

Composition, Tradition and the Anxiety of Musical Influence in Syrian and Moroccan Andalusian Musics

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Part I: Introduction

Syria and Morocco both make claims to the rich musical and poetic traditions known today as Andalusian music and which trace their origins in part to medieval Iberia under Muslim rule (*al-Andalus*). For Syrian musicians, these musical traditions are at heart Arabian, having made a trans-Mediterranean journey of several centuries, picking up en route influences from diverse sources, and then returning “home” to the Levant after the fall of Granada and the expulsion of Muslims and Jews from Iberia. For Moroccan musicians, the Andalusian musical tradition (*al-Āla*) is the result of extensive collaborations among musicians and poets from both sides of the Mediterranean, and with the collapse of al-Andalus these practices took firm root in the North African littoral, where they are thought to have been essentially fixed, though over the generations various components of the heritage were lost. Today the musical cultures labeled “Andalusian” in Syria and Morocco, despite a sense of shared history, are remarkably different in terms of tonality, rhythm, song texts, and performance practice.

Among the more interesting and little explored differences between these two contexts is the question of composition and innovation within Andalusian music. In Syria, on the one hand, composition in the genre most associated with the Andalusian legacy, namely the *muwashshah*, remains a vital part of contemporary musical practice: the *muwashshah* exists as a living compositional form. In Morocco, on the other hand, composition in the major genres of the *Āla* tradition is not considered to be appropriate; the *muwashshah*, for example, is not considered a living compositional form but rather part of a fixed musical heritage. Indeed, there seems to be a taboo on composition within the Moroccan *Āla* tradition, but not in the Syrian tradition.

What might account for this difference in approach to the question of composition and innovation in Syrian and Moroccan Andalusian musics? What do these cases teach us about the processes through which musical traditions and repertoires are formed, transmitted, and understood, and the social and cultural contexts in which they assume meaning for contemporary performers and audiences? Borrowing loosely from Harold Bloom’s theory of poetic influence, *The Anxiety of Influence* (1997 [1973]), I explore what I call “the anxiety of musical influence” to address how musical traditions are formed, and how the very concepts of tradition and patrimony, and their selective renderings, reveal tensions concerning communal, national, and regional identities. While the topic of influence has been of general concern in musicological studies of periods and genres, the notion of how influences are masked, repudiated, or otherwise anxiety-producing has enjoyed only limited exploration in musicology (Straus 1991),

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and even less in ethnomusicology and the anthropology of music, despite a handful of studies on jazz and folk music traditions (see Berliner 1993; Murphy 1990).

In this study I seek to understand the ways in which the concepts of tradition, origin, and authenticity in the two contexts of Syria and Morocco shed light on cultural production in two “post-colonies” (Mbembe 2001). The differences in attitude toward creative processes in Syria and Morocco bespeak different engagements with cultural history and collective memory. Analysis of the dynamics of musical practice in these two sites offers a constructive avenue for our understanding of postcolonial “memory cultures” (Huysen 2000) around the Mediterranean, and how music “sounds” cultural processes that are fundamentally changing this region. [This essay is part of a larger project that investigates pan-Mediterranean ideologies of heritage and collective memory among musicians in Syria, Morocco, and Spain.]

Part II: Anxieties of Musical Influence: Toward a Musical Poetics

Bloom’s Argument

In *The Anxiety of Influence* (1997 [1973]), Harold Bloom sets forth his ambitious and controversial theory of poetry in which he endeavors to account for the rise of what he termed “strong” poets though their anxiety-ridden grappling with poetic precursors. He points to six main processes through which poets create their work through engagement (agonistic, tension-ridden, in Bloom’s view) with that of their poetic ancestors: misreading or poetic misprision (*clinamen*); completion and antithesis (*tessera*); repetition and discontinuity (*kenosis*); demonization; purgation (*askesis*); and “the return of the dead” (*apophrades*), in which the poet seems to have influenced the precursor, as an uncanny sort of ghostwriting (Keery 2003).

Though Bloom’s arguments are not easily adaptable to music¹, his ideas provoke new ways of thinking about musical-poetic precursors and the dynamics of creativity and innovation in musical traditions. Drawing on Bloom’s thesis, as well as more quotidian understandings of anxiety before “the weight of tradition,” I inquire how the Syrian and Moroccan cases illustrate critical dimensions of the creative process and the role of “the anxiety of influence” in creating artistic imaginations and practices. My argument in brief is this: for Syrian artists, composition and creation within the urban art music tradition is accepted so long as it meets fundamental aesthetic conditions. For example, the *muwashshah* – the poetic-musical genre most associated with the Andalusian poetic and musical heritage – remains a living genre and a compositional form used (however sparingly) in contemporary Syrian music. Indeed, numerous 20th C. compositions are now considered canonical today, something not known in Morocco. Musical influence is generally acknowledged and there is less anxiety regarding tradition, both in Bloom’s more limited sense of the term, and in the broader sense of a feeling of anxiety when faced with musical traditions. This stance regarding composition, I argue, reflects both the relative lack of state patronage of the music in Syria, and different engagements with and understandings of tradition in contemporary Syrian cultural politics.

¹ For example, few would argue, as Bloom does for Shakespeare in regards to English literature, that a single composer has not only dominated European and World musics but in fact created what it means to listen as a human.

For Moroccan artists, composition and creation within their Andalusian tradition is fraught with anxieties, and in fact is usually denied as appropriate. There seems to be a strong cultural taboo on composition within the genres of the repertoire called *al-Āla* (Moroccan Andalusian music) and novel compositions within this repertoire are not known or are not acknowledged as such. Yet, evidence points to significant contributions by Moroccans to this corpus of song texts and melodies from the 18th to the 20th C. In Morocco, state and royal patronage of the music in Morocco as well as cultural policies regarding national patrimony work to maintain the Andalusian repertoire as static and largely unchanging. The differences between the Syrian and Moroccan cases can be explained by examining not only the respective musical styles and genres, but also the particular cultural contexts of performance, the situation of the musics within their respective national political and cultural economies (or “regimes of value”), and ultimately, I suggest, to colonial-era cultural dynamics.

Part III: Syria

The first kingdom of al-Andalus was founded in the eight century by a Syrian prince fleeing from persecution in his homeland. The Syrian connection to al-Andalus remained strong ever since, with soldiers, scholars, and pilgrims making the long journey from the Mashriq (Arab East) to the Maghrib (North Africa) and al-Andalus for the next six centuries. More important than this history is the *idea* of al-Andalus in contemporary Syrian understandings of selfhood and nation. For Syrians as for many Arabs and Muslims in general, al-Andalus represents a golden age of literary, scientific, philosophical, and musical accomplishment, one made increasingly poignant not only by its loss in 1492 but by the current state of affairs in the Arab World, which suffer in comparison to the idealized version of al-Andalus as a paradise lost (*firdaws mafqūd*) – a vision increasingly being claimed by a number of Arab and Islamic groups after 9/11, including al-Qaeda.

Syrians are proud of the Andalusian heritage, which they understand to be primarily Arab and Muslim, while recognizing other influences, chiefly Jewish (though these are usually underplayed). The literary evocation of al-Andalus and interest in the history of al-Andalus and Andalusian culture played an important role in late 19th and early 20th C. Arab revival movements (such as the so-called Arabic literary renaissance or *nahḍa*). In the 1950s Syrian radio shows featured suites of “Andalusian” songs on most evening programs, indicating their cultural weight in society; nonetheless, this component of Syrian programming remained minor in comparison to popular music genres. The 1970s saw the growth of a veritable cottage industry of Andalusian studies and a resurgence in things Andalusian, mostly under the influence of the rapidly growing and wealthy Arabian Gulf principalities, where many Syrian intellectuals settled and remain active, alongside Arabs from other lands (at the same time many wealthy Arabs have purchased properties on Spain’s Gold Coast and in the province of Andalucía). The idea of al-Andalus as a lost paradise, even one to be recovered in some form, dates most strongly to this period and remains vibrant today.

Despite the important role of al-Andalus in contemporary discourse, few Syrians claim any direct genealogical ties to al-Andalus, as is the case in much of North Africa. Hints of an Andalusian background can be traced in only a few family names in Syria,

for example “al-Maghribī” or “al-Maghārabi” (referring to the Maghrib, Moroccan and North African more generally), “‘Abbābīdī” (referring to the ‘Abbasid dynasty of Granada), and rarely “al-Gharnāṭī” and “al-Qurṭubī,” referring to the cities of Granada and Cordoba, respectively. al-Andalus lives on in popular culture – in the names of streets and neighborhoods, stores and hospitals, and in public monuments to Andalusian personages (see Shannon forthcoming). Despite the lack of an ideology of direct genealogical connection to medieval Iberia, Syrians nonetheless derive a great amount of cultural pride from the Andalusian heritage, including (and especially) music, and also literature, the visual arts, science, and philosophy.

The main Andalusian genre of music in Syria, as in Morocco and elsewhere in North Africa, is the *muwashshah* (sometimes called *tawshīh*). The *muwashshah* arose in al-Andalus as a poetic and most probably a musical-poetic genre in the 10th C. and flourished as a compositional genre in the Andalusian kingdoms until the 15th C (Poché 1995). It’s origins are debated but many scholars find echoes of early Arabian poetics as well as poetic and musical dimensions of medieval Iberia in the structure of the poems and descriptions of the music, though we have no reliable information on what the music sounded like in this period (Guettat 2000; Poché 1995; Reynolds 2001). In Syria, the *muwashshah* is first and foremost a musical genre (*qālib*), one most often performed in the context of the musical suite (*waṣla*), which includes a variety of instrumental and vocal genres usually performed in the same or related mode (*maqām*). In Syria the *muwashshah* follows a few standard formats (see Shannon 2003) but essentially consists of strophic poems, both classical and modern, usually in formal Arabic, that are set to music. This loosely follows the practices of medieval Iberia, and in fact many Syrian *muwashshahāt* use known Andalusian poems (though remarkably there is little overlap in the poetic texts used in Syria and Morocco today). However, many Syrian *muwashshahāt* are based on early Arabian poetry that predates the *muwashshah* or on more recent Levantine composition in the style of the Andalusian poem.

From the 18th and 20th C. the performance of one or more *waṣla-s* or suites of *muwashshahāt* among social intimates was the major context of musical performance in Syria; today, the concert stage has assumed more importance as elite and middle class Syrians have moved from their expansive homes in the Old Cities to more modern, and also more confined, dwellings in the newer quarters. In addition, the Andalusian repertoire has featured prominently on radio and television broadcasts since the late 1940s, and plays an important role today in the context of retrospective and cultural heritage programming.² Modern Syrian artists such as Sabaḥ Fakhri, Sabri Moudallal, Muḥammad Khayrī, and younger performers such as ‘Umar Sarmīnī, Ḥamām Khayrī, Nihād Najjār, and Nūr Mahannā , among others, distinguish themselves via skillful and emotive performances of this repertoire.

Syrian Andalusian Music and the State

Until recently, the Andalusian repertoire in Syria did not find much official patronage. In 1943, the Syrian government opened a music institute in Damascus that focused on the teaching and performance of Arab and Western musics; this closed in 1952 and was replaced in 1973 by the High Institute for Music that focuses almost

² For more on Syrian music today, see Shannon (2006).

exclusively on Western art music. Although it does house a section devoted to Arab music, and Arab music ensembles that participate in international exhibitions and competition, nonetheless the pedagogical and performance emphasis is on the Western art music tradition. Aleppo has been home to the Arab Music Institute (*ma'had al-mūsīqā al-'arabiyya*) since 1956, but until recently, when the artist Muḥammad Qadrī Dalāl assumed its directorship, it also did not emphasize Arab music but catered to the wishes of Aleppo's elite class to teach its children Western music and musical instruments (for example in 1997 the number of piano students outnumbered those studying the *qānūn* by 20:1). As mentioned, Syrian Radio and Television, and especially its broadcast from Aleppo, often featured the performance of Andalusian songs, as presented by 'Alī and Nadīm al-Darwīsh beginning in the late 40s and through most of the 1950s. At the time of my research in 1996-1998, and again in 2003-2004, there was very little official patronage of Andalusian or even Syrian urban art music repertoires: few dedicated performance spaces, no major recording programs, and only a handful of radio and television programs devoted to the music. Private clubs and organizations continue to organize concerts and lectures, such as the Archaeological Institute in Aleppo (which despite its English title is more accurately understood as a cultural heritage club). Although the state benefits from the fame of Syria's artists, often inviting them to perform for visiting dignitaries, official patronage remains insignificant – perhaps for the better, as many observed, since the state's influence tends to corrupt. Therefore private initiatives outnumber public when it comes to promoting the music at home and abroad (indeed, after the group of Ṣabāḥ Fakhūrī, the best known Syrian ensemble is the Ensemble al-Kindī, founded by the French-Swiss artist Julien Jalaliddine Weiss).

Composition in the Syrian Andalusian Musical-Poetic Tradition

Despite (or indeed, as a result of) the neglect of the state, the Andalusian repertoire nonetheless remains a vibrant if minor component of contemporary Syrian music. When asked, many Syrian artists claimed not only that they perform *muwashshahāt* but that they do or could compose them too, and that this would not present any problems. The only restrictions, according to them, were aesthetic: the poetic text, musical melody, and rhythmic cycle had to match well, and this mixture had to be performed by a suitable ensemble and vocalist to be acceptable. In the context of the performance of the *wasla*, artists generally stick to the “greatest hits” or standards of the last century, including the most popular songs culled from recordings and the various songbooks that have been published over the past 50 years (see Rajā'ī and Darwīsh 1956). These are almost uniformly labeled “Andalusian *muwashshahāt*,” indicating the importance of the presumed tie to medieval Iberia.

Many of these “standard” songs were composed not in the medieval period but in the 20th C. by such composers and performers as the Egyptian Sayyid Darwīsh and the Syrians 'Umar al-Baṭsh (1885-1950), Bahjat Ḥassān (1927-1995), Bakrī al-Kurdī (1909-1978), Majdī al-'Aqīlī (1917-1983), and Zuhayr Minīnī (b. 1930), among others (see Shannon 2003; Dalāl 2006). In addition to performing these “standards,” a handful of contemporary artists have commissioned *muwashshahāt* that they record and perform in concert; usually older poetic texts are set to music, though in some cases contemporary poets will compose lyrics in an Andalusian style or spirit. 'Umar al-Baṭsh

in particular was known as a prolific composer of *muwashshahāt*, with some 150 attributed to him in a variety of modes. He was also known for his “completions” of earlier *muwashshahāt* (including some attributed to Sayyid Darwīsh), especially those that had been inherited with “missing” or incomplete sections (*khānāt*), a process that is not considered controversial in Syria the way it is in Morocco. His additions to existing *muwashshahāt* are almost always performed (and in fact many musicians either do not know that al-Baṭsh “completed” the original works or attribute the entire work to him).

A generation after al-Baṭsh, Majdī al-‘Aqīlī composed a number of *muwashshahāt* by setting well-known Andalusian poems to music in ways that he claimed better reflected the original intention of matching the poetic and musical meters (and al-‘Aqīlī, as a scholar as well as composer and performer, supported his compositional efforts with poetic and musical evidence in his many publications; see al-‘Aqīlī 1980). The late Ṣabrī Moudlalla composed some 40 *muwashshahāt*, mostly on religious themes (See Dalāl 2006). Today, Zuhayr Minīnī, a student of al-Baṭsh’s and composer of some of the more famous *muwashshahāt* in the 1950s and 60s, continues to compose religious *muwashshahāt* for a group of vocalists and students learning the art of religious song (*inshād*); Minīnī long ago gave up the profession of music and earns his living as a calligrapher. He sees his work as following in a long line of Arab-Syrian composers, taking earlier texts (not all of them *muwashshahāt* or of Andalusian origin) and setting them to music according to one of the main *muwashshah* forms.

Contemporary Syrian Composers

A handful of contemporary performers have also made efforts not only to compose *muwashshahāt* but also to reinvent them and update them. For example, the young Aleppine vocalist Ḥamām Khayrī collaborated with the poet Anṭuān Mubayyīd to add new poetic and music introductions to a number of well-known *muwashshahāt* and other genres of song, as well as to change their modes, add modulations, or otherwise alter the instrumentation and musical structure in order to “revitalize” them. He has also composed some *muwashshahāt* himself, eschewing formal Arabic and instead mixing linguistic registers and using unusual meters. He has performed many of these new works at international festivals and begun recording them in his own professional studio. Khayrī understands his work to be an extension of the earlier generation of masters, such as al-Baṭsh, who attempted to renew the *muwashshah* form after a period of perceived decline under the Ottomans. During our frequent discussions, however, he did not acknowledge the role of more recent compositional interventions and innovations within the Andalusian repertoire, such as those of Zuhayr Minīnī or those of the Lebanese Raḥbānī brothers, perhaps the most famous innovators in modern Arab music and musical theater throughout the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, as well as works by Egyptian and other composers and performers that sought to standardize or modernize Arab-Andalusian music performance practice.³

Creative Genealogies

It would seem that most Syrian composers today who work in the *muwashshah* genre (whether profane or sacred) trace their artistic genealogy to ‘Umar al-Baṭsh, either

³ These would include the Egyptian artists Sayyid Darwīsh, Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, and ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm Nuwairī, the Tunisian Luṭfī Bushnāq, and others.

directly, as in the case of Minīnī and Moudallal, or via one of al-Baṭsh's many students who taught at the Music Institute in Damascus in the 1950s and carried on his tradition. Others regard the Aleppine composer and vocalist Bakrī al-Kurdī as another source of inspiration for innovations in the Andalusian repertoire, one that mediates the earlier, Ottoman-influenced songs and more modern styles come from Egypt and Lebanon. The generation of the 1950s and 60s, when Syria was going through a period of intense growth (economic and demographic) and transformation in the orientation of its national culture (from decidedly anti-colonial to pro-Western), tends to be forgotten in the memory of these genealogies; there seems to be a desire among modern composers to trace their roots directly to the generation of "grandfather" figures such as al-Baṭsh.⁴

Part IV: Morocco

Overview of Moroccan Andalusian Music (al-Āla)

Turning to the Moroccan case, we note several differences from the Syrian. In Morocco, Andalusian music (variously called *al-Āla*, *al-musiqa al-andalusiyya*, or *al-musiqa al-andalusiyya al-maghribiyya*, among other names) refers to a corpus of poetry set to music. Like the music in Syria, it also is arranged into suites, called *nūbāt* (sing. *nūba*), according to mode (*ṭab'* pl. *ṭubū'*) and rhythmic cycle (*mīzān* pl. *mayāzīn*); however, there are significant differences structurally and aesthetically between the Syrian *waṣla* and the North African *nūba* regarding tonality, rhythm, instrumentarium, suite structure, and performance practice (see Guettat 2000; Reynolds 2001; Shannon forthcoming). For the purposes of this essay I focus on the cultural dynamics within the Andalusian traditions of Morocco that prevent composition or mask its existence as a way of denying influence. A fuller description of the musical system of *al-Āla* can be found elsewhere (Guettat 2000; Poché 1995; Shannon 2007).

The standard narrative of the music asserts that the seeds of Andalusian music were brought from the Arab East to the Iberian peninsula by the cultural hero Ziryab in the 9th C. After five centuries of development in the various city-states of al-Andalus, the music spread to North Africa as a result of the waves of expulsions of Muslims and Jews during the *Reconquista*. Once in North Africa, according to the narrative, the regional traditions of Spain (of Granada, Valencia, and Seville, for example) coalesced into the distinct traditions of cities such as Fez and Rabat, Tlemcen and Constantina in Algeria, and Tunis in Tunisia. In the process some elements of the original musical cultures were lost; for example, where originally there were 24 suites, now there are eleven, the other 13 having been lost in translation from the Iberian Peninsula. Moreover, the standard narrative barely acknowledges accretions to the tradition except as impurities. The task today for performers in these different contexts is to gather and preserve the shards of memory that remain like echoes of medieval al-Andalus (see, among others, Guettat 2000; Davis 2004; al-Shāmī 1984).

While this task is not limited to those claiming Andalusian ancestry, a sense of genealogical ties to medieval Iberia is an important element of modern Andalusian identity in Morocco. Many scholars have shown that Andalusians – that is, those claiming descent from Andalusian refugees – constitute a social and cultural elite in

⁴ The influence of earlier Jewish performers is acknowledged by many contemporary musicians but this rarely figures in official or published accounts of the history of music in Syria.

modern Morocco; in many ways they can be considered a distinct ethnic group identified with particular habits of dress, culinary practices, residential neighborhoods, linguistic registers, and of course musical practices (Bahrami 1996). Not only do they see themselves as apart from non-Andalusi Moroccans, they are also recognized by others as separate, even superior (a fact supported by their often close ties to the Moroccan monarchy and political elite). A well-known book of genealogies of Fassi families arranges them into three main categories: Arabs, Amazighen (“Berbers”), and Andalusians (Kattānī 2002); “Andalusian” families constituted about 20% of the total by the mid-19th C., though the distinction between “Arab” and “Andalusian” are not clarified in the text.

Numerous individuals in Fez and Rabat extolled their Andalusian origins to me and argued that this explained their “natural” affinity to the *Āla* repertoire. Others asserted that they might have such background in the hopes of gaining some of the prestige that it affords. I recall one man who showed me the deed to his grandfather’s home in Fez, which was located in the “al-Andalus” neighborhood of the *madīna* or Old City; this was proof enough to him that he had some Andalusian ancestry). A number of musicians in Fez claimed Andalusian ancestry, since the association with a genealogical link to al-Andalus gave them more authority and authenticity in their performances and interpretations. Whole neighborhoods of Fez and Rabat, both traditional and modern, are associated with al-Andalus and Andalusians, and therefore with Andalusian culture. Some Moroccan elites have gone so far as to remodel their expansive villas based on the architecture of al-Andalus, especially the Alhambra Palace of Granada. As I have indicated elsewhere (Shannon forthcoming), and as numerous scholars have pointed out, many Andalusian Moroccan families claim to maintain keys to their ancestral homes in Spain; one artist has written about an annual gathering in Chefchaouan, an Andalusian town in Morocco’s north, in which his grandfather would take out the key to their home in Granada and tell stories of their exodus (Chraïbi 2001)⁵; I write elsewhere about a similar practices and narratives of loss and belonging among Palestinian refugees in Syria (Shannon 2007).

Al-Āla and Islam

A closely related element is the strong association of *al-Āla* with Islam in Morocco. Many song texts have an explicit Islamic dimension to them, especially the suite *Raml al-māya*. The *Āla* repertoire has strong associations with Islam, both because many of its lyrics are open to interpretation from a Muslim and especially Sufi perspective, and because the music plays a central role in many areas of Muslim ritual life: from accompanying weddings to Ramadan festivities. There are also strong associations both structural and stylistic between the *Āla* repertoire and the song traditions of some of

⁵ Moroccan Jews of Andalusian origin also figure into this complex of identities and discourses. Moroccan Jews took the basic *Āla* melodies and added their own lyrics, so to a degree the *Āla* tradition was living in that they could alter it (for liturgical purposes at least). It’s hard to say what role this might have played. In Syria the same thing happened (and still does in diasporic communities), but the tradition was living as far back as I can tell, certainly to the last decades of the 19th C where there are numerous reports of composition and innovation within the larger structure of the Arab-Ottoman musical patrimony. In fact, much of the “traditional” music performed today in Syria – the urban art music repertoire – crystallized in this era and was extended in the 20th C, esp in the years after Independence – the Golden Age of Syrian and Arab Levantine culture (up to the 1960s).

Morocco's Sufi orders. As in Syria, there is often a close association between the sacred and profane musical styles. In Morocco, while the *Āla* repertoire is generally not performed in mosques, a similar performance aesthetic is at play in both domains. For example, I attended a *mūlid* (a celebration of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad) in the Tijāniyya *zāwiya*, and a prominent vocalist from the *Āla* tradition was a featured vocalist there, performing standard praise songs; the aesthetic was similar to that encountered in non-ritual *al-Āla* performances.

Royal Overtones and State Patronage

The association of *al-Āla* with Islam is strengthened by its association with the Moroccan monarchy, which has been a major patron of the music for generations. The palace has maintained a royal Andalusian ensemble for many years, at least from the late 19th C if not earlier.⁶ The late King Hassan II was honorary President of the Moroccan Andalusian Music Association, and was reputed to be a connoisseur of the music (I have my doubts concerning the present monarch).

Forms of state patronage of the music may also account for the relative inflexibility of the Andalusian tradition in Morocco. In the 1980s the Moroccan Ministry of Communication in collaboration with the Maison des Cultures du Monde in Paris launched a recording project to create an anthology of the extant Andalusian repertoire. The aim was to promote the preservation of the repertoire for subsequent generations of Moroccan listeners and to create an archive of the tradition as it had been handed down. Concerning the release of one of the suites of the Anthology series, the Moroccan Ministry of Communication notes on its website that the *Āla* anthology recordings were “set within the framework of the policy for the safeguard[ing] and preservation of Moroccan cultural patrimony”.⁷ This policy aims at propagating the patrimony and, in particular, at progressively building up a documentary database of recordings using the most advanced techniques, combining high fidelity with respect for authenticity and classical rules of interpretation. The recordings are based in the “interpretations” of modern masters, such as Moulay Ahmed Loukīlī, Muḥammad al-Ṭaūd, and Aḥmad al-Zaytūnī, who had inherited their repertoires from past masters.

Conservatories

These interpretations, now preserved on cassette and CD, are taught in the state conservatory system as part of a larger endeavor to support the learning and performance of the *Āla* repertoire. State conservatories, such as those in Rabat, Fez, Tetouan, Tangier, and Oujda, use pedagogical practices that focus on memorization of the repertoire, word for word and note for note.⁸ Yet, performers of Andalusian music often make a distinction between the “players” (*‘āzifīn*, sing. *‘āzif*) and the *Āla* insiders “*ālīyīn* (sing. *ālī*)”; *‘āzifīn* may have memorized portions of the repertoire, perhaps all of it, but if they have not lived with the music and inherited it in the traditional sense, they can never be an *ālīyīn*. This is not necessarily tied to musical skill or indeed knowing how to play an instrument since some *ālīyīn* are not performers but a subset known as

⁶ Jonathan Glasser, personal communication, 2006.

⁷ <http://www.mincom.gov.ma/english/gallery/music/andalusi.html> accessed 08/08/2006

⁸ Yūnis al-Shāmī, personal communication, 2002, 2003, 2004; Carl Davila 2006.

mulū'a – “lovers” of the music.⁹ It would seem that the national conservatory system produces more *'āzifīn* than *āliyīn* – more “players” than “insiders” and the former are largely suspect in the eyes of the latter, who themselves may or may not be musically literate or have Andalusian social affiliation.

In addition to the state conservatory system, *al-Āla* performance is promoted by state radio orchestras and broadcasts. This began prior to Independence but took a more regular form in the post-Independence era, when artists such as Loukīlī ; Moroccan Radio and Television (RTM).¹⁰

Clubs and Associations

Unlike Syria, which boasts few private music associations, Morocco hosts a number of private clubs generally consisting of social elite who support the performance of *Āla*. Some were founded by enthusiasts, others by artist/scholars. Examples include the various *jama'iyāt* (associations) for Andalusian music in Casablanca, Fez, Oujda, Tangiers, and elsewhere. These associations play an important role in bringing Andalusian music to a wider public through concert series, and also in promoting the preservation of the tradition through documentary projects. One example is the opening in 2004 of Dār Benānī, a museum for Andalusian music, in the “al-Andalus” neighborhood of Fez. The museum boasts a collection of instruments, books, and recordings, hosts resident scholars and workshops, and aims to offer lessons in *al-Āla* performance, Qur'ānic recitation. These aims were promoted as part of a larger quest to preserve not only the *Āla* repertoire but the Old City of Fez itself and its innumerable forms of heritage, tangible and intangible. Indeed the correlation of these discourses and those of UNESCO's World Heritage program are notable (for more on UNESCO and related ideologies of heritage preservation in Fez, see Porter 2001, 2003).

Change and Innovation in Moroccan Andalusian Music

Despite the standard narrative of a pure Andalusian musical tradition that was attenuated but remained essentially unchanged in its life in Morocco, there are well known cases of changes to the *Āla* repertoire as well as examples of composition that are accepted today. We know very little about the music as it existed in al-Andalus from about the 14th C. to the 18th C., though during this time the musical traditions of the Iberian Peninsula were in close contact with those of North Africa so that the traditions must be understood as mutually constitutive.¹¹ The Moroccan additions that are accepted include a change of lyrics of the suite *Raml al-māya* from secular, amatory poetry to poems in praise (*madīh*) of the Prophet Muhammad. This is thought to have occurred sometime in the 17th or 18th Centuries; there are conflicting versions, neither reliable. Another change was the addition of the *mizān* (rhythmic cycle) called *darj* to the compilations of *al-Āla* repertory that emerged in the late 19th and early 20th C.¹²

⁹ Ānis al-‘Attār, personal communication, 2004; Tāzī Maṣānū, personal communication, 2004.

¹⁰ I don't have much information on the history of the RTM and the role in general of recording and broadcasting technology on the aesthetics of *al-Āla*, though this would be an important avenue to pursue.

¹¹ This is illustrated in the concept of the *'adwatayn*, or “two banks” of al-Andalus: the Iberian and the North African. See Shannon 2007.

¹² Carl Davila, personal communication, 2006.

These interventions in the *Āla* repertoire are acknowledged as additions or supplements – in the former case, changing the lyrics of one suite to better suit the needs of Muslims especially in the context of Muslim festivals, and in the latter codifying what was perhaps oral tradition or a portion of the *Āla* repertoire that had been combined into other rhythmic cycles, as a sort of rationalization of the system; a similar process was the rationalization of the organization of suites (see Banūna 1999). In addition, there are known instances of composition within the *Āla* repertoire, but these are generally understood as either reviving older practices or giving air to typically Moroccan forms of poetic expression. In the 1950s, Moulay Ahmed Loukili (Aḥmad al-Wakīlī, 1909-1988), head of the Moroccan radio orchestra, began a series of interventions in the *Āla* repertoire that aimed to restore songs (*ṣana'i'* sing. *ṣana'*) that had been “corrupted” either through the accumulation of mistakes in pronunciation or the improper attribution of songs to suites or rhythmic cycles. Despite Loukili’s stature as a master his corrections and renditions of the repertoire were not always met with approval and some performers today argue that they follow the older and more authentic tradition, errors and all. This is similar to criticism of more recent attempts to correct and notate the repertoire, as I explore below.

On the poetic front, scholars note that a large percentage of the songs – perhaps one fifth – of the *Āla* repertoire are of a genre of poetry in Moroccan colloquial Arabic, the *barwala*, that does not correspond linguistically or structurally with the major genres of the Andalusian repertoire: the *muwashshah/tawshīh*, *zajal*, or *qaṣīda* (Davila 2006). These clearly Moroccan additions to the corpus are explained as accretions that arose in the time when the music came to the shores of North Africa; oddly the *barāwal* are not usually acknowledged as central to the Andalusian repertoire despite their large number, though some scholars argue that given this and other evidence of Moroccan contributions to *al-Āla*, the music should more properly be called “Moroccan Andalusian music”; see Bin ‘Abd al-Jalīl 1988).¹³

When it comes to the question of actually adding to the repertoire as it exists today, either in the form of new compositions or alterations to existing songs, several prominent performers and teachers of the *Āla* repertoire flatly denied this possibility. In Tetouan, a respected performer and conservatory teacher and ensemble leader, when I asked him about composing new materials, responded: “*lā yimkinsh al-talḥīn*” (“composition is not possible”). When I asked him why, he said that the repertoire was handed down to us as is, and must be preserved even where it is incomplete in order to prevent further loss. Moreover, he claimed that, compared to the masters who created and carried on the tradition, no one today could do justice to the repertoire by adding new materials, either poetic or musical.

At the same time, this artist acknowledged that some 20th C. masters probably *did* compose, especially in the instrumental preludes known as *bughya* and *tawshiya*, but that they usually masked this through a number of claims. For example, he related a story I heard from several sources regarding Muḥammad Bin al-‘Arabī al-Timsamānī (Temsamani). Temsamani was an innovator in many domains, not the least being his use of the piano in the *Āla* ensemble (*jawq*); in fact, many Moroccans find no difficulty

¹³ Parenthetically, some scholars argue that in the *Ala* tradition, the musical melodies are more important than the lyrics, which serve as a sort of musical notation for the music in the absence of a notation system (Bin ‘Abd al-Jalīl, personal communication, 2004).

in the use of other non-Arabian or non-Moroccan instruments in the *jawq*, including clarinet, saxophone, and trumpet; the traditional *jawq* generally consists of the *rabāb* (boat-backed two string box fiddle), *'ūd* (lute), *kamān* (violin); *tārr* (small frame drum with castanets); and vocalist. Tamsamani also collected a number of already existing instrumental overtures (*mshāliyyāt*) into one long performance piece, called *al-Mshāliya al-Kbīra*, the Great Prelude, as part of a competition in 1960. This compositional intervention was understood as a revival of an earlier tradition of the Great Prelude and not as an innovation in the context of *al-Āla* per se; it is the only instance of an actual competition for musical composition in this repertoire, so far as I can tell.

In addition, Tamsamani introduced instrumental preludes to suites that either lacked them or had few (for example, the *tawāshī* for the suite *Raṣd al-dhīl*). However, he did not claim to have composed them but rather to have learned them from a *shaykh* or master in Tangier, who had since died. Several artists who told me this anecdote mentioned that it was well-known in the *Āla* community that Tamsamani had actually composed them but, given the taboo on composition, he attributed them to a (now dead) master. His additions to the core repertoire had to be authorized through reference to a (dead) precursor. This is very similar to what Bloom termed *apophrades* (the return of the dead), a process by which a poet in essence creates his predecessor through poetry that not only masks influence but is thought to be the completion of the early poet's work; in this case Tamsamani most likely created the dead precursor, and *was* in fact the precursor (the actual composer of the material in question).

‘Ūd Visions

Another Moroccan artist expressed some anxieties of influence through recourse to dead precursors. In this case, he wanted to recreate the varieties of *'ūd* (lute) used in the early Andalusian ensembles and had amassed a collection of vintage instruments, including some, such as the *'ūd ramal* (a long-necked, fretless, four string lute), that are thought by some to predate the exodus of Andalusians from the Iberian peninsula. He was concerned, however, about the reaction of the descendants of the original luthier – a concern in a sense over intellectual property rights – as well as of performers who use the standard (*sharqī*) oud. While searching for a luthier to realize his ambitions, he had a series of visions (*ru'ā*, sing. *ru'yā*) in which the ancestral luthier appeared to him in his sleep and authorized him to make the instruments; such visions are a common motif in Sufi epistemologies. The artist seemed deeply and truly concerned about ensuring this “right” to himself and the dream visions gave him what he felt was a seal of approval (*khātim*) to go ahead with his project of revival. By 2004 he had produced three prototypes (I have one!) and was learning himself the crafts of woodworking and lutherie so he could make them himself.

Other Interventions

There are other examples of interventions in the *Āla* tradition that invite either opprobrium or approval. One relates to the effort to compile and notate the repertoire as it exists today. The standard editions of the *Āla* repertoire, which take their cue from the 18th C. *Kunnāsh al-Hāik* (Bannūna 1999; al-Rayyis 1998), contain over 700 poetic texts organized into 11 *nūbāt*, each further organized according to the four *māyāzīn* (rhythmic cycles); this yields a total of 44 performance units. Musical notation was not known at

the time so only the lyrics and the mode and meter are indicated in the early texts as well as most compilations published in the 20th C., by which time the 5th *mīzān* (*darj*) was extracted from the other four sections, so that the repertoire consists of 55 discrete sections; some older texts still refer to the repertoire as the “55” for this reason.

Moroccan *al-Āla* performers render the melodies as performed by the masters of the late 19th and early 20th C., as handed down through oral transmission (*talqīn*) within the confines of particular ensembles (such as the ensemble al-Brihī, perhaps the most influential in contemporary performance practice; see Touma 1996). In addition to oral transmission, recording technology helped to preserve some of these early renditions, as performed for example at the Congress on Arab Music, held in Cairo in 1932 (*Kitāb al-mu'tamar* 1932). Today most artists and scholars rely on the recordings of masters from the 1950s through 90s, such as Loukilī, Tamsamānī, ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Rayyis, Muhammad al-Ṭāūd, Aḥmad al-Zaytūnī, Tāzī Maṣanū, and others that were codified, indeed to some extent standardized, in the recordings that form the Anthology of Moroccan Andalusian Music. Musical notations, however, have not played an important role until recently. Given that standard musical notation was little known in Morocco until the colonial period (as elsewhere in the Arab world), older artists relied on oral tradition and recordings; even today, conservatory students are encouraged to memorize the repertoire as performed by certain masters and not to rely only on musical notation. As I found in Syria, there is a certain distrust of notation’s ability to capture the nuances of the music.

Two contemporary Moroccan scholar-artists have published notations of several of the *nūbāt*: Yūnis al-Shāmī (al-Shāmī 1984), former director of the conservatory in Rabat, and Muḥammad Abrīwūl (Briouel 1985), current director of the conservatory in Fez and leader of the Ensemble al-Rayyis, named after ‘Abd al-Karim al-Rāyyis (Briouel 1985).¹⁴ While their texts are similar in organization – each begins with an historical overview and a review of the modes and rhythms of *al-Āla* – the two authors have taken different approaches to notation. al-Shāmī, in a series of interviews, argued that the repertoire as performed today is riddled with inconsistencies and errors. Like Loukilī, al-Shāmī aims in his transcriptions to not only record the existing repertoire but to correct the obvious errors that have accrued over the years. Some of these include improper attribution of rhythmic cycle or even suite, poor scansion of texts in performance, and poor pronunciation, among others.

Briouel, for his part, notates what he learned from al-Rayyis and from his book and recordings, including what others might interpret as “errors” – in the musical structure and poetic texts, as well as in performance practice. This was confirmed to me in my lessons with a sometime performer in Briouel’s ensemble; certain pronunciations did not make much sense (or were clearly grammatically incorrect compared to other texts in the al-Ḥāyik volume) and should probably be corrected, but out of deference to tradition they are performed as the masters performed them. An artist from Tangier argued that most of these older “masters” were illiterate and uneducated, and therefore their interpretations are full of errors that he, like al-Shāmī, aims to purge with his own renditions and recordings.

¹⁴ Among the earliest known efforts to notate the music was that of the French/Swiss musicologist Alexis Chottin, who notated one suite in the 1930s (Chottin 1987 [1931]).

Part V: Explaining the Differences

Given this overview of the history and “state of the art” of the Andalusian traditions of Syria and Morocco, how can we explain the differences regarding innovation and composition? I propose that the differences between the Syrian and Moroccan treatments of “Andalusian” music relate to differing understandings of heritage (*turāth*). Syrian artists are more open to change and renewal from within tradition, whereas Moroccans appear to have assumed a more curatorial attitude, as if heritage is something to be preserved but not altered. What would account for the relative openness of Syrian artists to innovation and composition within the Andalusian tradition? One possible factor is the role of the concept of innovation or newness (*tajdīd*) in Syrian aesthetics. As we have seen, in Syria the *muwashshah* remains a living musical compositional genre, not a fixed item in a repertoire of musical patrimony. No one in Syria I spoke with denied the possibility of composition, as is the case in Morocco; in fact, many claimed to compose their own or that they could easily do so. Moreover, the dominant aesthetic paradigm in Syria, what I describe elsewhere (Shannon 2006) as the “aesthetics of authenticity,” is paradoxically built on a notion of newness *within* tradition, not against it. As a result, “authentic” performances are not those that stick to the known parameters of a repertoire but rather those that add something new – an interpretation, usually of emotional depth and sincerity, if not new music per se (usually the latter is scrutinized rather strictly).¹⁵

Turning to Bloom’s argument, we might read in this stance what Bloom identified as one component of the anxiety of influence, namely the desire to “swerve” from an original model to create newness in the familiar and by extension a rejection of repetition. Such anxieties of influence are expressed in the commonly heard aesthetic evaluation “there is nothing new” (*mā fi shī jadīd*), applied in a variety of contexts, from musical recitals to fine arts shows to poetry readings. In other words, given an expectation of newness on the part of audiences, many artists will hide or misread their musical influences: by denying or masking the influences of their precursors, they make claim to innovation for themselves alone.¹⁶ (There is a famous Arabic poetic model for this stance dating to the 9th C.) As we saw, some younger Syrian artists display creative anxieties, usually through the selective memory of creative precursors (as in Khayrī’s forgetting of earlier innovations in musical innovation in Syria, Egypt, and Lebanon since the 1920s). This anxiety reveals how for Syrian artists musical heritage is the product of a selective acknowledgement of past masters in the genealogies of musical heritage, and a concomitant expectation of innovation and newness. Perhaps it is this expectation that promotes the conditions of creative anxiety to begin with; the desire to cover one’s tracks, to create something new yet within the realm of tradition. These are all aspects of what Bloom identified as the formation of poetic schools; indeed, the stronger poets, and by extension the strongest composers, are those whose anxieties are the greatest and whose memories and denials are most selective. In the near absence of state support for traditional urban art musics associated with the Andalusian heritage, Syrian discourses of authenticity and heritage are at once more deeply centered on the specific locales (such as the Old Cities and countryside; see Shannon 2005) or on

¹⁵ I explore a poetic expression of this aesthetic in Shannon 2006.

¹⁶ I show elsewhere (Shannon 2006) the role of memorization, digestion of tradition, and of forgetting and improvisation in Syrian musical aesthetics.

individual creative masters. While the state often seeks to capitalize on heritage to promote its interests, there is yet no clear understanding of how tradition should be conceptualized; indeed, a great deal of debate revolves around this, in terms of music but also the more “hot” topics of religion and society.

In recent years, Syrian conceptions of heritage have become more tied both to regional discourses of pan-Arab and pan-Islamic identities, and to global discourses of national cultural patrimony. A good example of this latter tendency are UNESCO World Heritage programs, which serve as models for local and international NGOs operating in Syria; another are those projects sponsored by the EuroMed Heritage program (including oral histories, architectural studies, and sustainable development programs).¹⁷ These transnational projects have taken root in Syrian soil already conditioned to some extent by anti-colonial struggles for the securing of a national patrimony against French efforts to suppress it. As mentioned, interest in reviving Arab cultural patrimony can be traced even earlier, to the 19th C. Arabic renaissance (*nahḍa*) in the context of Ottoman and European hegemony in the region. Ideologies of cultural revival animated the cultural politics of Syrians from the late 1880s through the 1920s, and continued strongly into the post-Independence era of ascendant nationalism, often closely allied to Western ideas of progress.

Interest in heritage preservation among Syrian elites increased dramatically after the 1967 loss to Israel, and subsequent generations have seen the growth not only of preservationist discourses aligned with UNESCO World Heritage and related projects, but also of conceptions of cultural heritage that have a decidedly Islamic cast. While the Old Cities of both Aleppo and Damascus are UNESCO World Heritage sites, for 2006 Aleppo was named the Capital of Islamic Culture, an annual distinction. A book on religious song and *muwashshahāt* won a prize for best cultural production of 2006 (Dalāl 2006). Given these recent development, I would expect Syrian cultural politics in the coming years to become more conservative and preservationist; this is already the case for architecture and, to some degree, poetry (and undoubtedly for understandings of religious). One reason, as I explore in my book (Shannon 2006), is that “heritage pays” – there are financial incentives to adopt a preservationist stance: international grants, for example. Morocco, with its plethora of festivals devoted to showcasing its different national traditions, might be a good example of the role of transnational discourses of cultural heritage in promoting a cultural preservationist stance with respect to national culture.

Indeed, what else about the Moroccan case might account for the denial of innovation within the Andalusian tradition? This is made especially interesting with the realization that Moroccan artists in other domains continually push the envelope of the acceptable (in literature, fine arts, architecture, and even other genres of music). Certainly the national conservatories play a larger role in the transmission of Andalusian music in Morocco than in Syria, where the elite state music institutes generally do not promote the teaching and performance of Arabian music (through they do house Arab music ensembles) but instead focus on European art musics. The location of the *Āla* repertoire in a state-sponsored conservatory system has had the combined effect of preserving it, raising it to the status of national patrimony,

¹⁷ See <http://www.euromedheritage.net/>

promoting it to a wider potential audience, and at the same time ossifying the repertoire. Unlike Syrian understandings of tradition that invite innovation, Moroccan notions of national patrimony suggest that this heritage cannot change. This does not totally rule out innovation: *al-Āla* performances often feature exemplary instrumental and vocal improvisations, and some performers expressed their desire to play with the melodies, adding their own touches. Ensemble leaders often choose from among the hundreds of songs in the preparation of a program. But the aesthetic pulse of the music, from the specifics of pronunciation to the more general questions of structure and order, remains largely fixed.

Much of the attitude toward tradition arises out of a confluence of factors, the most important being the association of the *Āla* repertoire with Islam and prestigious ethnic identities in Morocco. These associations are heightened by the role of the monarchy and official patronage; the association of the music with the monarchy might have a limiting influence on innovation since any changes would be extensions imply changes to a monarchical tradition and genealogy going back to the 12th C. The numerous private clubs and associations also play an important role in recasting the Andalusian tradition as the province of social and political elites as well as in attempting to create a national patrimony out of the Andalusian musical repertoire.

To what extent does the Sufi Master/Disciple relationship, as discussed by Abdellah Hammoudi (Hammoudi 1997), and the father-son relationship as well, provide a “diagram” or cultural model for the elaboration and maintenance of patriarchy and dominance of the precursor? Hammoudi (1997) suggests that this relationship promotes an elective affinity (my term, not his) between Morocco’s authoritarian political culture and popular religion in Morocco that is based in the personal ties of Sufi masters and their disciples. The anxiety of musical influence and the ambiguous relationship of contemporary Moroccan cultural actors to their ancestors (including al-Brihī, Mbīrikū, Mṭayrī, al-Ja’idī, etc.) suggests that this relationship pertains to musical genealogies as well. I have already noted the close connections between Moroccan *zawāyā* and *al-Āla* performers – most of whom belong to particular orders (*turuq*). The contemporary *Āla* scene remains closely identified with lineages descending from distinct masters from the late 19th and early 20th C., and debates over musical authenticity often revolve not around musicianship or interpretation of the repertoire, but of the connection (or lack thereof) of artists to these founders. This is especially the case in Fez with the diversification of ensembles following the death of ‘Abd al-Karim Rayyis; at least three groups have assumed the mantle of his authority, the anxiety producing effects of which can be seen in the degree to which artists adhere to his performance style (as elaborated in his recordings and song collection); the essential division is between a family member (Ānis al-‘Attār), whose genealogical tie is reinforced by his inheritance of Rayyis’s famous *rabāb*) and a student (Muḥammad Briouel), whose claim to the mantle of authority rests in his devotion to the late master’s renditions of the repertoire (reinforced by his positionality as director of a music conservatory). So far these latter connections defeat kinship in the Moroccan music market, though not without considerable debate among *mulū’a* and *āliyīn* alike.

Although I think that the Master/Disciple diagram may help us ask questions about the dynamics of intergenerational change in Moroccan Andalusian music, it is colonial conceptions of patrimony, I assert, that have intersected this cultural model and

promoted popular and official discourses of cultural management and preservation in Morocco. In these regards Morocco is very different from Syria. It was in the colonial period when the very term “Andalusian” was commonly associated with the music of North Africa; prior to this, and even into the 20th C., other terms such as *al-Āla* and *ṭarab al-ālāt*, among others, signified the music – but not *al-mūsīqā al-andalusiyya*, Andalusian music. The ur-text for modern Moroccan Andalusian music, the *Kunnāsh al-Hā'ik*, does not use the term “Andalusian” (*andalusī*). It would seem that the very term “Andalusian,” if not of colonial origin, nonetheless played an important role in colonial practices of musical heritage programming, perhaps drawing on late 19th C. nomenclatures such as “Moorish” or “Mauresque” (Yafil and Rounet 1905).

By the 1920s French colonial authorities were referring to the music as “Arabo-Andalusian,” or simply “Andalusian” (see Ricard 1987 [1931]). The French Protectorate era Service for Indigenous Arts (*Service des Arts Indigènes*), organized in 1927 a “census” of existing Moroccan musical traditions and then, beginning in 1928, a series of “Moroccan music days” (*journées de musique marocaine*; Ricard 1987: 5). These cultural programs aimed at reviving and fortifying the Moroccan traditions in the face of “vulgar” modern influences, especially those brought by musical recordings (Ricard 1987: 3-4). One of these musical days programs was held in Fez and devoted to “Andalusian music.”

At the same time, the musicologist Alexis Chottin was brought in from the Directorate of Public Education (*Direction Général de l'Instruction Publique*) to lead, in addition to the new national conservatory, a “laboratory of Moroccan music” (*laboratoire de musique marocaine*), which was a study center for the various Moroccan musical traditions, among them “Andalusian” (Ricard 1987:6). One of Chottin’s lasting legacies was the initial attempt to notate the *Āla* repertoire (beginning with the *nūbat al-'ushshāq*), as well as in establishing the basis for the conservatory tradition in Morocco.

We need to understand this interest in musical heritage as part of the larger colonial cultural policies of the French Protectorate period in Morocco (c. 1912-1956), when the French attempted, as Janet Abu Lughod has demonstrated (1981), to shore up and preserve Moroccan traditions, often at the expense of organic development (which is why she refers to Rabat in this period as exemplifying “urban apartheid”). The French approach to colonial patrimony was decidedly curatorial: study it, preserve it, perfect it, maintain it. This approach seems to have been perpetuated by Moroccans, including musicians who worked with Chottin’s “laboratory” and those who rose through the conservatory system, which to this day focuses on the rote memorization of the *Āla* repertoire (Davila 2006). It also promoted what has blossomed into a veritable cottage industry of Andalusian studies in Morocco, which now includes a university center for Andalusian studies and numerous private Andalusian associations and clubs.

In addition, the French, by labeling the music “Andalusian,” marked it as “European” accentuating the connections to medieval Iberia, and as a result denying the contributions of Moroccan Arabs to the musical tradition in the centuries after the decline of al-Andalus (see al-Fasi 1962). In this view, *al-Āla* exists as an unchanging bastion of authenticity in a sea of change, one tempestuously threatening the shores of cultural purity as early as the 1920s. The net effect was to promote a sense of distinction, one already at play among communities of Moroccan Andalusians, and one

which had to be preserved without great change. These attitudes remained in force after independence, as Moroccans inherited the cultural infrastructure and maintained many of the policies of the colonial government (see, for example, Rabinow 1989).

The combination of the colonial attitude toward cultural patrimony and the genealogical, religious, and monarchical associations with the music have resulted in a conservatism that resists change, even denies its appropriateness. Therefore I suggest that it is a colonial and postcolonial anxiety of musical influence that works to maintain a taboo on innovation within contemporary Moroccan *Āla* practice.

Part VI: Conclusions: Ethnomusicology and the Anxieties of Musical Influence

To conclude, the differences between Syrian and Moroccan attitudes toward tradition can be traced to the different social, cultural, and political contexts of Andalusian music performance in the two contexts. In the Syrian case, Andalusian music is part of a living musical and poetic tradition that connects Syrians to a prestigious past (al-Andalus as a Golden Age) but which also contributes to a distinctly modern sensibility. In the Moroccan case, Andalusian music represents a prestigious past and indexes genealogical links to al-Andalus whose integrity must be maintained in the face of change; *al-Āla* serves as a discursive locus of stability in Moroccan self-understandings. An important factor in explaining these different approaches lies in the different cultural policies of the two states regarding heritage, musical and otherwise. Morocco has adopted a more curatorial approach, supported by official patronage, conservatory systems, and a network of amateur associations. Syrian music lacks these forms of support but ironically it is the lack of official support and amateur associations that has kept the musical forms alive.

We are some ways from Bloom's poetic theory with these observations. Yet there are aspects of both the Syrian acceptance of innovation and the Moroccan denial of it that illustrate elements of what Bloom called completion and antithesis (*tessera*; as in the attempts to complete "defective" works); repetition and discontinuity (*kenosis*; as in the Syrian move to create new within the context of the old, to swerve with a new interpretation, and in the Moroccan ideal of repetition); demonization of precursors as deficient (perhaps a common trait of artists everywhere!); purgation of ancestral works; and "the return of the dead" (*apophrades*; as in the mysterious compositions and visions that legitimate Moroccan creative interventions). In both cases, musical creativity is fraught with anxieties in the face of the weight of tradition; and yet, this tradition is supported by conceptions of heritage and patrimony that are very much modern – products of colonial and postcolonial nationalist projects. Might this be a feature of the postcolonies in general?

At any rate, this preliminary study reveals the importance for ethnomusicology of the study of musical influence (anxiety producing or otherwise) in the creation of musical traditions and styles. The processes through which musical influences and forms of innovation are either celebrated or denied reveal underlying cultural dynamics that are key to the study of music in postcolonial societies. Moving away from Bloom, we might understand the differences simply in terms of what Nettl terms the distinction between "content" and "style" in performance traditions (Nettl 2005 [1983]:54-55, 294); Syrians

seem more concerned with maintaining the style of their “Andalusian” music, while Moroccans are more concerned with the content of their tradition.

By setting into comparative juxtaposition traditions that are normally considered separately, I hope to have at least opened new avenues of research on the ways traditions are composed in response to a number of factors, musical, cultural, and social. Tracing discourses and practices of influence reveals how musical (and other) traditions are created and invested with meaning. It should also shed light on the intersection of musical practices and the social and political contexts which they “sound.”

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