

The Lost Paradise: Andalusí Music in Urban North Africa. Jonathan Glasser, 2016. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 10 figures b & w, bibliography, index, 319 pp.

By reconsidering the notion of memory, repertoire and the historical narratives of various culture bearers during the colonial and postcolonial period in Algeria, Glasser offers a remarkable study on the revival of Andalusí music. The book is divided into two main sections: the musicological and sociological aspects of Andalusí music; and the different forms of revitalising Andalusí music as experienced by musicians, listeners, musical associations and the national politics of patrimony. Further, the book offers a historical understanding on the origins of Andalusí music in which Zyriab (musician from Bagdad) in the ninth century in Cordoba (Spain) is the main character. The book provides a considerable number of musical terms for the richer understanding of the musical inflections occurring during the performance of this particular musical genre. In doing so, Glasser connects the musical understanding of Andalusí music with other Algerian popular and contemporary musical styles such as *chaabi* or *rai*. The book employs different research approaches ranging from the phenomenological to historical and sociological accounts of the representation of Andalusí music in Algeria or North Africa. Although Glasser mentions most of the musical terms that appear in Andalusí music during the first part of the book, the book does not offer an in-depth musicological understanding of this particular musical genre.

In the Introduction, the book explains that the notion of revivalism in Andalusí music is not an objective but a discursive construction in Algerian historiography, present in the building of its postcolonial nationhood through the *tadwin* (different forms of documentation such as films, recordings, songbooks, and so on) (7). In Chapter One, Glasser offers a general understanding of the different narratives of Andalusí music from Spain, Morocco and Algeria. Glasser points out that the different narratives on Andalusí music offers a distinctive historical fracture from the times of Zyriab at around 850AD (as the founder of Andalusí music based on the twenty four *noubat* musical and poetic modal system) to its revival in Algeria from the nineteenth century onwards. He argues that the revitalisation of Andalusí music emerges as an orientalist discourse and as cultural awareness (33). Chapter Two examines the symbiotic relationship between the musician and the listener. This chapter describes how the musician and the listener are valued by their knowledge of the repertoire rather than by its virtuosity. Thus, for different social classes the notion of the *nouba* becomes a conversational revival of the past (57). As an example, Glasser mentions how Cheikh Larbi Bensari, who was trained as a barber, turned from being a *mulu* (listener) to *cheickh* (musician and knowledge keeper) (58). Bensari's descendants became part of a patrilineage of *nouba* aficionados and listeners. In Glasser's words, "the Andalusí repertoire constitutes a polymorphous capital that may be converted into money for professionals and into nonmonetary prestige for nonprofessional masters or collectors" (70). Chapter Three examines the musical aspects of the *nouba* in two distinctive phases: *thakil* (heavy) and *khafif* (light). *Thakil* is composed of three movements (*msaddar*, *btayhi* and *darj*) and the *khafif* of two movements (*insiraf* and *khlas*). These five sections are "the central building block

of the *nouba*" (96). This chapter includes a discussion of the different musical terms such as *mshalaya* (unmetered instrumental prelude) or *tushiyya* (metered overture), among other concepts, that enrich the *thakil* and *khafif*.

In Part Two, Glasser analyses the different forms through which the *nouba* is sustained and revitalised. This process unfolds through an analysis of songbooks, associations and the politics of patrimony after Algerian independence from France in 1962. Chapter Four examines the different forms of revitalising the *nouba* repertoire during the colonial period. It describes the different forms of orientalism applied by early European scholars on Andalusi music. As an example, Glasser mentions the interest in Andalusi music during the Congress of Orientalists (119) or the *exposition d'art musulman* in Paris in 1893. This chapter cites the interest of certain international aficionados who conducted a comparative study on the *nouba*. Among these admirers were Constantin Sonek (128) or Francisco Salvador Daniel's comparative study of Arab music and Greek chants in 1862. Glasser points out the multiple publications on Andalusi music which served as evidence of the emerging relationship between orientalists and local masters in 1904. An example is the relationship between an Algerian such as Boulifa and the French protectorate of the Saint-Smitonian colonial military in 1904. Bouali's relationship with the French resulted in his visit to Tangier and more publications about the *nouba* (132). By quoting Bouali, Glasser shows how Bouali links the colonial with local narratives in the revival of the *nouba* (133).

Further, Glasser emphasises how Bouali predicted the renaissance of Arabic language in the *Nouba*. Orientalists and local scholars would realise a mutual interest in this renaissance. As a result of the relationship between the colonist and the colonised in the study of Andalusi music, Glasser mentions that one of the most remarkable publications of the "1904 boom of Andalusi music" is Yafil's *Majmu* or *Diwan* which "reproduces song texts of fourteen nubat considered part of the Algerian tradition" (134). Later, this chapter notes that "The Orchestre Rouanet et Yafil" which became El Moutribia was, "the first amateur association devoted to Andalusi music in North Africa" in around 1912 (139). Glasser emphasises that for European scholars the revival of the *nouba* represented a form of orientalism whereas for local scholars the renaissance of the *nouba* represented a form of national consciousness (141). Glasser also notes that the multiple interpretations of the *nouba* were observed by others such as "settlers, Muslims and Jewish Algerians, European scholars, traditionalists, modernists and the many who fall in between" (143).

Chapter Five describes how Yafil's publications became the canon for teaching the *noubat* in many places in Algeria. There is a standardisation of the repertoire as a result of Yafil's publications. Chapter Five includes a discussion of the later publications by the Ministry of Culture in 2011, of songbooks by Bekhoucha and Sekkal (152) and recent compilations of the revival of the *noubat* from Tlemcen, Algiers and Constantine (157), that became the canon for building the repertoire of the *noubat*. Chapter Six recounts the importance of associative movements such as El Moutribia, El Andaloussia (Jewish majority) and El Djazairia (185) for the revival of the *noubat* in Algeria. The author

observes that by the mid-1930s the musical associations of Andalusí music were well established in many cities in North Africa (Tlemcen, Blida, Bone, Tunis, Oujda) (191). After Algerian independence in 1962, Andalusí music became part of the national patrimony by being organised for events of the new government. An example of such an event is the Festival de Musique Classique Algerienne held during December 1967 to January 1968 (196). Glasser notes that after independence Andalusí music had been promoted nationally in scholarly discussions, competitions or national events. Lastly, Chapter Seven reconsiders the notion of patrimony in postcolonial nationhood by analysing the political agenda of Benhamida's government and its predecessors for the cultural revolution based on the patrimony of Andalusí music. Glasser notes how the musical associations of Andalusí music engage with new performances such as El Moutribia's theatrical experiments, which became a form of social criticism towards the government's use of the *noubat* (208). Further, Glasser mentions how the Algerian government proposes ways of reviving Andalusí music by excluding groups with Jewish majorities, the promotion of old instruments (rabab, qanun), a supervisor to direct music associations towards a classical repertoire and the introduction of Moroccan teachers to introduce new *noubats* in the Algerian repertoire (215). Glasser observes that the government controls the production of Andalusí music, seeking the "purity of the repertoire" and the need for submissive musicians for the completion of the state's cultural project. Although the governmental use of Andalusí music is interested in linking precolonial, colonial and colonial narratives for strengthening the notion of nationhood in the postcolony, Glasser shows how the notion of Andalusí music becomes a multi-layered and discursive construction of colonial and postcolonial tropes.

This book offers a valuable reconsideration on the interaction between participants and observers in the continuation of Andalusí music. Given the semiotic interaction between music, historiography and society in Glasser's book, this book will be relevant for Anthropology, Ethnomusicology and interdisciplinary studies in the Humanities. From a musicological point of view, the book does not offer a clear understanding of the *noubats* although Glasser provides references for musicians interested in learning Andalusí music. In a broader sense, the book will be of interest to scholars with an interest in the role of musical revivalism and postcolonial studies in North Africa.

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