

Thus even the most deliberately conservative musician of traditional forms in contemporary Morocco was pursuing such conservatism in a reactionary fashion that was often not only highly conscious of the attempt to maintain tradition, but even playing upon it, as in the deliberate trumpeting in discourse of that maintenance of custom in al-Ala by musicians and sponsors alike. Some examples of this occurred in the government-subsidized performance possibilities in concert halls and festivals for designated folkloric or esteemed high art musics, with the various negotiations and compromises that often accompany such instances: e.g., the truncating of compositions deemed too lengthy for modern concert-style auditing; the self-conscious embodiments of originally spiritually-oriented performance in such de- and re-naturalizing contexts.

134 The majority of my time in Fez I lived around the corner from a record shop that, I soon learned, was run by the grandson of Abdelkarim Rais, a widely acknowledged master of al-Ala in the 20th century. While the shop featured prominent displays of his grandfather’s recordings, the grandson made his main living through his work as a DJ of more contemporary popular dance music.
And somewhat in between, those cultural projects and practices that attempted to integrate or assimilate aspects from outside perceived pre-existing, indigenously understood cultural forms, were prone to both subtle and dramatic shifts in praxis while doing so, even as they were apparently reinforcing any cultural or social status quo. The use of aesthetic and technical resources from overseas for expressive culture contained within it also the latent impetus to move in other directions culturally and socially, not only technically. This was true even of those cultural products that stemmed from and continued to address localist realities. This recalls Chatterjee’s critique of the distinction commonly attempted on behalf of nationalist projects: that local, indigenous culture could be maintained inviolate even while selectively adopting some of the means and tools of Western modernity (1993).

Of course, cultural claims of nationalism bring up the question of how many generations any manufactured product or process must be present in any locale and integrated into customary practice before it becomes “indigenous.” To further illustrate this complex of competing notions and practices, I turn now to another example of integrating technology in broader national and local cultural practices by indigenous Moroccans in late modernity.

Agency and Naturalizing Approaches of Indigeneity

Conceptions of indigeneity generally among Moroccan cultural practitioners (whether producers or audience members), in relation to their apprehension of musical forms and of their own ideas concerning what they were performing culturally, ranged along a continuum of varying degrees of consciousness about their own efforts at naturalizing foreign elements. But beliefs regarding those efforts, and those efforts’ end-products, for the most part, ultimately
devolved to the view that most uses of outside cultural material, style, and technology ultimately functioned as instances of something fundamentally “Moroccan.”

The larger question of agency haunts such efforts, of course, where seemingly casual assimilation of acculturative phenomena as well as the more intent ideologies and praxis involved in musical activities alike notwithstanding, the insistency with which the appropriation of those cultural phenomena that presented themselves as desirable, normal, and/or unavoidable precipitated the unquestioning integration of what had formerly been “outside” local practices. “It goes without saying, because it comes without saying,” according to Bourdieu’s statement (1977:167) addressing cultural assumptions of “natural” or “normal.” Such naturalization has proven as true for the development of cultural practices whose newly adopted elements arrived from far off without seeming to leave much agentive choice, given the momentum force of tactics or strategies felt by subjects as crucially adaptive to human survival and understanding, just as any prior seemingly circumscribed cultural context might have proven natural and normal previously. Here, it is instructive to recall the example of the wah-wah pedal, freshly introduced into Moroccan popular musical performance practice, but promoted unthinkingly by the practical-minded young musician, Kamal.

Ultimately, the novel selection of various technological and stylistic elements incorporated into the practices I observed by contemporary Moroccan musicians during these early years of the new millennium signaled divergent responses to the same or similar phenomena of increasing global cultural circulation stemming out of a former colonial relationship. Both self-conscious innovators, and more practical-minded working musicians such as Kamal were responding to the range of resource possibility available for making something culturally “Moroccan.” Crucially affecting factors toward what seemed desirable for selection for
both of these individuals included not only the entry of a plethora of previously unknown resource possibilities for cultural expression, but also the primary process through which such possibilities arrived: i.e. a global marketplace that changed conditions in local settings, in turn necessitating some sort of necessary response to those conditions among musical producers and listeners. The relative diversity of aesthetic and technical choices demonstrated among Moroccan musical practitioners occurred only within a range of possibility. Though each individual might negotiate the shifting terms of the familiar and the unaccustomed among cultural options, and do so from different subject positions created by varied social and economic class backgrounds and divergent individual histories, the need was similar for all to respond to the same basic impulse of defining meaningful cultural expression for themselves, while simultaneously defining those selves through that cultural expression.

*The Barbershop and the Music Video: Music, Technology and Mediation in Contemporary Moroccan Popular Music*

The problematic of designating what is at stake in such negotiations of interculturality suggests that all sorts of political work is being undertaken in the efforts at even naming sociocultural phenomena in these analytical perspectives, as the earlier survey of previously attempted social scientific analytic terminology demonstrated. As one possible means to avoid or supersede parochial debates about what are the appropriate inflections in identifying the constantly shifting targets of cultural practices and their associations for individuals and local formations, I propose here that any notion of cultural activity produced from more than one cultural resource area, or produced across more than one subject position, is prone to, as well as can be explicable by, the larger idea of mediation.
One way of defining mediation is as that group of processes that come between and/or work to bond, bind, or translate across a perceived gap: between and among individuals, between and among different social groups, between and among any sense of self and society, and even between and among different senses of any self for that self. Such a perspective connotes that the syntax and semantics of any cultural expression for communicative understanding is always fundamentally an assembly of two or more components. The mediated affiliation shared by any multiple forms or elements used for cultural expression carries as a foundational part of it, then, a connectedness inherent in even the most newly totalized constructions. As Bauman and Briggs have put it:

Mediation is a structural relationship, the synthetic bringing together of two elements (terms, categories, etc.) in such a way as to create a symbolic or conventional relationship between them that is irreducible to two independent dyads. A hybrid is thus a mediating form (2003: 5).

Any perceivable category of cultural activity -- including its tools or techniques, the genres and meanings associated with it, the stylistic conventions, as well as the ideologies of something culturally or socially residual or emergent (to use Raymond Williams’ terms) -- serves as an elementally mediating force, shaped to and shaping whatever practice and whichever individual is performing or being performed. In this rendering, mediation is also that which comes between and connects the past and the present, the local and the foreign, and the national and the global. Again, from Bauman and Briggs:

…tradition becomes a mode of discourse that is diagnostic of the past; it is an archaic language-society hybrid characterized by all of those indexicalities of time and place and interest and intertextuality...In its mediational guise, tradition becomes the intertextually constituted continuum of reiterations by which the language -- and thus the thought -- of the past survives in to the
present, the mechanism that bridges the historical juncture represented by the advent of modernity (2003: 11).

By this logic, a focus on the degree of hybridity (or traditionality) of a cultural practice as something autonomously characteristic would be misleading taken by itself, regardless of where on a scale of greater or lesser might be perceived the flows of influences from “outside,” whether that scale is measuring temporal aspects or spatial ones. This relativizing conceptualization for cultural tradition and innovation holds, again, since innovations in technologies, attitudes and performance are a given in human cultural activities, no matter how much stasis or change might be either desired or denied.

This is not to dismiss the political ramifications of such choices, however, by subsuming all human cultural activity under the umbrella of “mediation” and suggesting it as some transparent or neutral force. Following Williams’ fundamental precept that “All ‘objects,’ and…notably works of art, are mediated by specific social relations,” one must attend to both the more harmonious and the more contentious human interactions implicated in cultural production and understanding (1976:206). To ignore these would be to disregard both the formations and the larger ramifying social significance of cultural practices more generally. With this impetus, highlighting the specificity of those negotiations that occur interculturally as Moroccan cultural practitioners interact with cultural potential arriving from abroad, as forecast earlier, will serve most productively any analysis of such negotiations.

The “foreign” incorporations I concentrate on here are those in a variegated category of media technology, and includes the role played by such technology in social cohesion in contemporary Morocco. I demonstrate this through examples of popular music practice there, starting from a perspective similar to that in Bryan Pfaffenberger’s discussion of sociotechnical
systems as a force for human consolidation, one that “engenders a distinctive form of social solidarity” (1992:500), and which he puts forward as “one of the chief means by which humans produce their world” (1992:499; see also Theberge 1999:217). This overlaps with the description of mediation by William Mazzarella as "an obvious way of being in the world,” one that “depends on certain everyday practices” (2004:346).

By “social cohesion,” rather than implying a Durkheimian notion that privileges society over self, I am suggesting that some of those shared “everyday practices,” along with the explicit or unspoken beliefs underlying them, are critical in the emergence of forms of collective subjectivity particular to Morocco and possible for individual Moroccans in the modern era. In this, I follow an idea of Heidegger’s as glossed by Samuel Weber, where “the essence of modern technology” is seen as “that total availability of being placed and displaced at will...[where] things are allowed to take place only insofar as they can be put in place...” (Weber 1999:79, emphasis in original). Heidegger’s idea of humans’ imagining of the world leads to a conception where the “technics” of culture of all types yields a mediating influence between any human perception of nature and nature itself, and implies the mediating necessity as intrinsic to all human relations.

This is echoed in work by Aaron Fox on the mediating force effected by country music in Texas, in which he credits mediation as responsible for:

ideas of place and emplacement to models of temporal and historical consciousness, from understandings of self, person, and character, to beliefs about gender difference and the nature of emotional experience, and finally to working class concepts of aesthetics and performance (2004: 35).

Thus, the self-definitions through which individuals play out their lives are created both in response to and with the use of the continua of given external means both technical and social,
in order for those individuals to locate themselves in relationship to imagined yet structured -- as well as structuring -- ideas of their immediate community and the larger world.

These ideas were exemplified for me, in one instance, during an afternoon I spent at a barbershop in Fez early in 2006. Located at a busy crossroads on top of a hill at one edge of the medina, the shop commanded a unique vantage point to observe the comings and goings of an endless stream of passersby: on foot and/or leading donkeys or pulling carts as various residents of the city and nearby went on about their business. In addition to providing haircuts, the shop served as a quick and convenient source of electricity for charging a constantly shifting series of mobile phones brought in by neighborhood shoppers while they were out and about doing other errands. It also functioned as one highly-visited node in an informal network of meeting and exchange for those engaged in all manner of trade: used television sets, for instance, as well as contraband alcohol and cannabis.

I had paused in front of the shop because of a loudspeaker blaring some Sha’bi on to the street at extraordinarily high volume (with a by-then familiar to me in Morocco concomitant distorted set of timbres from the overloaded speakers). When the proprietor observed me from inside his shop, he came out to invite me to come back in with him, where we then proceeded to watch together the video CD from which I’d heard the music outside, me in the store’s single barber’s chair, him hovering nearby.

VCDs were a common promotional format and commercial item for sale in Morocco at the time. But they were “common” only for musicians whose careers had reached a certain level in terms of notoriety (or potential for some), and only when they had caught the attention of a distribution company willing to support the furtherance of those careers. These productions were fairly standard: half-hour to hour-long series of shorter segments in which relatively large-scale
groups of five to ten musicians were brought together to lip-sync and act out other aspects of the typically effervescent performance practice of Sha‘bi songs. These were generically thought of as party music, often used in creating an ambience that both signaled and effected a letting go of many of the usual inhibitions for social interactions in Moroccan life. The settings for these videos were occasionally anonymous studios, but more usually some relatively luxurious, semi-public gathering place: in front of a swimming pool at a hotel or resort; or in a well-cleared grass field or tent set up and decorated especially for the purpose.

The artist we were watching and listening to at the barbershop on that day a few years ago was Zeena Daoudia, a rare female performer in the world of Sha‘bi. Hearing that she was from Casablanca (a ten hour bus or shared grande taxi ride away for most Fassis), and noting the relatively lavish production values of the VCD itself as evidence that Zeena as both individual and commercial persona moved in a socio-economic realm that might be buffered from intersecting much with other, more “ordinary” Moroccans, I took more than a moment to understand the response after asking another, subsequent visitor to the shop (a middle-aged repair technician) if he’d ever seen her perform live, in person. The reply I got was that not only had she visited Fez six months before, but also the very barbershop we were sitting in, following a performance nearby in the medina. It turned out that Zeena was a cousin-in-law of the barber. Nonetheless, I had become conscious that my own prejudices about the separate, insulated channel of cultural communication implied by the medium of video had initially inhibited my ability to integrate the fact that other channels of communication had helped get the word out about Zeena and her cultural production.

In the case of this very local barbershop, however the initial affinal contact was made or relied upon, a countless number of other individuals in the neighborhood would encounter Zeena either directly, or more likely through rumors following the occasion of her visit. This transpired
additionally, of course, because of her music videos, which were undoubtedly played there thousands of times. And the neighborhood of dissemination extended far beyond: for instance, to the repair technician to whom I had put my questions and who was visiting the shop from approximately ten kilometers away in Fez’s somewhat separate Ville Nouvelle or “New City,” originally built in the early part of the 20th century to house the French colonizers separately from the Moroccan natives in the old medina.

No outward signs of Zeena appreciation would be as obviously and intensely embodied for me as those first in the barbershop, in which, for instance, some of the proprietor’s teenage assistants, who had joined us shortly after my own arrival, acted out each inflection of her vocal delivery, tapping rhythms sharply and heavily on the metal barber chair with their scissors and rings. Though I had attended live Sha‘bi performances in Fez during the recently past Ramadan period, this was one of the first signs of an intense effervescence I noted among Sha‘bi listeners there. I would go on to hear her recorded music in all manner of contexts from mobile phone downloads triggered by other youths in a games club around the corner, to recordings played over sound systems at bars on the outskirts of town, to cover versions of her songs by other local musical groups, to a (somewhat anticlimactic) live performance by Zeena herself, at an upscale nightclub in Tangier some months later.

What impressed me in that first instance at the barbershop was how Zeena had come to penetrate the consciousness of potential listeners and fans in this one milieu through a combination of both interpersonal contacts and the star-making channels of video technology and commodified mass media distribution. This was in contradiction to apprehensions expressed by some social and cultural anthropologists of all-encompassing effects of technological mediation as fundamentally distinct from that of “corporeal” mediation (see, for instance, Spadola 2007:8-9, 40, 176). Not every
site is necessarily so capable of being a center for the meeting of various streams of socio-cultural activity and understanding as the barbershop I’d happened upon by chance, but something of this receptivity, inherent in the mediations of human commerce of all kinds, exists in human locales generally.

As exemplary locations and locating devices, in the Heidegerrian sense mentioned above, the barbershop and the music video together helped individuals find themselves in relation to a larger potential community, one infinitely expandable through the means of this shared cultural icon, including even those many other citizens who might be or might remain unknown to them. At the same time, in a response to the circumstances generated by its relationship to the larger world brought forcibly to its attention in the modern era, this cultural community grappled with the novel means presented from outside that community, not only beyond the local but even the national level. Rather than simply emulating the products of foreign music videos streamed by satellite from abroad, Moroccan Sha‘bi producers created a locally significant product while also generating and reaffirming solidarities at the local and national social levels through use of forms and devices imported and emulated from abroad.

*The Selection of the Wah-Wah Pedal as Mediator of the Native and the Modern in Sha‘bi*

It is worth keeping in mind the idea that all aspects of what is called culture -- songs and rituals, acting and storytelling, cartoons and graffiti, and of course language -- are themselves media, not just the means or structuring channels by which content and culture "flows," but indissolubly culture itself. Put another way, culture in all its aspects is ongoing mediation: the means by which the possibilities of social relations are sketched, structured and played out between any individual and other individuals, between an individual and any possible social group, and ultimately among and across social groups as well. And that equivalency posited, it is
impossible not to see that the reverse is also true: i.e., that mediation is culture in this sense, and that the means of particular mediating technologies are in fact the stuff both of internal subjectivities’ understanding and negotiation of the external world, as well as the fundamental resources or substrate on which is based social life. As Meintjes has articulated about music in its function as mediating force, the process of mediation:

Link[s] issues of power and ideology at multiple levels: the sensuous evocative power of artworks, the micropolitics of personal interaction, and the politics of the music industry, state, and global economy...arguing for a focus on symbolic and technological mediation in order to understand the production of social difference (2003:13).

And as the types of mediating influences and channels are added to, become obsolete and/or shifted in prominence and impact, the latent potential for shifting practices and meanings in culture grow, reduce, and shift as well.

So, for instance, there were other, parallel examples to the promulgation of Zeena’s popularity through the distance-cutting capacities of modern, mass media in the forms of music videos and cellphone downloads while in conjunction with the more directly co-present interpersonal networks of connection among potential members of her fan base. In the case of the wah-wah, however it was initially introduced to the attention of an individual Sha’bi musician or group of musicians, the development of the aesthetic utility that became imbued in the idea of using such a new-found resource was one promoted inter-subjectively among various other musicians observing directly as well as what was transmitted or gleaned through recordings in different media its functioning for performance practice. The idea of that utility for musicians was passed on both in co-present moments through demonstrations some witnessed themselves of the device’s effect on cultural practice and audiences, as well as indirectly through “word-of-
mouth” channels such as the moment of conversation shared between Kamal and Said.

Both musicians and music listeners in Morocco used music to locate themselves in space both socially as well as physically. They accomplished this through the deployment of a shifting series of genre choices whose “cultural” attributes ranged from language (including its use in discourse about these mediating influences themselves) to the “technical” means that were part and parcel of such attributes. The use of mediating cultural practices in the creation and negotiation of social and psychological space is a necessary function of humans trying to make sense of and relate to an unpredictable and often difficult external world, including the realm of intersubjective activity, which was highly stratified and often highly constrained in most modes of social interaction in Morocco at that time.

To return to that earlier example of sound technology recently adopted in Morocco, the wah-wah pedal was an apparatus originally developed within U.S. and European commercial sound production and its symbiotic relationship with audio experimentation in recording studios and musical academia. It had been employed most prominently to date in popular music practice in the West as an added layer of manipulation on electric guitar performance, notably by Jimi Hendrix and, more recently, Kid Rock and Rage Against the Machine. Moroccan Sha’bi musicians most frequently used it to alter the sound of the kamenjah (the primary melodic instrument of modern Sha’bi groups) to achieve an effect that itself usually signaled a higher level of intensity in the musical performance and in perceptual and cognitive responses by listeners.

For Sha’bi performers, the employment of newer, foreign-designed and manufactured technologies for sound generation and manipulation (e.g., amplifiers, electric keyboards, drumkits, in addition to wah-wah pedals and many others) were part of indigenizing
assimilations of “foreign” formal elements into local practices, just as the Western violin (which was called kemanjah in Moroccan usage) itself had been a century or so earlier. Ethnomusicologists and social scientists in general have differentiated such cultural indigenizations from behaviors read as more “heterogeneously” cosmopolitan. As outlined earlier in this chapter, this differentiation, though not necessarily attached to a judgment of value, is often written as a sort of “giving in” to the confronting force of outside cultures (Appadurai, 1996; Turino, 2000).

In Morocco, several possible attributes made such formerly foreign or outside additions easily assimilated as they were into longer-standing local and regional practices because of the newer instruments’ utility or their similarity in effect to other instruments in prior use, while also at times suggesting the novelty and possible glamour of cultural types produced from afar and exemplified in a range of cultural media also arriving from overseas. The musicians who added these newly arrived instruments to their sound-making resources were generally highly unself-conscious about their naturalization of these technological means. When I asked music performers, fans, and store owners about the initial timing and motivation for incorporation in Morocco of such new instances of sound-making equipment as the drumkit, keyboard and wah-wah, typical responses expressed included ignorance, vagueness, disagreement, and/or disinterest among even the most avocational practitioners of popular culture.135

In the case of the wah-wah, which from all accounts had only entered widespread use among publicly practicing Moroccan musicians in the year or so prior to the start of my fieldwork in late 2005, I received one suggestive link as to how that innovation might be

135 When in early 2006 I’d put these sorts of questions to Muhammed, the drumkit player for Orchestre Farhan (“Happiness Group”), the first Sha’bi band I’d seen perform live during Ramadan 2005, regarding the introduction of such newer musical instruments into local practice, he and his (non-musician) friend had argued for several
connected to prior Moroccan musical life when, after much pressing, Kamal B. allowed that one Moroccan cultural element the wah-wah might reference was the *lira*, though what he probably meant (from subsequent evidence) was the *qasba*. This was a locally more long-employed double-reed woodwind instrument with a sound envelope busy with overtones, about whose entrancing quality another musician stated, with accompanying pantomime of attracted movement for a listener: “When any Moroccan hears this, they want to come immediately” (personal communication 2007).

Meanwhile, Kamal, in response to my questioning about why he thought the particular device of the wah-wah might have become so readily integrated in Sha’bi performance practice, mentioned more specifically the Sufi brotherhood of the Jilala, the musical component of whose performances usually included the qasba. In attempting to place such “crossover” technological choices for aesthetic effect within a theoretical context for “mixed” cultural production, the mediating force provided by the constantly shifting conventions, interventions, and bridges of cultural attributes demonstrates itself through those notions of perpetuating a local practice even while appropriating a technology from previously outside of that practice. Such cultural attributes span the widest conceivable range from language to spiritual belief and from performative genre to manufactured instruments. And novel appropriations can assimilate so readily to any existing practice that there often is no question of seeking any *bona fides* for its origins except insofar as it sounds “right” and “makes sense” both to performers and listeners.

It is worth noting that the song my Moroccan musician acquaintance and I had been minutes with no definitive conclusion about whether or not another well-known regional performer had incorporated or not a drumkit or electric guitar at a particular point in his public performance career.

136 A single-reed wind instrument popular in Moroccan musical practice.
137 A double-reed wind instrument that was a mainstay of Moroccan musical practices going back many generations.
listening to prior to this discussion of the wah-wah’s entrance and significance to the field of Sha’bi practice was “Moali Tahar,” (literally “My Pure Master,” or "My Pure Lord," but also the name of a particular, revered saintly figure). The lyrics of the song contained numerous fragments that explicitly invoked aspects of the Jilala and other Sufi confreries or brotherhoods, and its usual hoarse vocal style with frequent recourse to falsetto is highly suggestive of that of the performance practice in the music of the Jilala.\(^{139}\)

**Altered States through Ritual and Technology**

Moroccan musicians’ use of more recent technological arrivals, such as the wah-wah, just as that of prior existing instruments such as the qasba and lira, helped produce in live performance situations a dense, unavoidable sound space, as mentioned above, eliciting from attendees’ responses a range of embodied reactions that differ markedly from erstwhile modes of individual and social behavior in Moroccan daily life. Through this process, musicians and audience worked together to establish a special, temporary world, where experiences of sensory exaltation, sensuous enjoyment and inter-gender physical display (all of which were usually constricted in ordinary encounters), became the norm. At the same time the larger social structure, which this specially generated psychosocial realm seemingly stood in opposition to, actually became further reinforced, given the inevitable lapse of the contingently generated social and psychological realm back to that mode of normativity. The respite offered by these occasions, which usually occurred in milieus that were physically removed and/or socially

\(^{138}\) The following two Internet addresses link to brief examples of these two sound producing technologies: \[\text{Jilala Qasba Sample} -- \text{http://music.columbia.edu/~cecenter/MediationCulture/JilalaQasba.mp3}\]; and compare: \[\text{Moali Tahr Wah Wah Sample} -- \text{http://music.columbia.edu/~cecenter/MediationCulture/MoaliTahrWah.mp3}\].

\(^{139}\) For an auditory demonstration of the similarity of these two, visit the following links: \[\text{Tahar Vocal Sample} -- \text{http://music.columbia.edu/~cecenter/MediationCulture/TahrVocal.mp3}\]; Compare: \[\text{Jilala Voice Sample} -- \text{http://music.columbia.edu/~cecenter/MediationCulture/JilalaVoice.mp3}\].
extreme in relation to the concerns and abrasions of daily life, had an emancipatory feel that seemingly celebrated a free license of the individual.

The majority of signals or catalysts, however, whereby an altered psychological state was engendered among attendees, as well as a majority of the gestural and affective responses by those individuals who engaged with those stimuli, were received by them from sources external to those individuals and their given, native socio-cultural milieus. Newer gestures spurring or indicating disinhibition – such as use of the wahwah – joined with other, previously established signs that had come to be understood as disinhibitory. This was true whether the external source derived from was the immediate and continuing one of Sha‘bi performance itself; or others consciously or unconsciously referenced and drawn upon, such as the Sufi performances already mentioned; or other popular cultural practices and formations in Morocco and elsewhere. And, to reiterate, the long-standing, far-reaching incorporations that have fed such local or national cultural practices included many of the key reference points borrowed from Sufi brotherhoods such as the Hamadsha, Gnawa, and Jilala, and which themselves stemmed from personages and ideas arrived to Moroccan locales from origins beyond North Africa or even the Arabic world, from at least as far as Persia.¹⁴⁰

No matter what particular source associated musical or dance gestures were derived from, or which cultural idioms were actually “in play,” such space- and position-creating functions “worked” when arbitrarily defined, socially proscribed gestures became “understood,” and were taken up and performed by individuals — in this case, practitioners of Moroccan Sha‘bi. In this embodied fashion, spurred by the mediating force of cultural forms and adopted technologies,

¹⁴⁰ Some of the sources offered me by Moroccans during the year 2006 for bodily gestures in response to Sha‘bi music, such as especially the energetic shaking of head and (liberated) hair by women, included commercial music videos from Lebanon; horse-related imagery as well as performance practice associated with Moroccan ‘Aita music
social spaces were mapped out and moved through by individuals, while new or shifted positions were created for, if not exactly or entirely by, themselves.

Sites for active Sha'bi listening provided an outlet for behaviors that were not usually found in the quotidian social sphere of Morocco, which was generally inhibited, particularly in terms of bodily aspect, intergender interaction, and expressive affect. Demonstrations of physical pleasure in public settings, especially with strangers, were otherwise highly unusual. Embodiments by audience participants in the focused context of live Sha'bi performance were at times sufficiently radical to be considered transgressive in almost any other circumstance: women, who might typically pass the day with their heads covered by scarves, often literally let their hair down. Some used the same disengaged scarf as mobile, malleable, visual accessory to call attention to other parts of their bodies, whose existence was otherwise typically masked in public settings by long, loose-fitting djellabas or caftans (hooded and unhooded gowns), including especially the hips, crotch and backside of those bodies.

Such radical inversions of the usual social order suggest the carnivalesque in the Bakhtinian sense, with all the accompanying ambiguities that might occur during periods of festival that not only allow shared celebration and a liberated sense of individual freedom, but at the same time contain both, within this highly defined, narrowly acceptable social space dedicated to them, fixing them as one insulated, quasi-structured venting component of a culture that overall demonstrates itself as inhibited in many ways regarding social decorum. The placement of self in the unusual position of liberated body experienced outside of usual social constraints was afforded by the mediation of conventionally performed culture, and that placement was ultimately provided for and contextualized by a shared, particular but highly

performed by sheikhat, professional female performers (see Ciucci 2008), as well as dance moves copied from performance traditions from the Haleej, or Arabic Gulf.
absorbent social technosystem that structured both the restraint – along with the possibility of opening up -- for individuals within that system.

In Moroccan use, the sound-selecting and sound-shifting function of the particular device of the wah-wah pedal resonated with its mediating function at the social and cultural level. The wah-wah acted as an intermediary between acoustic vibrations of an instrument such as the violin -- what became “the signal” -- and a constantly modulating version of that instrument: an instrument of an instrument. Just as the device’s technique was to sweep through different ranges of emphasized frequencies or pitch levels, contemporary Moroccan musicians accessed various continua of disjunct cultural possibilities and accentuated shifting portions of different registers to yield a series of distinctive effects, both emulating -- and instrumentalizing the creation of an artificially-produced variation of -- the human voice.

And just as the characteristics for “native” genres were understood as given because individuals had been introduced to and enculturated with them since at least birth, the attributes of possible elements to be adopted from outside that given milieu were set both by those same given mediating characteristics of a native cultural milieu, as well as by the parameters of whatever technologies were being picked up and added along the way. Thus, in the case of the wah-wah, the range of sound-producing or sound-manipulating possibility built in to that hardware (its frequency range and period for “sweeping” through that range) determined the sound output potentially produced and perceived by musicians and listeners. In terms of social understandings, its applicability and limits figured in to the larger mediating circuits of use and understanding that included approaches to existing forms and individual attitudes to address or reject them.
Like *mqaddem* -- the title given in Morocco to leaders of Sufi spiritual brotherhoods -- the musicians of Sha‘bi functioned both as performers and masters of ceremonies for initiated fans and for merely curious, more passive audience members alike.¹⁴¹ Musicians’ use of sound-producing technology assisted in a coalescing of physical, perceptual and cognitive forces -- e.g., the acts of sitting still, standing, and movements of extended duration; prolonged chanting; burning of incense; and the sounding of particular musical instruments; along with the signifying mythos, which those elements referenced and drew upon in the minds of participants. These impelled individual responses by those attendees, and, through their embodiments, expressed each individual’s separate embrace of a communal idea: in this case the temporarily liberated aspects allowed these subjects from a mutually understood social order. Where the leader of a Sufi group such as the Gnawa or Hamadcha might use incense, colored clothing, swords, long staffs, or other instruments in order to promote and assist the transition for individual devotees into an altered state of consciousness,¹⁴² and at the same time engender a heightened or rarefied relationship to the immediate social context around him or her than exists generally, Sha‘bi musicians employed not only musical instruments historically derived from a range of sources, but also more recent sound reinforcement technology including microphones, amplifiers, electronic keyboard synthesizers, and other devices that altered the volume, tone and timbre of sounds generated on those instruments, in order to stimulate a change in consciousness among both musicians and audience members.

The musicians’ use of this technology produced a highly immersive physical and social environment, whose auditory stimulation and highly framed perceptual and psychological

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¹⁴² For more detailed descriptions of some aspects of such ritual gatherings, see Crapanzano, 1978; Paques, 1991; Yarmolinksy 1991.
context elicited from attendees’ responses a series of possible embodied reactions that diverged significantly from normal modes of aspect and behavior on the Moroccan street, at home, or at work. This development of the rarefied space created in collusion by musicians and willing audiences could be stimulated further on the part of musicians by their calling out and “naming” members of the audience, a phenomenon that was shared with the historical performance of the musical form of Rai in Algeria (see Schade-Paulsen 1999), among many others in the Mediterranean. Audience members could then reinforce their approval of and participation in the music’s performance by offering “gharamat,” or small to medium sized contributions of money handed directly to members of the band or “orchestre,” or, where there were official dancers formally and professionally linked with the orchestre, sometimes to the dancers, though these offerings were then immediately transferred to one of the musicians.

The physical and psychological states arrived at through these multiple intersubjective feedback loops -- including the entering of a designated space by a large group of people who understand that space as serving as foundation for the creation of a highly localized and rarified effervescence or ethos, the naming out loud of participants, the offering of gifts -- all had aspects that were akin to the ecstatic states attained or sought after during many Sufi ritual ceremonies. And indeed, many of the physical gestures of dancers, as well as textual references of Sha‘bi songs,143 frequently traced a direct connection to those ceremonies via the cultural components in the makeup of popular songs and audience response to them: e.g., the very uninhibited, mixed-gender dancing, often with women whose hair was (unusually) uncovered; the falling to the knees when a certain peak level of response is reached (or wants to be communicated); the

143 See the following chapter for a discussion of several such texts.
abrupt switch to that rarefied state stimulated by musical cues, and as abrupt a return to a normative state, as if both were constantly latent even when not clearly manifest.

In the case of contemporary Sha’bi performed live, like many other expressive ritual performances in Morocco, much of its culturally compelling performative force was achieved through the density of its stimulating perceptual effects. Individuals gathered in a dedicated place, where it was possible to leave behind quotidian modes of enculturated behavior and understanding. Such a generated space needed only a handful of reminders to signal its difference. Electronic sound reinforcement elevated the amplitude or volume of the musical performance to extraordinarily high levels, creating a saturated auditory environment and, while doing so, it altered the timbre of even the most accustomed “acoustic” instruments, such as the violin/kemanjah. These distortions that were by-products of the process of amplification were augmented by more deliberate auditory effects such as “flange,” “delay,” and “wah-wah,” generated by mass-produced, imported metal, silicon, and plastic technological apparatus through which Sha’bi musicians fed musical sound via transducer microphones typically attached to their instruments.

Thus such newly-employed means for producing the range of altered audio signal worked in support of the larger, ongoing culturally expressive form in Morocco of Sha’bi. Such novel means (imported sound-altering technology) and long-lasting cultural forms (the evolving indigenous modern meta-genre of sha’abi) served in mediation between individuals’ aspirations and social realities. They also worked together as a sort of cultural liaison, mediating between the social makeup in the particular local and national milieus of Fez and Morocco, on the one hand, and the ongoing sphere of influence stemming from the larger world outside, on the other.
Some of the differences across this cultural divide were negotiated through a series of encounters and adjustments that included just such appropriations as that of the wah-wah, which, for all of its novelty, nonetheless corresponded to prior cultural signs and understandings, such as the thick, oscillating sound envelopes of prior acoustic instruments such as the lira and qasba, associated with other, pre-existing indigenous cultural formations in Morocco of the Sufi brotherhoods. This resetting of novel and familiar that demonstrated a relationship with local and the foreign culture, as well as customary and modern ideas and practices, played out as naturalized practice within one cultural performance genre and one vocational social formation. Any number of other instances of such overlapping choices, however, could be found in cultural performance practice and forming social contexts among contemporary Moroccan musicians. In the next chapter, I look at choices among Moroccan musical performers that were both parallel in some ways and divergent in others.
Chapter Six – Newly Hybrid Popular Music as Nationalist Culture in Modern Morocco

Looking at another set of specific instances involving the incorporation of “outside” influence on Moroccan musical practices of the years 2005-2008, I track in this chapter how some other Moroccans responded differently to such cultural resource possibilities through the use of technology and musical genre as parts of a shifting series of mediating channels for expression. Market considerations, though highly dominant in shaping general practices as well as individual practitioners’ attitudes, were not the only motivating factor in popular musical production. Charting a different tendency of purposeful direction, I take up here a consideration of Boohallee (née Kifash), a musical group based in Fez whose mélange of influences and styles were somewhat sui generis, but which I propose as exemplary of a particularly self-conscious hybrid trend.

Boohallee was a local group in the sense that, though they “toured,” performing in at least half a dozen or so different cities in Morocco over a few years, they never released a commercially available recording and thus never occupied a place in a national distribution system for musical products. But countless other groups who employed a myriad of overlapping means toward hybrid musical approaches in the same era became quite familiar at a national level for anyone paying attention to contemporary popular music in Morocco; it was difficult not to be at least somewhat aware of the names of groups who were featured in national magazines, advertised as performing at large-scale music and cultural festivals in the biggest cites of Morocco, or broadcast on national radio stations and television channels.

The styles embraced by such hybrid groups ranged far and wide. In an earlier chapter I

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144 “How,” in darija.
have already referenced in passing Hamid Kasri, the nationally most well-known practitioner in the newer hybrid categories of “Gnawa blues” or “Gnawa jazz,” beginning in the late 1990s. Among other stylistic adoptions in popular music in Morocco was the Western-style garage rock/punkish attitude and sound of Hoba Hoba Spirit, one of whose songs I look at more closely in the next chapter. Such investment in straightforward versions of the Western rock genre were rare in Morocco during this period, however -- not least because of lack of access and financial capability for the majority of practicing and aspiring musicians to sufficient imported music technology.

Among the many other groups who established exceptionally wide recognition for themselves was *Fnaire*,¹⁴⁵ whose mix of hiphop and customary Moroccan musical styles (sometimes referred to as “taqlidi rap”) manifested through performances on traditional instruments such as the tbal, genbri, lira or ghaita, along with the use of modern studio production technology, including sampled and synthesized drums and bass, highly manufactured post-production audio effects such as “flange,” and turntablism “scratching” of vinyl recordings. Interspersed with the more purely musical elements were *verité*-style recordings of street life (the sounds of horse-drawn carts and other traffic noise, vendors cries, bird noises) and direct address in monologues by individual voices representing both religious and nationalist themes, the combination of which with the other musical choices served as a sonic context for the various themes of the group’s lyrical choices, delivered in darija, African-American hip-hop style.

These latter were often centered on issues of nationalist pride (the proposal for pan-Magrebi political unity in the group’s song “Golih Goleh”¹⁴⁶ being the most expansive in its

¹⁴⁵ “Lantern,” in darija.
¹⁴⁶ Recorded versions of this and all following referenced songs can be found on *Yed El-Henna* “Hand of the Tattoo” (2005) — henna, of course, being the customary designs Moroccan women often decorated themselves with for special occasions, including particularly life-cycle celebrations such as weddings. The residue of these
reach conceptually), but also referenced religious or spiritual concerns through recurrent
invocations of Allah (e.g., “Sah Raoui”), and celebrations of both Sufi brotherhoods (the Gnawa
and Jilala, most prominently) and iconic Moroccan places. Among the latter was the highly
spiritually-reputed Fez, for instance, and the southern Moroccan port city of Mogador,
particularly associated with the Gnawa (due to its history of embarkation and settlement there by
many generations of those individuals arriving from sub-Saharan Africa, and their offspring).
Another particularly Moroccan place of reference was Jamaa Lfnaa (“Jamaa Lafna”), the
celebrated giant open public square in Marrakech: part market, part carnival, with an ongoing
mix of Moroccan cultural possibility available for viewing, from snakecharmers and boxing
matches, street-level dentists and fortune-divining numerologists, storytellers and musicians.
Most of Fnaire’s lyrics were sung in darija, but they incorporated as well “guest” appearances by
vocalists singing romantic verses flamenco-style in Spanish (“L’Mori F’12 “) or rapping in
English, including a recorded appearance by Cilvaringz, a member of the internationally well-

This was some instance of the range of differently cosmopolitan integrations by
Moroccan musicians of cultural sources from inside and outside Morocco, and this was some of
the overlapping impulses and choices shown by the group of musicians who are the focus of the
rest of this chapter. Like the group of Sha’bi musicians orbiting around Kamal and Muhammed,
discussed in the previous chapter, but with a different degree of willingness/capability to take up
from a wider range of sources and with different avocational intent, the musicians in
Kifash/Boohalle were negotiating the possibilities and demands of the particular time and place
into which they were born and enculturated. A greater access to resource possibility – including
access to cultural resources from abroad – was afforded them due to a socioeconomic position they began from, and a series of maneuvers they negotiated along the way, establishing a higher class basis from which to proceed than was likely or even feasible for working class musicians such as Kamal and Muhammed.

Their hybrid-genre style supported an interest in social change -- or at least social perspective -- which was the most salient thematic for their evolving performance practice. The selections from among cultural resource possibility made by the leading agents within the group pointed to their investment in a certain range of social awareness -- or at least social perspective. This was true for their choices in types of more customary Moroccan musical practice as well as for their re-appropriation of non-Moroccan styles, genres, and formal elements. Stylistically, the group’s larger social perspective impacted their cultural practice more generally in helping define their attitude and approach through a particularly willful sort of amateur ethos, explicitly questioning some of the careerist maneuvers most musical groups around them engaged in, while at the same time making the band’s performances available by some of the same means that the most market-oriented group might.

For example, one evening I waited backstage in a dressing room with the band before their performance at the recently renovated Cinema Rif in the Grand Socco of Tangier. This was part of a mini-tour of the North of Morocco the group had organized entirely themselves. In the last half hour or so before the first band of the evening was scheduled to go on, I observed how Adil, the de facto leader of Boohalee,147 was trying out an impromptu collaboration with

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147 Boohalee, in Moroccan darija, is the term for an individual who is seen as a kind of simpleton figure, but one who has at times attributed to him a special insight garnered from his particular position in relation to society (Harrell and Sobelman 2006). Another, briefer idiom offered me in explanation of the term was “cuckold,” and more than one person has also suggested to me as a definition the English word “hippie.” It is also the name for the one of the
members of the opening band, Zenka Flow,\textsuperscript{148} whose well-honed hiphop style made clear a very different musical program than that of the more shambling and chameleon Boohallee.

Adil had invited members of Zenka Flow to try to rap over a simple, indie rock-style, back-and-forth two-chord progression. Intended to serve as an encore performance after the concert proper, this last-minute attempt at creating a cross-genre synthesis failed to coalesce due to lack of time in an evening that went long, more than because of lack of preparedness. Over-rehearsal was not typical of Boohallee’s performance practice -- a style of rough edges was a deliberately courted characteristic of the group, if not necessarily a primary goal -- and this yielded a lively, anarchic sense beyond the limited effervescence demonstrated on stage by most Sha‘bi groups in urban Morocco at the time.

Boohallee’s approach to music-making had long been about quick and loose cross-genre partnering and production: Adil mentioned once how several years earlier he had approached a ma‘lem or "master" musician of melhûn, the centuries-old, semi-classical Moroccan genre of music; this individual had agreed to try to collaborate with Adil in creating a musical fusion project. As events transpired, though, circumstances always remained too challenging to organize sufficient time and thus momentum to follow through and to develop upon those initial impulses. Adil’s band, he had said in the past (for instance, several times in the course of one evening of rehearsal and home recording), was always ready for a concert, implying that the ephemerality of live performance suited his freer attitude, while the continuing material

\textsuperscript{148} Zenka is darija for “alley”, or “passageway,” indicating the smaller byways of old city medinas in Morocco, and, in the usage for the bandname, clearly both a claim toward desired “street” credibility and native Moroccan authenticity.
reference points of documents produced in recording constituted a different order of commitment and constraint.

Adil had been in another band, "Syndicate Hiphop," until four or five years previously, when he decided that, though he liked hiphop, there were other things he wanted to do musically. At the same time, he and his friend Youssef were discovering the allure and aesthetic utility of Gnawa culture through their more intensive exposure to it at the *Festival Gnaoua et Musiques du Monde d'Essaouira* (the "Gnawa and World Music Festival of Essaouira"). This was a growing annual event in the south of Morocco that had simultaneously helped develop Moroccan cultural self-consciousness and to bring international tourism to the city and country.

Gnawa was previously a music that Adil and Youssef, like most Moroccans, had been more or less dismissive of, perhaps because they had felt, consciously or not, that this music tied to a former slave class and their offspring was "low" and beneath their notice, or somehow not relevant to their experience because of the music’s ethnic specificity. This attitude derived both from those historical class associations, but perhaps also because of the beggarly attitude of many of those Gnawi who would prowl the streets of Moroccan cities in decades past, dressed in their recognizable robes and hats decorated in cowrie beads, playing the loud, large metal qaraqeb castanets particular to Gnawa musical practice, or threatening to do so, until strangers gave them money to move on.

But coming out of their experience at the Essaouira Festival, several different Gnawi had encouraged the aspiring musicians' nascent interest in the genre and taught them the basic tuning of the Gnawi stringed instrument, the hajhuj. The two younger musicians had been performing and recording songs ever since that incorporated elements of Gnawi style, adjusting the strumming of guitar chords to fit Gnawi rhythms, fusing it with the Western guitar styles they
had learned as college students or shortly after. When their friends first heard some of Adil's and Youssef's recordings, they thought they were listening to the Megri Brothers, the Moroccan popular music band of the 1970s and 80s, because the Megris were the only ones who had used guitars so integrally in Moroccan music up until that time.  

For their part, Adil and Youssef were not initially conscious of the direction their music had headed until someone suggested what they were doing coincided with a nationally emerging fusion genre of "Gnawa blues." Though their combinatory musical activities had evolved unselfconsciously, Adil told me at one point, the reason they were able to align their guitar-based practice so readily to the newly integrated lessons of Gnawa musical performance was because of characteristics held in common across the two genres that had originally emanated from two distinct cultures: specifically, pentatonic scales and the repetitions of simple musical and lyrical phrases over and over to comprise most song material.  

Adil's earlier lack of familiarity with the indigenous Moroccan forms of Gnawa music and his growing acquaintance with music and culture from outside of Morocco was a result of a series of specific social-class positions he had occupied as he made his way from an early youth spent in Morocco's largest and arguably most cosmopolitan city of Casablanca. Following this he had re-located with his family to what he described as a poor outlying section of Fez near Fez Jdid, which had been built by the Merenids in the thirteenth century, and then later become the old "New City" of Fez. In the few years just prior to and overlapping with the period of my study, his occasional but growing work acting as a “native” liaison for foreign buyers and owners in real estate dealings in Fez’s old city of the medina, coupled with his full-time job at the American Language Institute of Fez (ALIF), had undoubtedly accelerated a feedback loop.
through which his awareness of and interest in American music particularly had developed, along with his access to knowledge of such cultural information both in person and online.\footnote{One of Adil’s primary roles at ALIF was maintaining the computer equipment, software, and media library resources for students, which left him a fair amount of unsupervised if not free time, and direct channels to cultural exchange both human and technological.}

He spoke of a seminal moment early in his relationship to music from overseas when, “someone gave me a Tracy Chapman tape to practice English with, and, as I was translating the lyrics, my eyes opened wide. And I thought, ‘This music is really about something!’” (personal communication 2007).\footnote{Chapman is an African-American singer-songwriter, popular in the U.S. and Europe, and whose lyrical themes, while generally highly personal, often suggested concerns with larger social themes as well.} This experience helped launch a continuing development of greater cross-cultural cognizance on Adil’s part. This unusual degree of familiarity with cultural products from abroad had impelled him, from the earliest of his own musical productions, to incorporate musical components from “traditions” thought of consciously by him as derived from distinct streams of cultural production originating both at home and abroad.

However distinctive they might have been in his mind, though, he made clear he felt he had as much “native” right to draw on one as another, no matter its origins (a reggae beat equally with a Moroccan daqqa rhythm). He also demonstrated his belief that these cultural signs might also signify differently according to their usage by different or even by the same musicians and listeners in different contexts. He did so by explicitly representing, in his rhetoric at least, a certain care and consideration regarding the various ascribed values that might accrue while deploying the stylistic features of one genre more than another (an awareness that was not always evident among other musicians in Morocco who utilized novel elements in their musical practice). Whatever innate tendencies toward recognizing his own resource possibilities that he possessed, Adil had germinated a readily recombinant praxis that was exceptionally conscious of those possibilities due to the particularly generative conditions of his own habitus, one which had a heightened relationship with translocal cultural practices, and which created a particular willingness on his part to engage
with the intercultural give and take that was part of daily life in urban Morocco at the time.

Another Recombinatory Set of Cultural Appropriations in Popular Moroccan Music

The group of musicians gathering variously under the name first of Kifash, and later, Boohallee represented some crucial, growing awareness of possibility in contemporary popular culture in Morocco. However extreme the group was in their aesthetic choices, and however unlikely to become exemplary of any trend in musical practice to come in Morocco, they could be seen as a sort of “avant-garde” in the realm of the popular in Morocco, a leading edge of cultural changes that would become further integrated in the practice of other, succeeding musical groups as time went on.

Like the sorts of groups of Sha‘abi musicians exemplified by Kamal, Muhammed, and their cohort, this other ensemble of contemporary musicians also coalesced around individuals who not only developed a certain musical know-how, but also gained access to and ability in building and exploiting social connections and other resources (e.g. rehearsal and performance spaces, musical instruments and networks of promotion). The specifics of these accessed resources, however, were quite different, and they included a clear, deliberate and self-conscious relationship with a wider range of Western cultural elements, and other Western and Western-leaning individuals and institutions.

The group had a series of several different sets of core members, but ultimately its membership revolved around one continuing member: Adil. His was a far more conceptualist musical project than most popular music groups in contemporary Morocco. Though it had performed publicly in many different venues not only in Fez but also in other parts of Morocco during the years 2005-2007, the group did not possess any given sociocultural context for public performance -- no bar, café or wedding milieu provided them a natural or conventional venue –
this in contrast to the sorts of settings that a typical Sha'bi band in the same period might have had. The group nonetheless managed to connect with audiences, and it received enthusiastic responses from hundreds of mostly middle-class teenagers who heard its music.

In some ways, their enterprise was a self-conscious development of cultural possibilities that had been established by Moroccan groups of the 1960s and 1970s such as Nass El Ghiwaine and Jil Jilala, whose reputation and musical output remained prominent touchstones for Moroccans across class and generation, cultural icons for a different era that was both filled with darkness (the “years of lead”), as the same time as they offered more hope. Sometimes referred to as “musiqa ihtikajiya” ("protest music"), or even “music of revolution" (a designation offered by the owner/performer at the Sahara Club in Granada, quoted in an earlier chapter), the music of these and many more or less celebrated groups from this earlier period incorporated a willful combination of "foreign" elements: the banjo, mandolin, bell-bottom jeans, and group-oriented as opposed to individual “star” performer stage presentation styles. These adoptions were combined with what was for popular music in Morocco at the time an unusually disparate array of traditional Moroccan cultural components, including musical instruments (e.g., the hajhuj or genbri), apparatus usually associated with Sufi orders such as Gnawa and Aïssowa. The use of these instruments accompanied texts reflecting the stories and sayings of legendary “wise men” such as Sidi Mejdoub (literally, “Saint Eccentric” or “Saint Entranced”).

These combinations allowed the groups an unusual degree of social commentary. It also provided an appeal to or connection with an audience that was originally divided from

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152 One story that still circulated widely in more recent years was the obstinate recapitulation by the group, after the release of some of its members from jail, in their decision to re-record and distribute the same song had gotten those members arrested in the first place. This song was a metaphorically veiled criticism of corruption and unequal allocation of resources in the guise of a commentary on the customary Moroccan social practice of serving tea.
mainstream Moroccan popular culture to a large degree by a generational difference (see Schuyler 2000).

Other musical groups that followed slightly later in the footsteps of such projects in terms of stylistic choices for this newly defined genre included Lamchaheb, who continued the use of foreign instruments both acoustic and electric. Another, later musical group, Larsad, also employed unusual combinations of (non-electric) instruments, a "back-to-roots" attitude promoting the idea of a relationship to ideals of folk, and also generated and maintained a popularity with diverse listeners from multiple generations (though Adil, for one example, questioned the more apolitical attitude of this group relative to Nass El Ghiwaine and Jil Jilala).153

Though obviously part of the makeup of a shared national culturescape for large segments of the music-listening population of Moroccans, and frequently referenced in conversation by musically-interested Moroccans, as well as in written articles in the popular press, and even sometimes played on the radio and television, the music of that first wave of the self-consciously constructed musical style of musiqa ihtikajiya was only occasionally "covered" in live performance by more recent popular groups. Out of hundreds of musical performances I attended in Fez and Morocco during the years 2005-2007, I only encountered a handful of instances where old material of Nass El Ghiwaine and Jil Jilala was performed, despite a strong reliance by most public musical performers in this period on pre-existing musical materials originating with others. Two of those instances I did observe were performances by street musicians: one in the famous open venue that is the large public square of Jmaa El Fnaa in Marrakesh; the other a regularly strolling banjo player and singer in the Ville Nouvelle of Fez.

153 I first heard the group at an Internet cafe in a recording given me by a nineteen year-old woman apparently of a relatively high economic class; the next encounter was a citation of their lyrics by a middle-age carpet salesman.
The legacy of these iconic groups, then, in terms of direct influence on musical practice thirty-odd years later was small, though their symbolic importance as icons of cultural and political possibility was still quite large.

In many senses, Kifash/Boohalee was updating ideas of these 1970s-era groups in the process of creating a novel hybrid demonstrating a particular Moroccan cultural savvy in accessing a different, more far-ranging set of cultural parameters. A series of consciously syncretic musical styles were manifest in all of the various incarnations of Adil's musical ensembles, which he always referred to as "we," though he was the only constant through the shifts in personnel, instrumentation, style, repertoire, and group name, and it was clear that his vision and skills were a primary driving force in directing how the project evolved. Adil seemed determined to keep the project a constant work-in-progress, willfully uncommitted to a particular style or genre, recounting admiringly at one point a story he had read about the American genre-shifting “indie” pop-rock star, Beck, and this latter’s deliberate refusal to give concert attendees what they had come to expect.

Though patently interested in reaching public audiences, Adil also declared his disinclination to play music for monetary gain. His primary “day” job in this period (as support personnel for the American Language Institute of Fez) not only provided the income he needed, but it also offered several channels for resources for his developing musical projects. Since the core constituency of the Institute where he worked consisted of the many hundreds of (for the most part) middle to upper class teenagers whose families were able to afford the time and money to pursue extra-curricular study in English, the Language Institute also held a built-in, internationally-oriented potential audience for his musical projects.
That network of possibility was expansive beyond the immediate groups of students in the city of Fez, reaching as well not only those students’ non-schoolmate friends, but also groups of students in the network of English language instructional institutes in every major city and town of significant size in Morocco (i.e., Casablanca, Marrakech, Rabat, Tangier, and Tetouan). That there was an interest, even a hunger, or at least an openness among this demographic for the novel musical mélange of the group was apparent from the audiences that showed up and stayed at each of the group’s performances—audiences that often numbered in the hundreds.

Access to that audience was not simply a matter of casual promotion to the school’s students of live performance events by Adil and his band, but extended into levels of formally structured promotion. For instance, at Adil’s instigation, the Center had sponsored a number of events over the years of his employment where his and other musical groups from Morocco and abroad were featured. These events were conceptualized and organized by Adil himself, with financial support, equipment and technicians, and external venues often arranged and/or paid for by the Center, along with the aid of one or more of the other language centers in the network nation-wide for performances which took place outside of Fez. The level of production overall (including at times a 24-input Soundcraft mixing console—a relatively high-end, Western music industry standard—sound monitors for individual performers, and Fender guitar amps) was well beyond what was enjoyed by the typical working Sha’bi band at the time, who relied almost invariably on eight channel Italian-brand Montarbo consoles, no separate monitors for musicians, nor often even separate, dedicated amplification for each of their instruments.

The level of media-savvy and access on the part of Adil in support of his group’s developing possibilities, both musical and logistical, was also apparent, and this was in stark contrast to that of a typical Sha’bi group at the time. Whereas my documentation of several
performances by Kamal’s group on digital video was clearly a novelty for most of the musicians in the band, and the resulting copies I made for them were highly sought after by its members, nearly every performance of Adil’s band was documented on video (in however amateur a fashion), by one or another friend; while only one out of the five or six core musicians in Kamal’s band had an email account when I met them in 2006, several of the various members of Kifash/Boohalee did and used them quite extensively.

Adil put his default professional role at the Language Institute to use via a further, more pro-active approach to media technology in the margins of his time while doing that job, maintaining an ongoing campaign of research on his own about a wide range of pop music products and performers from the West, as well as an active electronic correspondence with many individuals from the West, including a hiphop band from California, for whom he arranged a tour of the American Language Centers in Morocco, booking his own group as an opening band. By early 2007, he was posting video excerpts of his group’s performances on Youtube, the do-it-yourself Internet video archive/viewing site, which was just then reaching a new peak in mainstream popularity in the West.

As already alluded to, class and level of education had much to do with positioning primary members of the two different groups for their experiencing and taking advantage of more extensive contact with musical products generated and exported from outside of Morocco. Where the more working class level of Kamal’s performance context provided him with only a vague awareness of foreign genres, as in his aforementioned placing in the category of hiphop a English House dance track overheard at the café in Fez, Adil’s exposure to and fine-tuned awareness of genres as diverse as folk, blues, indie rock, and rap provided him with a multitude of cultural resources to draw upon. By his own account, popular music from the Americas was
particularly responsible for his extraordinary facility not only with a broad and diverse English language vocabulary, a fluent command of syntax and idiom, and flawless accent, but it also provided him with a vast and constantly widening pool of cultural reference points both for musical composition and for more general conversation: he had more than once been mistaken by Moroccans for an American, and even his American wife commented on how often she was startled to realize anew that he wasn’t American himself.

Adil also arranged for his group to perform at the official residence building at ALIF for the dozens of foreigners (whose average age was early- to mid- twenties) passing through the Language Center in the course of a year. Through these he received a constantly updated supply of cultural references from abroad. Highly accustomed to accessing information from a variety of sources, he had a more developed awareness about the products of the international commercial music industry--in the United States particularly--than did most natives of the U.S. themselves.

The events at the Language Center residence would often incorporate one or more individuals from among the foreign students as participating musicians themselves, especially from among the longer-term and returning students. At one such event, Adil acted both as musician and a producer, arranging for a local Gnawa group to perform first to introduce the genre of music to the foreign students in residence at the time, also joining in with a punkish jam band style toward the end of the Gnawi performance, then moving on to play a set of his band’s own material until broken strings on the electric guitar borrowed from one of the American students hastened the end of the evening’s musical events. Youssef, Adil’s main musical partner for many years, also worked at jobs that provided the group with an additional density of contact with foreigners: a primary one being a long-standing job at a high-end riad (a converted villa tourist hotel) in the medina, which he later left to work alongside Adil at the Language Institute.
Adil developed his network of international contacts further through his sideline work in real estate: originally as property manager, then as liaison between local samsara (real estate agents) and international buyers, and finally, succumbing to temptations/pressures, as a broker of deals himself. His early reservations about the effects that the intense dealing in property speculation obviously had for life in the medina were inscribed briefly on a website that he launched that was devoted to considering critically those effects. But the ambivalence he felt in this work was soon overwhelmed by the burgeoning activity he took on in the business realm, so that the cultural consideration of this site soon lapsed, giving way to a new site dedicated to marketing his company’s services globally.

Freed of the constraint to try and make a living from music, and more cognizant of the array of cultural possibilities in the wider world, the choices of Adil for his evolving musical project had a greater possibility of serving his more conceptualist and ideological impulses. Fueled in part by political philosophies for cultural production that were anarchist or punk in nature (he appreciated, often out loud, the American, politically-leftist, polemicist musical group, Rage Against the Machine), he was avowedly against the idea of trying to attain professional status or monetary gain through his music. All the live performances presented by the various versions of his musical groups during the years 2005-2008 were free to the public. He used as negative example the story of compromises in performance style he understood the contemporary U.S. hiphop group The Black Eyed Peas had made to maintain a relationship with their record company, and he vehemently countered in his conversational recollection of this story that if anyone came to him suggesting he should change some aspect of his performance practice in order to sell more records, he would be furious.
When I asked him if there had been much discussion in his group or consideration on his part about changing the style and sound of the group in the early part of 2007 to feature more of a rock sound, he responded first by referencing his past as a musician. He narrated that he had come to appreciate many types of music from a young age, naming more than a few to represent that diversity: not only the classic Moroccan Sha‘bi performer, Hussein Slaoui, but also reggae and Bob Dylan. However, he went on to say, a lack of equipment and other resources had impaired him and his collaborators in musical projects from attempting much of the music he would have preferred at many moments up until the present one. If he could have, he indicated, he would have loved to sound like Rage Against the Machine. Though, he quickly amended, he would not want exactly to copy them, and then he digressed into a lengthy series of anecdotes about how he had advised other Moroccan groups (mostly those he encountered that were working in hiphop) to avoid all-encompassing, all-defining stylistic straightjackets, especially those borrowed wholesale from abroad. Once he was able to afford or access instruments such as electric guitars, a drumkit, and processing equipment like audio effects generators, he suggested, he was enabled to try his hand at other genres that had previously been out of reach.

Adil’s own departure from the hiphop stylings of one of his earlier musical incarnations had something to do with this approach he said he found pervasive in local practices: the whole-scale abandonment of possible Moroccan musical identities while embracing the Western one of hiphop. But additionally, it was his development of technological capacities for making music that opened the way for him to work within or across other foreign genres. “There are mostly hiphop bands here [i.e. Fez],” he once mentioned to me, “because it doesn’t take much resource-wise to get something together.” Finally, his attendance along with Youssef at the 2004 Gnawa Festival in Essaouira, and brief subsequent study under the tutelage of some Gnawa muallem
(masters) he met there, had confirmed his movement away from musical efforts more strictly aligned to the genre of hiphop, though even within his earlier work he had often and quite deliberately incorporated samples of Moroccan traditional instruments and rhythms in the dozens of tracks he generated in Fruity Loops, a computer-based music sequencing software program that was manufactured and marketed in the West.

While there were certainly a number of amateur hybridizing musical groups in contemporary urban Morocco, Adil’s assertion of shifting practice was a particularly pro-active negotiation of the possibilities offered by globalization: computer software and other musical instruments from abroad, genres and examples of musical practice from overseas as well, and even a local genre brought more forcefully and positively to his attention by the context of a national festival oriented toward international audiences. Seen another way, Adil’s syncretic praxis was a willful reaction to an enforced cosmopolitanism, one which compelled and enabled him to learn the names, backstories and attitudes of various cultural actors from overseas, and the correspondence between use of certain cultural forms and technology to genre practices in music.

Ultimately it would be difficult or impossible to parse how much of the cultural adoptions he incorporated was willed by him and how much forced on him. Either way, it is an open question whether it merely succeeded ultimately in promoting a sort of false consciousness regarding the relationship he developed with those adoptions he made of “foreign” musical instrumentation and other sound-making technology as well as song form and style vis-à-vis other choices he continued making from among an array of Moroccan cultural elements. From his point of view, however, he felt all these elements from diverse sources were combined by him to produce something contemporarily Moroccan.
Some Concluding Thoughts on Cultural Responses to Modernity and Global Flows

The gamut of terms proposed in the previous chapter to try and frame cross-cultural processes -- from hybridity and indigenization -- suggest a variety of different possible narrated versions of cultural change and incorporation. These in turn offer a divergent set of implications on relative agency in the processes (and positionalities) of cultural production, including the possibility of the elision of difference and masking of power dynamics in human relationships. The range of class positions potentially occupied by individuals in Morocco might have much to do with the degree of engagement with and self-consciousness about interactions with the novel, the foreign, and the other. Working class Sha’bi musicians such as Kamal and Muhammed had a less expansive target geographically for their vocational practices as musicians: largely contained by the Moroccan territorial borders themselves, usually based in a single town, and still bound at their most far-reaching extension to a radius of a couple hundred kilometers, for those in the Northern urban locales, at least. For musicians with a more willfully syncretic approach, such as Adil and his cohort, the capacity to integrate new cultural elements (certain kinds of instruments, distortion, amplification, as well as song styles) into a system of practice derived from greater degrees not only of material access but also of knowledge about different sound-making technology, emplaced them (as much as they might also have been trying to place themselves) in relation to both an originary location as well as to the larger world from which so much of this practice was drawn.

The very idea of “indigenization” implicitly posits a polar system, where “foreign” and “local” are reified and become at best (or at most nuanced) different components to be put into a new combination with one another. In this conceptualization, the amount of pertinent, perceivable “local-ability” or “foreignness” for any cultural process or production is up to the distinguishing taste of any of a number of different arbitrating authorities. Those who take on the role of such authorizing might be individual agents -- whether they are individual producers, distributors, critics, or fans -- or institutional performance venues, festivals and recording
companies, as well as the even more spectral actors of the state, commerce and the marketplace, versions of translocal capitalism.

It is these last that seem to be most lost sight of when the description of interactions among different actors are left to the all-engulfing epithets of “circulation” or “flow,” oft-resorted to in recent social scientific accounts of global cultural practices in late modernity (e.g., Appadurai 1996; Lee and Lipuma 2002). Such conceptualizations of something indigenous in hybrid practices (i.e. forms that incorporate the elements brought in to “native shores” by “currents” and “flows” that are abstractions for human systems of distribution) can ignore the interpellation of market economies’ insistent taps on the shoulder. That same market is felt in an array of gestures by different individual cultural practitioners, who see themselves, or are seen by others, as participating in projects that are to various degrees successfully meaningful to ideas both of locality, as well as to the “outside,” “modern,” “developed,” “foreign” or otherwise different. But there is an undeniable bullying presence of the larger socio-economic system, and not only in the need to respond to it, but in the requirement to define oneself in relation to it, to always perform culturally, even if in denial, and in always having to make (or getting to make) decisions about using the tools and the means that are provided by one side or another of any perceived cultural divide (and class, as I have indicated more than once by now).

Those polarized notions of “local” and “foreign” are crucial for differentiating selves as social beings who are part of larger groups (and not part of other groups). At the same time, often unknowingly, individuals become agents of something other than themselves while keeping difference channeled and contained, whether through their own assimilations of cultural practice, marginalized in a supposed indigenizing process, or where any difference is always kept at a distance no matter how close it might seem to be brought, because of those very preemptive
definitions of the poles of “local” and “foreign.” One musician then may seek out and relish the interactions of playing with “foreigners” and the “foreign.” Another may not be able to imagine it at all. In order to maintain any general cultural relevancy, however, whether in the interest of livelihood with whatever naturalized ideologies of Moroccan nationalism latent or manifest in accompanying discourse, or in pursuit of more explicit ideologies of willful cultural appropriation in modernity, contemporary popular musicians in Morocco could hardly be said to avoid the examples of foreign popular culture brought to their attention and indeed surrounding them by the production and distribution of a popular culture industry system from abroad.

Adil’s attitude toward what he saw as the misleading attractions of commercial success for musicians was remarkably similar to that of his questioning of the examples of false prophets of Sufism and Islam, and what he saw as their range of disengagements from society, whether by excessive, self-serving wealth or by withdrawal from social intercourse altogether.154 It seems apparent that his attitude was fed by encounters both with iconoclastic and punk figures from Western rock and alternative music practice, as much as with those figures of Sufi wisdom who have historically questioned the social, political and spiritual status quo.

Moroccans’ variously unfolding relationships to modernity, to colonialism, and to the cultural offshoots of both of these, had a range of fallout stemming from what played well, what played at all in local practice, and how those forms and processes signified to audiences and producers alike. Choices to assimilate certain aspects of cultural practice from both near and far could not simply be made from any position of undeniable individual agency, if a musician wished to remain accessible to audiences also entrained by cultural examples and expectations

154 In relation to the recurring paradigm in Morocco of the narrative of the reclusive saint see concurring documentation from an earlier era in Westermarck 1968 [1926]. In relation to the insulating capacities of wealth, and in a more contemporary iteration, Adil derided the example of a rich sheikh, or spiritual leader of one brotherhood, arriving or departing spiritual events in a Mercedes, surrounded by an entourage.
set out by a worldwide system of distribution, which impelled a certain range of choices: from media technology for production and distribution, to clothing to song lyrics and language. The simultaneous tug and repulsion of the artifacts of colonizers (and of those of their conceptual “offspring” of succeeding generations of international cultural producers, of whom much of Morocco had daily reminders in one way or another) were only layers to be subsumed in a cumulative and shifting mass in a larger process of cultural sedimentation, as will be described in more detail in Chapter Six.

Where Adil was conscious and triumphant in his recombinatorial musical style, Kamal and Muhammed were casual, and not focused on generating any larger difference in their musical choices. If anything, their development of instrumentation along the lines of already established (however recently) precedent, and, as tellingly, their devotion in repertoire to “covering” other, pre-existing songs, spoke of a drive to steer close and adhere to the confines of received Sha’bi conventions. To a large degree, it was a matter of attitude: the ambitions of Kamal and Muhammed were first and foremost to stay aesthetically relevant and commercially viable in a local sense, and their use of imported innovations like the wah-wah was not manifestly ideological, more a matter of trying to get audiences excited and keep them (and venue owners) happy.

More ironically, Adil’s use of equipment and musical genres from abroad indicated a zealousness in his attempting to represent Moroccan culture at a moment of particular openness or vulnerability. He deployed his art to achieve social as well as cultural activism, both in terms of content and style, proselytizing vocally with other musicians about the tack he felt they should take in incorporating foreign elements and styles themselves, while also adopting and/or channeling the personae of various Sufi or other social critics to deliver a message questioning
the present-day interpretation of spiritual obligation to society, and the state of Moroccan social life generally.

As much as Martin Stokes is right to insist that “Politically, one must distinguish the hybridizing cosmopolitanism (Turino 2000) of the relatively powerful from the relatively powerless,” and as much as his reminder that “Hybridizing strategies often have an elite, rather than subaltern, dynamic” (2004:61) is no doubt true in many circumstances, the “strategies” of both the relatively “powerful” Adil and the relatively “powerless” Kamal and Muhammed in Fez circa 2006-07 were actually both oriented toward creating or re-generating something distinctly “Moroccan.” Of course, in the larger political scheme of things, Adil was also fundamentally limited in access to power, and even in ability to control most aspects of his own life, just as almost any individual musician in Morocco or elsewhere in the world. But his ability to produce and represent something he conceptualized as worthwhile musically surpassed that of the average musician in Morocco, amateur or professional. More accurate would be to claim that the tactics of Kamal and Muhammed, on the one hand, and Adil, on the other, differed from one another, while addressing the same “goal” or need: the necessity to respond to a compelling, particular modernity in Fez at that time, a pressure that spurred a potentiality to access different ranges and registers of cultural possibility: local language and “foreign” technology, and song forms and styles from both.

Though all of these musicians would differentiate between what they were doing culturally and something musically “taqlidi” or “traditional,” the projects that came out of each of their vocational practice (in the case of Kamal and Muhammed) and avocational praxis (in the case more pointedly of Adil) were clearly understood by both audiences and performers as something that could only be made in Morocco. With a view of hybridity as what is necessarily
entailed in any cultural production, the degree and proportions of individual technologies within the musical practice of each performer are somewhat beside the point, despite Stokes’ assertion that “one must distinguish between a variety of different ways in which styles, genres, instruments, and sounds perceived as different are brought together” (2004:61). Class does matter within any local context, but, for at least the first steps on the march toward a globally integrated cultural and techno-system, the range of socio-economic and political positions of any one nation-state vis-à-vis others, trumps the better part of localist cultural and much of socio-economic differentiation as well.

If, as McLuhan has suggested, the spoken word was the first means of mediating the experience of oneself as an internalized subject in the external world -- that is, how “man was able to let go of his environment in order to grasp it in a new way” (1964:64) -- then all subsequent iterations of “culture” serve that same purpose of what Mazzarella has described as mediation’s producing of effects of “simultaneous distancing and self-recognition” (2004:357) by humans caught up in mediation’s processes, or what Weber has described as "the world brought forth and set before the subject, whose place thus seems secured by the object of its representation” (Weber 1999:86). Ideas of the world are thus produced by and for cultural practitioners.

The relationship of each musician to the question of genre in particular is a different matter: the attitude of Adil and his group, for instance, in deliberately mixing and matching elements from a wide and shifting array of musical genres, was more explicitly elaborated when he went so far as to proselytize to other musicians about transcending the limits of hiphop style, say, in order to achieve a synthesis more meaningful for the singular context that was Morocco in the years 2005-2007. Meanwhile, members of Kamal and Muhammed’s group were by and
large unquestioning about the perceived parameters of any genre they might or might not be working within.

This integration of foreign and local reminds how mediating forces must be seen as a fundamental given in the generation of both ideas of culture and of self, or, as the McLuhan, Mazzarella and Weber quotes above indicate, how subjects necessarily locate themselves through what Mazzarella earlier defines as the "dialectical doubleness of mediation -- its close distance in the flow of practice" (2004:348), and his later conclusion that "we come to be who we are through the detour of something alien to ourselves, the places at which we recognize that difference is at once constitutive of social reproduction and its most intimate enemy" (2004:355).

To conclude here, having already reiterated the fundamental nature of mediation for defining self, society and difference, I want to return to the idea of interculturality I brought up earlier to underline the foreign origins for some of these culturally-applied devices, and to point out that what becomes convention, and what is actually absorbed into communally understood cultural practices, never occurs as a social phenomenon that can be circumscribed or understood as a sovereign realm entirely unto itself, isolated from cross-cultural negotiations and exchanges of all kinds. The means and manner of these kinds of selective appropriation may not be so much decided by individuals in local settings even if they are adopted in the terms of local culture. And as for future unfoldings, the further shifts in practices locally understood might more and more resist or more and more adapt to not only the means and manner but the goals and ambitions of whichever cultural systems present themselves as likely, or necessary, or unavoidable for appropriation, a matter I take up in the next chapter with specific reference to several individual popular music songs.
In this chapter I look at several iterations of popular music in Morocco in relation to perceptions of the foreign, outside, or Other. While doing so, I consider various ideas of modernity as a frame for analysis. I also take up for consideration paradigms outlined by Michael Taussig (1993) and Homi Bhabha (1984) regarding mimetic contact between and among various different cultural groups originating from different milieus. In applying these frameworks, I provide perspectives on some of the ways that Moroccan cultural practitioners have integrated formerly alien cultural elements as that expression has developed through various stages of affect: e.g., from nostalgia to irony. One overarching goal of the explication here is to point to aspects of these processes of integration as a response to the unfamiliar, and the signs of unease and uncertainty they represent in the face of the foreign.

Any consideration of “modernity,” however much it might be focused on the determining effects of a seemingly prevailing cultural, economic, or political system, must be conscious of the fracturing entity that the basic concept of “modernity” itself is prone to be upon examination. Historical relationships to colonialism, capitalism and consumerism, nascent nation-state formation, large-scale population shifts via migration, and rapid technological development are all common characteristics that have laid out modern foundations for different groups of people to organize and conceptualize themselves in relation to. Nevertheless, the specific iterations of these different groups’ experiences in relation to modern phenomena are worth noting distinctly too, given that they also result in continuing difference, at the same time that many characteristics might be shared in common.

Marilyn Ivy (1995) points out the plural modernities that exist simultaneously among and
across conceptualized entities of differing human groups—e.g., nations from different regions and/or with different histories of relationship to some developing global systems of exchange. These modernities, she observes, exist in many ways as incommensurate with one another, but they do nonetheless exist coevally (1995:8). And while the characterizing aspects of modernity for any particular locale or group of people might be conceivable as unique, all “types” of modernity remain fundamentally interrelated and caught up with one another.

This is particularly notable in the ongoing results of those mimetic tendencies generated out of encounters across cultural difference, a fact emphasized not only by Ivy, but also by Bhabha before her, and by Taussig, as well as many others (see, for instance, Boddy 1994; Kramer 1993). These authors suggest that such mimetism among groups of people is enacted as an unavoidable part of functioning for humans in contact with other groups of people, as they negotiate with aspects of those others' differently-perceived cultures. This is true whether the medium of imitation or appropriation is comprised of new technologies or new systems of political or economic organization.

All of the above-mentioned writers, in their consideration of the question of cross-culturally mimetic behavior in modernity, focus on the effects of such mimetic interactions between representatives of the post-Enlightenment West and those of indigenous groups elsewhere on either side of a cultural divide, the latter usually colonized by the former in one way or another. This colonial backdrop to cultural mimesis informs my own consideration of encounters by Moroccan cultural practitioners with representatives of the foreign in the modern era (most notably those from the U.S. and Europe), and the integration of various elements in developing Moroccan self-expression from cultural practices that were previously outside the experience of the vast majority of Moroccan sensibilities.
To focus more specifically here on the particular form of cultural expression that is the primary subject of this dissertation, I would like to make clear that, long after whichever initial contacts and many succeeding generations of interchange across perceived cultural divides, the recombinant aspects of most popular Moroccan musical practices were not simply examples of cultural imperialism and subservience in Moroccans’ emulation of Western music styles and techniques, no matter how lopsided or even unilateral the arrival of some cultural difference often was. As part of their own developing performance idioms, Moroccan musicians worked through their various capacities of accessing resources, possible ranges of identity and behaviors, and representations that were both familiar and novel to different degrees -- as do all humans encountering cultural difference to various degrees.

Common as such encounters might be, the stakes are important in reckoning specific outcomes of such cultural differences. Some of the stakes in the relationship engendered by cross-cultural mimesis at an earlier colonial moment are suggested by Bhabha when he abstracts the results as:

*a discursive process by which the excess or slippage produced by the ambivalence of mimicry becomes transformed into an uncertainty which fixes the colonial subject as a ‘partial’ presence. By ‘partial’ I mean both ‘incomplete’ and ‘virtual’” (1984:127, emphasis in original).

In the following, while tracing how some particular instances of Moroccan musical practice have dealt with encounters with the foreign, I am responding in part to this half-ghostly figure invoked by Bhabha, with an eye to ascertaining how much more fully such figures might be fleshed out or otherwise resolved.

By eliciting in this chapter a sense of some of the different phases of contact over time between various Moroccan musical formations and the cultural possibilities arrived from the
larger world outside Morocco, I seek to elicit signs of shifting mediating influences over time as well as point to some of their outcomes. I do so by reading through several song texts composed and recorded at discrete intervals over a period of more than sixty years. These texts address – explicitly, in thematic fashion -- moments of cross-cultural contact as a fundamental basis for their own narratives.

I look to how these songs present differing responses to the arrival of human figures and cultural elements that embody the foreign. These responses vary from that fatalistically critical perspective on what is transpiring in the world around the song’s narrator in Hussein Slaoui’s “Dakhlau Lmirikani” (“The Coming of the Americans”), to the wry and knowing later-day irony of a post-modern generation still aware of the differences encountered when meeting cultural others in Hoba Hoba Spirit’s “Mirikani” (“Americans”). Both these songs represent meetings across human and cultural difference, even while employing aspects of those differences in their own cultural production.

In between these two poles of responsiveness of the distressed or wearily decrying, at one end, and of an ironic jouissance, at another, I explicate in a third song (“Tanjiyya,” as performed by Sheikh Mwizo) an example of a narratively dominating reference to a supernatural manifestation. Such a manifestation, extreme as it might itself seem in some ways, is very much in keeping with historical practices for integrating disjunction in social realities, a psychological tendency among Moroccans for generations past, according to Crapanzano (1973, 1977, 1979, 1980) and Pandolfo (2000), among others. The reference in the lengthy song narrative of Mwizo’s text to an unnamed entity apparently from a spiritual realm, however singular in its articulation as one particular popular song, is nonetheless part of a long chain of references in Moroccan music of all types to specific spirits and saints associated with Sufi brotherhoods and
their healing practices, references which were still evident in Moroccan popular songs during the first decade of the 21st century.

Working chronologically backwards during the course of this chapter, then, I will track the occurrence of multiple such embodied manifestations of cultural difference in different popular song texts, and how they have helped mediate such difference, while at the same time pointing to different phases of cross-cultural recognition, negotiation, and response and integration. I have chosen to focus on these three songs due both to particular aspects in each, as well as to some of the attributes shared in all. I have also selected them because they range across several different styles of the popular, from the antiquated proto-Sha'bi of Slaoui's "The Coming of the Americans" (the celebration of which by many Moroccan music fans points to a continuing trend of nostalgic appreciation for a certain vanished moment of Moroccan cultural practice), to the much more recent garage rock of Hoba Hoba Spirit, and the aspiring Melhûn style of Mwizo's "Tanjiyya."

This last cultural product is notable also as an unusually far-flung example of the dispersion of one particular ethno-cultural relationship to the production and distribution of popular music in Morocco. Produced in Israel by a Moroccan Jewish cultural practitioner originally from the Moroccan city of Meknes, it presents a nostalgic model of Moroccan popular cultural practice from the era prior to the mass Jewish exodus from Morocco in the 1950s and 1960s (a milestone of nationalist identity formation in late modernity), drawing on specific cultural reference points as sources for its own production.

I attend to these recorded documents in their signification as salient points of coalescing awareness in a longer continuum of cultural activity. Each serves as part of a series of emblematic glosses on the state of cross-cultural interactions as manifested in Moroccan popular
music during the late modern period. I focus on them because each in its way is fundamentally about negotiating with aspects of a newly-arrived spirit of modernity perceived through encounters with the foreign or Other.

What I am conceptualizing here is a paradigm of response to modern conditions of being human in post-colonial states. I propose bracketing consideration of such response in phases that I believe are productive for thinking about the relationship between individual subjects in any modern locale and how they react to and re-deploy cultural possibilities received from both near and afar. Though I lay out a series of discrete phases for tracking evolving reaction to cultural difference, I am in no way suggesting that these be taken as a schema that represents some truly hard-structured reality.

Rather, I am interested in using this set of characterizations to parse out some of those ambiguous, ambivalent, and shifting impulses and reactions that occur when individuals in all modern societies grapple with the cultural manifestations of difference that arrive to them from outside a given culture, and which they often simply cannot ignore. In Morocco particularly during the modern era, the series of differences embodied in and purveyed by European traders starting in the nineteenth century (extended over time through the policies and actions of French and Spanish colonial representatives) gave way in great degree to American cultural incursions starting in the middle of the twentieth century. The resulting state of this long series of political, economic and cultural interactions was a more and more globalized, highly commercial, and interwoven relationship, in which Morocco served more and more as staging ground for ongoing interpellation in a marketplace of new-arriving products from abroad.

That “marketplace” is, of course, not so simply the site or sites of any physical exchange of goods, but a larger, more abstract realm that is defined as well by the additional functionality
of such goods as carriers of new ideas and as catalysts for new relationships. These latter are
dynamic elements that must be engaged with by individuals in varying fashion in order to be
made sense of by those individuals. In the process, those ideas and relationships might be
variously resisted, rejected, embraced or succumbed to, but must necessarily be dealt with, in one
way or another. For Morocco in the last century of the modern era, this has meant integrating the
impact of newly entering mass-produced elements from overseas; idealized notions of a larger
nationhood and political organization (however uneasily, corrupted, or flawed these might be
instituted in practice); and a system of increasingly encroaching capitalist exchange, whose
sources and termini have been more and more global in basis.

The five phases I consider in this grappling with difference that are played out in the
following song texts include:

*Consumption*, that is, both the act of ingesting any crafted or mass-reproduced
cultural products, as well as the idea of consumerism as an ideologically-
inhaled, highly-determining pattern of behaviors learned as part of becoming a
modern subject;

*Contagion/Infection*, the notion that something non-native, alien, and likely
pernicious comes to pollute, threaten, or toxify some more natural or previously
naturalized state of being. With the impression of contagion comes the onset of a
significant sense of nostalgia imbuing much of the perspectives on prevailing
cultural practices. That sense of loss of something meaningful from prior cultural
attributes is part of the syndrome that Laroui (1973 [1967]) points to as a
prominent feature of modern Arab mentality in his meditation on the post-colonial
condition;

*Possession*, suggesting the inhabiting of one's own being by a force originally
external, and with an ensuing set of behavioral by-products of entering a different
state of consciousness and relation to one's surrounding social context. This state
of being, particularly prominent in Moroccan cultural history, is most often as
something psychopathological, seen from the outside perspective of a Western-
oriented gaze (see again Crapanzano 1973, 1977, 1979, 1980; and Pandolfo
2000), and thus some cross-cultural perspective for understanding is necessitated;

*Mimesis*, that is, the impulse to reproduce or represent aspects of what is
perceived in the world outside oneself. In a sense, this can be taken as one overarching, most abstract definition of culture. Per Taussig's explanation of it (1993), and following so many thinkers before, manifestations of culture are part of humans' second nature response to nature itself. This, in turn, points to Latour's suggestion (1993) of a long-term tendency on the part of humans at “purification,” that is an arbitrary division between culture and nature. A careful understanding of mimesis elicits an ongoing reminder that such attempted reproduction or representation is not the simple copying of something else perceived, however, but rather that the result is always a new, more complicated cultural product and/or process filled with additional difference;

Inoculation/Camouflage, a relative resolution of some of the cognitive dissonance generated from cross-cultural encounters. Following the earlier metaphor of infection or contagion, the idea of inoculation suggests that incorporating manageable doses of the invasive Other will arm oneself to better negotiate continuing invasions by such outside presences. In cultural modes, while perpetuating at times a high degree of irony, this phase also often shows the loss of much of the nostalgic impulse shown in different phases of grappling with the changes and confrontations presented by foreign novelty. Nonetheless, despite this assimilation of the foreign, ambiguity and ambivalence remain. The continuing threat of the invasive elements remain at least latent. And cultural accommodation of such foreign arrivals creates an uneasy tension that cannot be entirely resolved, as cultural production continues in modes that are more hybrid than previously produced by colonial and earlier post-colonial cultural practitioners and still in often conflicted self-consciousness with prior cultural modes and practices (including, of course, by Moroccan musical composers and performers).

The variety of types of appropriations of outside cultural elements leaves open the question of whether such iterations might be means to either overwhelm or allow to remain in conflict prior indigenous practices, or if such appropriations can be used as instruments of cultural resistance, leveraged back against their very source while appearing to accept and integrate that newly arrived difference. In this latter mode, adoption of foreign cultural processes and products can act as a sort of cultural camouflage, only half revealing at times some differences that still persist. In the next section, I explicate a first example in late modernity that functions in just such an ambivalent mode.
As taking-off point for the rest of this chapter, I introduce the first verses from the sung text of “Mirikani,” a recent (2006) garage-band-style pop song by the Moroccan group Hoba Hoba Spirit (lyrics as originally sung in bold; translations in parentheses and italics):

Il existe quelque part, mon ami, un pays
(There is some place, my friend, a country)
Où chaque homme est fort comme toi et moi réunis
(Where each man is as strong as you and me combined)
Pas de place la bas pour les plus petits
(Not a place, there, for the puny)
C'est les Etats-Unis
(This is the United States)
Pays des hommes et demi
(Country of the men and a half)

Koulchi ktir temma
(Everything is abundant [increases] there)
Koulchi kebir ya khouya
(Everything is big, my brother)
Shouf el fouk dima
(Look up always)
Hez aynik l’smaa
(Raise your eyes to the sky)
La californie n’est pas faite pour les nains
(California is not made for dwarves)
Et moi, je suis un africain
(And me, I am an African)

Fi las vegas, khalas! Les rapaces menacent.
(In Las Vegas, enough! The rapacious threaten)
Et ramassent ramassent ramassent ramassent des masses
(And pick up pick up pick up pick up from the masses)
Tu passes ta soir à courir après les as
(You pass your night running before you have them)
Tu finis à la masse
(You finish in the pack)

This series of images portrays the United States both as a potential land of plenty, but
also as an alien realm menacing to the foreign and weak. A glowing fascination with iconic locales of a fantasy America (e.g., California and Las Vegas), where the best of possibilities exist, is darkened with the notion that all the resources available are actually only fodder that allows for the stronger and more predatory American elite to further prey on the larger population of less-resourced individuals. The declaration at the end of verse two that the narrator is “an African” leaves ambiguous whether he means to identify with the “dwarves” who California is “not made for,” or conversely that being “an African” might qualify one to operate successfully in this country of the strong and would-be wealthy. Either way, there is an explicit differentiation being made between the narrator’s character and those natives he encounters there.

This distinction is further teased out in the following episode, narrated in the song two verses later:

\[
\text{It’s a wonderful party in Beverly [Hills]}
\text{wa khliqa Merikanja jait andi}
\text{(and an American creature came up to me)}
\text{“Hi baby, want to have some fun with me?”}
\text{Maya ka-thadri}
\text{(She says to me)}
\text{“Aliya wadee.”}
\text{(Oh god, but of course!)}
\text{“Where you from?”}
\text{I said, “Casablanca.”}
\text{“Where is that?”}
\text{“In Africa.”}
\text{“Oh I know. It’s close to Cuba, I love reggae, I love samba.”}
\text{Imagines, cette blonde elle dirige le monde…}
\text{(Imagine, this blonde rules the world…)}
\]

In the ironic embrace of the “fun” to be had in America as depicted in the various scenes of the song (which includes audio snippets of the first U.S. lunar landing as well as these
references to Las Vegas and a “party in Beverly”), the band’s singer himself pokes fun verbally, skipping in cosmopolitan fashion across three languages. He accomplishes this in part by parodically voicing an American pop-cultural stereotype of “Valley Girl” speak, an accent and dialect conventionally understood as indicative of a shallow individual character and a larger cultural milieu dominated by the lived ideology of mass consumerism.

The content of the speech itself, as represented in the song, sketches the apparent ignorance of an American proclaiming herself to feel especially connected with the cultural context from which the song’s narrator originates. She does so while both geographically and culturally mis-locating that context (along with the entire continent of Africa) to be near Cuba, as she does with the musical forms of reggae and samba, which she also purports to love.

The undertow of ambivalence for American culture (of which many of the song’s primary musical components are a product), results from the combination of critically representing the voraciousness and the simultaneous cluelessness of such denizens of America, at the same time as embodying full-tilt other cultural aspects of that place with much less criticality. Most notable in the latter category of the song’s appreciation of American cultural power is the full embrace of the rock and roll genre in which the song itself is performed, with its propulsive upbeat tempo, its major-key electric guitar power chords, Western-style drumkit, and a giddy chorus chanting over and over the phrase “Fun! Fun! Fun! In America.” These are elements that in combination would have been difficult or impossible to find in prior Moroccan musical practices, and they point to a significant development in self-conscious cultural integration.

At the same time, creating a more denigrated pole of cultural activity represented in the song is that satirized, appreciative, but hollow gushing about cultural Others performed by the
character of a superficial American beauty and her emblematic obliviousness to the actualities of cultural difference. That gushing is set amid references of her own culture’s celebrity by-products, which are sprinkled throughout the song (e.g., the already mentioned Beverly Hills and Las Vegas, and later on in the song, Marlon Brando, Bill Clinton, Miles Davis, and Carl Lewis, to name a few). The names of these icons are recited in close proximity with the literally transcendental human reaching beyond Earth to outer space accomplished by American know-how, as embodied in an extended audio clip from the Apollo lunar landing that introduces the song proper, and then reappears periodically throughout.

Over the course of the musical group’s ten-year history prior to the release of the song, Hoba Hoba Spirit had built a popular awareness of the band’s existence in Morocco on a national level. This both was supported by and abetted its developing presence at the larger public festivals devoted to popular culture there, as well as through garnering a significant degree of broadcast on national radio and television programs, and coverage in national print media publications such as the popular weekly journal *Tel Quel*.

In terms of instrumentation and style, there was nothing specifically Moroccan about the group’s cultural production, save the frequent (though not exclusive) delivery of song lyrics in darija, and perhaps a particular knowing sense of ironic pleasure-taking, one at home in a world not entirely of its own making. The group’s address to the thematic of the limits and pitfalls of cross-cultural encounters on a global scale, as demonstrated in “Mirikani,” was not out of keeping with the majority of its lyrical tendencies in its other songs, which often underlined social concerns in Morocco in a humorous or satirical fashion.

In the case of “Mirikani,” the group’s performance practice derives from the same cultural milieu it is mocking (embodied in that figure of an unknowing foreign fan),
encapsulating overall a conflicted embrace of aspects of that cultural milieu of the Other. This having of pop fun while critiquing it too gives a typically ironic turn to cross-cultural awareness in late modernity. In this telling, both sides of the cultural divide achieve some kind of access to the cultural possibilities of the other, but neither side gets it “right.” That is, neither achieves that access unalloyed with either their intentionally ironic distancing, or their culturally ignorant mistakes, or both. Cultural consumption on both sides of a perceived cultural divide is the basis both for the song’s “action,” such as it is, and for its underlying thematic concern as well.

To read the signs of cultural consumerist enthusiasm shown in the encounter by the narrator of “Mirikani” with the cultural misattributions (no matter how well-meaning) of his American fan is to catch a glimpse of one in a series of distorted reflections or projections generated in cross-cultural meetings of all kinds. In this case, the attempts at recognition of difference in this fantasy encounter between the knowing Moroccan man of the world represented by the narrator, on one side of a divide, and the ignorant American “creature,” on the other, produce a fundamental disorientation when it comes not only to geographical mapping, but when it comes to relating to one another through cross-cultural reception as well.

The images passed between the song’s two characters, and the relationship developed, remain murky at best: he becomes mis-identified by her with the cultural forms of samba and reggae, while she will always be for him a sort of monster, a “creature” in a position of power that she can easily maintain in her obliviousness. This is implicit through the cultural might from which she hails, a hegemonic force that is represented by the range of iconic celebrated American cultural figures intoned by the song’s narrator later in the recitation.

Her appreciation of culture, meanwhile, is presented as cultural consumption at the lowest level. The degree of irony in the narrator’s awareness of his own ambiguous position via-
a-vis this cultural Other is as acute as is his ambivalence toward that Other’s culture, also demonstrated through his many references to those icons of that culture’s production – clearly seductive for him despite his derision given the form and style he himself adopts in performing his own song. The ambiguous integration of those markers of foreign culture points to that idea of inoculation, or the adoption of cultural difference by necessity, while perhaps also serving at times as a sort of political masking device.

Irony can be seen as one particularly prominent mode of mimetic distortion, an especially recurring response to the modern era of frequently encountered difference. Julia Jorgenson (1995) references studies that conclude how the majority of experimental subjects used sarcastic irony to make critical thoughts or express negative feelings; though another trend that was both competing and overlapping was the use of irony for humor. She also points to the idea that the usage of irony by different status individuals is a form of indirect speech for the face-saving that is possible in communicative ambiguity, especially in remarks that are meant to be critical. At the same time, sarcastic irony functions most effectively between or among those individuals that share a certain degree of social closeness, or even intimacy.

Jorgenson (1996) cites Brown and Levinson (1987) in proposing to “consider irony an indirect strategy used to attend to face-threat. Irony used to express disapproval, criticism, complaints, contempt…may be thought of as softening a threat to the positive face of the hearer” (1996:616). Irony used in this fashion can be partially playful, but most crucially a means of mediating conflicting impulses in a complex set of subject positions. As Jorgenson states it, in relation to sarcastic modes in the deployment of ironic address: “The interpersonal ambiguity…could be described as a tension between the hostile and the potentially solidarity-enhancing uses of sarcasm” (1996:629). Reckoning thus, the use of irony in the song by Hoba
Hoba Spirit suggests the relationship between the narrator of the song and those others he addresses (the character of the American creature, but also any potential American and Moroccan listeners implicated in the song’s “story”) as a complicated one. This relationship is, then, already intimate and intertwined, while both antagonistic and embracing.

In its textual concerns, “Mirikani” follows the example set by earlier instances of popular music in Morocco dating back at least to the earlier part of the twentieth century, when anxieties about the arrival of the culturally foreign have been articulated as a primary concern through the medium of song texts as one channel of expressive possibility. These signs of difference encountered generation after generation point to the salience for cultural performers and consumers having to negotiate the serial, wholesale arrival of such difference, as an ongoing yet continually shifting relationship with the foreign and Other at the same time as any individual develops his or herself in the context of a larger social group. In the next section of this chapter, I look at “Tanjiyya,” a response to new cultural influences in Morocco dating from the middle of the second half of the twentieth century.

In prior stages of cultural contact, the symptoms of reaction to cultural collisions differ from those evidenced in the ironic, knowing musical response of Hoba Hoba Spirit. One notable characteristic in the consideration of earlier phases is that the foreignness of cultural change is less readily integrated. To productively frame the invasive aspects of the novel and foreign in such prior moments, I invoke here the notions of “contagion” and “infection.”

The shock can be severe to any human system, whether individual or corporate, with the confrontations brought about by changing customs, and shifting precepts and possibilities. And the human difficulty in absorbing the effects of such cultural change is an impetus for one functional aspect of culture itself. This includes mythological and supernatural explanations of
humans’ understanding for their environment, both social and natural. The separation between those realms understood as “cultural,” “natural,” and “supernatural” is one that has been falsely devised, according to the schema of modernity put forward by Latour (1993), and it is, in fact, one defining characteristic of modernity itself.

In Morocco to this day, as in many North African countries, highly involved ritual ceremonies of sometimes extremely long duration are undertaken by adherents to a wide range of different spiritual brotherhoods to address what might be understood as supernatural. And the participation even by “lay” non-devotees in such events includes engagement with specific saints and spirits, understood to be responsible for individuals’ condition and circumstances. The presence of these spirits is evidenced originally by those individuals being confronted with otherwise inexplicable, troubling encounters out in the world, and ultimately often through the apparent possession of that individual him or herself by a spirit. As part of an ensemble of cultural possibility, the notion of the djanoun has been prominent for centuries as one active element of belief among Moroccan cosmological understandings that connect domains of the natural, the social, and the supernatural.

The recognition of such influential spirits, and indeed, the acting out of manifestations of spirits by afflicted individuals in the course of group ceremonies, allows a diminishing of symptoms for anything from stomachache to depression, but also, however more uncertainly, it allows an address to larger life conditions including unemployment, poverty, and infertility. In the process, such impacted individuals can undergo radical transformations in individual affect, and in social status and understanding.

As Crapanzano has described the shifting perspectives resulting from such healing approaches based in recognition of specific spiritual manifestations:
Certain therapies...may often be incapable of, or do not even aim at, restoring the distressed individual to his previous condition. Rather they introduce him to a new social role and concomitant tasks...He is provided thereby not only with a new social identity but also with a new set of values and a new cognitive orientation—that is, with a new outlook. This new "outlook" may furnish him with a set of symbols by which—in the case of psychogenic disorders...he can articulate and give expression to those particular psychic tensions which were at least in part responsible for his illness (1973:5).

Such individual adjustments, of course, needn’t be taken entirely as psychological pathologies, but can be seen also as adjustments to the changing social realm. In the next example, I look at the idea of humans in the Moroccan cultural context becoming confronted by outside spirits, as a way of representing the negotiations by Moroccans of the uneasiness and tension that come from those shocks of the new that transpire from cross-cultural encounters in the modern era.

*Nationalism and Nostalgia: One Example of Cultural Treatment of Unease in Contemporary Morocco through Popular Song*

In her article "The Thin Line of Modernity," Stefania Pandolfo quotes Moroccan historian Abdellah Laroui, from his writing in Paris in the 1960s, when he considered “the Arab” as being defined in modern times by foreign minds and hands: “determined elsewhere, where the balance of power lies, in the industrialized West” (2000:124). Leaving aside momentarily the question of how fully relevant the use of “Arab” might be to depict any general grouping of humans within multi-ethnic, poly-vocal Morocco, the grim melancholy let flow by Pandolfo in recounting Laroui’s characterization might be taken as a cartoon figure, a sketch or a caricature for the purposes of argument.

However, in her own pursuit of this figure of the individual attempting to cope in
"formerly colonized countries like Morocco" (2000:129), Pandolfo also articulates the notion of a fundamental incommensurability between Moroccan vs. Western ideas of addressing mental illness and unease. In her recapitulation, the object of Western psychoanalysis is seen as attempting to restore agency to the potentially "self-responsible subjectivities" of damaged mental patients and other vulnerable individuals among contemporary Moroccans. Meanwhile, the telling, stark contrast shown by the vectors of traditional North African symptomology is one that avoids self-reliance by attributing illness to a host of imagined, projected, invading or threatening djanoun: that is, spirits or demons.

But in the texts of the songs I attend to here, the manifestations of such invasive figures, whether human or otherwise, are not merely figments of the imagination. Things really have changed as told through these songs’ narratives of social interaction; there really is a threatening horde of arrivals, both in the form of real humans (whether foreign colonizers, military “liberators,” or cultural producers and consumers), as well as in the products and processes that come with them. And the resulting shifts in the imaginary, even as such shifts allow the humans doing the imagining to co-exist uneasily with the djanoun who are invoked, adequately or not, by traditional healers), are radical in what they track and what they embody: men losing and changing their livelihoods, formerly sober citizens imbibing alcohol, consumption run amok, and foreigners who really don’t get it or who get it on their own terms entirely, even while the din of their cultural barrage becomes more and more unavoidable.

An important backdrop to these changes are those greater histories of large-scale populations that have been re-situated into complex new positions of ethnic and national loss and allegiance, stemming out of permanent relocations from their native Morocco to countries that are new to them. Among these relocations are migrations made for economic and social reasons
by individuals from Morocco to Morocco’s former colonizers of Spain and France beginning in the late 1970s, some of the impact of which I have already recounted in Chapter Four. The earlier mass relocation in the 1960s of Jewish Moroccans to the newly founded state of Israel is a second, separate, radical transformation of Moroccans’ relation to the world outside, but one which nonetheless comes out of a common set of conditions: i.e., those of modernity as experienced in Morocco in the second half of the twentieth century.

Both groups were propelled to their new locations by the forces of geopolitical shifts resulting from socio-political phenomena of the modern era. In the case of Moroccan emigration to Europe, this can be traced to the fallout from the colonial era that transpired in Morocco, as also occurred in other former colonized countries whose fortunes remained intertwined with their former colonizers in economic, political, and, to various extents, cultural terms. The specifics of that Moroccan emigration movement is also, of course, dependent on those other political realignments that occurred in the middle of the twentieth century, where the legacies of fascist rule in Spain, and post-War ideas of European social and political structures more generally became defined in real-world policies and implementation.

In the case of the massive number of Jews who emigrated out of Morocco in the course of an extremely short period, this large-scale migration did not result simply from a more general trend in the modern coalescing of nations. Rather, it came out of some vectors of a particularly modern concept of ethnically purist ideas that factored into the formation of the modern nation-state in Morocco. But it reached a certain zenith of self-conscious willfulness in political organization with the founding of Israel, followed at various points after by the coalescence of multiple other Arab states in the Middle East and North Africa in the middle part of the last century.
To trace back a bit further that one defining aspect of modernity that is nationalism – as famously detailed by Benedict Anderson (1991) as identification with an imaginary community of others in both political and cultural realms -- the greatest momentum for this idea becoming reality in Morocco was initially impelled by the arrival of European colonialists there in the early part of the twentieth century. According to Waterbury: “The social and economic change initiated under the protectorate stimulated the emergence of a nationalist movement” (1970:43). The fullest flowering of Morocco as a modern nation, however, came after the foreign colonizing project officially ended there in the mid-1950s. Also from Waterbury: “[The] nationalist movement...remained a strictly elitist movement until after the Second World War” (1970:35). Following this shift to political sovereignty on a national basis, a complicated re-alignment occurred with the mass exodus of 95% of the Jewish population in Morocco in the first fifteen years after independence.

A substantial proportion of that population ended up in the new nation-state of Israel, where a tenuous status developed for them as citizens in both their former home of Morocco and their new one of Israel. Though ostensibly still welcome in Morocco (something I heard stated -- explicitly and unsolicited -- countless times by non-Jewish Moroccans I met during my fieldwork years), their impetus to depart had been strong enough to leave the impression still several generations later that some internal spasm of the body politic had caused this mass of one particular ethnicity to be expelled because of the dynamic tension of its own uncomfortability both in that body politic as well as for that larger body politic. A bifurcated or multiple nationalism added an uneasy second-class citizenship for those relocated native Moroccan Jews as well as for their Israeli-born offspring in a newly adopted home of Israel, but with ongoing reference toward a nostalgically memorialized, departed-from home of Morocco, a particularly
late modern iteration of the nationalist trope.\textsuperscript{155}

An individual example of this complicated relationship to nationality in the late modern era is reflected in the production history of “Tanjiyya,” a song recorded in the 1970s by Sheikh Mwizo, a Moroccan Jew transplanted to Israel at some time in the generation or so before this recording. Other aspects of the conditions of modernity channeling into the context for this diasporic movement across national boundaries are reflected in the song’s lyrics. The many verses of “Tanjiyya” are devoted almost entirely to recounting the insatiable appetite of a mysterious character, one who can be taken in its inexplicable, sometimes threatening aspect as a djinn, a sort of demon spirit. The “djinn” here is modernity itself, and it is a spirit that must be dealt with by those doing the living and the “imagining,” in one way or another.

This figure’s seemingly endless meal occurs at a restaurant newly opened by the song’s narrator, who has abandoned the trade of building the traditional rabbouz or hand bellows—a craft become mostly obsolete in contemporary Morocco. The switch from making a living through hand-crafted artisanery is represented by Mwizo as in reaction to a world turning topsy-turvy socio-economically with the coming of modernity, via the appearance of products from other, more mass industrial realms, such as the American smokeless pump that replaces the rabbouz mentioned in the early part of the song:

\begin{verbatim}
Katir al-faloosh wa zagh al-ansan
(Money increased, and the people became restive)

Insaou snai’aou zman
(They forgot the skills of yesteryear)
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{155} See Kelly and Kaplan (2001) for an extended countering of Benedict Anderson’s argument for the primary formation of nations in modernity coming out of nineteenth century developments in colonialism, written language and news media. In Kelly and Kaplan’s emphasis, the resolution of a new post-Second World War global political order was embodied in and indeed grew directly out of the founding of the United Nations as the new fundamental standard which any political entities worldwide had to define themselves within and relate to.
lakan khmal wa la ybi’a al’atria
(The porter began selling perfume)

[…] 

Al-youm thahaz shi naoufkh marikan
(Today appeared some American pump)

Ma yatl’auo dkhan
(It doesn’t release smoke)

Ma ymtajou raboz wa shm’ati msheet khati fdia
(They don’t need a bellows, and my skill goes to waste)

[?] Khmmt wa qlit “Abdelrahim”
(I thought and said, “Oh Abdelrahim”)

al-souq wa l’myan
(The market has fallen ill [weak])

Nddbrti wa shi hrf wa sir ma youliq bia
(I get up and look around to find a new trade that will suit me)

Msheet wa kreet wa al-mkazan
(I went and rented a store)

Drtha ristoran
(And made it a restaurant)

“Tanjiiyya” brings the apparition of one anonymous yet particular demonic spirit front and center, when that spirit confronts a man trying to make a living while the cultural and economic ground shifts out from underneath his formerly more integrated cultural and economic practice. The text makes clear that the insistent, even desperate energy of the spirit of the modern must be fed in response to its relentlessly demanding appetite. In what is now the most widely circulating recorded version (thanks to online peer-to-peer sharing), a lip-synced video performance from the 1970s, the song continues for some twelve minutes of recitation primarily
focused on a meal that is comprised in part of local food sources, including the song title’s eponymous reference to “tanjiyya,” a traditional stew of lamb intestines. But it includes as well a multitude of globally-manufactured products such as Coca-Cola, and additionally a plethora of imported Western notions and loanwords, such as the “garcon” (i.e. waiter) and “ristoran” (restaurant) that the protagonist hires to serve “kliani” (that is, his clients), and most broadly, the introduction of a novel system of exchange interpenetrating prior Moroccan economic and cultural custom.

After the song’s narrator witnesses the intensely grotesque bout of sustained consumption on the part of the monstrous, somewhat threatening figure of the djinn, the denouement of the song’s story goes thus: “Time to pay—the restaurant owner appears and states the price: 1,100,700—pay or be taken to prison.” But in true capitalist fashion, the negative reciprocity for the binging feast in the context of this newly launched commercial enterprise is one that results only in avoidance, borrowing on the future, and in the customer’s continuation of his consumerist splurge:

“The client [i.e. the djinn] got angry and said, ‘If you want to get paid, give me time. Next year I’ll replace all of this.’

Then he ran off—at 100 [kilometers] per hour—all the way to Tetuoan, And asked the restaurant to prepare him a tanjiya for dinner.

As he also implies through his song's exaltation of a specific example of handiwork as the symbol of a passing era in Moroccan cultural life, elsewhere Mwizo reiterates through the guise of the song’s narrator his own craft of writing and performing songs: “your brother [the narrator] is an artist, and my bellows is art,” and later, in concluding his song, “I tell this story for young and old, men and women—lovers of poetry ['Ashab Melhûn’].” The reference here is to a
specific centuries-old genre of music, which has been maintained as a morphing practice capable of absorbing newly introduced cultural realities as thematic concerns.

Thus are held out at the song’s close as a sort of coda--outside the primary narrative--the ideals of a particular archaic native culture, but told from the distance of (at least) one state removed from the country of Morocco and its culture by this diasporic refugee of new political orders. These are ideals also made distant through the passage of time.

Mwizo himself, like so many other emigrated Moroccan Jews, is triply relocated from the native Morocco he had been citizen and subject of previously. The first relocation through the shifting economic and cultural vagaries of time is inscribed in the theme of obsolescence of custom, livelihood, and handicrafts contained within the song text. Then a second displacement hovers around not only the figure of Mwizo but also around the production of the song itself because of the new cultural-political context generated through that relocation in space by means of the mass aliya (“homecoming,” or more literally, “uplifting”) to Israel of hundreds of thousands of Moroccan Jews in the 1960s. A third dislocation thus transpires additionally through time due to the nostalgia any diasporic refugee might feel. Nostalgia is at the heart of both the song and the cultural milieu that Mwizo is a part of, since he keeps alive in memory at least this idealized version of (past) Moroccan cultural life for a limited audience, primarily of other expatriate Moroccan Jews.

More crucially, he points to an awareness of the changing roles of both humans and spirits in the wake of modernity’s changes. Entering among the panoply of those longer-standing, more customary spirits is that continually new, transformative spirit of modernity through which mass industrial production, exchange-based currencies of valuation -- along with other systems and concepts of resource production, distribution, and consumption arriving from
non-local sources -- begin to establish themselves as part of a new norm for social and economic organization.

The figure of the spirit in “Tanjiyya” embodies in overstated parody a whole host of behaviors inferred by a native’s understanding of foreign difference. The imitation of what is understood to be proposed by the foreign Other is embodied in the spirit-figure that stands outside of the everyday and the “natural,” yet connects to it some new phenomena as part of its role as representative of the supernatural. This is one of the primary functions of both the sacred and the transgressive in social understandings, per Durkheim, Bataille and so many other social thinkers, where societies’ customs of moral behavior are cast into question by exalted display in cultural framings that set apart from quotidian life in a special realm such significant representatives from a world beyond the natural, daily occurring. And the displaced mimetism that is narrated through the figure of the djinn in the telling of “Tanjiyya” indicates the recognition of a cultural shift already happening locally.

Nostalgia is the underlying affect behind the recognition of this new mode of production and consumption, a mode that the protagonist of “Tanjiyya” attempts to negotiate, though it ultimately proves unmanageable and out of control, as the bill for the cost of the lavish meal is insupportable, and the threatening spirit figure of consumption flees to pursue further gratifications of a bottomless appetite. At the same time, the narrator and his story never let go that melancholy over what has passed or is passing away.

Such passing away of relationships and of prior customary modes of making a living are not new phenomena in this as in any society. But the impact of the particular set of changes in this instance comes out of specific cultural and political turns based on earlier foreign arrivals, including not only foreign goods and techniques of manufacture and livelihood, but notions of
ideology and social organization that manifest through ideas of “nation,” and in the form of competing nation-states amid a larger geopolitical constellation whose formation rearranged the lives of human populations on the greatest scale.

Nationalism itself, and the multiple possible ideological bases for it in Morocco, is a still-contested organizing principle of modernity, with the cultural/ethnic/religious orientation of pan-Arab nationality conflicting with another set of impulses oriented toward Europe and the West. Ideas of multi-party, multi-ethnic democratically-based society newly entered Moroccan political discourse in the early 1900s, but only truly coalesced there post-Independence in 1956 on a limited basis in the form of an ostensibly parliamentary monarchy. Nonetheless, there was another prior moment for significant cultural change for Morocco in response to arrivals from the outside the country, which is embodied within the Moroccan popular music song examined next.

**Different First Contacts and Mimetic Excess**

Generally speaking, cultural influences in Morocco from outside Moroccan territory certainly pre-date the mid-twentieth century. A particularly prominent marking point of consumerist inclination propagated from abroad, however, and one which had a heavy impact on prior local cultural practices in Morocco, dates back to the invasion of U.S. military forces there in 1942. As much liberation from the French Vichy authority that this mass arrival of Americans might have provided at this juncture, any contention for Moroccan sovereignty was delivered a further check by the combined onslaught of cultural products and political concepts that came in greater and greater waves in the wake of the American troops. The growing presence of this

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156 Morocco is notably absent among North African countries significantly affected by European economic, political, and military interactions during the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries in F. Robert Hunter’s rethinking account (1999) of the “Opening of the Maghreb” (an “opening” accomplished, that is, by the West).
influence from the West helped precipitate a large-scale shift from many of those modes of political organization, cultural production, and of doing business that had prevailed during the Protectorate period and earlier.

From the perspective of the “invaded,” such encounters have not flowed equally in both directions, as awareness about what goes on in Morocco by foreigners overseas has tended toward the indifferent and ignorant, or, at best, vague and misinformed, however passionately motivated. As Pandolfo has described it, building on the perspective of Moroccan historian and social theorist Laroui:

Despite the movement of interpenetration, the two societies cannot encounter each other. 'Historical distance,' Laroui says, makes recognition impossible: 'contact between two societies can be inconsequential; for one society can simply not see the other' (40) (2000: 124, emphasis in original).

Such a lack of reciprocity was made clear to me during my fieldwork years in Morocco and Spain both by the earnestness and the fatalism with which various Moroccan cultural practitioners voiced their perceptions of the lack of acquaintance by the vast majority of Americans and Europeans they encountered with any Moroccan cultural practices whatsoever.

At the same time, the influx to Morocco of cultural arrivals from abroad had only accumulated and accelerated in the modern era. This occurred via the proselytizing agents of European and American ideals of finance, cultural and social formations, and technological developments through the ministrations of dominating foreign soldiers, governmental authorities, and commercial interests. The force of these agents has effected an imbalanced relationship of economic and cultural exchange, and it has hastened new systems of social and political organization in Morocco. The ideologically-impelled systems of capitalist market economy,

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157 That “liberation” was limited in immediate governmental terms, given the return of overarching political
ostensibly representative democracy, and modern developments in idealized rationality, standardization and efficiency have been brought to bear on populations in many post-colonial nations such as Morocco, however far from stated ideals, and however sometimes hypocritical the functioning of those systems might have been in real practice.

In looking here at the details of this series of popular musical responses to the globalized era of late capitalism, the blurred realities and contrasting logics for individual subjects in post-colonial states are apparent within what Taussig has called an age of “mimetic excess.” This refers to a later phase in cross-cultural encounters, after generations of partial imitation of cultural differences have interwoven layers of indigenous practices of cultural expression to yield “modern” hybrid forms, taking off from styles and techniques also brought from abroad.

Taussig presents that excess as “creating reflective awareness as to the mimetic faculty” (1993:254) and as an “appreciation of mimesis as an end in itself” (1993:255). He suggests that this excess might reconfigure the significance of both a melancholic aspect in relation to cultural loss that is contained in the mimetic “aping” of newly arrived cultural examples by those individuals of supposedly more primitive cultures, on the one hand, and, on the other, that “wild abandon of sympathetic absorption into wildness itself,” as more modern sensibilities seek the “magic” they project on to primitivist gestures (1993:255).

That “wildness” and “melancholy” become subsumed in a larger, self-aware potential that signals a happy turn toward a primal or natural spirit of humanity, in the half-celebratory view of what Taussig sees as possible in post-coloniality. This excess of greater capacity through imitation is a somewhat different “excess” than that identified by Ivy (by way of Bhabha) in her explication of the cross-cultural mimicry of the colonized and formerly colonized. Such mimicry, she says:

authority on a national basis in Morocco to the Gaullist French by the end of the war.
can never succeed in effacing the difference between the western original and the colonized copy. Colonized mimics remain as “not white/not quite” … in Bhabha’s formulation the mimetic attempts of the colonized also contain an element of menace because of their dangerous doubling and uneasy proximity to the colonizer’s position: there is always an excess, a slippage that reveals mimicry as something more (and less) than the object of mimesis (1995:7).

If the “less” mentioned in Ivy’s gloss on Bhabha’s take on mimicry here is that Moroccans will never fully “be” modern in the way that a Westerner might, then the “more” is the leapfrogging of that issue by having one’s cultural critique of the Other and consuming it at the same time too. This is embodied in those cultural moments where pleasure is taken within the semi-adopted form of difference. The example of Hoba Hoba Spirit’s song “LMerikani” demonstrates some of this kind of pleasure that can be taken in the power of cultural mimesis and the maintenance of a complex position of desire and increasing proximity simultaneously with the menace/critique achieved by ironic means even within the adoption of those many concepts and components of the alien culture they are mimicking.

The other two songs examined in this chapter show different, prior relationships with various aspects of the “foreign” or the “modern” as the object of Moroccan cultural mimicry. The potential for this sort of mimicry was abetted by a long history of multi-lingual (Arabic, Berber, French, Spanish and now English) and multi-cultural interplay in Morocco. All three instances of native Moroccan relationships to the culturally foreign narrated in these song texts embody different degrees of tension in that same two-way tug between attraction and criticism.

The result of such at once critical yet embracing attitudes is that the negative impact of such cultural difference is recognized, while at the same time the potential value of such difference, artfully integrated, is not denied entirely. In that process, cultural practitioners both
consume (that is, take in and incorporate), even while some earlier and/or possible version of subjectivity itself is consumed (i.e., extinguished as possibility) in the process. In seeking some sign of how those indices of cultural change might have occurred “on the ground” for Moroccans who were facing social and cultural changes during earlier moments in the wake of modernity’s various waves of arrival, I look next at some of those means, and at some of those patterns of response observable in popular culture production at one other specific, earlier moment in the larger trajectory of self-conscious Moroccan-ness during this period.

Other First Contacts: The Coming of the Americans and Ambivalent Cultural Consumption

Beyond merely functioning as static melancholy or paralyzing nostalgia for cultural practices that must regrettably be let go, the tracking in popular cultural expression of deceased icons and lost social contexts serves as a response to perceived social, political, and even militarily-impelled ruptures. Such ruptures do not simply come as part of any natural “progression” of events, but are in fact effected by various contributing factors, which can be pinpointed to different degrees, however invisible or faceless such forces might appear. Popular culture is one realm of human expression that attempts at least fitfully to address such changes, which might otherwise seem at times unspeakable because they are at once both so intangible and so ineluctable.

A prime example of such a product that responds to the changing circumstances of lived life in Morocco and points to some of the incipient ambivalence in the face of various new cultural practices arriving from outside most prior Moroccan experience is Hussein Slaoui’s text and production practice in the Moroccan popular song “Dakhla Lmerikani” (“The Coming of the Americans”). This response followed the very precise moment of military landing in North
Africa by tens of thousands of American and British troops looking to take control of the region from the Axis-affiliated French Vichy government in the context of the Second World War. Dating from some time shortly after 1942 (the year of the arrival of Allied troops in Morocco), Slaoui depicts a local world of customary behaviors and social relationships turned upside-down, when not only superficial styles of fashion and consumption had become unsettled, but when by implication the customary moral basis for society was changed forever as well.

Slaoui’s narration in the song’s lyrics (more a list of observed behaviors) portrays the aftermath of a sort of First Contact across cultural divides. Native Moroccans had already been buffeted by cultural influences from the French and Spanish colonial projects begun in Morocco decades earlier. But, in “The Coming of the Americans,” Slaoui calls attention to a wider and more penetrating range of popular practices and attitudes making themselves manifest in daily Moroccan life, and which stemmed from the substantial initial contact with a newly significant cultural Other: i.e., Americans, as sketched in the song’s opening lines:

Zayn wal ain al zarg jana bi kol lkheir  
(Handsome with blue eyes have brought all bounty)

Lyoum, yemchi u bil firqa libnat nafkhin  
(Today girls go with a parting [in their hair], looking haughty)

Sh’hal min hi me’shouha zauw la shau, limerikan  
(How many admirers, they flattered and paid attention to, the Americans)

Tesma’a ghir “OK OK” hada ma kan  
(All you hear is “Ok, Ok”—this is it/this is the start)

Those questionable developments in local practices and attitudes included hairstyles and clothing that were newly revealing, and novel habits of public discourse and comportment (e.g., alcoholic elders, less veiled and more immodest young women, and strangers fighting for seats in
public buses and feeling shut out of taxis):

Fil kukchi, M‘a tubis ma lqit Nubti
(On the coach, in the bus—can’t find a seat)

Iman ou shmal, ma tswashi klimiti
(Left or right, my word means nothing)

Hta men fefo un taksi, daru lha shan
(Even the taxi bikes became expensive [?])

Tesma’a ghir “OK OK” hada ma kan
(All you hear is “Ok, Ok”—this is it/this is the start)

Firqi Ifanid, wa sigar, wa zadu dolar
(They gave out candy, cigars, and they added dollars)

Hta men l‘azayzat lkbar shrau lfular
(Even grandmothers are purchasing scarves [replacing old head covers])

Hta minhom sghiwat ya halfdu l’mzal
(Even young women are learning the way)

Firqi l’fauid, flayu, wa zain zadu chewing gum
(Passed out candy, peppermint, and even chewing gum)

Firqi l’ghaba, l’hamir wa zadu l’bonbon
(Distribute face powder, blush, and even sweets)

Hta mil azayzat l‘youm sherbau rum, ma lmerikan
(Even grandmothers today are drinking rum with the Americans)

In the song, a number of such unavoidable cultural changes are recurringly noted through Slaoui’s refrain in darija and pidgin English, “Tesma’ ghir: ‘Ok, Ok. Come on. Bye bye’” (“All I hear is ‘Ok, Ok. Come on. Bye-by’”), which frames that pervasiveness of those changes by pointing to those newly entered linguistic markers of American English adopted as well. The song concludes with a more monetary variation of the chorus: “Tesma’ ghir ‘Ok. Ok. Give give dollar,’” suggesting not just an exchange of currency, but a preference for one type – i.e.,
American – and the notion of cash itself as a primary medium.

As primary a moment of immediate aftermath of the extra-cultural encounter as Slaoui’s song-text implies his observations to be stemming from, the attentions he paid, techniques he employed, and affects he sought to produce in his own cultural project point to the beginning of a later phase of cross-cultural interaction. This is a phase that Taussig has proposed as “Second Contact” (1993:249). Though the degree to which Moroccan cultural producers and consumers were exposed and responded to following the United States intervention was unprecedented, the door had previously been opened at least to the possibilities of cultural exchanges in Morocco first by trade with and then as a product of political rule by Europeans there. The explicitly demographic and cultural segregationist policies of Louis Lyautey (the influential French colonial Resident-General of Morocco from 1912 to 1925) circumscribed early contacts between Moroccans and Europeans but they nonetheless presented for Moroccans (both by example and by mandate) the ineluctable cultural possibilities of an outside world.

This was the relationship out of which Slaoui modified his musical practice from the highly localized entertainments of open-air markets and customary accompaniments for life-cycle celebration to a developing hybrid cultural prototype – that is to say, modern Sha’bi -- which became nationally recognized. Slaoui’s practice was in fact cosmopolitanly aware and sourced. Whatever early ambivalence was more than latent in his view of the alien changes he witnessed through the song text of “Dakhlaou Lmerikan,” an earlier phase of initial contact with the outside was already long past in Morocco. And this had yielded to a stage of Second Contact, in which cultural practitioners such as Slaoui adopted a series of shifting cultural positions in response to the constantly unfolding series of radical innovations being brought to their attention, and in which any sharply defined cultural difference became untenable, as cultural practitioners
and cultural consumers both incorporated and rejected various new entries to their cultural cognition.

Taussig characterizes this Second Contact as an “era of the borderland where ‘us’ and ‘them’ lose their polarity and swim in and out of focus” (1993:246). He writes: “this type of ‘second contact’ disassembles the very possibility of defining a border as anything more than a shadowy possibility of the once-was” (1993:249). This blurring of any separation between a formerly more localized culture and the difference embodied by previously more distinct cultural practice from outside that local culture points to the intercultural relationships that develop out of pre-colonial encounters and other meetings across gaps between cultural groups such as those that are represented by Taussig and narrated by Slaouï.

Taussig also points to both the periodicizing and the technically-integrated process of how "colonial 'first contact'...passed into the mechanically reproduced image as a new sort of sympathetic magic of imitation and contact” (1993:251). From such a perspective, one perceives the versions of various sorts of cross-cultural contact as inscribed in the stories and music of composers and performers like Hoba Hoba Spirit, Mwizo, and Slaouï, just as they are inscribed in the mass-produced recordings themselves for their listeners. The local cultural representations of such cross-cultural encounters, then, pass into the very systems of difference they are pointing to: modernity manifested as technological apparatus. That is, the systems of recording and dissemination for those encounters (from radio and 78 rpm vinyl discs to mp3 files and streaming on the Internet) are based on technologies brought by the same encounters these cultural products are marking, and which, in the instances explicated here, the texts of those recordings might be decrying.

In her explication of “Dakhla Lmerikan,” Jamila Bargach (1999) refers to the ironic
nature of Slaoui’s song, though in her telling of the gendered basis for the presumptions behind representing the defensive nationalist impulse embodied in Slaoui’s song, she points to the text itself, without detailing which aspects she finds significantly ironic in the material. I suggest here that there is a substantial ironic basis for the production and distribution of the song itself, given the means by which it was made and disseminated.

To present some additional context for the reception of “Dakhlaou Lmerikan,” it is worth noting that Slaoui was still an iconic presence himself in the Moroccan cultural imagination more than fifty years after his death in 1952 at the age of approximately thirty. His musical career began as a youth while performing in the close-to-the-earth halqat: the spontaneously formed rings of public attendance surrounding storytellers and singers’ performances outdoors, which were a regular feature at that time in Slaoui’s hometown of Salé, as in most other Moroccan urban locations. And his initial public reputation was likely developed in the same circuits of cultural practice and possible local renown in which most Moroccan musicians still perform today: wedding celebrations and other parties, festivities during Ramadan nights, as well as in more quotidian milieus such as cafes and bars.

Nonetheless, the status of cultural iconicity attained by Slaoui developed on a mass scale through the use of a particular lineage of media technology—recordings, radio, and most recently, the Internet—products and processes that were created (and extensively marketed and promoted) by Europe and the West. Some dozens of his commercially released songs, recorded in Paris for the European musical distribution company Pathé Marconi, have continued to be disseminated widely, however erratically.

Slaoui’s sojourns in Paris provided him not only with access to systems of mass-scale distribution and the modern recording studios of Pathé, but also with exposure to novel musical
instruments and styles. Slaoui is one of the seminal progenitors of the developing urban musical genre of Sha’bi during his era. That genre drew on instrumentally stripped-down, previously rural forms of musical practice (hand percussion and a small number of melodic instruments heterophonically accompanying a solo voice), along with making use of musical instruments (e.g., ‘ud, qanun, and violin) formerly mostly associated with the higher "art" musics of city and court.

But by the time that portion of his career that entered into and relied upon the use of modern recording technology was underway, Slaoui and other early practitioners of Sha’bi had already started incorporating some of the various musical instruments entering into Moroccan cultural consciousness from the West (e.g., accordion, banjo, clarinet, clave, piano). These were introduced to Morocco either by mass media, or in some cases directly by European colonizers and other foreign visitors, including prominently, those American sailors who arrived as part of the Allied invasion in 1942, as in Slaoui’s account in “Dakhla Lmerikani.” This was a wave of contact long past any initial significant encounter with the West, but one impelling the start of a new phase of greater inter-penetration, and leading to the greater blurring of Second Contact along the lines proposed by Taussig.

Leaving aside the question of how customary or not might be the form, instruments, and style with which they were performed, the very transmission and delivery to other Moroccans of Slaoui’s cultural commentaries has been accomplished through the means and formats of mass media imported into Moroccan cultural (and economic) practices, starting from early in the twentieth century. This has occurred, of course, even when, as in the case of “Dakhla Lmerikani,” the commentary delivered seems to be a negative judgment on the larger repertoire of cultural importation those means come with.
Taken as a whole, the ambivalence in the cultural gestures by this “artist of the [Moroccan] people,” as he has been called in retrospective evaluations by Moroccan writers,\textsuperscript{158} reveals a cloudy perspective of Moroccan encounters with foreign others of the West in the blur that Taussig has characterized more brightly as Second Contact. This perspective has been colored an even darker one by Pandolfo, as when she describes “Modernity [as] inextricably bound with domination, and the desire for modernity, like the desire for tradition, [as] the insidious way in which domination works. Yet there is no other path” (2000:122). I turn to the larger political implications of this developing cultural relationship with the West in the next, concluding section.

\textit{Cultural Mimesis and Political Independence}

In such musings, Pandolfo is building on work by Laroui, whom she quotes as stating a twofold sort of servitude undergone by Arabs in the modern age: first via their necessary alienating identification with their [supposed] Other, the Occident, but also because of “the affective tie the Arabs maintain with their past—a past long dead yet treated as present by the alienated self. Both the West and the Past are foreign voices that speak from the vacant place of the Arab self...hindering the emergence of a modern self” (2000:122). Though the past is, of course, likely as significant for any cultural complex or cultural group, Laroui’s proposal to consider that loss for Arab culture as somehow singular is based on the recognition that with the coming of modernity, Arab political self-sovereignty waned overall, giving way to the rising Western powers, and this giving-way induced an extra nostalgic twinge in the relationship to a more glorious yet irretrievable Arab past, which compared favorably to any subsequent Arab present.

\textsuperscript{158} E.g., www.marocsong.net/Maroc/Houcine-Slaoui.html and socialmediamusic.blogspot.com/2010/06/houcine-slaoui.html
There is an additional poignant sense of Past as “foreign voice,” according to Laroui. As Pandolfo explains this perspective on preemptively alienated Arab subjects in modernity:

Luring themselves to be modernity's agents, they mime anachronistic forms of Western consciousness...this is the core of Laroui's argument. Whether clerical, political, or technological, Arab modernists reproduce models that, in the West, are already obsolete. Arab consciousness is shaped by "superseded forms of Western consciousness," forms in which the West no longer recognizes itself" (2000:128).

However generalizing or self-essentializing such representations of the "alienated...Arab self" are by native Moroccan intellectuals such as Laroui, there has nonetheless been some corroboration for the feelings expressed about such incorporations of the culturally conquering foreigners of the West among other Moroccan cultural producers, beyond Slaoui’s early pointing in that direction. Post-Independence cultural practitioners in Morocco such as theater director and playwright Siddiqi and musicians Nass El-Ghiwaine and Jil Jilala were busy from the 1960s on grappling with the hybrid combinations of cultural forms and styles that they thought would negotiate some sense for them of a hollowness at the core of the cultural juggernaut originally presented by products of the West. Meanwhile, influential cultural publications such as *Anfas/Souffles* and *Lamaalif* in the 1960s through the 1980s (a role arguably filled in the 2000s by *Tel Quel*) were filled with manifestos, experiments, exposes, promotional puffery and self-conscious analyses in issue after issue, purporting to represent current and future directions for a Moroccan national culture after many generations of only partially absorbing the cultural products and processes of other empires.

What I am pointing to here is that the range of positions occupied or adopted by Moroccan musicians – like all cultural practitioners -- are examples of the variety of responses to this question about how to be both a modern and a Moroccan subject (and a possibly un-
alienated, or at least, a less alienated self) in the late modern era. Parsing as polar opposites any proposed dichotomous positions in such cultural responses loses sight of the continuing necessity of recognizing the ongoing, always contingent give-and-take of intercultural encounters more generally. It overlooks as well the fundamental human reality that, to become a self, one first models and builds on the models of others.

As normative as this might be in subject formation, some alienation remains in the process of responding to difference in such encounters with the unfamiliar, and with negotiations across gaps of cultural significance. And, coming out of that, cultural responses abound that are more indicative of what would be called the psychopathological by Western standards: that is, both as symptoms of challenged or maladjusted individual subjects, and as their attempted “therapy.” Thus the recollections within both Mwizo’s and Slaouï’s narrations of archaic cultural forms and superseded social behaviors are representative of what Western medicine refers to as melancholic: that refusal to let go emotionally of one’s ties with the past. And, as the displaced symptoms shown in the figure of the voracious spirit in “Tanjiyya” demonstrate, there are other conditions that might be diagnosed as psychopathological in their compulsiveness, or as sociopathological in their alienation, even while such half-identified-with figures also offer some mode of therapy, or an inoculating exposure and recuperative adjustment, as in the new order/disorder represented by the djinn.

At the same time, there has been no capacity in Morocco to hew to any purist track of proceeding to define a singular shared culture based on other ethnic, religious or other cultural precepts on a nationalist level. This is in no small part, of course, because the outside continues to intervene in Morocco, and Moroccan cultural practices have variously embraced, questioned or resisted such interventions. The range of such responses suggests again the ambivalent cultural and political arenas that modern subjects must enter into, willingly or not.
If, as Pandolfo insists, Arabs have “[lured] themselves to be modernity's agents,” the “forms of Western consciousness” they “mimic” (2000:123) are nevertheless not so simply anachronistic or fundamentally unsettling, nor is theirs the crudest type of mimicry. This also speaks to Laroui’s dismissal of mimetic cultural behavior as a fundamentally problematic obstacle, as where Pandolfo references him: "To be modern, for Laroui, is to possess the present...to be emancipated from myth, from mimetism...to do away with voices that are not one's own. To possess the present, in the end, is to deal in universal values: cultural pluralism, he says, is the last imperial ruse of the West." (2000:128). It is not realistic in assessing human nature to simply dismiss mimetism as an enslaving process or behavior.

Both intentionally, in satirizing, and, as Taussig has suggested, even through the unintentional parody of vague impressions by natives offering distorted reflections through their imitation or adoption of the expressive forms of newly-encountered cultural others, something happens in a second or later phase of cross-cultural interaction because something has already happened in a first contact between representatives of previously alien cultural complexes. This is part of the ongoing responses of any human subject to the world around him or her. This is culture itself, as Taussig also suggests: the mimetic faculty of human nature that makes culture second nature. And this is the impulse to reflect nature, what’s out there, beyond any individual, and to address it, to come to terms with it, and, in fact, to give it terms, to set limits and to be understood.

For better or worse, most human individuals are subject to an encompassing range of the dictates of modernity. At the same time, individuals exploit for their own benefit the potential offered by modern systems of thought and production. It is the vocabulary, the language, the discourse they speak; the cultural currency they earn and spend; and the ways of livelihood and social status they seek. The range of potential understandings and responses by Moroccan musical practitioners to the waves of endlessly
renewing cultural possibility become part of their cultural reservoir—even if their reactions to those newer arrivals from afar might include responses of attempted negation. And those cultural arrivals from far off, along with whichever indigenous cultural resources that are also chosen to be exploited or ignored by native practitioners, provide them a range of repertoire from which to select in producing modern selves, while in the process becoming entangled in systems of thought beyond any individual’s fully agentive control.

That very forceful phenomenon of individuals’ lives being confronted by the possibilities of not simply new products, but streams of cultural products, and cultural and social processes newly arriving from outside a given local or native cultural complex, must be dealt with in one way or another by those they address. And it is not hyperbolic to state that the possibilities that such arrivals suggest are usually "offers" that cannot be refused. This is true because even while such arrivals might be productively understood as coming from “outside,” any individual or group newly confronted by such phenomena begins to use those new resources, however alien, to supply the very means for that individual or group to know themselves through that new expressive culture’s terms and means.

By the time anyone is aware of the possibility of a new technology, a new medium of communication or of exchange, and/or a new way of living, any of these newly encountered modes of expression have become part of that individual’s or group’s language, thinking, and living, and ultimately part of the basic system of mediation within which they are embedded. Such influence remains persistently relevant even if some conservative impulse might attempt to deny it entirely. The rejection of any social or cultural possibility still puts that possibility into play because it then shifts the signification of those other possibilities of cultural expression that one does choose to embrace or deploy. By that point, "it," the figure confronting any individual or group, the spirit surrounding and demanding-- what might seem only a possibility, or what
might seem a threat -- is already inside.
Concluding Thoughts: Modernity and Continuing Difference

Modernity has had its effects, in Morocco as elsewhere. In Morocco those effects have been specific to its cultural precepts and the larger historical episodes it has undergone: colonialism in the first half of the 20th century; national independence and ethnic singularity in the second; and movements of populations from primarily rural locations to a more urban basis throughout, as well as overseas in different iterations during various eras. These developments occurred even while legacies of a longer history of Arab cultural hegemony continued, simultaneous with a fitfully authoritative monarchy drawing legitimacy from a grand religious tradition and, more conflictually, a less orthodox range of regionally-specific Sufi spiritual praxis.

How Moroccan individuals have negotiated the arrival and confrontation of different systems of thought and practice include mediations generated by a wide range of cultural processes and products, including a range of genres of popular music. The choice and valuing of different musical genres serve as means for defining group identity, but also for channeling difference. Among the cultural practices that have shifted in Moroccan modernity are some formerly the exclusive province of the non-secular realm: musical genres associated with the Gnawa ethnic group, Aïssowa, Hamadsha, Jilala and others Sufi brotherhoods. Beyond these, Sha‘bi has been a particularly notable genre indicative and abetting change because of its capacity to absorb novel elements from outside prior cultural practice. As with many of the non-secular genres of musical practice, Sha‘bi’s accessibility and interest for lower socio-economic classes in Morocco have also made it a productive mediator for negotiating cultural change. Overlapping but also divergent have been the
investment in other musical genres which have also been used to mediate difference. These include “classical” genres such as al-mūsīqā al-andalusiyya, which variously represent tradition and an upper-class habitus (for some listeners, at least) in Morocco, and a harking back to an attempt at connecting to earlier idealized moments of co-existence in Spain for Moroccan immigrants and would-be sympathetic Spanish cultural producers and audiences. Such genres also include a endlessly generative variety of “fusion” musics: hybrid cultural products that make alliances between and among various genres that have otherwise been recognized and/or favored by commercial markets and cultural brokers, including flamenco, Gnawa and hiphop. Class considerations figure into these attempts as well, since access to technology, to travel, and even to discursive information can depend on other material resources not always readily available.

Some of the differences that have confronted Moroccans historically include those manifesting between an Arab, Muslim-based Moroccan cultural and political trajectory of the last millennium and more (along with the residual indigenous Berber culture of North Africa it is infused with) versus more and more prevailing humanist Western and Catholic cultural trajectories of Spain, Europe and the West. Moroccans have also grappled with larger systems of ideological difference in the course of modern history as well: precepts of capitalism, secular education, and representative democracy, however unevenly pursued in contrast with more locally and regionally specific trade networks, Muslim-based systems of learning and the networks of strong-arm governmental power and cronyism.

And coming from these encounters, new relationships formed out of and across various attempts to bridge divides: new cultural fusions developed to make sense of colliding cultural difference via technological additions and hybrid genre development; exotic dancers making strange connections for former and continuing antagonists; the various spectacles of
folklorization and self-conscious cultural demonstration for international festival and other forms of cultural tourism.

In my first chapter I had mentioned the growing use of cellphone cameras by audience members at the 2007 Fez Festival of Sacred Music to record moments of some of the performances for which they were present. The casual, personal archives that were created in this way were just one by-product of the mediating impact of these devices: the turning of attention away from the live performances themselves (which had already been truncated from the night-long durations of prior convention) even while physically still co-present was another. These effects shifted the relationship both performers and other attendees had to the cultural practice of staged music associated with Sufi practices.

As another example of the mediating force of technologies in combination with particular musical genres at the same Festival, various novel choices in the presentation there by the Ouled Kamar Ensemble (“Sons of the Moon”) supported shifts in reception of Gnawa music by both native and foreign audiences. This meant both more substantial information being provided foreign audiences, while at the same time limiting the range of material and context being presented to audiences than had previously been a conventional ideal for music associated with Gnawa ritual. In this case, a wireless microphone (an innovation during the Sufi Nights component of the Festival up to that point) allowed for a greater degree of movement and interaction by the “mu'allem” or leader of the group, creating a different degree of spectacle and possible engagement for the proportion of audience members who had arrived to the Festival from overseas, many of whom were clearly witnessing the Gnawa for the first time.

More significantly, the use of projected images of translations (into French) of the lyrics of Gnawa songs that were performed (in darija) offered an unusual degree of access for non-
native attendees. The context for the performance – which was restricted to an isolated fragment of a cultural form that would customarily have extended much longer in time, and that performed in the atypical setting of a public garden – was already a shift in practice. Additionally notable was the codification into written form of performed texts that conventionally had been shared orally and extemporaneously, however much improvised from a set range of narrative possibility. This series of mediations – from darija to French language, to a written form from oral means, and culminating in projections of that written version of sung texts to a scale larger than that of the performers themselves via technological means – each contributed to the promotion of new relationships to the actual musical practices as well as among the various humans themselves by foreigners and native Moroccans alike.

This brings us back to the notion of various sorts of newly impelled or necessary cosmopolitanism: the pragmatic – or forced – responsiveness to a world larger than the most local one any individual might be born into, and the different degrees of access to those resources that can put different kinds of worldliness into play. For Moroccan natives, a form of nationalist branding (“Moroccan spiritual music”) was fundamentally intertwined with the effort at creating an internationally-oriented cultural festival, which in the process both extends the possible reception while also distorting the cultural forms it featured. Those foreign visitors on hand got unprecedented glimpses at those cultural forms, but only in a shifted and arguably more cursory fashion. The playing out of difference continued even in such shifted contexts – where some Moroccan listeners were transfixed by the music, and even seemingly possessed, as pointed to in my first chapter.

More contentiously, cultural difference played out across other divides: I recall the image of a middle-aged, somewhat drunken Moroccan expatriate in a particular bar in Albaycín, where
local gitanos shared the small space with young hippie travellers in what was clearly one of many nights of easy drunken revelry. The very professional bartender managed a tight operation, and this included his very active djing of musical background for the ongoing party. On the occasion where I was present to observe, the Moroccan patron -- who was obviously a regular too, but seated at the bar by himself, removed from the more sociable aspects of the place -- was complaining about the choice of Roma music from Eastern Europe being played over the bar’s sound system.

He had already been holding forth out loud at great length to a room of other drinkers who were not listening to his diatribe on what he claimed were the three greatest evils in the modern world: the IMF, WTO, and World Bank, making clear the unequal position structurally those organizations put individuals from the Southern Hemisphere like himself into by their policies and influence. That rant, which fell on deaf ears, gave way to an even less measured critique of the inappropriateness of the arbitrary choice of music from far away that was being played over the bar’s sound system.

When I asked him what he would prefer to hear, he hauled out a beat-up portable tape cassette player with headphones, and shared a brief snatch of music by Nass El-Ghiwaine, the Moroccan band of social protest from decades past. His own long sojourn abroad having obviously wound up in some resentment and disappointment, he clung to these older signs of difference and resistance, but through elements that were antique to the point of obsolescence: opposition to a Moroccan social context that had already shifted dramatically and not unironically channeled through a format of distribution technology whose time had already passed in terms of not only market relevance but easy utility. While this Moroccan immigrant had gained a foothold in living across the divide of geography and political borders, his had been no
easy assimilation into the culture of the North he entered into, nor had that culture embraced anything of his cultural attributes: his musical preferences would remain ensconced in the insulated package of his private cassette player, and very likely fade into further obscurity as time went on, having already given way to more novel, daring or absurd experiments in musical re-combination on both sides of the divide of the Straits of Gibraltar.

Popular music both allows and (mis)leads expectations. To mangle an assertion of one of my other interlocutors: there is no good or bad hybrid musical practice. The question is not only what is produced and received, in terms of cultural product, but what effects do those products have on individuals, groups they feel part of, and their relationships to others. International cultural festivals are not the only context where consumerist spectacle is offered up by cultural producers. The “bad news” is the disproportionate influence certain naturalized principles and practices (e.g. false and superficial stereotypes; commercial capitalism for its own sake) might have; the good news is no cultural synthesis is ever final and complete.
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