

Chapter Five

Outside-In: Music, New Media and Tradition in North Africa

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Introduction

This chapter will consider the ways in which contemporary media and musics in particular, are used in everyday life in Morocco and Algeria. It will examine the tensions existing between the cultural associations, or content, these media bear and traditional conceptions of home and community. I will do this firstly by describing, in broad terms, what these traditional values are, then by considering the nature of the music and the other media that are enjoyed in the home. I will then look at the consequences and negotiations that ensue when these interact in context.

Before embarking on this discussion, however, I freely acknowledge that such generalized descriptions of social discourses cannot account for the multitude of ways in which these will be expressed in practice. Certain cities, quarters, streets or even families will be more "liberal" or "conservative" than others, just as differences between life in a small Berber village and a major Mediterranean city will be vast. Nation-states themselves shape dominant moral and political values, alongside one's age, gender, class and ethnicity. And without intending to expand the possible manifestations of these principles infinitely, the concept of "North Africa" can itself be reasonably stretched to include émigré communities around the world, who share a great deal of the language, music, values and social codes with the Maghreb.¹ As Mar-ranci discusses just such developments in a later chapter in this volume, however, I will not pursue this digression further.

Morality and Urban Space

In order to appreciate the impact of media consumption practices upon contemporary life it will first be useful to describe the concept of *houma*—a notional community or neighborhood and the obligations this concept imposes.

In almost any town or city in North Africa you may find that people have a strong sense of the neighborhood in which they live. Cities built along traditional architectural lines, such as Fez or Seffrou in Morocco (see Geertz 1968 and Rosen 1978), are often composed of distinct quarters, with at least one neighborhood mosque, a communal bakery and hammam, the public steam bath. Bakery and hammam are often found together, as the same furnace that bakes each family's homemade bread may well heat the steam for bathing. Many quarters have their own well, possibly a saintly shrine and access to local markets where essential foodstuffs can be bought. In addition, regular migration patterns from rural villages to major cities have, over time, developed quarters with common ethnic backgrounds, certain specialized trades and extended familial links. As Morocco alone boasts several very different regional languages in addition to the official Arabic the potential cultural diversity of a large city is great. So, for example, it is common to find one family split between village and metropolis, with brothers trading and migrating back and forth along the same route; a pattern described well by Waterbury (1972) in his book *North for the Trade*.

Even in outwardly "modern" cities like Oran in Algeria, where French colonizers imposed an entirely Western urban structure, one finds very similar migratory patterns based upon familial and economic links to the hinterland and beyond. This phenomenon contributes to the generation of largely self-supporting neighborhoods that are ethnically distinguishable. So here we have a very pragmatic basis to a strong collective feeling—and as close business relationships tend to be limited to the immediate community, each quarter is to some extent in competition with its neighbors.

Another driver for this strong awareness of *houma* is the principle of female sequestration. Although the practice is often much more relaxed than the ideal, the basic premise is that young women make the best matches in marriage when they are believed to be chaste. Before an engagement is arranged, investigations as to the moral character of the intended bride are made throughout the quarter—and particularly at the women's sessions in the hammam.² As serious suggestions of im-

morality, or perhaps rather, of indiscretion, could embarrass both families, it is considered important that between their teen years and wedding that girls observe certain norms. These include: not being seen out after dark, especially alone or with a strange man and not spending more time than necessary outside unless accompanied by female relatives. In theory, the "ideal" female habitus is framed in time and space by moral boundaries, though the actual practice can be quite variable.

The role of the men in this arrangement is to occupy the public space of the quarter, either as they work in it, sitting in cafés or simply socializing on street corners. Young boys are introduced to this role early in life by being sent for water, to the bakery or the local hanout (corner shop), whilst girls tend to help their mothers inside the home. Because all the families in a quarter know each other, any unusual activity or visitors will be obvious and appropriate action taken. So communities tend to be self-policing as well as economically independent and here too there is potential for antagonism between adjoining neighborhoods. In the course of my research in Oran (Algeria) and Oujda (Morocco) I asked people to draw maps of the quarters in town and describe the kind of people who lived in each. Almost invariably men considered adjoining quarters to be hostile to various degrees, especially after dark and associated each with particular ethnic groups. Women seemed less conscious of these distinctions, but as many had come into the quarter from the neighborhood of their parents, they knew particular parts of the city much better than others. To women, everywhere outside the home was potentially dangerous, particularly at night, when they would feel highly conspicuous.³

Self-help is important in North African societies, where governments have neither the resources nor the infrastructure to provide social welfare and manage only the most essential health care. Both Algerian and Moroccan states subsidize the price of staples like flour and powdered milk, but many areas still experience deficiencies in electricity and even water supply. Consequently, I have seen whole apartment blocks in Oran mobilized with buckets and hoses to bring water from one functioning standpipe to all its residents. Likewise it has been common for such blocks to share access to satellite television dishes, spreading the cost of the equipment and deciding democratically which stations they wish to access. (See also Hadj-Moussa 2003, for a description of such arrangements.)

So for very pragmatic reasons North African communities have a strong local sense of identity, of self-regulation and interdependence and these cultural values appear to be important, if not always strictly maintained, by émigré Maghrebis around the world. Conceptually then,

the home is considered a feminine space (as discussed, amongst others, by both Bouchara-Zannad and Virolle 1989). According to traditional design, both rural and urban houses are built around courtyards, providing shade in the summer months and space for family gatherings, but which also afford privacy and security within the home. Narrow alleys between houses allow and control, access in the older cities and though newer developments provide roads for vehicles, much the same principles are applied to domestic architecture. Small barred windows face public space, whilst the inside is often open, leafy and colorful.⁴ By this same binary logic, public space within a quarter tends to be a male domain of negotiation, association and commerce—a protective barrier around the home. Beyond the quarter and beyond the houma, are areas of danger, immorality and adventure.

Music

Music has had an interesting role in both marking and transgressing the boundaries of this moral universe, not least because in many Islamic societies music itself has strong moral connotations.⁵ Because the limits of male and female space are so sharply defined, certain musics can be found in North Africa that are almost uniquely associated with women, their domestic contexts and with the “folk” forms of religious practice they are more likely than men to be involved with.⁶ Female musicians, some semi-professional, play *b'nader* (plural of *bender*—a large-frame drum strung with gut snares) and sing songs to accompany visits to local shrines, pre-wedding parties and other life-cycle events. Some of these *medahatte* performances (particularly those taking place before weddings) reputedly include sexually suggestive songs and dances, though the repertoire also contains love songs and others drawn from popular maraboutic Islam.⁷

Music associated primarily with men can also fall into the categories of sacred or profane. Sufi musical practices are tolerated by orthodox Islam, in fact the two overlap and in some important areas, but rarely do they receive official approval. Through a variety of ascetic disciplines, often involving music and lengthy ritual, men seek psychic unity with Allah. Although the techniques of each sufi brotherhood are distinct, each following the example of their founding shaykh, they differ in important ways from women's ecstatic practices, with which, in keeping with other social practices, they never mix.

Perhaps precisely because of the tension existing between male and female cultural domains, the nightclubs, bars and “hotels,” where these barriers are relaxed, constitute a moral space at the opposite end of the spectrum from sufi practices. Correspondingly, these clubs tend to be situated outside residential areas—in the basements of hotels on the edge of town or, as in Oran, in small resorts some way along the coast from the city. *Rai* music is typical of this niche in Algeria and eastern Morocco, but various forms of *cha'abi* fill an identical role elsewhere in the region.⁸ Until the 1990s *rai* songs sometimes contained fairly explicit references to alcohol, hashish and sex and though these themes are now rare, the performance context itself continues to evoke these connotations. Men who can afford to are free to visit nightclubs, where they can drink, dance and meet women beyond the surveillance of their own neighborhood and without trespassing in anyone else's houma. No woman caring for her reputation would be seen anywhere near these clubs, as they are associated with prostitution.

So in principle there is a clear distinction, at times a conflict, between moral conceptions of the home and the outside world and this maintains community boundaries, the privileged status of older men and networks of control within it. Interestingly, the one context in which these moral domains are allowed to merge is during weddings, when *rai* and *cha'abi* musicians are brought into the heart of the community to enable dancing and celebration. Naturally the texts of the songs are almost entirely innocuous in these circumstances, but the very fact of this notorious music being performed within the houma contributes to the excitement of the event. Very often the bride will come from outside the immediate neighborhood and traditionally she is brought to the groom's household in procession. In some cases this takes place on foot, accompanied by musicians, but more often this procession involves lines of noisy, decorated cars, with a percussion band playing in the back of a pickup.⁹

In effect this exuberant display of change of status involves an inversion of the moral gravity that normally applies to the houma. It dramatically marks a transition in the lives of the couple, establishing publicly the new rights and responsibilities that are to prevail from then on. It does so in part by invoking the dangerous and sexualized domain that is normally kept well outside the community, bringing the “outside” in and rendering the forbidden visible. Naturally it does so in a highly controlled form. For fear of unruly behavior, young people from different neighborhoods are rarely left unsupervised by responsible adults, public drinking is not permitted and songs never become too risqué.

Nevertheless dancing does usually carry on till the early hours of the morning and for a short time many normative boundaries are let down.

This catalytic role of music and musicians is far from unique to this situation. The rwaifs musicians of the Atlas mountains perform a very similar symbolic role (see Schuyler 1985) as do the Roma wedding musicians of the Balkans (Buchanan 1996). In each of these cases it is not simply a matter of needing music to dance to, as a recording could provide this. And as many dance musics are without words, or at least without words that are in themselves very meaningful, I would argue that it is not the explicit content so much as the music's associations which excite the imagination of the audience. Although such contexts are inevitably unique and complex, I suggest that it is often the physical presence of morally suspect "outsiders" themselves, in the center of the most tender space in the community, that stimulates such an affective response. It is this pinch of "profanity" that allows this stylized brush with chaos and pretty soon, in keeping with familiar descriptions of *communitas*, the reestablishment of familiar social structures.¹⁰

Boundaries and Modern Media

So far I have sought to demonstrate a principle by presenting a simplified model of the relations existing between urban spaces, music and moral concepts. Although I am satisfied that such a notional model still exerts influence upon North African social practices, contemporary lifestyles present challenges to the operation of this principle. Electronic media in particular allow recorded or broadcast material to be accessed in increasingly unpredictable and uncontrollable contexts. In some respects this has brought about a transgression of moral boundaries—not only within the community but also at a transcultural level. This section of the chapter will outline developments in electronic media in Algeria and Morocco and it will be followed by a discussion of the consequences of these changes.

Radio and television have been popular sources of information and entertainment in North Africa since they were made available. Gramophone recordings of music, whether indigenous, from the eastern Arab world or Europe, have been a part of everyday life since early in the last century. Up until fairly recently, however, these media were easily controlled by governments and/or international record companies. Given that vinyl record production requires expensive pressing facto-

ries, and TV and radio broadcasts an even heavier investment, it is clear that powerful institutions would have the biggest influence on their output. In the 1960s the newly independent countries of North Africa employed these resources to develop a new sense of national identity that coherently marked a departure from the culture of preceding colonial regimes.

This nation-building imperative, combined with a centralized technological infrastructure guaranteed that many of the diverse musics that existed in North Africa went unrecorded. At the time they were considered unsophisticated, too coarse, or they were only thought to appeal to a minority regional market in a period where cultural unity was privileged. The favored indigenous recordings through the 1960s and early '70s were chosen to reflect positive aspects of national cultures; for example, the "classical" Andalus schools or the related Moroccan *melhoun* and Algerian *hawzi* traditions.¹¹

In this postcolonial context, it is understandable that these genres, which are clearly non-European but nevertheless with the aura of a distant "golden age," should have been given elevated status. Andalus was promoted in schools, urban conservatories and broadcast on state television and radio broadcasts, particularly at times (such as the anniversary of the king of Morocco's coronation) when a sense of national solidarity is invoked. Such top-down efforts to influence taste are, however, seldom completely effective and on the whole it has been the educated middleclasses who have identified most with Andalus. In the 1960s, Algeria's generally ill-fated adaptation of Eastern-bloc socialism only rendered the cultural diet more monotonous and of course people did not adopt these musics en masse but listened instead to live local musics, to Jacques Brel and the Beatles.

Between independence and the 1980s many social and political changes had taken place in North Africa. Enthusiasms for socialism, pan-Arabism and pan-Africanism had dimmed with the experience of economic realities and ineffective management. The single-party states that dominated Tunisia and Algeria were facing widespread criticism, and attempts had even been made on the life of the king of Morocco. Significantly, the migration route to Europe was rapidly closing, leaving expanding young populations with nowhere outside their countries to improve their circumstances.

In the late 1970s, in the midst of this growing political pressure, cassette production technology arrived in North African cities. Equipment was cheap and small and although sound quality was poor, it became possible to record a song one week and buy it on street corners the next, without any government control whatsoever. Very soon, *raï*

music from the nightclubs of Oran and Oujda, replete with local slang, current in-jokes, suggestive imagery and bearing immoral associations, was on the streets, in cars and, very soon, in homes. This posed a challenge not only to the authority of the Algerian state but to the innocence of domestic space and for some time was a matter of considerable public concern (see Daoudi and Milliani 1996). To those who promoted high moral "national culture," *raï* was the worst of all combinations. Its vernacular was highly local yet modernized with foreign electric instruments. Based upon a very low form of entertainment to begin with, many songs were derived from women's "folk" Islam, whilst others referred to sex, drink and hopelessness. Even worse, these were performed in *derija*, a colloquial form of Arabic spattered with foreign and Berber words, a language which is considered far from the ideal *fs'ha* or classical forms. As Frank Tenaille (2002) suggests, this was a bastardized form of music, devoid of the heritage and refined, poetic expression of Andalus.

After initial and ineffective attempts to ban the music, the Algerian government eventually allowed a much tamer version of *raï* to be broadcast on state television and radio.¹² This was partly because legitimizing the music meant it could be taxed and also because the government was by then under pressure from Islamic reform movements and hoped to present a more liberal face to the country's disaffected youth. Domestically, *raï* had a similar impact, as family patriarchs attempted, often in vain, to ban cassettes from the house. Algerian men I knew were sometimes embarrassed when I noted the *raï* cassettes they held in their collection. Though many admitted to enjoying some of the music, they would not dream of listening to it in the presence of their elders or sisters. Girls often had to listen to cassettes secretly then, and even after the songs gradually became more acceptably sentimentale in the 1990s, the genre's dubious associations remained. Eventually the more outspoken singers left the country to work abroad and domestic *raï* focused on increasingly romantic themes, though still with a fatalistic, despondent tone. Despite these changes, young women in particular were discouraged from listening *openly* to certain songs and always turned the music off when older men entered the house. If the man was their father or an elder brother they may have been reprimanded; if it were a stranger, association with the music may well have formed a bad impression of her character, something which unmarried women avoided at all costs. During this decade, the growth of militant Islamic movements in Algeria rendered *raï* even more controversial and the "toning down" of the songs may have well been a response to this new situation.¹³

Though consumption practices continue to be shaped by domestic norms, more recent technological developments have further deregulated *access* to musics of all kinds. Many "record shops" now use the Internet and computer hardware to download music and "burn" compact discs for their customers. On a recent visit to a shop in Morocco, the proprietor could provide me with a CD containing a personalized mixture of local musical genres, all selected from a vast playlist on his computer. Every kind of music from North Africa, including those in minority Berber languages, were available, so reflecting and accommodating the ethnic mix of the region. Although, I was told, he could also provide Western musics on request, this would take longer as he had to download the album from the web. The demand for Western pop music was so small that very little was kept in stock, even on the computer's hard drive. Given the scale of the unofficial economy in both Algeria and Morocco it is not in the least surprising that such "piracy" abounds, though it will be interesting to see how this affects the local music business. As even with cassette technology, musicians' work was routinely copied without payment, it is possible that they consider wide exposure more beneficial to their performing careers than royalties.

La Parabole: An International Context

Since the 1990s, widespread access to satellite television (*la parabole*) has had an enormous influence upon the consumption of all kinds of information, including music. However, because the overwhelming preference remains for indigenous genres and Arabic language pop songs, the most significant impacts of this development have been in the areas of current affairs and entertainment programming.¹⁴ As these clearly have a bearing upon the construction of a moral of community, I will briefly outline them here.

In order to understand the importance of global media in the area of current affairs, one should know that in North African countries it is never wise and not always possible, to openly criticize the government. In principle Algeria enjoys freedom of speech, but many journalists and editors have been intimidated or killed during the last decade of political strife and it is seldom clear which political factions have been responsible. Only fairly recently has Morocco adopted a more relaxed media policy, though many topics still remain taboo. Despite growing political cynicism, television news tended to reflect government perspectives until at least the 1990s. With the advent of satellite broad-

casts, North Africans were suddenly able to access alternative versions of news about their own country, about Middle Eastern issues and "The West." Although these perspectives were not necessarily more credible than domestic news, viewers became sophisticated readers of the media, comparing reports from Gulf Arabic and French stations to their own national networks.¹⁵

Unlike other Islamic countries it was never feasible for governments to ban reception of these broadcasts. The black economies in both Algeria and Morocco are so pervasive that attempts to regulate the medium would be hopeless—and early attempts to do so, as in Fes in 1991, contributed to outbreaks of serious rioting. Instead, both governments attempted to turn the matter to their advantage, presenting a liberal government face whilst imposing a duty on reception equipment. Public interest in international affairs (such as the intifada or the Gulf wars) also served to attract attention away from contentious issues closer to home. I have come across the view several times in both Algeria and Morocco that their respective government was irresponsible in allowing access to satellite broadcasting; it was reckless to put such temptation in people's way. Interestingly, such commentators tended to justify their views by expressing concern for the morality of women and children at home, regardless of the material they watched themselves. By opting for a liberal approach, governments placed responsibility for regulation directly upon the consumers, that is, the family and thus gained revenue in sales tax without being liable for the content. In fact, most subscription channels are "cracked," that is, the code that enables access is used illegally, so the use of immoral material is clearly deliberate and unapproved by the authorities.

Broadly speaking I have found that men and women tend to watch different kinds of television, especially during early evenings, when most women are at home but men socialize elsewhere. At cafés, which are primarily a male domain in North Africa, satellite televisions are ubiquitous and likely to be showing current affairs or sports channels. The women of a household seem to prefer soap operas and films.¹⁶ National news programs, however, tend to be fairly popular with everyone and viewers will switch from other formats to the local service for hourly or evening bulletins.

VCDs

An area of considerable recent growth in the areas of media consump-

tion is that of video compact discs, or VCDs. These discs contain visual material, such as films or music videos, using the most basic technology available.¹⁷ Compared to DVDs these discs tend to be of poor visual quality, with none of the supplementary "features" and viewing options available on this medium. They are nevertheless very simple to produce and can be played on a range of different formats, from computers to cheap VCD players. In 2004 these discs cost fourteen Moroccan Dirham (the equivalent of £1 sterling). The visual material contained on VCDs includes the latest Hollywood films, kung fu movies from Hong Kong and Indian Bollywood productions. Such a large proportion of these discs, however, feature performances by local musicians. Some have been copied directly from national or satellite television, though many appear to have been produced by the musicians themselves as a musical/visual product in their own right. Though the production quality of VCDs is variable, a wide range of musical styles can be found on sale at market stalls, making diverse regional genres available to both rural and urban audiences. Most music VCDs are considered to be acceptable for family viewing, but as they are largely watched inside the home are, in practice, more likely to be used by women than by men.

Some of the more remarkable discs, from the ethnographic point of view, feature 'ripped' visuals from popular films and music videos, to which Moroccan popular songs have been overdubbed. One example shows Michael Jackson and the characters from *Shrek* dancing in time to *cha'abi* songs; others employ dance routines from Indian films or Disney's *The Jungle Book*. From the lively response these performances receive when played at street kiosks, the ironic juxtaposition of music and visuals is clearly found to be amusing. The objectives here may be simple entertainment rather than political satire, but nevertheless this illustrates both the creative use of affordable digital technologies and a decidedly local response to global media. Just as 1970s rai employed cheap cassette technology to combine traditional and international musical styles, so contemporary "pirates" are cutting and mixing digital material in ways which are both imaginative and unpredictable.

Consequences and Negotiations

As I have suggested already, North Africans have become sophisticated users and readers of the media over the last twenty years. Unlike typical

consumption patterns in Europe, North African paraboles are regularly turned to foreign language satellites and so in many respects may access a wider range of cultural perspectives than the average Western viewer. As women's literacy rates are not high, especially in rural areas, one might have expected that this new access to all kinds of information might have brought about significant changes in social attitudes. In fact its impact has been more subtle, partly because patterns of media consumption are themselves influenced by gendered tastes and the notion of the *houma*.

To take an example, the Al Jazeera Arabic language news service is very popular in cafes and its very graphic, daily coverage of conflicts in Israel and Baghdad inevitably present these as cultural "front lines" with "the West" in a general sense and with America in particular. However, even where families have their own satellite television access, Al Jazeera seems to be less popular in the home, possibly because its content is not considered suitable for the domestic environment. So the tendency for men to watch sports and current affairs programs with their friends in a public space is consistent with other discourses relating to masculinity and the "wider world." At home women prefer to watch films, VCDs and Egyptian dramatic serials, frequently relating to more emotional, psychological and interpersonal relationships. So just as there remains a conceptual distinction between male/public and female/domestic space, so tastes also tend to reflect gender-based preferences.¹⁸

Given my original proposal that the *houma* is conceptually a space of moral virtue, how is it that the introduction of thoroughly worldly material, both visual and musical, has not brought about a crisis of core discourses?

Firstly I would suggest that these notional structures are still so central to social life that they are maintained by a certain degree of mutual sleight of hand. So long as women remain physically in the home environment, especially at night and perform the domestic roles required of them, then men turn a blind eye to what they watch or listen to. In order to make this possible, women often change the station or CD when men return home at night. Perhaps new pressures have been placed upon normative structures of morality and gender, but this does not change the fact that most women remain largely dependent upon their husbands and fathers, not only for resources, but for a social identity in the community. A man's own good standing in the *houma* depends in turn upon a successful performance of maintaining appropriate boundaries. So long as indiscretions are not visible this status is not threatened. The outside "immoral" world can be *viewed* from the secu-

rity of the home, but it is not in the interests of men or women to allow this to challenge the status quo.

Secondly, to both male and female audiences, the "outside world" remains a distant place which is viewed through a highly local prism. A minority of individuals have firsthand experience of Europe, the United States or even other Muslim countries, so foreign soap operas and Al Jazeera alike create exotic worlds of drama, sexuality and violence that are more mythical than real.¹⁹ Whatever the rhetoric about the influence of media upon morality, all parties understand that there is a huge difference between a recording of a *rai* singer and his physical presence. To take another musical example, in the appropriate context, a maraboutic musician may cause fainting fits amongst his female listeners—this simply does not happen with recordings of the same music. Likewise, although men in North African cafes enjoy discussing international politics and the (usually inferior) cultural attitudes of others, these remain largely theoretical debates. Viewers may become incensed about the Gulf War or the Gaza Strip but very rarely encounter material that criticizes their own governments, either on local or international channels. As perceived through the local optic, "the West" constitutes at best an amoral "other," and this is demonstrated by its own media to be manifestly materialistic, murderous and sex-obsessed. It is also a world with which North Africans have little close engagement. On the other hand, debate within the domestic public sphere is limited, suggesting perhaps that, as with the domestic status quo, a close inspection might threaten the credibility of value systems that are too cherished to put at risk.

Whilst local media do not broach thornier issues (which become instead the subject of extensive rumors), they are nonetheless enabling much greater awareness of the ethnic variation existing *within* North African countries. Nation-building involves the consolidation and promotion of core cultural elements and, in Algeria, this has meant subsuming regional ethnic differences into a single national identity. As serious friction with Berbers from the Kabyle region has demonstrated, this process of homogenization has not been without its critics. Throughout the region, access to cheap recording technologies has enabled minority cultural perspectives to be expressed in music and regional languages despite government programs of "Arabization." At the time of this writing, both Moroccan and Algerian governments appear to have made concessions to these interests, allowing broadcasts of regional musics on national radio and television and most importantly, the local use of Berber languages in state education. Each Saturday evening Moroccans watch musical performances from different parts of

the country, performed in languages and styles which often sound more exotic than Western music. This fairly recent acknowledgement and acceptance of internal cultural diversity is a departure from previous attitudes and through broadcast media will inevitably influence the ways in which citizens formulate notions of the state and their relationships with "others," both inside *and* out.

Notes

1. It can be argued that the concept of *houma* has different significance between generations; that it represents parental values which are not shared by young people today. I would suggest that such changes are in no small part due to the transgressive influence of modern media, but that contemporary attitudes are formed in relation to inherited moral values. I am grateful for conversations with Becky Schulthies, of the University of Arizona, which have contributed to my understanding of this and related issues.

2. A subject described by Susan Schaeffer-Davis in her book, *Patience and Power* (1983).

3. Such moral boundaries are not merely sustained through a culture of surveillance but are also supported by commonly held supernatural beliefs including the "evil eye" (*el ain*) of strangers and possession by spirits (*djinn*), both of which are considered more likely when alone in unfamiliar or public spaces. Thus complementary institutions control the social use of time as well as space.

4. Gilsenan's (1990) discussion of the structure and use of domestic architecture in Lebanon bears useful comparison with North African arrangements. Bourdieu's early work on Algeria (1977) considers the change in habitus brought about by the introduction of Western industrial practices to primarily agrarian, kin-oriented North African society.

5. See Rouget (1985) and Al Faruqi (1985) for elaboration on the theme of music's inherent morality. Rouget argues that it is as much the way of listening as the music itself which renders it sacred or profane. Al Faruqi summarizes the legal distinctions made between music that encourage virtue or sensuality.

6. Langlois (1999) discusses the religio-musical practices of Moroccan women. Maraboutic Islam privileges the role of saintly lineages. Charismatic individuals claim descent and often supernatural powers, from an ancestral holy personage, whose shrine they often maintain. For female adherents, practice typically entails offering gifts at shrines

for intercession and ecstatic rituals. See also Gellner's (1969) *The Saints of the Atlas*.

7. The songs of Umm Kulthum and other classic *sharqi* (Eastern) singers are also highly esteemed, but these are difficult for amateurs to sing and are most popular as recordings.

8. *Rai* music is most associated with Oran, where it developed from a rural wedding genre, to an entertainment in the bars of Colonial Algeria, to an eclectic "world music" within a few decades. *Cha'abi* is a generic term for indigenous popular musics throughout North Africa. Moroccan *cha'abi* is musically distinctive and is the mainstay of both urban nightclubs and radio broadcasts. Amongst several excellent books on *rai*, its songs, history and original social setting, I would recommend, Virolle-Souibes (1995), Schade-Poulson (1999), Tenaille (2002) and Daoudi and Milliani (1996). For a discussion of *rai*'s negotiation of global and local influences see Langlois (1996).

9. Different musics may be employed for particular aspects of a wedding. Whist *rai* or *cha'abi* remain the preference for dance parties, acoustic percussion ensembles, occasionally accompanied by trumpet or *ghraita* (oboe) and sometimes in the style of maraboutic *g'nawa* troupes, are common for processional aspects of the event.

10. See Victor Turner (1969) for his classic anthropological understanding of the dynamics of social structure.

11. The Andalus tradition, supposedly derived from the courts of the Islamic Spanish caliphate, had a complex history, including use in both Sufi and "nightclub" contexts, before being appropriated as a privileged genre by independence movements in Algeria and Morocco. With political autonomy Andalus schools (of which there are four distinct traditions) filled the niche previously occupied by Western classical musics and in some cases European techniques for learning and performance were also applied to the genre. See Ruth Davis (1997) for a study of such developments in Tunisian *ma'luf* (the local form of Andalus). For more detailed description of these genres, refer to Guettat (1980) and Poche (1995).

12. It proved impossible to ban *rai* for three reasons. Firstly it was very popular locally and production knitted well with the already highly developed black market in Algeria. Secondly, the music was also produced and broadcast a few miles across the border in Morocco, where it wasn't perceived as a threat to their national identity. Thirdly, the recordings were quickly picked up by expatriate North African communities in Europe and America, finally reaching the mainstream "world music" market. For a useful comparison with the impact of re-

cording technology on India, see Peter Manuel's *Cassette Culture* (1993).

13. Many raï singers were intimidated and several key figures in the scene assassinated, but the music industry in Oran, like the black economy generally, managed to adapt to and survive the political turmoil afflicting the nation.

14. Music-video channels are very popular domestic viewing, though the bulk of the Arabic language programming comes from Egypt. The production quality of this visual material is high and videos often take a narrative form, adding a story line to the theme of the song. Few locally produced music videos are as sophisticated and they never appear on Egyptian channels, yet if radio play is an indication of national preferences, they are much more popular. MTV, which in the early 1990s attracted considerable attention in cafes, seems to be much less popular than Levantine satellite channels, though it is hard to know if this is because of its visual or musical content.

15. During the 1990s, Algerians often came across more informative news about their own country on French-language stations than on their national networks. This caused considerable discussion, as viewers were aggrieved by critical representations of Algeria, especially when originating from an ex-colonial power. At the same time, video and audio cassettes were also in circulation which promoted distinctly anti-Western and antigovernment sentiments. Faced with such contradictory information (supplemented by a lively rumor mill) many Algerians I knew at the time gave credence to very little they heard or saw.

16. Hannah Davis (1989) provides a valuable description of Moroccan women's local interpretation of global television programs and the role of Egyptian TV dramas in structuring domestic narratives is considered by both Abu-Lughod (2002) and Armbrust (1996).

17. VCDs are simply compact discs which use MPEG 1 compression to store up to eighty minutes of visual and audio information. The quality of a good VCD is comparable to that of a VHS, but most are slightly more blurred, especially when already copied from a television broadcast. Sound quality, however, is good and as output can be directed to domestic stereo equipment, this medium has become a popular means of consuming music within the home.

18. These programs are shown around 1pm, when families are often resting following their midday meal and in the early evening, when men are most likely to be outside the home. Abu-Lughod (2002) and Armbrust (1996) both discuss the impact of these series upon domestic discourse in Egypt itself. In Morocco and Algeria these moral tales, told in perhaps twenty daily episodes, are extremely popular and are

broadcast on national (terrestrial) stations. Other significant imports include soap operas from South America and Spain, though these are not shown at peak viewing times. The suggestive content of some Mexican soaps in 2003 raised public concerns about moral values, but although it is certainly possible to regulate domestic transmissions, the range of different media currently available have made banning almost impossible at the national level.

19. Hannah Davis (1989) elegantly describes ways in which Moroccan women "read" Western soap operas in terms of local beliefs and values. I have found that Western presentations of romantic love are popular amongst North Africans. Movement away from extended family control is attractive and supports desire to marry maghrebis who are European passport holders.

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