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music, trance, and affect in popular Islam

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ALGERIAN DĪWĀN OF SĪDĪ BILĀL:
MUSIC, TRANCE, AND AFFECT IN POPULAR ISLAM

Tamara Dee Turner
ABSTRACT

Algerian dīwān (lit. ‘assembly’) is a healing, musico-ritual tradition that originated out of the trans-Saharan slave trade and coalesced through the segregation of these displaced sub-Saharan populations in present day Algeria who, under three centuries of Ottoman rule, were heavily influenced by the local, popular religious practices and socio-political organisation of Sufi lineages. Subsequently, dīwān gradually developed into a syncretic Afro-Maghrebi ritual practice predicated on many of the same structures of other musical traditions within popular Islam: saint veneration, trance, and musically generated ritual healing.

Dīwān ritual today is considered by its practicants to belong to the family of Sufi ṭuruq, providing divine transcendence of human suffering and functioning, quite practically, as mental-emotional healthcare. What makes both of these processes possible is the ritual labouring of music. The most broadly applicable utility of music in dīwān is its ability to create community feeling or ‘social warmth’—ḥāl. With dīwān music creating the critical ambience of ideal ḥāl, adepts suffering from psychological distress and/or physical pain are then triggered into varying states of trance by personal associations with musical mottoes that intensify their bodily sensoria, thus igniting a process that obliges these adepts to physically move these sensoria. By rendering private suffering public, this ability of dīwān to musically trigger and release pain means that it establishes the sufferer's place in a wider network of relations including the religious community and the supernatural world of Islam. Subsequently, social relationships are reconfigured as the community cares for the suffering of others.

Being the first ethnomusicological study of dīwān, this thesis both documents and analyses musical and ritual practice while examining in detail the sensory and affective worlds of trance in dīwān to ultimately posit dīwān ritual worlds as emerging out of an affective epistemology.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements 5  
Notes on Language 8  

INTRODUCTION 9  

PART ONE: WHERE DĪWĀN HAS COME FROM 14  

Chapter 1: Political, Historical, and Intellectual Legacies 15  
   A. Historiographies of the Region 15  
   B. A Survey of Academic Inquiry into Trance 24  
   C. A Survey of Affect Theory: How Dīwān Challenges It 36  
   D. Researcher Positionality 43  

Chapter 2: The Emergence of Dīwān: the Afro-Maghribi Context 50  
   A. Trans-Saharan Caravans and Sufi Histories 50  
   B. The Afro-Maghribi Position 61  
   C. Dīwān’s Afro-Maghribi Musical Elements and Sensibilities 66  
      1. The Instruments and ‘Musicians’ 68  
      2. Make-up: Modes, Meter, and Compression 77  
      3. Styles of dīwān music 85  
      4. Structure of a Borj 90  
      6. Final Thoughts on Recent Dīwān Musical Status 119  

PART TWO: THE DĪWĀN LIFEWORLD 121  

Chapter 3: Epistemologies and Ontologies of Dīwān 123  
   A. Meriem’s Affliction 125  
   B. The Epistemologies of Agency, Affect, and Transmission 142  
   C. Affective Labour Systems in Dīwān 152  

Chapter 4: The Social Field of Trance 156  
   A. The Cultural Background of Ḥāl 156  
   B. How Ḥāl is Produced in Dīwān 161  
   C. Trance Types 168  
   D. Bodies and Movement 178  
   E. Care 183
PART THREE: TRANSMISSION: HOW DĪWĀN THRIVES, STRUGGLES, AND IS REPRODUCED 186

Chapter 5: Secret Knowledge 190
A. Secrets 192
   1. A Conversation with Moqed Jallūl Moṭam 195
   2. A Conversation with Shaykh ʿAbd el-Qādr Guellāl 203
   3. A Conversation with Mʿallem Tūfīq ʿAbd Es-Selam 211
B. Supernatural Involvement in Transmission 218
   1. Punishment if Transmission Codes Are Neglected 218
   2. Supernatural Contracts Between Human and Nonhuman Agents 219

Chapter 6: Family Lineages and Place 224
A. Oran and the Lineage of Majdūb 226
B. Saida Lineages 237
C. Mascara Lineages 245

Chapter 7: The Dīwān Festival of Bechar 251
A. Background of the Festival 252
B. Talking With Ritual Experts 256
C. The Rabbit Incident 264

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS 272

APPENDICES 278
   1) Notes on the Companion Website 279
   2) List of Figures, Tables, and Musical Examples 280
   3) Ṭreq Comparisons 283
   4) Ritual Action (Nashat) Table 291
   5) Glossary 297

BIBLIOGRAPHY 298
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Notes On Language

For Arabic transliteration in this thesis, I use the system of the International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies with some adaptations for Algerian dialect (*derija*). I will take exception to this system in a couple of ways. With place names, I will represent them as they would be recognised in English: for example, Oran rather than Wahrān, Saida rather than Saʿīda. Secondly, when a term is of unknown or non-Arabic origin, I will not use the above system, such as representing the song name Jamarkay rather than Jāmarkī. Particularly in the west of Algeria where I did most of my fieldwork, the hard g sound, like the hard g in English, often replaces the letter qaf. *Derija* occasionally replaces *alif* and the short vowel *fatḥa* with an ‘eh’ sound which will be represented as ē.
INTRODUCTION

Background on Dīwān and the State of Dīwān Scholarship

Algerian dīwān (lit. ‘assembly’) is a therapeutic, musico-ritual tradition that originated out of the trans-Saharan slave trade of sub-Saharan (sūdānī) populations such as Hausa, Fulani, Bambara, Bornu, Zozo, Songhay, and Gurma ethnolinguistic groups.¹ Dīwān coalesced through the segregation of these displaced sub-Saharan populations in present day Algeria who, under three centuries of Ottoman rule, were heavily influenced by the local, popular religious practices and socio-political organisation of Sufi lineages. Subsequently, dīwān gradually developed into a syncretic, Afro-Maghribi² ritual practice predicated on many of the same structures of other musical traditions within popular Islam: saint veneration, trance, and musically generated ritual healing.

Unlike its sister traditions, the Moroccan gnāwa and Tunisian stambēlī, Algerian dīwān has not yet attracted the attention of significant musical scholarship in any regard. The Moroccan gnāwa are well studied by anthropologists addressing ritual dynamics, psychology, cosmology (Kapchan 2007; Chlyeh 1998, 1999; Hell 1999; Baldassare 1999; Pâques 1991; Lapassade 1982), and musical analysis (Sum 2010; Fuson 2009) while in Tunisia, although scholars addressed Maghribi saint veneration, spirit possession, and ritual practice of sūdānī populations (Tremearne 1914; Dermenghem 1954; Pâques 1964; Lapassade 1982), very little was known about stambēlī musical practice until Richard Jankowsky’s articles (2004, 2007) and ethnography (2010). This thesis is the first to comprehensively and ethnographically document and analyse both the musical aspect of dīwān as well as elements of ritual and dynamics of trance.

John Bruyn Andrew’s small book, Seba’ Aioun (1903), is the oldest published account of dīwān in Algiers. While he provides a brief glimpse of the practices and beliefs of sub-Saharan (‘les soudanais’) in Algiers at the time, he sketched three vocal lines with words from the songs, ‘Overture des Haoussas,’ ‘Baba Inoua,’ and ‘Baba

¹ The term sūdānī references sub-Saharan Africa, or what was referred to historically as the Bilad es-Sūdān, Land of the Blacks.
² Also spelled ‘Maghreb’ in some literature. I will keep to the spelling found in certain literature cited, otherwise when referring to it myself, I use ‘Maghrib’ to reflect Arabic spelling and pronunciation.
Mouça’ (1903: 21) but these short sketches are not sufficient enough to provide an idea of aesthetics and trends. Viviana Pâques’s L’arbre Cosmique (1964) provides the greatest amount of detail on dīwān structure and symbolism but primarily by way of how they connect to other südānī traditions in North Africa as well as cultural practice south of the Sahara (such as Timbuktu). Emile Dermenghem provided a broad and ethnographically informed text on North African saint veneration and Sufi orders, Le Culte des Saints dans l’Islam Maghribin (1954), still considered today one of the most important documents on the region. His chapter on the Bilaliyya (black) brotherhoods of his time is unprecedented.

However, while both Dermenghem and Pâques noted general dynamics between the ginbrī (lute) and dancer, such as intensification of their exchanges at moments in the ritual, we have little sense of how any of these specific musical aesthetics might be mobilised to communicate with spirits or to engender or abate trance, the ultimate goal of dīwān. We get very little sense of any subject in these sources, of who these researchers were speaking to. Rather, both emphasise structuralist approaches over an ethnographic perspective. In addition, Dermenghem and George Lapassade’s Gens de l’Ombre (1982) describe dīwān ritual as observers but in each of these sources, the music itself receives little attention other than the note of instruments and their presence in ritual. Pâques makes note of the most important songs (brāj, pl; borj, sing) but, not having a musical ear, she fails to make important comparisons across dīwān groups who pronounce the names of songs or classify them differently.3 Little to nothing has been written on ginbrī melodies, their contour, nor ritual efficacy. Despite this, all four of the primary sources on dīwān (Andrews, Dermenghem, Pâques, and Lapassade) confirm that several distinct musical practices of dīwān existed at least up until the 1960s, often connected to their associated diyār (pl.; dār, sing.), communal houses that served as centers for the many different ethnolinguistic groups.

3 She often lists brāj by the first few words of the text and does not seem to recognise that the same borj is pronounced slightly differently from group to group so that, for example, what is today’s ‘Rima’ she sometimes calls ‘Yarima’ or ‘Arima’. I am mostly able to determine which brāj she is referencing and that are still in practice today based on phonetics of text and where they fall in the tartib (order) of most dīwān ṭuruq (ritual paths’) today. However, this is of course not fool proof. Based on the difficulty in obtaining such contextual information, one has to allow for a certain margin of error or misinformation in her case as well as Dermenghem’s.
Since Lapassade, two compact discs released in the mid-90s (Poché) and in 2000 (Lecomte) provide some sense of dīwān ritual music constituents, aesthetics, and song structure. However, having been recorded in dramatically different locations (Biskra and Mostaganem) more than twenty years apart, the recordings nevertheless leave wide gaps in knowledge, raising more questions than they answer. Except for Salim Khiat’s unpublished Master’s thesis in French written in the 2000s with a primary focus on the Algiers practice, academic scholarship on dīwān is sparse. More recently, on February 9, 2012, the Centre d’Études Maghrébines en Algérie (CEMA) research institute in Oran held a one-day panel specifically on dīwān, featuring three scholarly papers.

Recognising the large gaps in knowledge, this thesis—coming fifty-some years after the best documented dīwān practices of the 1950s and early 1960s—aims to first, act as a document of practice in the most active regions of Algeria: primarily the West. However, I traveled extensively, visiting as many of the main dīwān loci as possible, particularly those discussed in the main sources and including regions outside the scope of this thesis for reasons of space: Biskra, the Tuwat Oases (Adrar), Gourara (Timimoun and surrounding), Ouargla, and the Mzab Valley. Each of these regions features their own, unique practices with significant differences in repertoire to the ‘western’ Algerian body of dīwān music and practice. With this background knowledge, I sketch the broad scope of dīwān practice, to explore what makes dīwān cohesive, varied, and to consider what a 'big picture' of dīwān might be. Questions about the music of dīwān are not only crucial to the first stages of understanding how the music itself functions as an art form worthy of extensive study, but these questions are also necessary to tracing dynamic aesthetics relevant to North African studies in general, such as how musical traditions survive amongst dramatic political change and turmoil. Additionally, my research promotes the possibility for larger comparisons between dīwān, gnāwa, and sṭambēlī, towards the understanding of aesthetic family resemblances and the dynamics and continuities of healing music traditions in North Africa.

Most importantly, in counterpoint to the previous historical and structuralist approaches to dīwān, my aim is to provide a much-needed ethnographic approach to the

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4 Salim Khiat passed on a copy to me as a Word document in 2013 but there was no date on the document and I have been unable to confirm the exact date of its completion.
5 I do hope to publish on the ritual practice in these areas in the future.
practice, people, and epistemology of dīwān: one that focuses on the senses and feeling, and that attends to the sounds, smells, and ambience of ritual. Utilising anthropological participant-observation methodology, and considering ritual as a knowledge practice, this thesis is based on eighteen months of fieldwork in Algeria, including extensive video and audio documentation of dīwān rituals, music lessons, and interviews with ritual musicians, attendees, and adepts. In addition to comprehensive documentation and analysis, my research aims to contribute to the Humanities and Social Sciences by illustrating previously unexplored connections between trance, affects/sensoria, cultural conceptions of ‘health’, and musical labour. The current state of scholarship on Algerian dīwān, as outlined above, necessitates such an ethnomusicological approach that considers the interconnectivity of sociocultural, aesthetic, epistemological, and sonic worlds.

Structure of This Thesis

In Part One, I will deal with crucial background and contextual information that the reader requires in order to situate dīwān. I begin in Chapter One with the historiography of the region, moving on to a survey of the intellectual history of trance inquiry and affect theory—the two predominant academic legacies crucial to this thesis—followed by a discussion of my positionality in relation to these historical and intellectual legacies. In Chapter Two, I go into greater detail about the very particular trans-Saharan, Afro-Maghribi situation, including a detailed look at historical, linguistic, and musical/aesthetic connectivities and ruptures. As part of this Afro-Maghribi context, I then elaborate on the music compositional elements, detailing musical fundamentals (mode, groove, song structure) and the balance between fixed musical structure and individual creativity.

In Part Two, my goal is to attend to and illuminate the dīwān lifeworld. I do this first by featuring an in-depth ethnographic description of a trance event in Chapter Three. By then reflecting on this event, I detail the critical epistemological and ontological assumptions of this lifeworld that turn around a prioritisation of affect. From here, I explain the ways that humans engage with affect in overlapping systems of affective
labour, such as in the phenomenon of ḥāl in dīwān—an affective field of social warmth, the subject of Chapter Four. This is critical because it is with the labouring of ḥāl that everything else in dīwān ritual can or cannot emerge—crucially, trance. I then flesh out the rich taxonomy of local trance terminology, categories, and requirements of bodily movement and community care.

Part Three deals most explicitly with the dynamics of dīwān transmission, the variety of ways in which ‘traditional’ dīwān knowledge is learned and reproduced in a ‘modern’ lifeworld with very particular, ‘modern’ expectations around the transmission (sharing, circulation, consumption) of Algerian ‘culture’ and ‘music’. This part of the thesis is split up into three chapters as three thematic case studies that look at examples of dīwān experts negotiating the competing needs and expectations within the dynamics of transmission. Chapter Five deals first with the important discursive negotiation of secret knowledge that reveals complex understandings of what it means to be a dīwān ‘insider’ versus an ‘outsider’. Chapter Six attends to family lineages as structures of transmission where dīwān experts assert ownership over crucial aspects of dīwān knowledge. Chapter Seven details the state sponsored annual dīwān music festival for its goal of ‘preserving and protecting dīwān’ by staging it. In addition, the festival is revealing for its legibility of insider/outsider struggles, particularly around who has the authority and ability to represent, and thus transmit, ‘dīwān music’ on stage.

Finally, in the conclusion, I will first summarise the topography and assertions of this thesis. Then, reflecting on larger questions about the past, present, and future of dīwān transmission, I address the kinds of histories that are silent in my thesis and what I hope to have contributed.
PART ONE: WHERE DĪWĀN HAS COME FROM
CHAPTER ONE: POLITICAL, HISTORICAL, AND INTELLECTUAL LEGACIES

A. Historiographies of the Region

Over the last fifty-some years, two streams of Maghribi social analysis have been dominant: that of large-scale, long-term, top-down geopolitical assessments considering 'new state' development and secondly, self-reflexive, so-called 'bottom-up', post-structural anthropological approaches that allowed the region to be situated within wider questions of Muslim subjectivities but perhaps portraying the region as a 'symbolic background' (McDougall and Parks 2012: 632). More recently, in the wake of the Algerian revolution and independence in 1962, and with the growth of postcolonial studies and the centrality of Franz Fanon in critical theory, thinking about Algeria has extended towards culture, with more attention to literature, local discourse, language, and smaller-scale regional dynamics.

I want to start by situating the material of this thesis within these two conceptually separate and yet often overlapping legacies of academic knowledge production. The first legacy is that of the dominant frameworks: geopolitical, colonial, and post-colonial contexts, today often written within History and Political Science departments. The second legacy is that of anthropological and sociological knowledge production particularly on religion, trance, ritual, brotherhoods, or otherwise tight-knit, religious or spiritual community practices in North Africa. Because many of these sociological and anthropological endeavors emerged directly out of geopolitics and the French colonial project—not to mention shared academic epistemologies and kinds of inquiry that political scientists and historians also subscribed to—it will be clearest to chronologically connect these two strands of knowledge production below. In addition, while the majority of North African anthropological and sociological scholarship took place in and about Morocco, with less investigation in Algeria and Tunisia, there are common threads and connections across these spaces that lend towards broad understanding of this Francophone region. For example, what lessons the French gained regarding policy in Algeria were applied to their later conquest in Morocco (1912)(on
this issue pertaining to material of this thesis, see Amster 2013) just as anthropological and sociological research in Morocco influenced similar work in Algeria (notably Pâques 1964).

By situating my work within these legacies, I aim to give context to my positionality and biases—white, American, Western, privileged, female—while also prefacing my effort to write outside some of the deeply grooved scholarly routes in these worlds, particularly those pertaining to religious or occult practice. As well providing a glance at the intellectual inheritance of this thesis, the surveys of these academic legacies highlight the ways that academics have historically engaged with the region and its people and practices. In other words, the kinds of questions that generals, anthropologists, and historians were asking have, in some cases, influenced and impacted the way dīwān practicants, ritual experts, and adepts think about themselves and the way they imagine their pasts, presents, and futures.

From Regional Geopolitics to Individual Subjectivities

The history of ideas and thinking about Algeria as well as its place in wider North African, Mediterranean, and 'Arab world' regions are structured and influenced by a 'unit of analysis' problem (Brown 1997). While thinking about Algerian history in chronological, dynastic, or racial periods of Roman, Arab, Ottoman, French, Spanish, or Italian governance is problematic for the ways it obscures inter-structural political dynamics and fluidity, such an approach is so deeply embedded in the historical discourse (Le Gall and Perkins 1997) that it continues to determine intellectual engagement. Albert Smith (1978: 178) proposed three similar 'schools' in which one can think of the historiography of the region: colonialist, nationalist, and Western, meaning Westerners not involved in the colonial project. However, Carl Brown’s Unit of Analysis Problem (1997) exactly identifies that ‘the Maghrib’ itself is, of course, just one way of thinking about the physical place. He argues: why not identify it as 'Atlas Land' for the central importance of the Atlas mountain chain? (1997: 8).

Most important to questions of historical representation, however, is the fact that the historiography of Algeria and North Africa has long been dominated by 'outsider'
authors of European—primarily French—origin. While historically, Germans studied German history and the French studied French history, by contrast ‘modern Maghribi historiography was first created by Europeans [. . . ] while Maghribi historians continued to pursue the models of classical Islamic history’ (Le Gall and Perkins 1997: 82). Because it was through the lens of French power that much of the Maghrib was first represented to the 'outside' and was then wrapped up into European intellectual traditions (ibid: 2), this legacy of intellectual colonialism is inextricable from contemporary discourse and ways of understanding the region both abroad and 'at home'. Compared with Morocco and Tunisia, these legacies are even more profound and lasting in Algeria due to settler colonialism that was specific to Algeria and that was particularly successful at embedding and propagating French culture, language (ibid: 2), and epistemology.

French geopolitical writing about Algeria was particularly prolific just before the French invasion in 1830 as well as throughout the colonial period (1830-1962) as French colonels, military officers, engineers, and geographers sought to map the region socially, politically, and geographically to their advantage. For example, topographical detachments of the French Army began identifying and mapping by 1881, producing data for two atlases (Mahjoubi 1997:20). These types of projects that are particularly important to this thesis—because of their mention of slavery, social demographics, Sufis, and occult practices—include the writings of geographic engineer, Claude-Antoine Rozet (early 1830s); French administrator and politician, Jean-Jacques Baude (1840s); French Catholic priest and orientalist, Jean Joseph Léandre Bargès (1850s); French historian, Henri Leon Fey (1850s); and French lawyer and officer, Louis Rinn (1880s).

Later, at the end of the nineteenth century with the colonial administration sufficiently established, writings by explorers, anthropologists, journalists, and sociologists began to blossom like that of the linguist, James Bruyn Andrews, sociologist Edmond Doutté (early 1900s), and explorer Réné Lespès (1930s). These authors were highly influenced by French structuralist anthropology with Lévi-Strauss’s profound impact on ethnographic representation and writing. The structuralist epistemology as well as influence from psychoanalysis and structural linguistics popular
throughout academia in the first half of the twentieth century perpetuated a desire to
categorise and understand 'deeper' forms and meanings and/or subconscious workings
that could be decoded and 'read' by an outsider; in other words, universalist and
categorical approaches to understanding North African subjectivities. In addition to the
profound impact of French structuralism, the twentieth century Annales School (known
for a particular kind of long-term French historiography) along with Weberian, Marxist
and neo-Marxist trends in academia (bending history towards political economy),
Anglo-Saxon social science (developments in social anthropology and structural
functionalism) and the academic, theoretical saturation of Michel Foucault have, in turn,
all pushed and pulled at the nineteenth- and twentieth-century approaches to the
Maghrib (Le Gall and Perkins 1997: xxii).

In tandem with geopolitical historiography, the history of ideas and ways of
writing about Islam, Sufism, religiosity, spirit mediumship, and the spiritual lives of
Algerians from the 'outside' is particularly important to this thesis. Such historiography
was influenced, if not explicitly driven by, the colonial project that compiled data from
French government personnel and enlisted ethnographers in order to produce
information about domestic and religious realms (Amster 2013: 161)—such as Amélie
Marie Goichon who worked on women’s domains in the M’zab Valley of Algeria (1927,
1931) as well as in Morocco. Sufi orders—politically intertwined within deep-seated,
historical tribal politics in pre-Ottoman and Ottoman Algeria—were dynamic political
and religious entities for France to contend with. While some became well known for
their resistance to French domination—notably a branch of Qadiriyya led by Emīr ‘Abd
el-Qādr in the west of Algeria—there was a variety of nuanced reactions and
relationships that developed out of these encounters (see Clancy-Smith 1994). For
example, rivalries between the Tijaniyya and Darkawa orders with the Qadiriyya order
in the West, as well as dynamics between rural saintly clans in the hinterlands, for
example, served as pressure points in which France participated and profited from (Abu
Nasr 1965; Nadir 1972). Such strategic interest in the Sufi orders, maraboutism, and
clan politics, therefore, produced categorical volumes such as that of Louis Rinn’s
Marabouts et Khouan (1884) which documents and analyses every notable Sufi order in

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6 The Tijaniyya turned to the French to help dismantle the Qadiriyya (Abu Nasr 1965: 611).
Algeria, the number of followers or branches, and its beliefs and activities. As I will explore in depth later, such information is central to this thesis as Sufi orders were instrumental in the trans-Saharan slave trade and in the naturalisation of slaves once in Algeria; almost all published information about the activities of orders is from this French perspective.

New grassroots Islamist leadership beginning around First World War gradually gained a foothold while, around 1929, with a new modernity shifting 'the practice of politics in Algeria', there was a 'collapse of the old structures of political socialization', such as the Sufi zāwīya, mosque, and guild, and an emergence of new kinds of socialisation 'issuing from the civilian bourgeois society—clubs, associations, labor unions, and political parties' (Touati 1997: 89). Historiographic representation responded in kind, itself under a process of change, absorbing 'certain positivist notions' (ibid: 89) concurrent with the nationalist movement that blossomed in the 1920s and 1930s. While political and religious grounds were shifting in Algeria, French interest in such dynamics continued to be relevant throughout French occupation but not always with explicit political strategies in mind. As previously noted, in the early 1950s, the journalist-writer Emile Dermenghem provided a broad and yet ethnographically informed text on North African popular Islam and, particularly, Bilaliyya brotherhoods.

During the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962), French sociologist and anthropologist, Pierre Bourdieu undertook ethnographic research in Kabylie. Despite his foundational inheritance and championing of structuralism, his fieldwork eventually led to his landmark text, Outline of Theory and Practice, and his tide-changing ideas about social practice, embodiment, and habitus. Dovetailing both well grooved and burgeoning academic trends, the symbolic and interpretivist anthropology of Clifford Geertz, who began writing about Morocco in the mid-nineteen sixties—blurring the lines between 'social science' history (oral history) and other histories (Rollman 1997: 64-66) with his 'thick description'—also moved with universalising tendencies and has similarly been critiqued for having produced essentialist narratives of the region that endured for at least another decade.

Meanwhile, Francophone anthropology largely perpetuated an object-oriented and structuralist approach. The work of the French anthropologist Viviana Pâques is most
notable here to demonstrate these burgeoning, structuralist searches for 'deeper meaning' beyond or below the contours of the observable as they apply to supernatural and mythic worlds. Her ambitious, comprehensive volume, The Cosmic Tree (L’arbre Cosmique, 1964) thoroughly catalogs, compares, and analyses trans-Saharan semiotics, myth, and 'below the surface' animist and sacred connections between Mali, Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. Most of the comparisons and trans-Saharan symbolic connections she makes, however, are generated from her reading and are not, at least explicitly or discursively, the experience of her interlocutors. In this work we find very little ethnographic information on the people, dynamics, politics, and subjectivities or agencies nor do we sense Pâques’s presence in the field much less in the text. Nevertheless, Pâques had a tremendous influence in Morocco and Algeria on and within the communities and individuals with whom she worked. Ritual experts in Morocco and Algeria continue to remember her and recount stories of her work—these stories indicate that while her attention to the communities was appreciated on the one hand, she remained a controversial figure. In Morocco, she was accused on more than one occasion of hiding cameras and secretly trying to video record communities without their consent while in Algeria, several pages of her entry in L’arbre Cosmique on dīwān ritual symbolism in Saida have recently been appropriated (without credit) into the local musicians’ informational brochure for their dīwān ‘folklore’ group. Such a move is one example of how dīwān communities defer to outside representations of their practice to appeal to outsider publics.

Since the hard-won independence of Algeria in 1962, nationalism has been the dominant frame of analysis. As Le Gall and Perkins point out, since nationalism is a European invention, there has been a tendency to analogise the Algerian process with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe, neglecting the important role of Islam in national movements (1997: 82). Meanwhile, the object-oriented, structuralist, and arguably orientalist anthropological thinking about North Africa that blossomed in the 1960s continued to echo well into the seventies, eighties, and nineties where trance and spirit mediumship were treated in related ways such as in the work of Georges

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7 'Abdellatif Makzūmī, personal communication, Marrakech, 2011.

Crapanzano’s (1973, 1980) work is especially relevant to this thesis for its place in the genealogy of scholarship addressing North African popular Islam and its very particular basis in Sufism, trance practices, spirit possession or affliction, and other 'occult' or 'magical' phenomena that are deeply intertwined with local modes of sickness, suffering, and wellbeing. His ethnopsychiatric approach (1973) to spirit affliction, locating such experiences in the mind, thoughts, or workings of the psyche can be situated within the larger sphere of George Devereux’s ethnopsychiatry that was similarly informed by Lévi-Strauss’s structuralism. Furthermore, such an approach was problematic for its underpinnings of ethnographer-interlocutor as analyst-analysand and particularly notable when compared with British anthropologists’ ‘fierce antagonism towards psychology’ at the time (Lewis 1971:178).

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, academic research on and publishing about trance or, broadly speaking, ecstatic religious practices across a variety of cultures began to gather such interest that, due to its central, theoretical importance to this thesis and it being non-Maghrib specific, I will examine this particular intellectual legacy in a separate section (see Trance Inquiry). Lewis’s (1971) 'Ecstatic Religion' sought to correct what he viewed as the failure of sociologists to properly systematically gather, analyse, and compare religious practices due to their, 'abandoning religious emotion to the psychiatrist' (1971: 11). Structuralism, its tendrils, and responses to it continued into the 1970s and 1980s with attempts to supply cross-cultural, categorical understandings of trance, shamanism, spirit possession, and related phenomena. However, as Anne Beal illustrates, despite attempts to break with Orientalist, generalising, interpretivist anthropology, seeking to highlight the intersubjective and constructed ethnographic encounter, post-Geertzian anthropological writing about Morocco in the late 1970s and early 1980s ultimately failed to break with empiricist depictions and instead, re-inscribed self-other, subject-object dichotomies: specifically, the works of Rabinow (1977), Crapanzano (1985), and Dwyer (1982) with their perceived importance to the genealogy of anti-essentialist writing and post-modern sensibility (1995: 290).
Overall, however, it is appropriate to note that recent scholarship (since the 1970s) of the Maghrib has tended towards a focus on the nation-state, an 'almost insurmountable framework of analysis' (McDougall and Parks 2012: 632) while those studies that break out of this trend fail to make viable connections between the global and local, macro and micro registers: 'the degree to which the literature is divided between levels of analysis, between both objects of study and the lenses applied to them, remains a striking feature of the field across the disciplines' (ibid: 632). Therefore, even while the last twenty years has especially seen 'an accelerated convergence' between the social sciences, history, and political science (Rollman 1997: 64-66), such as a growth in work on linguistics, religion, and cultural production (theatre, music), the majority of research still sits within history and political science often with Algiers as the site of investigation for its strategic and geopolitical importance. Such work consistently privileges the colonial struggle, post-colonial nation building, and modernisation.

A considerably recent (2000s) exception to this is the Anglophone interest in Saharan and trans-Saharan connectivities; it is one of the more significant transformations in intellectual perspective of North and West Africa and the Sahara. The work of Ghislaine Lydon (2009), Judith Scheele, and James McDougall (eds. 2012) has been particularly influential to a shifting view of the Sahara as a continuum and dynamic 'bridge' rather than as a north-south, religious and racial barrier between 'black' and 'white' and 'Muslim' and 'non-Muslim' (Lydon 2009: 41). Such a black-white binary, very much a product of French intellectual colonialism, continues to persist discursively around and within dīwān communities in Algeria, who largely consider dīwān a sub-Saharan, animist, and pre-Islamic practice prior to its emplacement in North Africa where it was 'cleaned up' (see more below). As James McDougall points out, rather than thinking of the Sahara as 'empty space' and without over-emphasising routes across the Sahara—in other words, focusing too much on trans-Saharan trajectories that write the Sahara out of history—trans-Saharan studies would do well to consider 'spaces in between' (Scheele and McDougall 2012: 75), and perhaps multiple 'Sahara-s' with

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8 This central idea has been taken up by the American Institute for Maghrib Studies (AIMS) outpost in Algeria, the Center for Maghrib Studies in Algeria (CEMA), and the Boston-based West African Research Association (WARA) followed by several co-organised international conferences and an annual AIMS grant scheme, the Saharan Crossroads Fellowship, that officially began in 2013.
varying mobilities across economical, political, and ecological landscapes (Lydon 2009: 47).

This latter development is particularly important to the intellectual background of this thesis and to the contribution it aspires to make: that is, the ways we understand trans-Saharan relationships. Rather than highlight connectivity or 'flow', the histories—both textual and oral—of dīwān suggest uneven networks of practice, aesthetics, and epistemology, demonstrating both trans-Saharan connection and disconnection, remembering and forgetting, construction and destruction, and power and powerlessness. While the Sahara in the histories of dīwān did function as a bridge to some extent, passage involved great trauma, loss, suppression, and suffering. Thus, it is important to consider how Saharan crossings not only fostered connections but also how they destroyed them by establishing, reconfiguring, and obliterating subjectivities.

France not only physically occupied the Algerian territory, and not only colonised the land intellectually, as Le Gall and Perkins demonstrate, but colonialism equally consumed its subjects psychologically, psychically, emotionally, and spiritually. Its educational system, administration, language, food, religion, dress, priorities, and values—its epistemology and ontology—were very much pushed into the soil of cultural politics, selves, and imaginaries. Nevertheless, Algerians educated in the French system, particularly in the North, are well read in post-colonial theory and are therefore keenly aware of longstanding representational problems; most often, I heard these problems identified as racist and imperialist. In the South, where Algerians have darker skin or may be black, and where the French did have less impact, tensions accumulate around registers of national identity and worth. Algerian musicians living on the edge of the Sahara such as in Ouargla, for example, rarely see government funding for their cultural projects—despite their greater need due to lack of other resources and general poverty— unlike help that is available to musicians in the North. Such distance can also be seen at an existential level where, like the French enchantment with the Sahara, northern Algerians also exoticise the desert as a place of 'purity' where its people, namely the Tuareg, symbolise Algerian 'authenticity'.

As an ethnographer working in post-colonial Algeria, I have inherited the above intellectual lineages that continue to cast shadows of Western disciplinary interests,
assumptions, and biases situated within larger structures of academic institutions and intellectual pursuits. Most noticeable in my fieldwork experience were the shadows of French structuralism in the categorical, binary, classificatory, and deeper structural meanings 'behind' or 'beneath' songs that were very much a priority in wider discussions in Algeria on the cultural heritage of diwān. As previously mentioned, diwān was commonly seen as an Islamicised animist practice to the point that there seemed to be little recognition of Islam’s deep roots in sub-Saharan Africa, not the least of which was Timbuktu, from which so many diwān ancestors reportedly came.

Similarly, as noted regarding the appropriation of French written materials into a brochure for a diwān community in Saida, I frequently encountered what one highly educated gentleman in Algiers called the 'systemic cultural inferiority complex of Algerians.’ When journalists were present at the large, annual diwān gatherings in Saida, the diwān kin group of Saida asked me to speak on their behalf to the journalists, to 'promote' their festival. In many other situations, rather than seek out the diwān elders from whom my information came, television producers, newspaper editors, and journalists, instead, asked to speak with me about diwān practice: a fact that consistently put me in a difficult position.

In this first section, I have been concerned about the geopolitical historiographies of Algeria because of the ways that such inquiry and knowledge production affected and continues to affect Algerian epistemology. Such legacies can be felt 'on the ground' and within diwān discourse, for example. I would like to now address another legacy of intellectual inquiry quite important to this thesis: the history of academic inquiry into trance as a cross-cultural phenomenon.

B. A Survey of Academic Inquiry into Trance

Conceptualising, analysing, and representing trance has long posed an existential challenge to academic inquiry. The canon of music and trance scholarship has continually mirrored development and polemics within anthropology and social theory so that the methodological paradigms that emerged posited scientistic (positivist) approaches at one pole—Andrew Neher, for example—and relativist, phenomenological
approaches at the other pole (Friedson 1996; Norton 2009). Various takes on 'embodiment', while often privileging phenomenology have at times tried to strike a kind of middle ground, such as Judith Becker’s work (2004) that addressed the working of the limbic system in conjunction with culturally framed rhythmic entrainment. Alternative approaches, often overlapping, have sought broad structuralism (Rouget 1985, Lewis 1971), or situated trance within single, cultural practices like traditional medicine (Roseman 1993), and relationships with ancestors (Berliner 1981), or embodied memory (Boddy 1989; Emoff 2002; Stoller 1989, 1995; Kapchan 2007) and, more recently, approaching trance at face value without interrogating it as 'some kind of problem that needs to be solved' (Jankowsky 2010: 24).

In this section, I would like to survey the intellectual history of trance inquiry, addressing the canon of anthropological, sociological, and ethnomusicological literature, so that the approach taken in this thesis will have been properly contextualised within this intellectual legacy. I separate trance inquiry from the previous discussion of Algerian historiography for several reasons. First, trance inquiry has often been a cross-cultural pursuit and scholarship of trance outside the Maghrib is, therefore, crucial to consider as such. Secondly, trance inquiry, often located within ritual theory, has not always been the object of colonial or foreign gaze but has also been a pursuit of general anthropological and sociological interest, traceable back to, at least, Durkheim’s *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912/1995). Therefore, I see this thread of my thesis, my own engagement with the phenomena of trance, as being connected to this broad intellectual lineage, based more in the nature of the questions being asked rather than in the cultural specificity of the Maghrib.

As mentioned in the previous section, the influence of French structuralism particularly in the 1960s and 1970s similarly impacted the ways in which anthropologists, sociologists, and psychologists sought to understand trance. I.M. Lewis’s (1971) book on Ecstatic Religion, which equally took a categorical and comparative approach, may be considered a precursor to the larger, and most canonical text with regard to music and trance: that of Gilbert Rouget, *La Musique et la Transe* (1984). Rouget dealt with trance, ecstasy, and related phenomena across a wide cross-section of cultures, exploring relationships between shamanistic and possession trance
and, in each case, the role of music. Most importantly, Rouget argued against a biological framework for trance—particularly confronting Andrew Neher's (1962) brain models and suggestion of a physiological cause-and-effect relationship. Rouget meticulously argued that it is only with the unique, culturally appropriate meaning ascribed to musical cues that trance states are possible. His ambitious work was the first to attempt a broad theory of relations between music and trance and while such mapping offered a needed overview, his structuralist framework tended to be reductive, leaning more towards binaries and with little said about overlap, individual agency, and forces of change. As Lewis (1971: 45) pointed out, such categories and binaries of ecstasy/trance, possession/shamanism, etcetera, are often without substance; for example, possession can occur outside of trance and in some cultures, possession and shamanism occur simultaneously and within the same subject (ibid, 46).

A second tide-changing work was Judith Becker’s *Deep Listeners* (2004) that aimed to stake out common ground between the humanistic, cultural anthropological, and the scientific/cognitive/physiological approaches by proposing a three-pronged, anthropological skeleton of embodiment. While Becker does attend to a phenomenology of 'experience,' noting the work of William James and Martin Heidegger—and, in a similar gesture, noting the 'Western aversion to trance' with its idolisation of self-control and rationality—her primary, theoretical 'common ground' between poles is a positivist theory of rhythmic entrainment through the model of 'structural coupling' in which trancers are rhythmically entrained to one another, reaching extraordinary experiences of being (119-122). She acknowledges the 'special gnosis of trance that need not be explained' (2); nevertheless, she makes the strongest case for neuroscience, charting the limbic system's effect on functional consciousness, taking us back to ideas of 'core' and 'extended' consciousness.

Taking quite the opposite approach, Steven Friedson's self-reflexive ethnography, *Dancing Prophets* (1996), with its Heidegger and Dilthey-inspired phenomenological approach, proposed two important shifts in sensory inquiry: expanding our often-neglected focus of *musical* agency in spirit possession and expanding our thinking regarding *bodily* ways of knowing. Drawing from Heidegger's 'being-in-the-world’, Friedson gives a personal account of 'dancing his disease' and experiencing his
consciousness as dispersed throughout his body rather than bounded to his thinking self. In addition, Friedson delivers a poetic and thorough account of musical agency, returning again and again to the power of music to 'heat the spirits' and 'charge a battery' of the ancestors in order to empower 'seeing' and divination, thus, kindling proper diagnosis and healing of the sick. Thirteen years later in his book, *Remains of Ritual*, he advocated for exploring ‘the things themselves as they are given’, and to ‘dismissing what people are telling us’ to once again, ‘begin to listen along with them’ (10).

Barley Norton's (2009) coverage of spirit possession practice in Vietnam is also phenomenological. Norton openly discusses the level of his insidership, comparing it to Friedson's, and points out that his framing of the phenomenon was generated out of discussions with mediums who continually referred to the experience in their bodies. In this way, from a bottom-up approach, Norton's phenomenology points the reader to existential meanings through the texture of representational meaning. He further explains his framework, in order to show its indigenous resonance, by explaining that mediums 'did not discuss possession in terms of mentalistic notions of consciousness or altered states of consciousness, but rather in terms of somatic change and bodily interaction with the spirits.' He explains the processes in which mediums attend to, and with, their bodies during *len dong* ceremonies, through 'culturally constituted modes of somatic attention’—such as ritual action, dance, gift exchange, and divine utterances—for the presence of embodied spirits and for the interactions with ritual participants. As well as showing embodiment in this way, he uses an analogous semiotic model to discuss the physicality of language: the words of the spirits embodied through mediums.

Similarly privileging the body, Paul Stoller's *Embodying Colonial Memories* (1995) uses a framework of cultural memory—in this case, the historical presence of French military occupation of which the effects are still being felt. Stoller shows how these memories are recollected, substantiated, negotiated, and reclaimed, *through the body*, during spirit possession ceremonies. Stoller spends a generous amount of time discussing the workings of cultural memory, which in his view, is specifically embodied.

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9 Ibid., 56.
10 Ibid., 57.
11 Ibid., 72.
Not unlike Friedson, Stoller advocates for anthropological consideration of the senses beyond the visual. In Songhay, spirits must be enticed to their social bodies through music (sound), praise-poetry (sound), specific perfumes (smell), and dance (movement)’ (22).

Akin to Stoller’s approach is Ron Emoff’s Recollecting the Past (2002) which centers on the Malagasy ‘multidimensional music/sound/performative aesthetic’ of *maresaka*: the texturing of multigenerational social relationships from within the region (neighboring cultural groups) and outside of it (colonial histories). Animated by inviting the echoes of geo-cultural history into the social space of spirit possession, this socio-musical encounter is not only practiced ‘to convey a performative aesthetics and a way of recollecting the past, ‘but as a means of revaluing, reconstructing, and remastering their past (1, 23). In other words, ‘Historical time…is brought into synch with everyday time through manipulations of musical time’ (63).

Sharing a similar perspective through embodiment and memory, Deborah Kapchan (2007) writes about the *gnāwa* of Morocco suggesting that we might approach the body as a theatrical stage for the script of cultural memory, employing spirits as actors. Within a frame of performed identity and performed culture, Kapchan discusses gestural economies, which are part of a cultural tapestry and thus, are learned, codified, and repeated. The inseparability of music from an ‘aesthetic complex’ gives it total agency within the body, utilising all five senses. Particularly intriguing is her assertion of performed cultural memory and identity seen to be reflecting the *gnāwa*s relationship to their ancestors: slaves brought to Morocco from sub-Saharan Africa. In a kind of embodied double *entendre*, the *gnāwa* become ‘possessed’ by spirits, as part of remembering the cultural memory of physical possession—that is, having been physically possessed as slaves.12

While each of these personal and tailored approaches to embodiment—that of Friedson, Norton, Stoller, and Kapchan—beautifully demonstrate the capacity with which we can continue to understand the body and physical ways of being-in-the-world, the anxiety I encountered in my own work was whether there is a risk of confusing the body with embodiment: ‘the body. . . as a biological, material entity and embodiment as

12 Ibid., see chapter 3.
an indeterminate methodological field defined by perceptual experience [including our own as observing researchers] and by mode of presence and engagement in the world' (Csordas 1999: 145). As I will explore below, this is precisely where dance theory allows the accounting for movement without necessarily ascribing meaning to that movement (see particularly Pinto 2011; 2013).

Circumventing the epistemological questions of her contemporaries, and rather than focusing on otherworldly symbolism or meta-meaning, Marina Roseman (1993) takes a hands-on, 'this world' approach, discussing the quotidian, indigenous concepts of health and illness among the Temiar of peninsular Malaysia by illustrating the interwoven relationships between local ecology, song composition, and social structure. Her language is exquisitely descriptive of not only the jungle landscape but the dream and song landscape as well. By engaging deeply with and illustrating the complete environment of the Temiar, Roseman provides a richly detailed, comprehensive 'big picture' for her readers in a way that grounds the research, lending it well to cross-disciplinary access. In a world where, for example, headaches have a sound (12), Roseman engages with local ideas around health and illness, asking, for example, 'where does illness come from?' and fleshing out how the Temiar order their experience.

Like Roseman, Vincent Crapanzano’s (1973) ethnography on the Moroccan Hamadsha community, a popular Islamic trance sect, is rich in legends and semiotics, delving into social roles and norms, painting detailed pictures of music's central agency in therapy, and most importantly, illuminating indigenous relationships between sickness and health. While his ethnopsychiatric approach drawn from Western ideologies of 'health' could align him with Becker, his focus on native ecology resists a primarily scientistic conclusion, highlighting how an individual is moved from sickness to health through 'the manipulation of symbols [that] not only to give expression to conflicts within the individual, but also to resolve them'(7). Crapanzano's work resonates with Friedson's by showing that therapy presupposes a cosmology; his weaving of the hagiographic legends of the Hamadsha throughout the book might align him with Stoller and Emoff. And like Roseman's discussion of social structure, dream worlds, and total world ecologies playing into ideas of health and illness, he shows, over and over again,
that therapy 'necessarily involves changes in all significant levels of human existence—the physiological, the psychological, and the socio-cultural' (212).

If we consider the history of trance inquiry as comprising a spectrum with the scientistic and phenomenological poles at opposite ends, Richard Jankowsky (2007, 2010) argues for a much needed middle ground, an existential space wherein the need to problematise and thus, categorise trance is suspended. Similar to the way in which Fabian Holt discussed 'in-between poetics' in regard to genres within ethnomusicological study, scholarship of spirit possession requires, 'a ground outside of paradigms', while at the same time, avoiding an analogy of 'the beyond’, thus, moving the 'space' in question further into obscurity (2008: 45-46). Jankowsky’s work delves into the multidimensional articulations of alterity, first by situating geo-cultural encounters within Tunisian history, as well as illustrating how these events shaped the sub-Saharan diasporic imaginary of sṭambēlī musical and ritual practice. His approach is not entirely distant from that of Kapchan, Emoff, Norton, or Stoller in his attention to embodied history and performed otherness, and advocates approaching meaning 'from within, through extensive ritual co-participation, and…approaching [the tradition] on its own terms', so that knowledge comes out of the processual physicality of doing, attuning oneself to indigenous modes of attention. Furthermore, Jankowsky's work demonstrates the necessity and significance of musical focus within spirit possession scholarship.

As well as the various ways of framing and analysing relationships between music and trance and/or spirit possession traditions, there are some scholars who choose to limit their treatment of these dynamics, if not pass over them entirely, and focus on other elements of ritual, performance, or cultural context. For example, in Philip Schuyler's article, Music and Meaning, as well as in Tony Langlois's article The Gnawa of Oujda, and finally in Katherine Hagedorn's ethnography, Divine Utterances, there is little to no treatment of the context of possession. Schuyler passes over the phenomenon on his way to discussing a musical game which resembles Rouget's description of musical mottoes, and Langlois discusses impoverished women as the main clientele of an ostracised Gnawa group in Oujda without discussing their healing (possession) process. Hagedorn focuses primarily on contemporary secular, theatrical performances

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13 Ibid., 6-7. Emphasis added.
of sacred Cuban music on the world stage but occasionally alludes to possible spirit-driven 'odd occurrences', her own prophetic spirit dreams, and spends most of chapter seven discussing her initiation into Santeria.

Related to my own research presented in this thesis and dilemmas I encountered, it is worth considering the value of this approach, particularly in some cases where spirits and trance involve secret knowledge and sensitive information that may not be possible to access, much less communicate and write about. Another example of such an approach is Paul Berliner's *Soul of Mbira* that focuses on the *mbira* instrument. While he may not have set out to uncover and communicate the music-possession relationship, the ethnography offers a fluid and practical handling of music and possession, moving organically through the topic vis-a-vis the necessitated discussion of its inextricable function in mediating human-spirit world relationships: the instrument is central to the society and is inseparable from the total cultural ecology of the Shona. In addition, through music-assisted ancestor intervention, 'the *mbira* role [is] a means for villagers to impose the moral values of the society on individuals who have strayed too far from the community's accepted mores' (202).

Finally, to reflect on all of these works, the unifying, underlying assumption of *any* model to translate cultural phenomena—and particularly within what is so often a secular humanist or scientific ideology—is that others' worlds are knowable and that our understanding of the world is equipped to interpret and represent those of others. This position eschews the evidence that there are limits to academic inquiry. And as for our methodological turn towards the body, as Csordas pointed out, 'If behind [it] lay the implicit hope that it would be the stable center in a world of decentered meanings, it has only led to the discovery that the essential characteristic of embodiment is existential indeterminacy' (Csordas 1994: xi).

So where does that leave us? How might we productively think about trance and in, perhaps, unexplored ways?

Some—such as Rouget—have understandably argued that we have no option other than using our own frameworks to analyse others' life worlds, despite what
Heidegger would fault as their ‘ontological presuppositions of ontic enquiry’. We might try 'taking a viewpoint on our viewpoint,'¹⁴ as Bourdieu suggested, realising that, ‘all models are wrong but some are useful’, as the statistician George Box (1976) said. One thing seems quite clear, however: the pathways of trance are never direct or contained. If there is such thing as an essence of 'trance', anything that holds the term together despite its elasticities of signification, it is that trance, as a concept, is non-localised. It arises out of a multiplicity of social, personal, and material conditions; in other words, it has no single 'cause'.

Trance in dīwān is, by its nature, not fully comprehensible, even for those who go through it. The anxiety that was sometimes caused by my attempts to clarify its meanings and manifestations demonstrated that, like inquiry about God or the supernatural, there is no real way of ‘getting to the bottom of it’. Talk about trance is particularly difficult—local ideas about trance are usually explicitly secretive, held to be deeply personal, sacred, and enigmatic. Being so often connected to pain and suffering, trance experience in dīwān is often fragile, fiercely intimate, and sharp at the edges. Pressing for coherent explanation of trance, therefore, risks oversimplifying and reducing complex and uncomfortable experiences and thus, posed ethical questions. Furthermore, investigating trance also raises important issues about the right to certain kinds of spiritual knowledge when those who understand trance best—ritual elders or shyākh—spend their lifetimes labouring for and over such knowledge. Though its geographies are described poetically, even if we had volumes of trance testimony, words only flit across the surface of the traces it makes. Studying trance, thus, ultimately asks us to rethink how we study the ineffable.

One of the challenges here is that the term 'trance', in English and French, has often been associated with 'states of the mind', 'consciousness', the psyche, or brain. In order to understand trance experience in dīwān, I find that it is more helpful to consider the varying registers of trance as intensities and types of presence and awareness that culminate, accumulate, and become temporarily congealed—this provides conceptual space to understand how a jedēb(a) might struggle with shifting agencies and attempt to move them with his or her body. For example, in the varying trance experiences

¹⁴ Quoted in 'Music, Spirit Possession, and the In-Between,' Jankowsky, 192.
described below, through the numerous verbs and adjectives utilised to describe trance experience, there are degrees of being mentally aware, physically aware, and being emotionally or affectively (sensorily) aware. In other words, if we consider that, in theory, that a 'normal state' is one in which a person is able to be 'fully present' mentally, physically and emotionally, and to self-regulate in culturally appropriate ways (personal agency) then varieties of trance can be understood as involving the partial or total loss of agency to self-regulate these various faculties.

Considering how fluctuating and overlapping degrees of presence, awareness and absence might work in a moving body, an engagement with dance theory in the work of Sarah Pinto is helpful here to attend to some of these subtleties. As Pinto points out regarding the clinical lives of women in India, the question is less, ‘What kind of subjects are these?’ and more ‘what kind of presence is this?’ (2013:83). Indeed, it is this varying loss of agency over awareness and presence that, discursively, parses out the rich taxonomy of trance in *dīwān*. Presence is never entirely mapped onto the body (Pinto 2011: 4; see also Lepecki 2004), particularly when the body, moves 'subjects can disappear into the things they generate' (Pinto 2011: 3). In trance, absence is a part of presence; they are intermingled. In this spirit, the equal importance of absence in trance can be appropriately accounted for. For example, many trancers experience forms of amnesia and may only remember parts or nothing of what happened during their trances while others report only being able to partially see or hear during their trances. Others report numbness, not being able to contact parts of their bodies.

Robert Desjarlais’s (1997) work with the homeless in Boston demonstrates how we might need to reconsider the ideas of ‘presence’ and ‘awareness’ in relation to sharp realities of absence, particularly when subjects do not have a sense of having had an 'internal' or somehow narratable 'experience', when, as he explains, 'things happened much more on the retina, the eardrums, and the fingertips than in any detached haven of mind or body' (22). Desjarlais critiques discourses around ‘experience’ as involving interiority, depth, and authenticity (17) and argues, that, unlike Heidegger who takes it as a given, that, 'experience is not a primordial existential given but rather a historically and culturally constituted process predicated on certain ways of being in the world' (13). Critique of experience, then, unsettles presumptions about trance because the agency of
the person having that, ‘experience’—and, therefore, also the integrity of the trancer’s memory and narrative—is already in question. This, again, is where current theories of affect are destabilised; that the body of a trancer can be inhabited by an outside agent so that the subject of that body has no recollection of the event. Whose ‘experience’ is it, then?

Regarding varying degrees of physical and sensory awareness, some trancers in dīwān demonstrate exceptional, even abnormal physical abilities during trance such as not feeling the pain of knives slashing the abdomen in some songs or the fiber whips on bare skin in the song, Dabu, or, as I observed in Biskra and Mascara, the eating of hot coals directly from the fire. And like the above two example, trancers similarly report varying degrees of emotional or affective presences and varying loss of agency: from sobbing uncontrollably without knowing why to knots in the stomach, feeling nauseas, feeling pins and needles or unexplainable pains, unexplainable fear, hearing voices or seeing spirits, speaking words that, ‘come from somewhere else', and occasionally speaking in tongues. Considering trance as a spectrum of presences, absences, and processes better reflects its mutability and the ways the body can feel outside of, within, or very much part of oneself acting on oneself. In this way, the body has non-physical potentiality such as the way that one might feel one’s own body to be seized by another dimension, to be vibrating in another world. This concept finds deep resonance in Lisa Blackman’s (2012) work on ‘immaterial bodies’, clarifying registers of both and overlapping energetic and material ‘bodies’ in ways that speak to overlapping presences in trance.

My own experience within North African trance communities compelled me to attend to the traces that trance made in the movements, lives, words, and on the bodies of those in its field, how they talked about, prepared for, lived, and physically imbibed the spectrum of trance. I spent long hours speaking with my dīwān friends about what trance can feel like, how it fills the minds, bodies, and hearts of dīwān adepts. We talked about what it does to relieve suffering and what it does to cause suffering—the ways that movement can be ‘both a cure and a pathology’ (Pinto 2011). We talked about how it might shape and historicise one’s sense of self in time when one reflects on the hundreds of dīwanat a jedēb(a) (trancer, male/female) attends over his or her lifetime.
We wondered about affective connections to known or unknown pasts, the aesthetics of trance, what it means to trance well, and how to know when someone is 'faking it'. We often started by talking about those first few moments of transition, what it feels like when trance hits them or arises in them, and—if anything is remembered and can be articulated—what is experienced. While we rarely ever spoke about what these experiences meant—this type of inquiry at times felt to be crossing a personal boundary or to be perilously venturing into supernatural worlds—we consistently discussed how trance felt—foreboding, heavy, sickening, constrictive, violent, ‘like churning ocean waves in winter time’, ‘like winds inside oneself’ or being hit by a wind, like being out of one’s body and sometimes watching from above.

Because trance in dīwān—as I will explore in great detail below—is primarily understood to be, and is described as, what we would consider as an affective process, I have found affect theory to be the most illuminating lens through which to look at this ritual tradition while also being, in my mind, the most accurate representation of the Arabic taxonomies of trance. Many of the tendencies in current affect theory around questions of agency—such as the ‘nonintentional’, 'subconscious' workings of affect that are 'below' or 'beyond' human agency, at least conscious control, find a great deal of resonance with affectivity in dīwān—this is something I will deal with a great deal more in the section on the dīwān epistemology of distributed agency.

However, at the same time, many other affective dynamics in dīwān are intentional, explicitly produced, managed, and cultivated by ritual experts and trancers (jedebebīn) so that dīwān also challenges academic assumptions about agency and intentionality and how affect might work and move. These complications necessarily lead to questions about how affect entangles degrees of subjectivity and materiality, and the inclination to demarcate 'emotion' from 'affect' and/or feeling. Therefore, in addition to the resonances between affectivity in dīwān with principles in affect theory, I hope that the dissonances will provide opportunities to further explore affective possibility and thus, might make a contribution to the ongoing development of affect theory.
C. A Survey of Affect Theory: How Dīwān Challenges It

While some scholars refer as far back as Raymond Williams’s *Structures of Feeling* the intellectual origin of affect theory is most typically credited to Silvan Tomkins whose work in the 1960s on facial expressions and the relationships between biology and basic, universal categories of emotion produced what science historian Ruth Leys refers to as the Basic Emotions paradigm (2011: 439). The epistemology of this paradigm continues to be used by leading neuroscientists working on emotion such as Antonio Damasio as well as scholars in the Humanities and Social Sciences seeking a 'nonintentional, corporeal account of the emotions' (ibid 439). The appeal of this approach was partly due to a reaction against poststructuralism and psychoanalysis, with an emergent need to reconsider the materiality of the body. Along with Leys (2011) and Blackman (2012), however, the paradigm has since been critiqued by scientists working on emotion for its lack of scientific basis and by cultural theorists who saw Tomkins' approaches as too reductive or essentialist.

Currently, since the early 2000s, affect theory has pooled around a handful of leading scholars in the Humanities, Social Sciences, and neuroscience of emotion, particularly Brian Massumi, William Connolly, Antonio Damasio, Nigel Thrift, Teresa Brennan, and Eric Shouse, among others, who, influenced by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, also draw heavily from the ideas of Baruch Spinoza, Henri Bergson, and William James. Largely, amongst these 'new affect theorists', as Leys calls them, the recent trend has been to recommence cross-disciplinary discussion with the biological sciences. As Leys shows in her article, *The Turn to Affect; A Critique* (2011), among many of these theorists is a shared assumption that affect is typically 'independent of, and, in an important sense, prior to ideology—that is, intentions, meanings, reasons, and beliefs—because [affects] are nonsignifying, autonomic processes that take place below the threshold of conscious awareness and meaning' (437). In other words, despite the attempt to move away from Tomkins assumption that affect and cognition (or reason) are two entirely different systems, the idea still finds purchase in contemporary affect scholarship, particularly in the shared belief of the 'anti-intentionalism' of affect.
First and foremost, as I will show throughout this thesis, trance in dīwān fundamentally problematises the intentional / non-intentional dichotomy in affect theory—this is what I often refer to below as dynamics of agency, or what one 'means' to do consciously, or has the ability to do, or is aware of doing. While an autonomous, non-intentional 'nature' of affect does also exist in dīwān, such as in some affective fields that can be unintentionally generated as well as intentionally generated (see below on ḥāl and the Evil Eye) but which have no particular subject, trance always involves plural and contested agencies of 'human' and 'nonhuman' actors or what could also be considered subjects and objects.

Furthermore, what seem to be autonomous, affective 'reactions' in bodies—like trembling or heart palpitations at the sound of a particular melody as happens in dīwān—can be and consistently are learned, rehearsed, conditioned, grooved, and sedimented over time (see Gray 2013:2; Seremetakis 1996:7)—a kind of volitional cultivation of the non-volitional (Kapchan 2007), a feedback loop—so that the affective worlds of subjects become temporal, subjective, and agentive entanglements, more complex than concepts of 'intentional' and 'nonintentional' can capture. Individuals can experience themselves as subjects, as both an acting, agentive, embodied self with conscious self-awareness while simultaneously being inhabited by a nonhuman agent—such as a spirit—acting within and through the material body of the subject, using the subject's own bodily, 'mechanical', and emotional mechanisms of crying or screaming, for example. Therefore, not only is a dichotomy of intention challenged here but we need to begin by asking, 'what do we mean by “intentionality”? and 'where does intention come from or start?' (see Leys 2011).

Secondly, trance in dīwān also unsettles assumptions in current affect theory around 'personal' or 'biographical' emotions as opposed to what are typically labeled pre-personal or non-biographical affects that do not need a subject. This personal/pre-personal dichotomy also encompasses with it assumptions about meaning and non-meaning, where 'affective resonances' are 'independent of content or meaning' (Shouse 2005), or are non-ideological (Massumi 2002) since the 'personal' or 'biographical' are often assumed to involve meaning. Some of the problems here, in my view, between these binaries have to do with Anglophone linguistic categories, particularly the way
affect is separated from emotion. The boundaries of these terms are very much challenged in the workings of diwān, in the Algerian dialect terminology that enfolds, nuances, and complicates such vicissitudes of 'emotion', 'feeling', or 'affect'. For example, the term mzāyyer can be used to denote an 'emotion' of fear or anxiety but also indicates how that fear feels: contracted, clenching, unmoving, and binding.

Cromby (2012) deals with these problematic linguistic distinctions within psychology, positing that here 'feeling' might be a more helpful term for its ability to encompass a variety of bodily, 'cognitive', and affective registers. While Massumi (2002) also argues that emotion, affect, and feeling follow different logics, and while one of his key points is that emotion is more socially organised and condensed, I aim to illustrate below through the dynamics of trance experience how, in diwān, we need to also consider the social construction and significant density of affective response, a flow between what we might call 'emotion' and 'affect'; or, to consider Massumi’s terms of logics, ways that these 'logics' cross one another and are enfolded in one another.

Such assumptions are also challenged in the workings of diwān because what we consider as 'emotions' like sadness or anger can move like contagion—a quality usually associated more with 'affect'—and these emotions can invade bodies just as spirits do, not belonging to the body or person it invades. And, on the flip side, the more fleeting and unconscious, pre-personal assumptions about affect are challenged in the ways that diwān affectivity can take on patterns and identification with certain jedebbīn (trancers). For example, Mehdi, a young man in Algiers, reported that he feels sadness when he hears a particular diwān song and yet it is a sadness without a clear subject; not only does he not know why he feels sad, he is not sure if the sadness is 'his' or if he has 'picked it up' from someone else; there is no traceable cause, object, or reference point to his sadness. In other words, it is possible for an experience to be meaningful without necessarily containing an attachment to the sense of self, without it being locatable as biographical or not.

In another case, a woman in Oran, 'Zeynep', who had been afflicted for years by a jinn, described her sobbing as both her own sobbing and the sobbing of the jinn inhabiting her. Although the two of them emote for different reasons, they cried at the same time, they utilised and experienced it through the same bodily, affective
mechanisms—her upset breathing, her tears, her shaking, her swollen eyes, her elevated heart rate, her contracted body. Whether inhabited by a rūḥ (spirit, sing.; arwāḥ, pl.) or a jinn (sing.; jnūn, pl., see below), states of agency and subjectivity are in flux so that affect might be what subjects share; when a jinn screams, he screams through the affective mechanism and body of the host. Is this not biographical then? Where is the 'personal'? Who is acting here, then, and to what degree?

These experiences might be meaningful, in part, in that they 'belong' to a person because they happened to a person, but they do not necessarily have biographical locus as being owned by the person. It is quite common for jedebbīn, especially beginners, to not know or understand why they are having a particular reaction to stimulus. And is it possible to have an 'experience' when one is not consciously present for it (see Desjarlais 1997)?

Thirdly, as Henriques (2010: 70) points out, there seems to be wide agreement across disciplines that affect is, if anything, something that moves. In fact, movement is so critical to affect that it is indeed difficult to conceive of it otherwise. Henriques draws from the work of phenomenologist, Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (1999), who argues that, 'feeling is the embodiment of movement' not the other way around (see Henriques 2010: 72). In fact, wrapping in here Henriques’s arguments for vibration, 'how movement and feeling might be related' (2010: 58), we can see that vibration is movement, movement is vibration. Feeling, too, is inseparable from vibration and movement: to feel is to move, to be moved, or to feel something moving, something vibrating. Therefore, movement in affect theory, as Henriques rightly points out, is often conceived as 'flows' or fluxes: affect can 'flow' across thresholds and boundaries. Brennan, for example, implies that affect moves horizontally (2004: 75). In dīwān, however, affectivity functions much closer to Henriques's theorization of vibration as energy patterns—that is, that affect can take on patterns, habits, even structures.

While Sarah Ahmed (2004: 89-91) has written of the 'stickiness' of signs and the ways that affect accumulates around these signs, I want to press further and suggest that in dīwān worlds, while some affects flow, other affects unmistakably pool, block, bind, clench, burrow, or impede flow. In this sense, I want to propose that we consider affect as not only forces or energies that may move directionally from point A to point B, but
that affects, such as in *dīwān*, can also be cumulative, patterned, and cyclical—even historicised and politicised—to the degree that we might find resonance in Featherstone’s (2010) notion of an 'affective body'. With *dīwān* cultivating particular, sensory modalities of being, feeling, and responding, and given the fact that both trancers and those observing attend hundreds of *dīwanat* over their lifetimes, there is reason for considering the possibility of an affective body as much as a physical, mental, energetic, or psychic body.

Furthermore, in the ways that people speak of affect in *dīwān* and in the ways it is classified, the themes of attraction, pulling, or magnetism are ubiquitous so that, for example, affect, as energy, is not equally dissipated across experience, nor is affect neutral. In other words, being pulled on is a feeling of being pulled towards something and away from one’s self, towards the ritual space against one’s better judgment. Music is what negotiates this tension: structured melodies and rhythms serve as musical signals that trigger, direct, push, and 'control' bodies.

In addition—and this is key—affectivity in *dīwān* often causes pain or suffering. While affect theorists have, to some extent, addressed the ways that affect relates to evasion, threat, manipulation, destruction, and other 'negative' effects (see Massumi 2002), although most often in political or public spheres and not so much in personal worlds—there is, nevertheless, a prevailing tendency to consider the movement of affect in liberating terms, as transformative, as a force of constant 'becoming' (see Gregg and Seigworth 2010; Manning 2010; Venn 2010; and others), or for its 'emancipatory potential' (see Papoulias 2010: 35; Manning 2010: 122). However, in *dīwān*, affectivity is often quite the opposite: dense and heavy. And even while affect might 'move', struggle is often at the heart of its movement.

To provide an example, during a *dīwān* I attended in Mascara in August 2016, a man fell 'sick' (*mrīḍ*), meaning that he was inhabited by a supernatural agent during the song of Bū Derbāla, one of two songs for the saint ‘Abd el-Qādr Jīlānī. His trance behavior indicated that, despite taking place during a song for ‘Abd el-Qādr Jīlānī, the man was not affected by the saint but, rather, by a *jinn* afflicting him: he began to slowly eat the hot coals that were being used to keep the incense burning. Next, he asked for two large knives to be brought to him and insisted on 'working' these knives in the
song—that is, using them to slash at his abdomen—something that is unconventional and quite controversial in this particular song because the personage of ʿAbd el-Qādr Jīlānī is an old sage who moves slowly and deliberately and should therefore be depicted as such. As one woman, Khaira, put it, ‘There should normally be no violence in Bū Derbāla. It is the jinn who wants that’; the jnūn tend to be much more precarious and potentially dangerous. Khaira, who grew up going to dīwanat, added that Bū Derbāla is a song for arwāḥ (the spirits)—for whom there are particular songs (brāj)—and Bū Derbāla is not for the jnūn, meaning that what took place in this song was quite unconventional, not to mention concerning. Some near me explained this break from convention as a result of the modern, disintegrating state of dīwān ritual, that, ‘no one follows the rules anymore’, that niyya (good intention) has disappeared. However, following the logic of how people fall 'sick', this sickness is already a breaking down of agency, a breaching of boundaries. Elsewhere I encountered the viewpoint that when someone falls ‘sick’ by a jinn (mrīḍ)—a word that, in the dīwān context, always implies supernatural inhabitation—there is no telling what can happen; it is the jinn acting, after all, and the jnūn do not follow human rules.

The taking of this man's body, his agency, and his subjectivity by the jinn has immediate and direct affective consequences: his emoting, his behavior, and his actions were all pressed upon by the jinn even while the jinn's actions, words, moves, and overall affective state happen through the man's bodily and emotional mechanisms. At times, the man slightly recovered and it was apparent that he was going in and out of the state. But, as the songs in the dīwān ritual continued, the man's trance did not ease as it should have. Rather, he continued to enter and leave the ritual space, song after song, seeming increasingly agitated despite the ups and downs of his struggle.

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15 The jnūn (pl.; jinn, singular) are supernatural beings made of smokeless fire. See more below.
16 Speaking with several dīwān connoisseurs afterwards about this man's trance, one of the men, Hamid, said, 'And when he gets home, he's just going to fall ill over and over. Back and forth like that, he'll go between the dīwān and home and won't get well', meaning that the jinn won't leave him alone but will continue to afflict him. Munir, another dīwān connoisseur (muḥeb) sitting near me, explained why: 'Because the mʿāllem did not play certain rhythms in Bū Derbāla [the song] that he [the man] needed to hear'. Here, the senses are bound together: hearing a certain rhythm is the only pathway to unclenching the jinn’s bodily and affective agency/subjectivity over the man. Without those rhythms, the man is affectively bound to the jinn, trapped in a cycle of 'sickness'—this is the kind of common struggle at the heart of the affectivity in dīwān.
As with this man unable to realise his trance, stuck in a state of agitation and needing to slash at his abdomen, talking about affectivity necessitates talking about affective integration and entanglement: the ways that individuals become inter-corporally and inter-subjectively bound or trapped with other agents, human or nonhuman. As Venn (2010: 139) puts it, there is an 'active, constitutive becoming through relating' and yet what is 'becoming', again, also needs to be interrogated because, in these cases, these human/nonhuman relations are often more oppressive than they are liberating. Here, there is no 'flow'. Here, affectivity is not 'emancipatory' but binding and punishing, even cruel, as some women described the arduous, exhausting, and painful affective processes they are subjected to by some *jnūn*.

On this note, Sarah Pinto reminds us to consider paradoxes of 'movement', such as 'forms of stasis [that] movement can bring into being—the automatic, programmed and drone-like', as well as, 'the liberating capacities of sitting still—meditatively or enraptured, or of inhabiting an authoritative grid—the submission of prayer, the discipline required to fulfill an aesthetic vision' (2011: 5). Along these lines, I was repeatedly told that when a person is beginning to feel seized by a *rūḥ, jinn*, or some other nonhuman agent, sometimes sitting still can prevent the feelings from intensifying—they are not pleasant sensations, after all. Several women who had this experience would eat *jāwī* (benzoin) because consuming it, unlike smelling it burning over the coals, works as anaesthesia, as one woman put it.

Let me summarise here that, in the examples I have given and will continue to provide, *dīwān* raises important questions about how we theorise affect and its possibilities and potentials: how intentional/unintentional or how pre-personal or nonbiographical it may be, and how it is transmitted such as the way it might pool, collect, bind, or oppress rather than 'flow'. Finally, it will be my aim below to demonstrate that the focus on affective *labour* in *dīwān* also demonstrates the ways humans intentionally take charge of affect, seeking to produce, manage, and ‘work’ it; a perspective that also challenges the ‘autonomous’ and pre-ideological assumptions of affectivity.
Researcher Positionality

I was first launched into the world of dīwān in May 2013 while on a pre-doctoral research grant from the American Institute of Maghrib Studies (AIMS). I had previously befriended a group of young, Algerois men of Berber origins with a music group, Wlād Bambara, who played both traditional dīwān and gnāwa music around the country. While allowing me to observe their weekly practices for their appearance in the upcoming, annual Diwan Festival of Bechar, and seeing that I could also play and dance, they insisted that I join them on stage in their performance in Bechar. My appearance on stage as the only foreigner at the festival—and the only non-Algerian and woman on stage—dancing, playing, and singing dīwān music catapulted me into the press, radio, and television. From that point forward, my doctorate on dīwān was national knowledge. I was often out of control of the ways my research was represented in the media; some dīwān musicians learned about me on television before we met in person and some of the ways I and my research were represented in the media were troubling. The following two years I began declining interviews by the media, particularly when the political situation grew more tense in September 2014 after the murder of the French hiker, Hervé Gourdel, in the Kabylie mountains southeast of Algiers.

However, it was my regular attendance at dozens of dīwān rituals between May 2013 and September 2016 all over Algeria, from Oran to Ghaidaia to Algiers and Biskra, where I really came to know and be known by the dīwān communities.17 My first connections in Algiers gradually provided contacts across the country—dīwān musical worlds are connected social worlds, often bound by kinship, so that with names and phone numbers of friends of friends or extended family members, I moved around local dīwān communities with the help of these new contacts who took me in, acted as my chaperones, and who would ‘vouch’ for me with the various dīwān insiders during the first stages of my research. Accessing dīwanat without such introductions and support would have been impossible; except for the summer time, large w ādat (like saints festivals, several dīwanat over a period of three to five days) where the public can

17 My field research periods were three months from May-August 2013; one month in May 2014; four months from July 2014-November 2014; six months from December 2014-June 2015; and three months from July - September 2016, totaling seventeen months.
attend. Furthermore, it never ceased to amaze me how difficult it could be to find the locations of many dīwānats and how little information my contacts had about them before setting off; once we were in the right neighborhood, word on the street was always enough to lead the way.

This network of contacts that began in Algiers first took me to Oran in June 2013; I was picked up at the train station by friends of a friend in Algiers: Nūreddīn 'Nounou' Khīter and Nūreddīn Sarjī, two men who will be important to the ethnographic stories below. Nounou became my main contact and 'way in' to the communities in the West in the first three months of my fieldwork. Later, Nūreddīn Sarjī, the son of the great master, Shaykh Majdūb, took over when Nounou became busy with work. Over the course of my year in Algeria from July 2014 until September 2016, I gradually worked myself into the ‘dīwān alert’ phone tree and, over time, I gradually learned how to fit into the dīwān dynamic and ritual field not just as observer but as a participant even in ways over which I had no control. With a shoulder bag full of recording equipment and spare food, I tucked myself in the corners of packed rooms or outdoor tents, and found means to photograph, audio and video record. Usually sitting in the women’s section or at the border between where the musicians (men) joined the women’s section, I learned how to care for women who had passed out near me just after completing their trances—fanning their faces, stroking their backs, giving them cold water to drink or sugar cubes to restore them.

The way my position and my work were interpreted by the dīwān ritual community, however, was particularly important at every turn. Because dīwān is situated in the context of Islam, regardless of how its legitimacy might be contested by outsiders, its religious and/or spiritual context is essential to its practicants. Therefore, my affinity for the practice raised continuous questions about my own religious and supernatural beliefs which were often very relevant to how much trust, access, and information certain communities wished to provide. Some of my dīwān friends told me that other researchers in my position would have encountered much greater difficulty than I had and that the relative ease with which I was able to access the dīwān circles was evidence that my research was divinely guided and that I had the permission and favour of the spirits (jnūn) who could have otherwise made my work impossible. Thus, the question
of my agency and power (or lack thereof) over my 'research' became very relevant to my position. In their eyes—as I hope will become clear below—dīwān had a hold of me more than I had a hold of it. Other ūlād dīwān (lit. ‘children of dīwān’, the adepts and practicants of dīwān) explained that my love for the music indicated that I must be suffering in some way that the music could attend to; in turn, my own suffering was seen to give me the ability to relate to and understand dīwān on affective and embodied registers. Occasionally, ūlād dīwān inquired about what this vulnerability and connection might be, asking questions about my past—some ūlād dīwān in Mascara determined that it must be connected to an early fascination I had with Lakota Sioux music ritual practices. They connected this aspect of my past to the 'Apache Indian-like' Hausa Migzawa spirits of dīwān. Maybe the Migzawa spirits accepted me for this reason, they wondered.

Several times, those within and outside of the dīwān community warned me of the possibility of my being afflicted by certain members of the spirit pantheon; I was seen as fair game by the spirits and vulnerable partly because I was inexperienced and because my friends determined that I was a sensitive person. I was cautioned to be careful that I did not listen to too much dīwān music on my own and to frequently tbākhar, or use the smoke of incense (bkhūr) to purify myself if I ever felt 'strange'. Because my dīwān friends believed that I was favoured by the spirits or that I had some connection to the music beyond intellectual interest (an ability to 'dance' to it appropriately, play the music), this surprising anomaly helped break the ice and provided opportunities. While my contacts knew and did not forget that I was an outsider, they also considered me enough of an insider—someone also consumed by dīwān—that they tolerated, accepted, and welcomed my presence in ways that a perception of a more 'distant' approach would not have afforded. Even in one of my later research periods in the summer of 2016, I learned from my dīwān friends with whom I traveled to dīwanat that most people in the dīwān communities we frequented in the West did not realise that I was conducting research; they only knew me as an American woman with a strange love for the ritual.

Some of my dīwān friends feared for me being so conspicuous at dīwanat (an outsider woman photographing, recording, and filming) worrying that I was tempting the Evil Eye and the bad intentions of others; they warned me to be careful. I often
responded consistently to the same songs—in particular Sīdī ‘Alī and the Hausawiyyn brāj—so that my friends and acquaintances declared that these were 'my songs' meaning I had a relationship with these songs (and possibly with the nonhuman agents of those songs too). I usually resisted 'trancing' at dīwanat to avoid drawing attention to myself unless it was a small, intimate gathering where I knew most of the people. But when I was pulled to the floor to dance, I moved to the best of my ability, with the knowledge I had gained from asking and watching. I slowly learned how to let the music enter my body, how to feel it pushing into my solar plexus, circulating in my blood, and moving my limbs. I learned how to physically ‘move' those sensations, or tejdeb, but even more so, I began to learn how to let those sensations move me. That I came to be a jedēba also, a trancer, afforded me possibilities to attempt to learn how to feel and experience the ritual the way it appeared my dīwān friends felt and experienced it. My participation and my ability to respond appropriately—emotionally and somatically—gave me more credibility as an outsider and proved useful for understanding more about dīwān epistemology. Because I occasionally fell sick from exhaustion and sleep deprivation after long periods of dīwanat, my dīwān friends sometimes interpreted this as my inexperience and vulnerability to being around spirits and other energies. The ways they worried and cared for me were touching opportunities to understand how the affective realms of dīwān extend beyond the ritual itself.

My being an American woman and outsider always affected the kinds of access I had—both in terms of the politics of gender and nationality—and the nature of information I was given. Oftentimes this worked in my favor, allowing me more access than many Algerians (especially women) had—a complicated and often awkward situation to navigate. But being a woman did limit me from certain aspects of the male domain—particularly the socialising before and after dīwanat or sometimes when visiting the homes of mʾallemīn, I was shuffled into the room to sit with the women. Almost all dīwanat are gender separated with men’s and women’s sections, the latter typically being less accessible to the ritual space. Except for in rare cases to film, I was seated in the women’s section but tried to get as close to the musicians as possible. Being a cultural 'third category', moving between men’s and women’s worlds, and quite unlike my Algerian female counterparts in life experience, expectations, and habits, my
interactions with women tended to be more awkward and strained for the first year of my coming and going. In many cases, I was seen as a threat given that I was mobile, independent, and, as was common knowledge, unmarried and without children. Therefore, my movement in men’s worlds, spending time with male musicians and ritual participants and experts in ways that Algerian women would not have been able to do made many connections with the women difficult.

However, even so, I sensed that my presence, an unfamiliar female presence, could also be unsettling to the men, particularly to older men, beyond greetings and limited questions. Therefore, in dīwanat, I made an effort to gradually work my way into the women’s tight circles and befriend them so that, eventually, I only really approached men in their spaces for short periods or when especially invited to do so. I limited my movements away from the women’s sections, just skirting the edge of the men’s section. My last fieldwork period between June and September of 2016, I made a concerted effort to talk primarily with women, sit with them during dīwanat, and concentrate on their view of the ceremonies. As I began really taking note of the gender divisions and asking questions about it, some responses were that this gender division is relatively ‘new’, since more conservative forms of Islam began taking hold after the 1990s. Many commented that, originally, dīwān was supposed to be for the women but lately, with more emphasis on social modesty codes, the tradition has become more male centered. I was affected by these dynamics as well; although I had more liberties as a Western woman, I was still, first, a woman and my gender was central to the information and access I had. Outside of dīwanat, when I was able to befriend families and spend time in their homes getting to know the women, this context helped to ease some of the tensions with the time I spent in men’s spaces. Despite these challenges, because the men regularly made exceptions for me, and because women’s worlds were open to me, I ultimately had unprecedented access to both perspectives of the music, discourse, and practice. I was welcomed into the lives of my Algerian friends with remarkable generosity and hospitality.

The knowledge that I would be writing a doctoral thesis and putting oral histories into a material form encouraged some to open up but gave many dīwān experts pause. If some were discreet, if not silent, or outright confessed that they, understandably, would
not share their secrets, others were incredibly open and shared very personal aspects of their lives with me. Sometimes I was sent on ‘wild goose chases’ or I worked out that I was being told a ‘line’ to put me off course; these experiences taught me much about the elusiveness of ‘truth’ and transmission of dīwān: knowledge must be earned. On this note, rather than focusing on just one family or maḥalla, I found it most diplomatic (‘objective’) and helpful to staying fresh with my research to split time between several family groups, primarily with the large Sarjī family group based around Oran and Mostaganem, Qwīder ‘Arūbī also of Oran, the Canon-Farajī-Būterfās kinship group of Saida, the Bel ‘Arabī and Zendēr family groups of Mascara, and with more limited time with Benʿūda Ben Brahīm and his zāwīya in Relizane, the Maharrar and Zerwāli maḥallat in Perrigaux (see Chapter Six). Much of this decision was to avoid being ‘claimed’ as the researcher of any one particular family or group, to avoid controversies when there were disagreements between groups, and to also allow for the most diverse range of information and experience in order to provide a starting point for an ethnography of dīwān.

Being based in Oran allowed me to more easily travel around the western corridor and especially to the two other, prominent, nearby dīwān centers of Mascara and Saida while also frequently attending dīwanat in and just outside of the city. Other areas I regularly visited to record dīwanat or conduct interviews were Perrigaux (Mohammmedia), Ain Temouchent, Mostaganem, Relizane, Arzew, Sidi Bel ʿAbbess, and Kristel. Outside of the dominant western Algerian practice, I also conducted research and observed dīwanat when possible in Algiers, Blida, Bechar, Timimoun, Adrar, the Mzab valley (Ghardaia and Lʿatef), Ouargla, Biskra, and Constantine. While adequately covering all these areas is outside the limits of this thesis, I will focus on those areas with the most dīwān activity that continue to have an important role in the flux of current dīwān practice.

Finally, relevant to and informing this thesis is also sixteen months of fieldwork on the Moroccan gnāwa between 2008 and 2011 for my Master’s research in ethnomusicology at Tufts University. Lastly, despite providing a broad, historically grounded comparative framework for dīwān practice across Algeria, in conversation with previous, structuralist scholarship, a key goal of this thesis is to prioritise the local,
'here and now' meanings, controversies, and personal worlds of dīwān communities. To the best of my ability, I have represented, analysed, and contextualised the information I was given, but understanding dīwān is undoubtedly a life-long process.

In this chapter, I have mapped the intellectual history and legacies pertinent to this thesis: the historiography of North Africa and the common frames of analysis, the history of academic inquiry into trance and additional questions and possibilities for consideration. I also provided an introduction to affect theory as well as why affectivity in dīwān both necessitates the use of affect theory and challenges some of its fundamental assumptions. I followed this background context with my researcher positionality in order to transparently introduce who I am and discuss the nature of my research, how I was perceived in the field, and why certain kinds of information were available to me or not. Like any ethnographic project, mine is just one view of many possible interpretations but I hope that it will be a productive one that does justice to the hospitality and grace with which I was welcomed into the world of dīwān.
CHAPTER TWO: THE EMERGENCE OF DĪWĀN: THE AFRO-MAGHRIBI CONTEXT

A. Trans-Saharan Caravans and Sufi Histories

Algerian dīwān of Sīdī Bilāl is a musico-ritual tradition that originated, coalesced, and developed out of the trans-Saharan slave trade, combining the practices, languages, and sensibilities of various sūdānī ethnolinguistic groups. Dīwān likely developed over hundreds of years of trans-Saharan traffic by the descendants of these diverse sūdānī populations as they came into contact with Berber and Arab cultures and social organisation in present day Algeria and, very likely, nomadic cultures along trans-Saharan trade routes. While early chariot crossings by the Romans are depicted in rock paintings, trans-Saharan trade only really blossomed after the introduction of the camel in the first centuries of the first millennium. The arrival of Islam facilitated communication through literacy and writing (Lydon 2009) and, by the ninth century, the routes were well established. From the eleventh century onward, along with gold, 'slaves were the most important trade item out of Kanem-Bornu' (58). At least by the fifteenth century, Timbuktu was a major commercial center with trade networks to the Southeast, including Kano, Kastina, Sokoto, and Gobir, and as far East as the kingdom of Kanem-Bornu and onwards to Cairo.

The Ottoman period in present day Algeria was the height of the trade and, as Lovejoy explains, the major market center of Bornu, 'had long maintained diplomatic and commercial relations with the Ottoman Empire and other Muslim states’ (2004: 13). Caravan routes varied over time due to climate change or natural disasters, like shifting desertification and droughts. Political upheaval was also a major factor, such as the Moroccan raid of the Songhay empire in the 1590s which caused caravan routes to shift further east to ‘Ottoman-monitored North African and central Saharan oases’ stimulating trade with the Hausa markets of Kano, Sokoto, and Katsina, ‘and especially with the kingdom of Kanem-Bornu further east’ (Lydon 2009: 106).

Broadly, with relation to Algeria, the main north-south routes involved Timbuktu to Tlemcen or Oran via the Tuwat Oases (Adrar), and from the Mzab Valley up to
Medea—one of the largest slave markets—and onto Algiers. At other times, caravans kept a more southerly trajectory through Ouargla and into Tripoli (see Lovejoy 2004 and Lydon 2012). Also important to the trade were the northeastern Saharan oases of Ghat, Ghadames, and Murzug (Lydon 2009: 80-81). Baude wrote in 1841 that the three main caravan points in Algeria were Oran, Constantine, and Medea (continuing onto Algiers), with Ouargla also being an important crossroads for caravans that continued to Medea and Constantine (Baude 1841:163; see also Fey 1858).

What the Ottomans encountered as they established a foothold in Algiers in the first part of the sixteenth century was a tribal society and one already rich with 'confederations' and organised groups. The Ottoman regime:

'singled out tribal leaders, known as bachagas, who in exchange for status and privileges acted as administrators and supplied fighting men... On top of this the Ottomans actively encouraged the Sufi orders by giving them judicial positions and tax revenues, as well as money to endow mosques and tombs. Thus, an essentially egalitarian lineage society was transformed into a hierarchical one linked to Ottoman authority in Algiers'—Evans and Phillips 2007: 23.

In *The Kingdom of Algiers Under the Last Dey*, Louis Rinn provides pages of various zāwīyat and makhzen tribes under the three main Beyliks of Constantine, Titteri, and Oran which the Turks had classified, such as the Zāwīya des Ūlād Sīdī Daḥū in Mascara under the Beylik of Oran (2005: 119). One key tribal group was the 'Hamyane-Cheraga', grand nomadic caravaniers and vassals of the Ūlād Sīdī Shaykh tribe as well as the Turks, and agents of various Sufi lineages (Tijanniyya, Taibiyya and Qadiriyya) which served to aid their commercial ventures (Rinn 2005: 123). Favouring certain tribes and playing them off against one another, Ottoman governance essentially prioritised hierarchical and top-down relations. Interestingly, most of the names of these tribes correspond to the major dīwān families of these regions, suggesting that dīwān families may have taken the names of local shyūkh or saints not unlike the practice of slaves taking the family name of their masters—hence the proliferation of Turkish

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18 Dermenghem 1954: 257.
19 ‘Zaouia Des ouled Sidi Daho’.
family names in Algeria—or a sub-Saharan city of origin, like 'Kano.' Furthermore, it is interesting to note that many names of such tribes, again named after saints—Ūlād Sīdī Brāhīm, 'Īssa, and Bū Derbāla, for example—are also major brāj in the primary section of the dīwān ritual.

Sufi Business

In the early part of the seventeenth century, ‘an enduring Sufi movement led by the Bakkay branch of the scholarly Kunta clan [emerged] with positive ramifications on regional commerce’; by the second half of the eighteenth century, the Kunta were ‘actively involved in caravanning’ (Lydon 2009: 97-98). It was particularly this ‘Arabic speaking, scholastic, saintly’ clan who then were the ‘ambassadors of Islam and Al-Qadiriyya in the Western Sahara and Bilad Es-Sudan in West Africa’. Umar Shaykh of the Kunta tribe 'was initiated into the Qādirī . . . and this accounts for the almost exclusive prevalence of the Qadiriyya in West Africa until the nineteenth-century Tijaniyya was introduced’ (Trimingham 1971: 88). They played such a major role in the 'propagation of the Qadiriyya Tariqa in West Africa, the Western Sahara, and the Maghrib that this tariqa… [Is] often referred to as Al-Tariqa Al-Qadiriyya Al-Kuntawiyya' (Batran 2001; 8). Lydon explains that they were intimately involved with many branches of the trade:

‘Through patron-client relationships and a vast Sufi network, the Kunta commanded a sizable portion of caravan traffic, specializing in both the salt and tobacco trades, extending from the western Sahara to the Hausa markets of Sokoto. At the same time, they were involved in other areas of the regional economy from herding and rearing camels…to redistributing slaves…” (2009: 98).

Sufi-based networks across the Sahara provided institutional frameworks and social capital that, ‘offered some protection to traders against regional instability’

20 For example, the present-day major names of Dahou (Mascara), Benʿūda (Relizane), Bu ʿomer (Oran), Harrar (Perrigaux), Bouhadjjar (Ain Temouchent).

21 In the west, 'Oranie' the four major tribes in the sixteenth century, before Ottoman governance had really took hold in the west, were the Ūlād Sīdī Brāhīm, Ūlād Mūsā, Ūlād 'Abdellah, and 'Alahaxeses' (El Korso 1978: 85).
(Lydon, 91) and Lovejoy concurs that the spread of Sufism was largely dependent on these networks, which were closely associated with such centres as Timbuktu, Agades, Kulumbaro, and Katsina (2004: 16). Furthermore, the routes, resting points, and destinations were structured around various Sufi shyūkh (masters) and zāwīyat (religious schools, lodges) helping caravaners form ‘tight-knit corporate associations based on trust and a reliance on Islam as an institutional framework’ (Lydon 2009: 21). During the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century, these kinds of systems were integral to the success of the trade because Turkish and indigenous authorities were incapable of governing and keeping in check the more remote parts of the territory:

'In an area where supernatural powers were presumed to play an important part in the life of human beings, it was natural for its inhabitants to appeal to those powers for the protection which the temporal authorities could not provide. The marabouts [holy men], who were considered capable of invoking these power and of using them, were also considered immune from molestation by an arbitrary ruler or from the attack of outlaws in distant lands. Holy men thus travelled in desolate areas loaded with valuable goods without fear of robbers. This partly explains the association of commerce with religion in such areas as the Sahara.' (Abu Nasr 1965: 6-7).

In other words, trans-Saharan trade was not only facilitated by but pioneered by Sufi orders on both sides of the Sahara; holy men were simultaneously business men and politicians; many marabouts became merchants or made a profession of securing merchandise.\(^{22}\) While caravans stopped and rested, taking shelter at zāwīyat along the way, such institutional systems came to be a part of the integration of sub-Saharan subjectivity. These lodges had slaves and/or servants—documented particularly in the Sahara oases such as Tabelbala, the Tuwa oases, and the Mzab Valley—and working in these zāwīyat, they would have learned the ways of the system with the potential to eventually purchase their own freedom (Rozet 1833; Lovejoy 2004). ‘Islamic practice also allowed slaves to work on their own account under a system, known as murgu in Hausa’ (Lovejoy 2004:5). And if slaves were not already attached to Sufi lodges, they

\(^{22}\) Furthermore, politically powerful Sufis in present day Algeria were also intricately involved and strategic; for example, at one point Emir Abdelkader is said to have tried to attract the former Tafilalet caravan towards Mascara (Baude 1841: 31).
could take refuge in them if they had problems with their master: *shyūkh* or ‘marabout’ were instrumental in negotiating and mediating these relationships (Rozet 1833: 128).

While products from Timbuktu passed on from the wealthy empire of Tlemcen across the Mediterranean and into other markets, the Ottoman Empire was a notable power in the trans-Saharan slave trade, having great need for labor of all kinds—domestic labor in the homes, military labour, craftsman, and small trades like attendees in bath houses, metalsmiths, and butchers. The Turks were actively involved in importing slaves for external markets and for their own uses; some caravans were even escorted by Ottoman soldiers in certain directions (Baude 1841:184). Slaves were often sent as tributes by *shyūkh* and nobles across the span of the routes to the Dey in Algiers, such as the *shaykh* of Ouargla who gave the Pacha at Algiers thirty slaves as a gift annually (Baude 1841:164). In addition, as payment to Algiers, the beys of Oran and Constantine sent male and female slaves along with other products totaling around three thousand dollars each annually (Spencer 1976:57) Furthermore, the Turks filled the ranks of their garrisons with freed slaves (Dermenghem 1954: 256) and secured arrangements with freed slaves such as the beylik of Titteri who secured a *makhzen* tribe of freed slaves who were likely commanded by two blacks (Aucapitaine and Federman 1867:357).

Slavery within sub-Saharan Africa between various ethnolinguistic groups was ongoing and continuous throughout history so that sub-Saharan Muslims, particularly those with knowledge of the Islamic approaches to slavery, would have had certain assumptions and would have developed strategies to benefit from the various institutions that provided possibilities for emancipation. ‘The experiences of slaves in Muslim areas, at least, may have encouraged Muslim slaves to seek avenues of freedom within the system’ (Lovejoy 2004: 3-5). Such dynamics suggest that slaves might have worked their way through Sufi *zāwīyat* and positions, all the while taking in vocabulary and structures of *zāwīyat* and structures around them, even appropriating Ottoman and Sufi vocabularies of governance into their own ritual practices such as the terms *borj*, *dīwān*, *mahalla*, *shawsh* and *moqedm*, *shaykh*, and *zāwīya*, respectively (see below). That is to say, over centuries, the trans-Saharan Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya Sufi networks, in particular, became not just contexts in which sub-Saharan found themselves but these
epistemologies, practices, and ideologies gradually found resonance in the lifeworlds of slaves, their descendants, and with other indigenous black communities.\textsuperscript{23}

Hunwick explains:

'African religious practices found a continuing, if modified, expression through certain Sufi practices or were given a new lease on life by being integrated into North African festivals and shrine practices. Above all, religious rites gave enslaved Africans an opportunity to assume control over an important aspect of their lives, and to organize themselves along communal and hierarchical lines' —Hunwick in Lovejoy 2004:149.

Salīm Khīat’s (2006) unprecedented work on black brotherhoods demonstrates a complex lineage system of marabouts, such as the assemblage of the black saint, Sīdī Merzūg, largely neglected by scholars but still very much alive in southeastern Algeria. Such miraculous legends of holy deeds, particularly those of black saints, continue to circulate in discourse in Biskra, for example, and are often linked to the many maraboutic dome-like tombs (\textit{qubba}, sing; \textit{qibāb}, pl) that dot the landscape.\textsuperscript{24} While black Sufis or scholars may not be as normative in popular discourse, inside the mosque of Sīdī Abū Medīan in Tlemcen, one finds a circle of black mannequins dressed in white robes, sitting in a circle reading Qur’ānic boards, indicating that black Sufis were a mainstream reality.

That is not to suggest that the processes of adaptation, syncretism, or conversion were uniform and without tension and difficult negotiation. On the contrary, one must assume that politics and power dynamics of race, religion, and language were alive and well. Depending on from where slaves were brought, whether they were already Muslim

\textsuperscript{23} Khiat notes a legend among the black communities of Nafta and Souf that both determine that Merzūg was a black servant (\textit{khēdim}) of Sīdī Bū 'Ali; when it was discovered that Merzūg had supernatural powers, Sīdī Bū 'Ali exclaimed, 'a \textit{wālī} [saint] cannot serve a \textit{wālī}!' and 'a \textit{shāykh} cannot serve a \textit{shāykh}' after which Merzūg was thrown out. Because the daughter of Sīdī Bū 'Ali intervened, Merzūg did not 'land' far and thus, he became a local saint (2006: 118-119).

\textsuperscript{24} Personal communication with various musicians and \textit{diwān} families in Biskra. To complicate matters, in Biskra the main family of \textit{shekwa} (bagpipe, also known as the \textit{mizwīd}) players have the family name of Merzūg. While there does not seem to be any direct claim of a tie to the saint, the \textit{shekwa} and its regional performance is almost always associated with black/sūdānī populations of the region so that \textit{shekwa} is synonymous with 'black' and also with the word 'Merzūg.' When one wants to hire a \textit{shekwa} troupe, for example, he can simply say, 'I need some Merzūg.' The connection of black sainthood between Merzūg and Bilāl also turns up in the ways that \textit{diwān} or \textit{ginbrī} practice in the east are linked to \textit{shekwa}/Merzūg performances either by the same families playing both styles and/or by the two musical traditions being presented back to back for marriages or festivities.
or new converts, and whether or not they had any exposure to Arabic, many would have still been quite ‘other,’ most likely speaking Hausa, Kanuri, Songhay, or other sūdānī languages.  

In the western corridor where Sufi orders were strongest, there may be have been more opportunity for enslaved sub-Saharan Africans to gradually work their way through the ranks. However, despite the possibility for strong ties from within Sufi orders, we also find parallel, ongoing phenomena of spirit possession cults around Algeria—primarily influenced by the Hausa bori possession ceremony. About these phenomena, Lovejoy remarks, ‘the enslaved were incorporated into the Islamic fold, but haphazardly and not always successfully’ (2004: 2). The earliest surviving, recorded account, to my knowledge, of such practices is in 1833 by Rozet (1798-1858), a French geographic engineer. Rozet describes attending and witnessing a ceremony in Algiers seemingly analogous to today’s dīwān: at that time, it was called djelep. To the best of my knowledge, there is no clear indication of when and where the term ‘dīwān’ came into usage or if it was perhaps modified or developed from the djelep. It is quite likely that ‘dīwān’ is the term the Ottoman Turks gave the gathering but it could have also had appeal for the practicing communities for its association with Ottoman governance and privilege. Despite the shock and disgust with which Rozet recounts these sub-Saharan rituals, various North African occult and divinatory practices were extremely common and intertwined with the social fabric—hence, Dermenghem’s masterpiece, The Cult of the Saints in the Islamic Maghrib. Ottoman daily life in Algiers resembled much of what has come to be seen as the 'baraka belt' (Clancy-Smith 1994) of North African popular Islam. As Spencer (1976) describes this phenomenon:

‘Belief in evil spirits (cin taifes) and the interventionary powers of marabouts was strong. The marabouts had a special role as intercessors and devotional objects for Algerine women, since they were not permitted to participate in public prayers. Women visited the kubbes [qubba-s] regularly to make votife offerings, light oil lamps, and lay flowers in support of the divine intervention they sought to alleviate social or family difficulties’ (Spencer 1976: 89).

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25 Dermenghem 259 also notes the overwhelming presence of Hausa and Songhay.
The hierarchy of Ottoman social fabric reached into and was replicated within 
sūdānī communities in Algiers. All occupations and trades were organised into
corporations, each of which had an amin or representative in charge who spoke on
behalf the organisation with extensive and mediating authority to settle disputes (Rozet
vol 3: 79).26 Similarly, each neighborhood also had an amin accountable to the beylik
(Léspès 1930: 180). Several early French sources state that communities of blacks (‘les
nègres’) throughout Algeria often had a chief. or qāʾīd (written caʿid in French
literature). For example, while Rozet may be the first to document this in Algiers,
Guichon’s (1927, 1931) study of female life in the Mzab indicated that black
communities had a ‘caid des negres’, a leader and spokesperson for the entire community
who, again, took mediating roles similar those of Sufi shyūkh.27 Similarly, all
‘foreigners’ or migrants to the city were segregated into gated neighborhoods called
‘berrāniyyas’—from the word berrānī (male) or berrāniyya (female) an ‘outsider’—such
as those for the Mozabites, Biskris, Laghouatis, and the ‘Ousfanes’ or Blacks.

In Biskra, within separate, gated neighborhoods, there were also internal diyār
separating groups by profession such as the dār el-ʿabīd (house of the blacks, literally
‘sclaves’), dār el-ḥaddad for the blacksmiths, and even houses for saintly lineages of
shyūkh (Clancy-Smith 1994:25). While Rozet mentions that in Algiers blacks lived close
to the city, in the same way that the 'Moors' did (volume 2: 140), it is not clear if he was
referring to the berrāniyyas or another system of housing; these might have been the
slaves living close to their masters.

In Algiers and Constantine as well as other smaller cities where Ottoman
hierarchical influence was pervasive, we find an analogous system of communal houses
or diyār (pl.; dār, sing.) associated with the different sūdānī ethnolinguistic groups
previously mentioned. Around 1900, there were seven houses of Sīdī Bilāl in Algiers:
three ‘eastern, Hausa' houses (Bornu, Katchina, and Zozo) and four 'western' houses
(Bambara, Songhay, Tombu, Gourma)(Andrews 1903: 36). By the time Dermenghem
was writing in 1954, there was only Dār Bambara and Dār Zozo remaining yet the latter

26 Quote: 'Tous les méteurs à Alger sont organisés en corporations, dont chacune a un chef nommé Amin,
qui possède une autorité très étendue, et même arbitraire; cependant il ne peut pas empêcher de travailler
les ouvriers soumis à sa juridiction.'
27 For instance, the caid ensured that slaves were treated well and that they performed their duties (volume
2: 37)
was directed by a 'white' who was more involved with 'white' possession-divination ceremonies that had presumably absorbed influence of 'sudānī' practices (1954:261). Furthermore, while it is not clear if these houses grew out of the berranīyyas or existed at the same time, many of the most important diyār, as well as the largest slave market in Algiers, were situated very near the Casbah.28

Much like the Ottoman Regency’s focused power in Algiers, it is also possible that some kind of power emanated from the dīwān community in Algiers out to other dīwān families through the country. One dīwān muḥeb (connoisseur) and ethnomusicologist in Algiers, ‘Abd el-Wāḥed Faḍel, suggested that these diyār of Algiers may have been a governing authority over the entire network of dīwān communities both within and outside of Algiers, including their practices and repertoires. If dīwān communities were similarly governed from the strength of the Algiers’ diyār, this indeed could partly explain why the dīwān ritual music repertoire across Algiers towards the West is remarkably cohesive. It might also explain why the predominant style of playing in the West is, 'paradoxically,' known as 'shergī' meaning 'eastern' (from sharq for East29), suggesting that, like Ottoman governance, perhaps an ‘Eastern' dīwān authority governed the West (see below). While there was certainly some kind of shared dīwān corpus—something that remains to this day—certain houses not only had and still have particular songs and dances but they also utilised indigenous instruments to their ethnolinguistic group.

Many dīwān elders now cite the complicated dynamics of demographic change, shifting of power at state and community levels, and general upheaval after Algerian independence as one of the reasons that some practices and materials persevered while others disappeared; for example, we still find the Hausa kurkutū drum in use in Constantine and Biskra while, although the Südānī family in Algiers kept a kurkutū tucked away in their kumania, or sacred room for ritual objects, it is no longer played

28 In addition, Algiers long had strong connections with the Mzab valley, particularly Ghardaia as many Mozabites, known as excellent and honest tradesmen, set up businesses in Algiers and Oran. For example, Spencer (1976) notes that, in Ottoman times, Mozabites in Algiers 'monopolized the position of hammam attendants and formed the majority of butchers and millers' (p. 69). Such connections are still apparent in musical spheres as well and here, too, we see echoes of representational and hierarchical governmentality. The prominent Sudānī family of Algiers’ apparently still keep Dar Bambara and trace their origin to Ghardaia (personal communication, June 2013).
29 In the west, the consonant qaf is softened and pronounced like the English hard 'g.'
anywhere in Algiers. Similarly, while the Hausa one-string fiddle (gūgāy) shows up in old photos of Hausa musicians in Algeria, there is no longer any memory of its use although one still finds several decorating the walls in Dār Bornū-Hausa in Constantine.

Dermenghem (1954), Pâques (1964), and Lapassade (1982) note the steady collapsing of the diyār in Algiers and Constantine. Dermenghem noted the primarily Hausa and Songhay influences in dīwān but did not give details while Pâques similarly recognised that the slow disassembling of the diyār meant that Hausa and Bambara aesthetics would be the last standing since, in her view, the respective regions had symbolic and cosmological significance to the entire social organisation. During my own fieldwork in Constantine, similar to what Lapassade noted in 1982, Dār Baḥrī, and the combined Dar Hausa-Bornu still hold weekly Monday rituals, from late morning until mid-afternoon. While Lapassade called them 'diwan', they are quite distant from 'dīwān' in Algiers and the West. As he similarly noted, the rituals I attended were strictly held during daytime hours and consisted of singing and percussion only: t'bola, qrāqeb, kurkūtu, and occasionally darbukka—there was no ginbrī (three stringed lute, quintessential instrument of dīwān, see below).

Wilāya of Oran and the West

The structural and demographic makeup of the West is quite distinctive from Algiers eastwards; geography is the first major influence. The west of Algeria is considerably less hilly and indeed, proved a less precarious crossing for caravans from Timbuktu or other areas. Early sources on caravan routes (Baude 1841:179) mention that when caravans had exceptionally heavy loads, they would choose the longer, westerly route to Oran to avoid navigating the Atlas Mountains in and around Medea.

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30 The Fulani have an identical instrument, the kunkuru of Arab origin (Erlman 1983). Souag cites the kurk(u)tu as Hausa, according to Bargery (1934) and adds that in Songhay of Timbuktu, the verb 'kurkutu' means 'beat drums' (Souag 2013: 222).
31 This 'dīwān' is of an almost entirely different order, typically treating only women with six to twelve nūbāt, and only one woman at a time in front of the musicians. The evening ceremony, simply called 'gumbri' or 'ginbrī', is closest to what is known in the west as a 'dīwān' although darbukka may also be present.
The rolling hills around Mascara and Saida and the large agricultural expanses of the High Plateau northwards had somewhat sparse settlements; we see a great deal of smaller scale towns and encampments. However, social organisation and cohesion of the West was also drastically affected by a series of droughts, famines, and plagues in which Oran was considerably affected from the late eighteenth into the first third of the nineteenth century; particularly with repeated plagues, people fled the city in great numbers.

By the mid-nineteenth century, sources report that many different groups of rural migrants in search of work and from various tribes and outlying villages were camped outside the walls of Oran. Eventually the numbers grew so large that in 1845, Christophe Juchault de Lamoricière, acting governor general of Algeria from 1845-47, allotted these groups land and the creation of an 'indigenous village' that would be later termed 'Djalis' for 'foreigners' and then again, later termed le village nègre, referencing its 'black' inhabitants—where ‘black’ here was a generalised, colonial, racist term that included not just blacks but ‘Arabs’ or 'the Muslims' for their brown skin (Léspès 1938: 125). More importantly, the appellation indexed 'otherness' and poverty. It also may have been a nod to similar 'villages nègres' dotted around the West, from Relizane to Mascara to Saida, wherein many of the inhabitants were all black.

Figure 1: Village Nègre in Perrigaux, photo hanging in zāwīya.
This great restructuring effort in Oran was meant to clean up the various tents and shanty towns around what was called the Kargentah neighborhood while containing outsiders. This area today is, interestingly, now called The New City, *Medīna Jadīda*. Within this area of Oran one still finds standing the vacated and quite small *zāwīya* of Sīdī Bilāl. Today, most of these *villages nègres* are called *grāba*, plural for *gurbī*, a shantytown or all black village and often housing a *zāwīya* or ritual space for the local *dīwān* community.

Also in the West and in some southern areas we find a smaller scale unit of organisation—such as that of a family lineage—to the *dār* system in Algiers and Constantine: what are called *maḥallat* (plural; *maḥalla*, singular) as mentioned above. This may be short for 'bit el-*maḥalla*' or 'home of the *maḥalla*', the *maḥalla* being the sacred chest of ritual materials absolutely fundamental to conducting a *dīwān*. The term *maḥalla* also works as shorthand for addressing the physical sacred space, as a synonym for *zāwīya*—here meaning a site for religious and spiritual learning or practice, not necessarily tied to Sufism. Finally, and most commonly, *maḥalla* can also signify an organisation, association, or troupe of ‘musicians’ (see my definition below), what might normally be called a *firqa* in non-sacred contexts, because any ensemble of musicians require a *maḥalla* in order to conduct a *dīwān*. In ritual, everything revolves around the physical *maḥalla*, the sacred trunk of materials, so that to be authentic 'children of *dīwān*,' *ālād dīwān*—those born and bred in the tradition and/or with *sūdānī* ancestry—the group must have inherited a *maḥalla* from their ancestors.

B. The Afro-Maghribi Position

As noted, from the mid sixteenth century until 1830, Ottoman rule in Algeria had a notable role in organising and influencing the local, popular religious practices and socio-political organization of Sufi lineages so that, subsequently, *dīwān* developed into a syncretic Afro-Maghrebi ritual practice absorbing many of the same structures of other

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32 The term *firqa* is only used to describe *dīwān* troupes in non-ritual contexts such as when groups perform for festivals.

33 During my fieldwork period, I heard a controversy over a troupe in Algiers who had allegedly borrowed the *maḥalla* of another family. Another controversy circulated in Oran over a scandalous supposed selling of one family’s *maḥalla*. 
musical traditions within popular Islam in North Africa: saint veneration and pilgrimage to saint tombs, trance, and ritual healing. While dīwān epistemology is very much rooted in these Sufi family resemblances—and still currently reflects this in ritual taxonomy, ritual roles, gate-keeping of knowledge, and approaches to divinely influenced altered states—it is equally part of a wider family of 'sūdānī' spirit possession healing traditions in North Africa, namely the Moroccan gnāwa and Tunisian ṣṭambēlī. This shared trans-Saharan history contextualises their comparable epistemologies of ritual, the usage of common musical material, and their similar musical aesthetics.

Most importantly, the Afro-Maghribi family of music practices is commonly bound by its identification with Bilāl, an Abyssinian slave who converted to Islam, was tormented by others for his conversion, and was freed by the prophet, becoming not only a close companion to the Prophet but also the first muezzin (caller to prayer). Bilāl powerfully symbolises and validates black subjectivity in Islam and the supposed passage from slavery to freedom via Islam. Despite the fact that Bilāl was not a saint (ṣīdī or wālī) nor a holy man in the sense of performing miracles, and while he did not have a tariqā (spiritual path; ṭuruq, pl.), disciples, or his own lineage—meaning that, by definition, his is not a Sufi order—Bilāl nevertheless functions symbolically as a shaykh; he is sometimes referred to as the 'spiritual father', el-ʿābb er-rūḥī. His disciples, who are referred to as the Bilāliyya, share epistemological lifeworlds with other orders, particularly the Qadiriyya, those who associate with the Sufi saint ʿAbd el-Qādr Jīlānī. The very fact of calling Bilāl a 'Ṣīdī' (saint) establishes him as a manner of shaykh.

Dermenghem (1954) pointed out decades ago that North African Sufism makes little difference between saints and spirits; likewise, iconic figures easily accumulate the status of shyūkh. Holiness and baraka (divine blessing) may be flexible, porous, and transferrable. Each of the three Bilāliyya, Afro-Maghrebi traditions of Algerian dīwān, Moroccan gnāwa, and Tunisian ṣṭambēlī similarly contain complex spirit pantheons that draw from former sūdānī sacred traditions and histories as well as localised hagiographies of North African and Muslim saints across the Muslim world—from the

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34 There is a great deal of porosity between orders in Algeria. Many who frequent dīwānat also frequent ḡadrat (gatherings) of Qadiriyya or Tijaniyya orders. Similarly, Qadiriyya or Tijaniyya adepts attend dīwānat and are sometimes invited to sing and play drums for larger events, such as weddings where dīwān is one of several ‘Sufi’ practices featured.
regional saint Merzūg in southeast Algeria (also important to ṣṭambēlī) to the Sultān el-Awlīya (king of the saints), ‘Abd el-Qādr Jīlānī, the twelfth century saint with powers to govern other saints. Central to each of these three traditions is the practice of ritualised trance, often as a means to gain the baraka (blessing) of these saints or to incorporate supernatural agents through spirit possession trance, often called 'borī' in Algerian dīwān, a term that comes from the Hausa bori possession ceremony (see Besmer 1983; Tremearne 1914). In the dīwān community, this origin and connection is not recognised.

Let me establish here that for purposes of ease and clarity I will use the term 'ūlād dīwān' to refer to the Algerian dīwān community: born-in-the-tradition, ritually trained culture bearers and family lineages or those who grew up in dīwān rituals, even if they are not from a dīwān family (a descendent of slaves or the family and tribal transmission that followed). This is the term that 'insiders' use to refer to themselves and their basis in ritual. While, of course, 'ūlād dīwān' are not a homogenous group and there is an enormous amount of insider/outsider debate even between ūlād dīwān, this term serves to reference those who are primarily attached to the ritual context in contrast to a popular music context as will become clear below. Amongst the Algerian dīwān community, all of these musical and ritual practices are consistently and self-consciously situated within this Afro-Maghribi 'family' context—that is to say, there is an ongoing, lively polemic about how dīwān compares and contrasts to gnāwa and stambēlī, especially in its relationship to the gnāwa since most dīwān activity today takes place in the west of Algeria. Dīwān discourse asserts that its own repertoire draws from seven sūdānī tribes (qabā'il, plural; qabīla, singular), but there is not consensus on which seven tribes comprise it. The most commonly cited are Hausa (specifically Katsina mentioned in Algiers), Bambara, Songhay, Boussou, Bornu, Zozo, Gurma, and Fulani/Peul. The gradual coalescence of these varying groups into somewhat connected 'communities' leads us to the term ūlād dīwān, ūlād being a common term across Algeria that references tribal affiliation.

Despite this narrative, the only songs (brāj, plural; borj, singular) in dīwān consistently linked to any historic, ethnolinguistic group mentioned above are Hausa,

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Bornu, and Bambara (see more below). Nevertheless, it is important to note here that an identification of tribe as such might not necessarily indicate the origin of the brāj. It could also reference the behavior and qualities of the spirits or personages depicted in the brāj. Indeed, it is the ideas and the imaginaries of 'Bambara' and 'Hausa' that live on in the world of dīwān so that what are called 'Hausa brāj' may or may not have come from any of the several the Hausa-speaking states. However, ethnolinguistic origin is difficult if not impossible to determine because east-west, interior trade, domination, war, and slave raiding was ongoing. Such integrations can be seen at the level of religious and occult practices; for example, the Songhay spirit pantheon includes Hausa and Tuareg spirits (Rouch 1987) just as within the Hausa bori spirit pantheon there are Songhay, Tuareg, North African, and Fulani spirits (Besmer 1983).

Linguistically speaking, however, in dīwān we find mostly Hausa and Songhay survivals. Champault’s (1969) brilliant monograph on the small community of Tabelbala in the Algerian southwest features discussion on a unique dialect, kora n-die, that primarily utilises Songhay vocabulary, Berber forms, and Arabic roots and that neighboring groups consider the language to be ‘of the spirits' (jnūn) because of its unintelligibility (43). One also finds a local, rich sūdānī practice of ṭbola and qrāqeb and a complex social hierarchy of marabouts and shorfa ṭuruq. One important and ubiquitous Songhay loan in dīwān is the word 'bania' used consistently in brāj and meaning 'slave' but its current meaning indexes 'a child of dīwān', an insider. However, the largest degree of trans-Saharan connection is traceable through Hausa words, phrases, and names of spirits from the Hausa bori spirit pantheon. The most obvious is the common word in dīwān brāj, 'bāwa,' meaning 'slave' in Hausa. Other common words in song texts are 'mai' (master) and 'magani' ('medicine, magic, or charm').

35 On rare occasion, the brāj duo Gurma-Jayba (two brāj always played back to back) was associated with the Gurma tribe from the inner Niger River Bend, between the Mossi states and Sokoto Caliphate (Lovejoy 2000:156). However, Gurma-Jayba is classified under a special kind of Bahriyya spirit pantheon of rivers and, to some groups is classified as 'Bambara' (see also JB Andrews 1903: 9 where he notes a similar connection). Moqedm Jallūl of Saida considered Bahriyya as a 'tribe', throwing into question what is meant by the term exactly; assemblages of spirits, humans, or simply qualities or personages? (see Roberts 2014: 44-45).

36 Lovejoy (2000: 156) details how slave trading was taking place across sub-Saharan Africa, so that one found slaves in the Asante kingdom from as far away as the Sokoto caliphate as well as Gurma and Mossi states.

37 Shorfa are those who claim to have descended from the Prophet.
very popular *borj, Bori ya Bori Mana(n) Dabou* references the Hausa *bori* directly (*bori*, a spirit) and magic (*dabou*). Also in this *borj*, dancers use *bulālat*, whips of Hausa origin and made of animal hide or natural material. Some *ūlād dīwān* identify these trans-Saharan connections by specific ethnolinguistic origin, such as M’allem Ḥammītū Samawī of L’atef (an Mzab town), reportedly from a Songhay family and who speaks some Songhay and Hausa.

In general, however, *ūlād dīwān* identify an extinct, hybrid *sūdānī* language called Kuria that was widely spoken between the slaves of various ethnolinguistic groups and their descendants. According to the majority of *ūlād dīwān*, it is Kuria that we hear in the Hausawiyyn and Migzawiyyn *brāj* as well as any other non-Arabic words still peppered throughout the other *brāj* suites. My attempts to clarify if Kuria might have been a form of Hausa were unsuccessful; however, since Hausa was a common trade language and because there are still intelligible phrases in Hausa in the Hausawiyyn *brāj*, such a connection is possible. Since Kuria is still seen today as a secret and powerful language that can call the *jnūn*, it may have some connection to the Bānū Kūrī spirit pantheon of the Bornu region (see Jankowsky 2010).

The present day geography of *dīwān* loci is still bound up with the above mentioned trans-Saharan caravan trade encounters, routes, and points of rest where slaves were sold en route. While the music ritual tradition of *dīwān* primarily developed in the towns and cities starting from the High Plateau northwards in the west and from Medea northwards around Algiers, former, southern caravan outposts such as in the Tuwat (Adrar), Gurara (Timimoun), Mzab (Ghardaia and L’atef), and around Ouargla still guard drum and dance traditions with *sūdānī* origin—such as *dūndān* in Ghardaia and *bēnga* in Ouargla—that share important aspects of *dīwān* epistemology, notably the attachment to Bilāl. Many *ūlād dīwān* consider these ‘southern’ traditions to be the pre-ginbrī origins of *dīwān*. Internal discourse among *ūlād dīwān* and *muḥebbīn* (connoisseurs), recognises *dīwān* as a ‘northern’ phenomenon, while in contrast, Algerians who know little about *dīwān* typically locate it in the Algerian 'south' often around Bechar, likely because it is understood to have come from 'black Africa' and because of associations with the annual Bechar *dīwān* festival (see below).
It is important to begin by establishing that 'dīwān music’ as an ontological category is said to have not existed until the late 1950s or early 1960s. As Aḥmed Būrī, a dīwān adept in Oran, put it, 'Before, there was no such thing as “dīwān music”’. There was only “dīwān”.’ That is to say that organised sound—or what is called here 'music' as a separate practice or system of knowledge—had not previously been conceptually separated from the ritual. ‘Music’ is, rather, the very structure of the ritual and it is entangled in every dimension of the ritual. Brāj order is the ritual order in terms of temporal trajectory; it imposes texts, ritual acts, bodily movements, and produces affects.

There are no composers of dīwān brāj; they are understood to have arrived in Algeria with slaves, modified somewhat over time as sub-Saharan came to speak
Arabic and gradually lost their own languages. The crucial subtext here is that the brāj are, at least partly, agents of the supernatural world. While it was never explained to me explicitly how this might have come to be, the melodies of the brāj are commonly understood to be the melodies of the jnūn or arwāḥ (nonhuman agents, see below) perhaps transmitted to humans via dreams or visions. Quite importantly, then, ‘music’ in this case challenges the boundaries of humanly organised sound (Blacking 1974). Furthermore, the term ‘musician’ or ‘musicien’ as it is used in French, is an ambiguous term in dīwān. Individuals who play music are referred to almost exclusively by their ritual roles, not as ‘the musicians’. That is not to say that sound is secondary—on the contrary, it is the primary affective basis of the ritual—but that conceptions of ‘music’ separate it and such separation is secondary to the conception of sound as part of a wider network of relations.

That said, even while it is difficult and problematic to parse out dīwān musical ‘data’ from its ritual and otherworldly associations, local discourse in Algeria today does, indeed, carve out such a space so that the idea of ‘music’ is not only legitimate but important to address. Despite the fact that ‘dīwān music’ as an ontological thing and practice may have, indeed, emerged out of fusion projects and festivals that distanced it from the ritual context, the ‘dīwān music’ concept is not at all limited to younger generations, current discourse, or popular musicians using dīwān musical material. Ritual elders also talk about specific musical aesthetics, skills, values, and compositional makeup. They speak about instrumental and vocal timbre, quality and thickness. There is much talk about the amplifier and the pastille or contact microphone typically used to amplify the ginbrī, there is critique of others’ ginbrī tunings, or whether or not a m’allem recapitulates the necessary main musical theme of the borj (the ‘rās el-borj’) after playing a series of thematic developments. In speaking with dīwān musicians, I was told that some elders would occasionally give advice on ginbrī fingerings or tbel (barrel drum) sticking. That said, it is important to acknowledge that ritual musical aesthetics (and their respective skills) are understood to be quite different from and even incompatible with festivalised or popularised dīwān musical aesthetics; I will deal with this more at length in Chapter Seven on the Diwan Festival of Bechar.
For the reasons of contemporary practice and discourse listed above, and in order to explain what kinds of sounds are doing such work, in this section I will attend to the mechanics of ‘the music itself’. Here, I will primarily deal with instrument background, construction, the basic fundamentals to musical composition (melodic mode, groove), and the structure of the typical borj (loosely structured repetition and development of motifs). However, for the remainder of this thesis, I will otherwise treat dīwān ‘music’ as one finds it in the dīwān ritual: it is everywhere and permeating everything. As sound, it cannot be tuned out, unlike other ritual practices that adepts might try to avoid. With regard to the ritual roles of music and how it does its work to engender trance, I will deal with this primarily in Section Two. The critical work that music does in ritual will be contextualised by the issues it attends to and generates: for example, its primary role of affective labour of the ritual ambience, the way the music, alone, is what determines the ‘path’ (treq) of the ritual, the supernatural phenomena it produces such as the melodic and textual calling of supernatural beings, and through its role in connecting and separating ancestral lineages, like the ways families pride themselves on their specialisation of particular musical repertoires or sensibilities.

In addition, while dīwānat can be and are enjoyed as social gatherings, as regular meeting points for friends and family, where stories, jokes, and food is shared, and where men and women and children of all ages enjoy the pleasure of being up all night, the performance and reception of a dīwān is not 'simply' aesthetic, as enjoyable music and ambiance. Dīwān is always performed with the understanding and intention that certain divine or supernatural forces are being set in motion—from forces like ḥāl to the calling of supernatural agents. The public, too, expect the dīwān to be 'more' than a musical performance; it must incite jēdebbīn (trancers) to trance.

1. The Instruments and ‘Musicians’

Because of its sub-Saharan origins, dīwān music is sonically and materially ‘other’ in its Algerian context. While having a strong connection across the Sahara, dīwān shares these Afro-Maghribi aesthetics across North Africa to the East and West with the Moroccan gnāwa and Tunisian ṣṭambēlī ritual music practices; all three
traditions are linked by their shared history in the trans-Saharan slave trade even while their geopolitics, histories, and caravan routes varied dramatically. First and foremost, these musical aesthetics and traditions are marked by the variety of their quintessential instrument: the gnāber (plural; ginbrī, sing.), long-necked, three-stringed lutes that vary by body shape, some materials, and the length of the neck. While the gnāber of each of the three traditions developed in North Africa, they have clear material, aesthetic, and performative ties to a large family of sub-Saharan lutes (see Charry 2000), particularly the Fulani hoddu, Hausa molo, and Bambara ngoni. For example, it appears that most West African lutes, while having similar shapes and construction, also tend to have three strings tuned in the same way, including an ostinato string at the octave. Most West African lutes use some type of metal resonator usually attached to the end of the neck; this will normally be a flat, metal plate pierced with metal rings around the edges with the purpose of jingling and vibrating with every pluck of a string or touch on the skin of the lute: known as a chenchēna in Algeria.

In many West African lute traditions—particularly Fulani hoddu playing—and in Afro-Maghribi traditions in North Africa, the skin of the ginbrī is often struck in a percussive manner simultaneously with the plucking or strumming of strings by using the index finger to activate the strings while letting the other fingers hang down past the strings in position to strike the skin. In dīwān, this is quite rare and it is typically only really found in the West, often associated with what is referred to as the baladī style of Oran and Sidi Bel Abbess. Many dīwān musicians were quick to point out that their prioritisation of ‘the notes’ over ‘just hitting the skin’ set them apart from Moroccan gnāwa.

In Algerian dīwān the ginbrī body is traditionally the shape of a large and deep rectangular box with a flat back and covered on its open side with camel skin. The ginbrī body is fully transpierced by a long, thick, wooden dowel that extends out from

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38 I share Fuson’s (2009) view regarding the spelling as ginbrī—which is sometimes also spelled guimbru, gimbru—because the plural is gnāber; the n and b produce what sounds to be ‘m.’ In addition, we find analogous instruments across Algeria of varying sizes called ‘ginibrī’ such as in Timimoun and Biskra. Bartok, during his stay in 1913, similarly spelled it in Arabic with the letters qaf, nun, bah, ra, and ya.

39 An analogous instrument is found in Moroccan gnāwa, the sersera, and in Tunisian stambēlī, the shaqshaq. The shaqshaq in stambēlī is not attached to the end of the neck, but is slipped under the strings at the base of the instrument.

40 Here, ‘les notes’ was used in French.

41 The skin of the camel used is that around its neck.
the top of the body to become the neck. At the other end, it is exposed within a few inches of the bottom of the box by a hole in the skin so that its forked end serves as the attachment for the three gut strings that pass over and are held just above the skin by a wooden bridge. The tension from the strings that are attached at the neck by thin leather straps keep the bridge in place.

The ginbri, played by the m’allem (‘master’ or learned one, always male) is typically held at the right side of the body if the m’allem is right-handed so that the left hand fingers articulate pitches on the two strings at the neck while the right hand articulates and strums all three strings over the body of the instrument. In this common position the string tuned to the low tonic is furthest from the ground. Two of the three strings of the ginbri are tuned at an octave at the tonic with the third string tuned a perfect fourth above the low tonic. The high tonic is always the middle string and is significantly shorter, only reaching just beyond the body whereas the other two strings are attached at the distal end of the neck.

Only three of my interlocutors gave names for the strings, and sometimes the names given by an informant changed after later clarifications. Despite conflicting information I collected earlier in my fieldwork with Muḥammad Amīn Canon of Saida, in January 2016, he identified the name of the low tonic string is yorkhi, the highest tonic is called biri, and the stringed tuned to the perfect fourth above low tonic is called kodo. Some of the confusion is due to string pitch relevance versus position in space: the string tuned to the perfect fourth above the low tonic is closest to the ground, therefore sometimes being called tahtiyaa, the ‘lowest’, when it is lowest in physical space but not lowest in pitch. For simplicity and clarity sake, I will refer to the strings by their relative pitch to one another as low tonic, high tonic, and perfect fourth.

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42 In previous meetings the string tuned at a perfect fourth had been called yomani and kudo was the middle string (high tonic). In Oran, I heard the low tonic string, instead, called yomani, the perfect fourth called tahtiyaa, and the high tonic called ḥbīb. One m’allem in Oran, Muhammad weld Ba’omar, called the high tonic yomani (rather than low tonic), with the string at a perfect fourth, instead, called hassan or kergamou.
For a right-handed mʿallem, left-hand technique (at the distal end of the neck) includes pull-offs, hammer-ons, pitch slides, and small touches to already-sounding strings (strummed by the right hand) to create a variety of tones whereas right hand technique generally features picking with the index finger and strumming with several
fingers. In the Sarjī lineage (see below), several of the mʿallemīn are left-handed—something viewed as both ominous and mysterious—so that the outer strings on the ginbrī, the low tonic and the perfect fourth, have to be switched in order that the lowest string in pitch is still furthest from the ground. Part of this arrangement is ergonomic: the low tonic is the most important of the three strings to the musical foundation—tonicity, again—so that it is more natural for the hand and wrist to move downwards, away from the body and towards the ground (the same way a guitar would strum downwards from low to high). It also allows for the high tonic, which acts as an ostinato, to be in between the two ‘speaking’ strings, making its ostinato role easy to achieve: on the way from low tonic to the perfect fourth and back, the middle string, high tonic, can be brushed past. If there is no built-in pickup inside the base of the ginbrī, a piezo type contact microphone is attached to the skin of the ginbrī near the bridge so that it can be amplified and easily heard over the many pairs of double-headed, metal clappers, qrāqeb (qarqābū, singular), that sustain and emphasise the rhythmic modes of the brāj (see more below).

With the help of the kuyu bungu (lead singer, sing.; no standard plural) and rqīza (chorale), the primary ritual role of the mʿallem and his ginbrī is to warm the ambience of the dīwān by ‘launching’ it so that trance can take place. Once people are in trance, the mʿallem then plays specifically to these states and particular trancers, meaning he adapts musically on the spot, to address these people, especially the more experienced trancers (see more on this relationship in Section Two).

Call and Response Singing: The kuyu bungu and rqīza

While the origin of the term kuyu bungu is not clear, it likely comes from Songhay. The first part of the term was probably adapted from 'kaaya' which can be translated as 'inheritance' or 'treasury of inheritance' which is appropriate considering the connections to griots and the importance of oral transmission of histories. The second part, bungu, may be Songhay for 'head’, the body part, and while using the term 'head' to mean 'chief' in Songhay is not typical, this could mark Ottoman Turkish influence, using 'head' to mean master (Souag 2013: 225 and personal communication). Therefore,
'kaaya boungou' could have referenced a chief of inherited histories; the role of the kuyu bungu in dīwān certainly reflects this as it is he who recounts the texts of stories, legends, and indeed, praise songs to prophets, spirits, and saints.

The kuyu bungu, seated next to mʿallem to facilitate their communication, works closely with the him to ensure the flawless delivery of the musical ‘call’ in the call and response sections of the brāj. Because the mʿallem will often vary the amount of time he plays one section of a borj before moving on to the next section—usually to do with the trance happening in front of him—and because he has the freedom to embellish his playing, a kuyu bungu has to adapt accordingly. The rqīza, or response singers who play qrāqeb (see below), in turn, take their cues from the kuyu bungu, not the mʿallem, so that on the rare occasion when I observed a kuyu bungu enter the musical phrase incorrectly, the chorus followed him, also entering at the incorrect time in the phrase rather than correcting the timing to the mʿallem’s; this reflects the musical hierarchy of control being in order of the mʿallem, the kuyu bungu, and lastly, the rqīza.43

In terms of trance and affective power of a borj, dīwān discourse dictates that the role of the kuyu bungu is nearly as important as that of the mʿallem; his role is indeed crucial in that he leads the chorus, and must know the musical phrases or cuts (gaṭṭʿat) that structure the borj, as there are designated points of entrance and lengths of phrases. Furthermore, as we will see below, many jedebbīn are moved by the texts of brāj as much as, if not more than, the melodic motifs; in these cases one can observe jedebbīn kneeling and trancing directly in front of the kuyu bungu in order allow the text to trigger and ‘work’ them best. A mʿallem will often work regularly with one particular kuyu bungu when the two have an established rapport of communication. In addition, the ginbrī is tuned in consideration of the kuyu bungu’s vocal register.

The call and response singing of brāj is crucial to the identity of brāj in part because the ginbrī approach can vary so widely between mʿallemīn and because many brāj have similar grooves; some brāj might only employ minimal accompaniment so that, unless one knows the treq quite well, it is possible to imagine losing track of the repertoire order or ‘tartīb’. I observed this on occasion from the women’s section when

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43 Although on these occasions, because of superior musical ability, the mʿallem typically then adjusted to the kuyu bungu.
women were waiting to hear a particular borj but did not recognise it until the entrance of the kuyu bungu. Furthermore, while texts in brāj and the ideas about these texts can vary dramatically between regions and even within regions, the texts are nevertheless extremely important to the symbolic order and meaning of the ritual; they represent what the brāj are ‘about’ and what stories are being told. In addition, as many would say, it is the texts which ‘call’ jmān or other nonhuman agents into being (see Chapter Three). In this way, the kuyu bungu is of the utmost importance.

In my fieldwork, I often heard that, ‘even if you have the best m’āllem in Algeria, if he’s playing with a mediocre kuyu bungu, the quality of the dīwān will nosedive.’ The kuyu bungu’s role is invested with significant affective power to incite trance; in fact, more of my interlocutors credited their trance to the kuyu bungu’s voice than to the nature of the m’āllem’s playing. This had to do with the importance of the text and thus, the meaning of the borj, but particularly with the quality of the voice because of the unique affective power of the human voice to convey human suffering. The sound of human suffering is the best trigger to release those who trance because of their own suffering. In fact, the vicissitudes of human suffering is so central to trance (see Chapter Two), that the ability of the kuyu bungu to trigger this affective topography was a primary barometer for quality. Furthermore, the kuyu bungu’s own suffering came into play in discourse on more than one occasion. One of the greatest kuyu bungu-s (pl., non-standard) in recent memory, L’āid Hassānī of Saida, was praised for his ‘emotional’, high tenor voice and his special ability to sing in Kuria but he was critiqued by some fellow ʿulād dīwān because he himself had ‘not really suffered in life’ because he was ‘white’, not black: this meant that he did not have the experiential background to adequately reproduce these affective topographies in ritual.

While it is lowest in the hierarchy of musical power and agency, the rqīza is also important here and discourse around the ideal rqīza involves their ability to sing with feeling, in tune, together, and most importantly, without letting the driving quality of the qrāqeb slip out of time; when the rqīza was scolded by a ritual elder, it typically had to

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44 However, I similarly heard the reverse being true as well, that a superb kuyu bungu with a mediocre m’āllem also fell short of producing adequate trance; in other words, the matching of musicianship between m’āllem and kuyu bungu was the single most important move to ensure a successful ritual, meaning successful trance.
do with this latter issue. In Mascara, the *rqīza* of the *mahalla* of Ūlād Meriem is so beloved for their high tessitura precision and affective power that outside discourse ‘forgives’ other aspects of their performances that, in Oran for example, are deemed subpar (see Chapter Three).

The *qrāqeb* are played by the *genēdīz* (disciples, pl.; *gendūz* (a), sing, masc., fem.), also called *rqīza* or, in French, the 'chorale' (chorus) because they also sing the response phrases to the *kuyu bungu* after he delivers the 'call'. Both *qarqābū* in the pair are made up of two barbell-shaped plates, held together by a string tied through a hole in the middle, just below the top 'head' and a metal clasp at the distal end. Each player has one *qarqābū* in each hand, with the top ‘head’ of the *qarqābū* held between the thumb and fingers so that he brings together the two metal plates with the opening and closing of the fingers. Because *qrāqeb* are ideally made out of iron, the instruments and/or the *rqīza* are sometimes referred to as ‘ḥadīd’ (iron, Arabic), as in 'follow the ḡadīd’; in some places, however, they are made out of galvanised steel.

![Figure 4: Qrāqeb pair](image)
The qrāqeb are key to stoking and maintaining the energy of the ritual. With sometimes as many as twelve to fifteen pair of them, they produce an enormous amount of sound and energy; they are described by some as the ‘engine’ of the music. Being the primary percussive instrument of the group, they occasionally have a role in ‘driving’ a jedēb(a) to the apex of a trance if the jedēb(a) is in particular need of rhythmic force. I spoke with at least one woman who claimed that when she was unwell, ‘in a state’, what she really needed to hear in order to complete her trance was the clanging of the qrāqeb, even more than the sound of the ginbrī or the kuyu bungu and rqīza. While for the most part they stick to the metric cycles, on occasion, a player might embellish or accentuate pulses outside the cycle for dramatic effect, particularly in the entrance.

Lastly, the ṭbola (plural; sing. ṭbel) are double-headed barrel drums that are carried with a sling across the shoulder and played with a hard, curved stick and a flat, flexible lighter stick. Most commonly, the ṭbola are used in processions with the qrāqeb (and always without the ginbrī) but are never used with the ginbrī in a dīwān in the West. It is only the east of Algeria, as previously mentioned, where the 'dīwān' involves no ginbrī but features ṭbola. Now that we have the context of instruments and their broad ritual roles with respect to one another, I will move on to the technical elements of dīwān music and songs.

Figure 5: Two differently sized ṭbola and a stack of qrāqeb. Photograph by Tamara D. Turner
2. Make-up: Modes, Meter, and Compression

Modes:

Like West African lutes, North African gnāber generally employ pentatonic melodic modes. Particularly south of the High Plateau, around the Tuwat and Gurara regions, Algerian musicians referred to the pentatonic mode in Arabic as khumāsī (from khamsa, five), but in the North it is expressed in French: la pentatonique. However, despite a largely pentatonic framework, a given borj in dīwān might include both the major sixth above tonic and the minor seventh above tonic in different passages; that is to say that they would not occur in succession.

![Figure 6: Theoretical pentatonic with major 6th](image)

![Figure 7: Theoretical pentatonic with minor 7th](image)

On rare occasion, microtones may also be used, and the tuning of the second and fifth pitch of the mode can vary from region to region and from tradition to tradition. In dīwān, the minor third above tonic is used occasionally as a ‘colour tone’, or embellishment and with my interlocutors, was sometimes called a ‘bluesy note’. The third degree, however, is otherwise not structural to the pentatonic mode and therefore, is not used. Even when the lowered third is used as an embellishment, it would not be used in an ascending step-wise fashion—something that does happen regularly in dīwān brāj where ginbrī passages outline the full mode from low to high tonic (ie: Mūsa Two)—because that would imply it being a structural note of the mode. Rather, the minor third is used primarily on the occasional descending passage as a way of pushing towards the low tonic or leapt to as a colour tone (see more in Chapter Six).

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45 In stambēlī, the second degree is often lowered while in gnāwa the minor seventh is utilised more than the major sixth as the fifth note of the mode.

46 The term here used was in English: ‘blues’.
While the figures above indicate which notes could be used in any theoretical, transposed pentatonic mode, the most important principle to melody and motif in dīwān music is ever-present tonicity and its constant reinforcement. That is to say that the high and low tonic and the perfect fifth are the most structural notes that ginbrī passages emphasise (G and D in the above example); secondly, on the scale of structural importance are, the perfect fourth (C) because it resolves to the perfect fifth, the second modal degree (A) because it resolves down to the low tonic, and, if there is a minor seventh (F) because it resolves up to the high G; lastly, the sixth modal degree (E) is the least structural. That is not to say that all ginbrī lines ‘resolve’ in these ways necessarily but, because these are the kinds of aurally cultivated points of modal stability and instability, melodic tension is regularly created in dīwān by the avoidance of such ‘resolutions’; the most obvious is the delaying or suspending of the low tonic, the most structural tone—something that is done in some interpretations of brāj such as Sīdī ʿAlī and Gurma.

Throughout my fieldwork, particularly during the Diwan Festival of Bechar, I encountered a great deal of anxiety and discussion about the term pentatonique, primarily between well-educated musicologists, journalists, and some younger musicians. Not only was their concern about the accuracy and utility of the term—recognising that, indeed, there is no monolithic approach to mode and many mʿallemīn do use more than five notes in their playing, not to mention half-flats and quarter tones—but some seemed outright hostile to the term, seemingly because it represents a colonial, Western musicological approach to classification and therefore, brings with it assumptions about musical worth. While these debates are warranted, they did not produce alternatives. While the term needs nuancing and contextualising, I still find that speaking in terms of pentatonic modes has heuristic value to illustrate the foundations of the melodic palette while also rightly situating dīwān within the larger family of Afro-Maghribi musics with overlapping histories, practices, and aesthetics.
Metric Cycles/groove

Groove is one of the most important elements to dīwān music and one of the most difficult to convey textually or through transcription. Much like Moroccan gnāwa and Tunisian stambēlī metric cycles, dīwān metric cycles feature what I call a ‘lilt’; this lilt has partly to do with the ways that articulations within one metric cycle are non-isochronous (Polak 2010). In other words, articulations of beats organised in musical time are not consistently equally divisible in relation to one another across the temporal space of one metric cycle. Rather, some subdivisions of beats are slightly larger or smaller than other same-value subdivisions within the same cycle. For example, rather than equally dividing a quarter note into two equal halves (eighth notes), four equal quarters (sixteenth notes) or equal thirds (triplets), or any otherwise isochronous dotted-value divisions, two eighth notes in the same beat might vary in duration so that rather than a 50:50 division we may find 57:43. Or, similarly, in ternary divisions, instead of equal parts of 33, 33, 33 we may find 25, 34, 41 (see figure 8 below):

Even, Isochronous Beat organisation:

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Uneven, non-isochronous beat organisation:

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Figure 8: Polak 2010: 28

If we consider the most common, four-stroke metric cycle in dīwān (called ‘quatre-quatre’, four-four) in terms of Western classical notation, the cycle falls between a) what would be transcribed as binary-triple organisation—two eighth-note triplets, or ‘three-over-two’—and b) a dotted, binary-duple feel: (see figure 9).

![Binary-triple organisation](attachment:image1)

![Binary-duple organisation](attachment:image2)

a) Binary-triple organisation  b) Binary-duple organisation

Figure 9: Quatre-quatre metric mode
This ambiguity between triple and duple feels, the quintessential metric lilt, is variable; some brāj feel to be more one than the other and this is oftentimes the result of accents in and contour of the ginbrī line. Changes between feel are also heightened with increased speed, as temporal compression means that articulations become closer together and more evenly spaced, producing less lilt (see below and Jankowsky 2010:118). Other scholars (Baldassare 1999; Fuson 2009; Polak 2010; Jankowsky 2010) of musics with similar challenges of non-isochronous organisation have approached textual representation and transcription in various ways; the most helpful and relevant of these are Fuson (2009) on the gnāwa and Jankowsky (2010) on stambēlī. In order to relate my own work to these scholars in an effort to contextualise dīwān aesthetics within the wider Afro-Maghribi musical traditions across North Africa, and because there is nothing particularly unique about dīwān metric cycles—except that dīwān appears to have less variation than gnāwa or stambēlī—I will here contextualise the dīwān metric cycles in relation to Fuson’s and Jankowsky’s representations.

In his unpublished PhD dissertation on the gnāwa, Fuson (2009) engages with Antonio Baldassare’s (1999) transcriptions, making several important corrections to strong/weak beat representation and duple versus triple beat division. For example, in the four-stroke metric mode (four right-hand articulations, four left-hand articulations, see figure 10 below), the very ‘quatre-quatre’ found in dīwān, Fuson maintains Baldassare’s preference to represent it as binary-triple beat organisation—that is, the larger structure (time signature, 2/4) is duple whereas subdivision is ternary (triplets):

Figure 10: (Fuson 2009: 122)\textsuperscript{47}

\textsuperscript{47} While the ginbrī and rqīza follow the same groove, the metric cycles are most easily represented in the qrāqeb parts.
While the *quatre-quatre* cycle in *dīwān* is always executed in the same way physically—R-L-R-L, hence why it is called 4-4 or four-stroke—some *ūlād dīwān* claimed that there were two versions of the cycle. This had to do with emphases in melodic lines that suggest an off-set ‘downbeat’ so that *quatre-quatre* takes on a feeling of:

![Figure 11: off-set quatre-quatre](image1)

The ‘two-against-three’ or ‘two-*with-*three’ feel is quite explicit in *dīwān* *brāj* so that, even while the underlying tactus is duple (the cycle is first binary, with each half divided in three), the three feel is ever-present. For example, on the occasions when the *qrāqeb* are asked to drop out for a moment, such as while a *jedēb(a)* is in a difficult state of trance and is needing to concentrate on the sound of the *ginbrī*, the *jedēb(a)* may ask the *qrāqeb* to drop out. On the re-entry of the *qrāqeb*—usually one or two very eager players will enter first after which the others follow—some experienced players will enter the groove by emphasising the three-feel of the duple beat subdivision; in other words, entering on what feels like three-against-two before falling into the duple groove:

![Figure 12: triple groove into quatre-quatre](image2)

Unlike *gnāwa* and *ṭambēlī*, the vast majority of *dīwān* *brāj* are in this four-stroke cycle and except for in the south of Algeria where we find one additional cycle, the only other cycle is the three-stroke, today referred to as *six-huit* (six-eight).
Three Stroke: Six-Huit

In dīwān, the six-huit mode or three-stroke—three strokes of qrāqeb to one pulse—usually feels exactly as it implies: binary-triple organisation, or one cycle divided in half with each half divided into thirds with two sets of dotted-eighth note, sixteenth note, eighth note:

![Figure 13: Three-stroke, Fuson 2009: 122](image)

Most of the brāj containing this cycle in dīwān begin at a brisk tempo so that there is less temporal flexibility to draw out articulations or ‘expand’ senses of pulse; therefore, this cycle has less ambiguity. This much less common cycle typically finishes off brāj suites (such as Mūsa, Srāga, Sīdī Hsen), meaning that the last borj of the suite is in the three-stroke mode, and this metric shift functions as a quickening of the energy and ambiance. Other than these finishing three-stroke brāj, we find the most amount of the three-stroke mode in the Insa’wiyyyn suites for the ‘women’.48

Similarly, as these six-huit brāj accelerate, articulations even out so that the cycle becomes nearly evenly spaced triplets (see Jankowsky on the similar ‘sūdānī’ rhythmic cell in ṣṭambêli, 2010: 116):

![Figure 14: evenly-spaced six-huit](image)

The only exception to this is in the south of Algeria, particular in the Mzab, where the ’signature’ metric cycle is, indeed, a very ‘heavy’ (locals use the adjective thaqîl in Arabic) three-stroke that tends towards evenly spaced 2/4. That is to say that while this cycle is more commonly found in the gnāwa as a variation of the three stroke, in Algeria we only hear this particular variation of binary-duple in the South and as one

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48 Interestingly, this is similar to Moroccan gnāwa where we find this mode in the 'women’s' suite and as a means of accelerating energy.
ritual elder put it, ‘when we hear this rhythm, we think about [the Mzabi town] “Ghardaia”’:  

Figure 15: Fuson 2009: 123

Of particular note here, then, is that metric cycles can index place and region.

Compression/acceleration:

Another key characteristic of dīwān music is that all brāj gradually accelerate, or, to be more attentive to the total affective aesthetics, they compress temporally. Because this quality has more to do with the propagation of trance, I will deal with its vicissitudes in Part Two. Here, I wish to mention it simply to indicate that such compression applies not only to the overall tempi of individual brāj but also to suites of brāj so that, when brāj are grouped within a suite—for example, Mūsa, Ḥammū, Srāga, and Ḥassaniyyn—the final borj is the fastest and lightest of the series. In addition, many brāj compress not just in the acceleration of their tempi, but by way of the musical composition, including the ‘cutting’ and/or shortening of motifs (gaṭṭʿat, ‘cuts’)—such as cutting a four-bar motif into two bars—as well as the ginbrī shifting from identifying motifs into an accompaniment texture where it ‘drives’ a particularly energetic tonic-heavy ostinato to signify the intensification of the borj (see below). This increase of energy at the apex of the borj is greatly aided by the qrāqeb players whose consistent, chugging metric cycles strive to push the borj to its peak.

Rich Jankowsky’s (2010) theorisation and graphic representation of this phenomenon similarly found in ștambēlī music is quite helpful here. In the following example of what is the near equivalent of the three-stroke in dīwān, he shows how non-isochronous beat organisation transforms across time to become more even, like triplets.
Part of the reason for going into the details of these musical components and aesthetics—particularly mode and groove—is because they are distinctive Afro-Maghribi characteristics. That is to say that other musics in Algeria do not typically share these qualities, especially pentatonic modes and non-isochronous beat organisation.\textsuperscript{49} Other musics might, however, feature an increase in tempi, making this category less particular to \textit{dīwān}. However, it is worth repeating here that \textit{dīwān} music is exceptionally ‘other’ in its Algerian context. The pentatonic, bass tones of the \textit{ginbrī} and the clanging \textit{qrāqeb}, the particular lilting groove, and the call and response singing that harkens back to praise singing of the Mande griots are all strong markers of musical (and ontological) otherness. Put plainly, \textit{dīwān} music is often referred to by Algerians as being ‘African’ or ‘pure African’ as opposed to ‘Algerian’—meaning, not based in ‘Arab’, ‘Berber’ or largely ‘Mediterranean aesthetics’.\textsuperscript{50} It is difficult to over-state this

\textsuperscript{49} The only exception to my knowledge is \textit{ahelīl} music of the Gourara region where men do sing in pentatonic modes and there is some indication of non-isochronous beat organisation. However, this is still ‘black music of the south’, meaning that the populations practicing this music are black Algerians with debatable sub-Saharan or \textit{haratīn} origins (freed slaves who have long worked or owned land).

\textsuperscript{50} Since the 1990s there has been a gradually increasing interest in the youth populations, particularly in Algiers, of pan-African connections. The first Pan-African festival in 1969 and the second in 2009 planted the seeds for this awareness. During the time of my fieldwork, pan-African bands were quite popular in
point; the exceptional ‘otherness’ of dīwān music is representative of its unique history in the trans-Saharan slave trade, its association with Sufi epistemologies, and its special status still today as belonging to a minority group who are often marginalised due to their ancestry.51

3. Styles of dīwān music

The ginbrī’s all-permeating bass register in the musical ensemble is the primary characteristic that determines its musical role, making it the center of the musical universe in dīwān. The ginbrī serves as the musical support and foundation upon which the higher vocal lines of the call and response singing depend. With regard to its role as accompaniment and support to the call and response singing, it functions also as a melodic instrument—delivering the critical melodic motifs of brâj that help to incite trance—as well as a percussion instrument on occasion, when the skin is hit. The first way musicians talk about ginbrī playing and singing style is within three broad, geographically based categories. shergī, the western pronunciation of sharqī or ‘eastern’; baladī, which was translated to me as the ‘city style’, and gharbī (western, usually meaning ‘like the gnāwa’ of Morocco to the West).

Getting to the bottom of these supposedly separate styles in Algeria was no simple task as ideas about them vary considerably. Nevertheless, shergī is understood to be the most common style that, in the words of Hūwārī’ Būsmāha, ‘basically everybody plays’ in the west of Algeria, from Oran to Bechar and beyond. However, the term shergī seems odd considering that it means ‘eastern’. While I found no explanation of this seeming contradiction, I suspect that either ‘eastern’ indicates ‘east of Morocco’ to differentiate between the gnāwa with whom ālād dīwān might have come into contact,
or, as mentioned above, that it possibly reflects an older diwān hierarchical social order in which ʿulād diwān in the west took direction from Algiers’s system of diyār.

Balādī, on the other hand, is said to be a ‘calmer’ style and yet, the few remaining mʿallemīn who are said to be experts in this style, most notably Muḥammad weld BaʿAmar of Oran, play quite rapidly in a style that I found—somewhat confusingly—reminiscent of the more virtuosic guāwa mʿallemīn. Balādī is generally associated with the cities of Oran and Sidi Bel Abbess only. According to Hūwārī Būsmāha, balādī differs from shergī in that its vocal parts tend to be in a lower tessitura and much less embellished, privileging more subtle, low register melodic lines. He also claims that it has nearly disappeared; there are just a few mʿallemīn who continue to play it. However, when I asked about balādī elsewhere, such as in Saida with Muḥammad Amīn Canon, I was told that there was no such thing, only different ‘touches’ of mʿallemīn. Nevertheless, it is fair to say that today shergī seems to be ubiquitously understood as the most popular style.

In June 2013, Hūwārī demonstrated for me an example of the difference between the two styles in the borj Mūṣa Two (Mūṣa Kebir), playing ginbrī while also singing for me. In the two versions, he entered with a slightly different ginbrī introduction. Notice that in the balādī version, the ginbrī stays around the A-flat and B-flat (perfect fourth and fifth in the melodic mode, E-flat as tonic) in its highest range, except for the common ostinato on the high tonic (not considered part of the theme here but ‘filler’). However, in the shergī version, the ginbrī range is slightly larger, particularly the way its call starts with C, B-flat, C, A-flat, B-flat. In addition, his articulation of the high tonic on E-flat in bars four and five is longer and therefore suggests being more structural. While adapting the ginbrī part slightly, Hūwārī primarily wanted to demonstrate for me the differences in the relationship with the voice: to him, this is what was most emblematic about the two styles and therefore, what defined them—even though the styles are not thought of as ‘singing styles’ per se because the ginbrī also changes. In the first transcription below of the balādī version he played first, notice how he, the kuyu

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52 Balādī is said to have developed there with the help of the most legendary mʿallem specialising in balādī style in recent memory, Hūwārī ‘Kaīkaī’. I heard one single recording of his playing during a chat with Muḥammad weld BaʿAmar but it was not clear what made balādī so particular. My continued questions about this style often resulted in conflicting information.
bungu ( Kb), follows the line of the ginbrī so that it is nearly matches note for note what the ginbrī introduced. Furthermore, regarding vocal range, the highest pitch is on B-flat, sol, so that the range is only that of a perfect fifth. Lastly, Hüwārī added that in the baladī style, the kuyu bungu would approach higher notes later on in the borj, so that it was primarily in the way that a borj began that determined the style.

Example 1: Mūsa 2, Baladī style. Audio in footnote.\textsuperscript{53} \textit{\textsuperscript{\textcopyright} =} string pitch bend, hammer-on

Example 2: Mūsa 2, Shergī style. Audio in footnote.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{53} http://algeriandiwan.blogspot.co.uk/2017/04/mallem-huwari-plays-musa-2-baladi-style.html
\textsuperscript{54} http://algeriandiwan.blogspot.co.uk/2017/04/mallem-huwari-plays-musa-1-shergi-style.html
In the shergī version, the kuyu bungu enters on the high D-flat, the minor seventh and also a note of tension in the mode, and holds it out for two beats followed by a leap to the ninth—a whole-step above the ‘typical’ octave range—on F to resolve to the high tonic on E-flat. To the ears of ālād dīwān and muhebbīn this first gesture would sound virtuosic. In bars ten and eleven Hūwārī also emphasises the D-flat. Furthermore, in the performance of these two styles, his vocal quality also took on two different aesthetics. In baladi, his tone was somewhat muffled, as if he was pinching the notes a bit, and intentionally staying somewhat reserved with the presence he gave the notes. On the contrary, in the shergī version, his vocal quality and timbre were greater in volume and presence, partly because to sing in the higher register also physically requires more breath support and a faster air stream to sustain the notes. What I mean to suggest here is that an affective difference between the two styles is also audible.

The second and most common way that ālād dīwān talk about ginbrī playing styles—still often attached to regional tendencies—are with the Arabic term ‘thaqīl’ (‘heavy’) and ‘khfīf’ (‘light’). Thaqīl refers not only to the tendency to play at slower tempi but, quite importantly, with attention to a full timbre of the ginbrī sometimes meaning that gnāber are tuned overall to maximise harmonics; a trained ear sensitive to these timbral differences can determine which region a m’allem is from based on timbre. In addition, at slower tempi, notes plucked on the ginbrī have more time to resonate; such lengthened resonation then offers the potential for the sounding tone to be coloured with ‘embellishments’ such as pitch bends, slides, or turns executed by hammer-ons or sliding the finger on the fingerboard.

Thaqīl also refers to a tendency to err towards the accompaniment role of the ginbrī to support the vocal parts alone—something that is known as ‘just playing the sūg’, or holding to a driving ostinato. In Mascara and Saida, for example, and to an even greater degree in mahallat based around Ghardaia, the ginbrī style tends to be more

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55 In discussions with muhebbīn about these two styles, I was told that if singers surpass the range of the ginbrī too much, these are identified as ‘false notes’ or errors. What is being identified here is that the ginbrī’s range is an octave and, typically, the vocal lines also span an octave. However, some of the most beloved brāj, such as this Mūsa above and Jamangaru, are those that feature dramatic, vocal leaps out of this range. Therefore, it is not clear where one might draw a line between what is considered ‘shergī’ and thus, higher singing versus simply ‘false notes’.

56 A right-handed m’allem who has already articulated a pitch on the perfect fourth string can then use another finger of the left hand to ‘hammer-on’ the same string followed by a release so that the pitch bends up and then back down.
minimalistic than along the coast (see examples of this below). On the contrary, the aesthetic generality referred to by ľād dīwān as ‘khfīf’ refers to faster, even rapid tempi and a m’allem’s use of running sixteenth notes ‘under’ the main themes—a kind of compound melody—aiming for maximum thickness of sonic texture by filling the space with as many notes as possible; I find it helpful to think of these as ‘filler notes’, they fill out the sonic texture.\textsuperscript{57} In any case, because there are remarkably different approaches to the complexity of ginbrī playing and because these approaches in general can be more or less mapped onto regions of dīwān practice—‘thaqīl’ dominating the hinterland and more southern regions like Ghardaia, whereas ‘khfīf’ dominates the northern regions—there is a possibility that these differences reflect historical change; dīwān discourse also reflects this question.

On this note, and keeping in mind academic anxieties around simplistic depiction of musical change and gestures at an evolutionary anthropology, I would carefully suggest that it is worth considering that the rates and types of social change in geographically distant regions of Algeria could have also had an impact on the evolution of the musical practice and repertoire given the very different experiences of ľād dīwān in the urban, industrial, cosmopolitan north compared to those in southern, rural Algeria. The more minimalistic ginbrī playing, such as was characteristic to some mahallat in Saida and Mascara, and the still even heavier, accompaniment-style playing currently quintessential to the Mzab, may indeed have something to do with varied dynamics of historical change of playing style. The south is seen to have held on to sūdānī aesthetics more than the north.

When I encountered this discourse in my fieldwork, it was also pointed out that the most sub-Saharan of the brāj, Hausawiyyyn and Migzawiyyyn, share this more simple, accompaniment style of ginbrī playing. Like most of the other brāj in the Hausawiyyyn suite, the borj for Bilāl, the spiritual father of dīwān, is identified musically by its call and response singing parts because it does not have a ‘singable’ motif on the ginbrī but, rather, is made up of the ‘Hausa sūg’ or accompaniment—a more typical sūdānī.

\textsuperscript{57} Two of these m’allemīn with such a reputation are Qādī Ben ūmrī of Sidi Bel Abbess and Laḥbīb Canon of Oran.
aesthetic on related lute instruments. Because this Hausa sūg is not only utilised in the borj for Bilāl but is also found in a number of brāj which are not in the Hausawiyyn suite (such as Jamangaru), it is therefore the vocal lines and vocal melodies which establish the identity of these brāj.

Example 3: Hausa sūg used in Bilāl borj and Jamangaru

Example 4: Hausa sūg-s used in other brāj

Whether we are speaking of style categories or aesthetics, and whatever the explanation might be for these very different ginbrī playing styles, ginbrī activity is most significantly determined by the musical personality of the brāj; some have more elaborate melodic contours and opportunity for virtuosity compared with other brāj that are primarily built on compact motivic cells—such as Baba Inwa—that suggest more conservative ginbrī lines. This is to say that, regardless of all of the above mentioned variation of style, there are required melodic motifs that must be heard in order for the borj to be what it is. Let us now turn to look at how a typical borj is constructed.

4. Structure of A Borj

With the exception of Migzawiyyn brāj that proceed straight into the borj theme and the Hausawiyyn brāj that begin with a driving ostinato, all other brāj typically begin with a variable-length unmetered introduction, the istikhbār, also known in dialect as the tahwissa, from the root, h-w-s, to seek or search. At the beginning of brāj suites, and especially if there is a change in musicians or if there has been an extended pause for

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58 Studying the recordings made by Murray Last in the 1970s of Hausa bori ceremonies with the garaya lute, one also hears an accompaniment figure and not particularly a sense of melody on the instrument.
any reason, a mʿallem will often take his time warming up to the borj in this way. While the tahwissa can serve as a means to warm up the ginbrī and the mʿallem’s technique while adjusting any tuning or microphone issues, it functions mostly as a way of warming up the environment and preparing the ambience for the borj. Oftentimes, the mʿallem will flutter up and down the pentatonic mode, highlight a few embellishments on the perfect fourth string, and hint at the motifs from the upcoming borj’s theme, as if to indicate where he is headed musically, or in case anyone has lost track of the tartīb. That is to say that these introductions are formulaic ‘improvisations’ that sound to be just as much about testing out the feel, resonance, and intonation of the ginbrī as much as indicating to the jedebbīn to prepare.

Following the tahwissa, brāj begin with the ginbrī’s main theme, the rās el-borj, literally ‘head of the borj’, that will be announced quite earnestly to grab the attention of the rqīza who should immediately jump in on qrāqeb, lining up correctly to the metric cycle if they don’t catch the theme until the second or third pulse of the bar. After a predictable duration of multiple statements of the rās el-borj—in other words, a set number of ‘bars’ that everyone knows—the kuyu bungu then enters, beginning the call and response sections that will usually involve more than one vocal theme. Most brāj also will have thematic development and secondary or tertiary themes, what may be a series of gattʿat, or ‘cuts’, that are often motivically related to the rās el-borj. However, the rās el-borj is the most identifiable melodic aspect of the borj on the ginbrī so that, in theory, one could sing this short theme to identify any given borj in conversation, a technique I used when going through brāj lists with ritual experts.

Let’s take for example the rās el-borj of Ḥammū (first borj in the suite by the same name). Here, the theme can be identified with the pick-up beat and the first full measure, and we see particularly that the four notes of the first full bar come back consistently: the D down to low tonic C, followed by the high leap up to the minor seventh on B-flat and the high tonic on C. Note the rās el-borj, indicated by the boxes:
In the performance transcribed above, M’allem Sāmī gives us four full statements of the rās el-borj before the kuyu bungu enters at the end of the last, thirteenth bar. Brāj themes vary in length, complexity, and degree of melodic contour but they are almost always introduced first by the rās el-borj on the ginbrī. This theme may be identical, close to, or simply complementary to the first statement of the vocal call and response. During the vocal response, sung by the rqīza, the ginbrī will often take more musical license to embellish so that he is primarily concerned with supporting the kuyu bungu. Or, at other times, the m’allem may choose to back off a bit and let the call and response singing take precedence. The relationship between the call and the response sections also varies in brāj so that while sometimes the length of the call and response in musical time are equal—such as two bars of call followed by two bars of response, like Ḥāmmū One—at other times, the response might overlap the end of the call (see Ḥammū 2), or the response might be more motivically elaborate or longer than the call. At other times, while the call changes musically and textually, the response stays the same (Sergu One). In these sections of gaṭṭ’at, repetition is most crucial. While repetition is a key structural and aesthetic element of every section of the borj, call and response pairs of themes in most brāj are, in particular, articulated numerous times before being ‘cut’ into smaller pieces that will then also usually be repeated numerous times. Repetition here is absolutely critical.  

Concepts of ‘repetition’ in the English language and particularly in Western music scholarship bring with them ideas about the recurrence of an ‘identical’ statement across time; in other words, a linear or possibly horizontal orientation to temporality and the experience of time. I would argue that the experience of time in dīwān rituals, structured by the brāj tartīb, is as much if not more so oriented by
With the gradual acceleration and compression of these gagāṭṭʿat, the singing drops out altogether and the ginbrī goes into the last section of the borj—the sūg section—where it ‘drives’ the trancers to a finish. Here is where we see the most culmination of trances so that the primary goal here is for the excitement of the ginbrī to affectively push the jedebbīn to their finish. There is no given ‘end’ to brāj; the mʿallema works the jedēb(a) until s/he either collapses or until the moqedm or another ritual elder indicates to the mʿallema to stop. This can be done with a look, a simple hand gesture, or typically, by a person approaching the mʿallema and resting a hand on the neck of the ginbrī. To stop a mʿallema, however, is something that is typically reserved for older and more experienced jedebbīn and ritual elders. I often saw a mʿallema refuse to stop if either the person indicating it was not of high enough standing or if the mʿallema saw other jedebbīn who he felt he needed to finish off. I will say a great deal more about the musical production of trance in the coming sections.

 compression and release. As I see it from a ritual perspective, repetition encourages a deepening of a particular sensibility, cultivating a vertical experience of time.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of section</th>
<th>What it is</th>
<th>Who shapes it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>istikhbār</em> or <em>tahwissa</em></td>
<td>Unmetered introduction, sometimes hinting at the main theme, <em>rās el-borj</em></td>
<td>Entirely shaped by <em>m'allem</em>; optional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Rās el-borj</em></td>
<td>Literally: 'head of the <em>borj</em>'; the main theme of the <em>borj</em>; while variation happens, it has to be recognisable to all</td>
<td>Shaped by <em>m'allem</em>, who, having some degree of musical flexibility, can stretch out the duration (see Ḥammū One)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrance of the <em>qrāqeb</em></td>
<td>As soon as the <em>rās el-borj</em> is recognised and/or the groove is established, the <em>qrāqeb</em> enter. Typically the <em>kb</em> plays also so that usually he will be the first to enter, followed by the rest of the <em>rqīza</em> (<em>rq</em>)</td>
<td><em>M'allem</em> might throw a glance at the <em>kb</em>, or <em>rq</em> if they do not pick up the groove quickly enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrance of <em>kuyu bungu</em> (<em>kb</em>)</td>
<td>The first 'call' of the call/response singing, the main theme. This theme is often closely related motivically, if not identical, to the <em>rās el-borj</em>. Musically superior to the 'response'</td>
<td>Typically the entrance timing is fixed, determined by the <em>rās el-borj</em> phrase structure; occasionally the <em>kb</em> might delay or enters incorrectly after which the <em>m'allem</em> must adjust to him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrance of the <em>rqīza</em> (<em>rq</em>)</td>
<td>The first 'response' of the call/response singing. Oftentimes it is consistent even when 'call' changes. Musically inferior to the 'call'.</td>
<td>Determined already by the <em>kb</em> because the 'response' is a set relationship to the 'call' (not flexible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gaṭṭʿat</em> (involves more <em>kb/rq</em> entrances also)</td>
<td>Literally: 'cuts'. Introduction of other themes, usually on the <em>ginbrī</em>, and usually motivically related to the <em>rās el-borj</em>, so that they are considered 'cuts' of it.</td>
<td>Changes can be determined by both <em>ginbrī</em> and <em>kb</em>, depending on the <em>borj</em>. ex: in Ḥammū 2, the <em>kb</em> indicates the timing of the 'cuts' from what he sings on the last beat of a bar, triggering a different response by the <em>rq</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropping out of all singing</td>
<td>no name</td>
<td>Typically the final call/response is decided by the <em>kb</em> who simply stops singing or might give an indication to the <em>m'allem</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restatement</td>
<td>a return to the <em>rās el-borj</em> on the <em>ginbrī</em>, often with some slight development from the original statement, such as repeating the last bars of it</td>
<td>Once singing drops out, this is entirely determined by the <em>m'allem</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sūg</em> sections until end</td>
<td>Literally: 'to drive'. Best thought of as 'riffs' on the <em>ginbrī</em> to escalate trance</td>
<td>Determined by jedebbīn (trancers), the <em>m'allem</em> here is playing directly to them. On occasion a <em>moqeddīn</em> might also direction the <em>m'allem</em> or jedebbīn if he sees problems or sees that a particular <em>jedēb(a)</em> needs musical attention</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Structure of a typical *borj*
There are some exceptions to this structure but the above table would be a reasonable generalisation of the structure of most dīwān brāj. The most frequent exception to this structure is generated by call and response singing parts. For example, in most brāj, once the singing drops out, the mʿallem restates the rās el-borj to some degree (with some embellishment, not exactly as he did at the beginning of the borj) and he then proceeds to the sūg section. However, as we see in Ḥammū Two (Bania), there is usually a long solo ginbrī section before the entrance of a second set of call and response singing, what would be considered another grouping of gattʿat. I will go into more detail on this below.

Another ‘exception’ or complication here is that gattʿat are not necessarily universally recognised or counted. What some maḥallat consider a gattʿa belonging to a given borj, other maḥallat may consider an entirely separate borj that has been ‘linked’ onto the former: this linking is expressed in French as brāj being ’enchaîné’. For example, Gurma and Jayba seem to be ubiquitously enchaîné, always played together without stopping. Nevertheless, there are disagreements about which is which: brāj enchaîné or simply gattʿa of one longer borj. The best example of this ambiguity is probably the Srāga series with its many gattʿ at and linked brāj: while most maḥallat perform the series as three main brāj—Sergu One, Two, and Three—with stops in between, I heard from several muḥebbīn that there were five Srāga, having to do with the third Sergu that could be parsed into three parts. Furthermore, certain regions have additional gattʿat particular to their region, such in Ḥammitū’s performance of Ḥammū Two. In Algiers, the Ḥammū suite has three brāj, the third being Ḥammūda in 6/8 time, consistent with other 3-brāj suites. In another example, Mascara has a unique ‘introductory’ gaṭṭ’a or even mini-borj, Tigirama, that precedes the borj Brahīm.

Because most of these differences are initiated by and therefore associated with the call and response organisation of a borj, it is important here to clarify the types of call and response singing. They can broadly be categorised as such:

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60 Such ambiguity also comes up in Jamangaru-Lillia where it seems Mascara is alone in performing the two with a stop in between.

61 Adapting to the regional treq preferences, Mʿallem Qwīder ʿArūbī of Oran added this borj during a dīwān in Algiers even though when he performs in the west, he does not play this borj.
1) Types where call / response = 50:50. Call and response are of equal length and are often identical in melody. Response comes immediately following the call. Example: Ḫammū One, first call and response

2) Types where response overlaps with sections of the call (Ḥammū Two). In Ḫammū Two, the rq. takes over the end part of the call to finish it

3) Types where the chorus is significantly longer than the call, more elaborate (Musa 2), Ḫammū Two (Bania)

4) Types where regardless of what the kb sings, which changes, the chorus is always the same (Sergu 1)

As we will see in the transcriptions, while there is generally a protocol about phrase length and the contour of calls and responses, there is still flexibility in the number of calls and sometimes, the placement of calls. Some of this has to do with personal or regional style preference.


In order to demonstrate many of the musical fundamentals to dīwān brāj mentioned above, this next section compares five performances of the western Algerian Ḫammū Suite, (the two brāj known as Ḫammū and Bania), mentioned in other sections of this thesis. I have chosen these particular performances based on the reputation and geographical importance of the mʿallemīn and their mahallat as well for connections between them: mʿallemīn Qwīder ʿArūbī and ʿAbdāqa Sāmī of Oran; mʿallem Benʿūda Ben Brāhim from Relizane; Qada Canon from Saida; and Ḫammitū Samāwī from Ghardaia. These five mʿallemīn are well known in dīwān circles; they are frequently invited to play at various dīwanat across the country. The first three mʿallemīn are connected by way of the Majdūb silsila (see below) while the mahallat of Saida (Canon) and Ghardaia (Samāwī), are not connected in kinship or silsila, but rather as mutual clients in friendship: they both regularly invite the other to perform in their dīwanat meaning that Ḫammitū is regularly invited to Saida and the Canons to Ghardaia.  

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62 Ghardaia has an exceptionally different freq. however. Historically, the Mzab was more connected to Algiers and so shares much in common with the Algiers freq. However, within recent memory, they have
The two purposes of the transcriptions below—and the accompanying recordings on the companion website—are to first demonstrate musical approaches to dīwān brāj regarding degrees of musical freedom and personal playing style within expected and fixed musical structures noted above: the rās el-borj, call and response singing, motivic development, and the sūg sections. Secondly, these transcriptions will help to clarify these brāj structures such as giving examples of how motivic cells taken from the rās el-borj can be utilised and developed in the gatṭ at sections or also in the sūg changes. It is important to establish first that these transcriptions are meant only as heuristic tools in order to demonstrate particular talking points. There are numerous problems with transcribing dīwān brāj in Western classical staff notation—something I alluded to above regarding non-isochronous groove and the difficulty of capturing it in notation. In addition to groove, differences in ginbrī string tuning and overall timbre are difficult to convey while the very vertically-oriented nature of the five-line staff of Western notation also imposes a certain concept of high and low, obscuring the particular antiphonal experience of the music and the ways that sounds cut through and across one another. Also suggested above are the problems of pitch; the ginbrī follows no rules of equal temperament and it is also quite common for the ginbrī strings to go slightly ‘out of tune’ as the borj progresses and the strings stretch ever so slightly.

Lastly, my gender and other logistics in my fieldwork limited my access to deep exploration of advanced ginbrī technique so that in certain recordings, while my knowledge of the ginbrī does inform how passages might be executed in terms of fingering, some of the more virtuosic riffs are nearly impossible to capture in transcription without having had the opportunity to ask masters about fingering and other techniques. In the rapid passages of Ḥammū for example, there are constant streams of sixteenth notes ‘running’ under the main theme. A complete transcription would capture what is being articulated on all three strings at the same moment. For reasons of readability, as well, I have only rarely represented these kinds of riffs under the apparent themes. That is to say, the transcriptions here function to put forward particular points and are approximations of pitch, rhythm, and compound melodic contour.

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63 See http://algeriandiwan.blogspot.co.uk/
64 In some of the recordings, the ginbrī is tuned between an E and an E-flat, for example.
Ḥammū One:

To begin, I have transcribed below the *rās el-borj* of the five performances of Ḥammū One to show the possible variations while the skeleton of this motif can always be identified. In these cases, I have transcribed up until the first entrance of the *kuyu bungu*; it is from this moment that in Ḥammū, the shape and melody of the call and response singing is consistent, although the number of repetitions of these calls and responses vary and are noted in the table (see bottom of this section). I have also transcribed the short motifs of the *sūg* sections, labeling them A–C as they relate to one another, in order to also show how *m’allemin* ratchet up and build energy, sustaining the trance experiences of *jedebbīn* while using condensed musical cells or motifs that allow for maximum adaptation and quick changes.⁶⁵

The *sūg* section can usually be identified by a shift from the *rās el-borj* restatement on the *ginbrī* to motifs of (generally) two bars, with a respective two-bar harmonic rhythm commonly emphasising dominant-tonic or otherwise hovering around dominant and tonic as a means of driving musical suspension. The progression of this *sūg* section is entirely determined by the trancing bodies on the *ṭaraḥ* (ritual space) at the given moment so that there is no pre-determined structure, only the understanding that a *m’allelm* will build on previous themes and work them as he sees fit. I find it helpful to think of these *sūg* motifs as short *ginbrī* ’riffs’ with the express purpose of intensifying trance. Based on what kind of trance is happening, a *m’allelm* may spend a longer time on one riff over another, such as if he sees a *jedēb* responding to it, for example. Or, if a particularly enthusiastic and experienced *jedēb* approaches him, he may switch into a more virtuosic riff that expands the pitch use of the *ginbrī*. Furthermore, as part of this increased intensity, it is from the beginning of this last section until the finish where we see the most acceleration of *tempi*.

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⁶⁵ Short, condensed motifs are easier to ‘cut’ apart and repeat in varying ways, being recognisable.
In the previous section, I introduced the *rās el-borj* in ‘Abdāqa’s performance and drew attention to the statements of this theme before the entrance of the *kuyu bungu*. Given that, during my fieldwork, ‘Abdāqa and Qwīder often performed together at the same diwanat with ‘Abdāqa acting as Qwīder’s *kuyu bungu*, there is a certain degree of resonance between their playing styles, a similarity that is particularly noticeable when comparing them with Qada and Ḥammūtū’s approaches below. These first two are what we could consider as fairly ‘standard’ performances of the *borj*. Ben’ūda, being connected to the former two by way of having been a gendūz of the same master, is notable in diwān circles as playing virtuosically both in terms of speed and for his reaching outside of standard interpretations. In this first *borj* we see an example of this in his very brief hint at the *rās el-borj* before launching into a succession of triplet figures that harmonically delay the *borj*’s progression. According to most performances, this musical choice would be heard as exciting and as creating suspense. This is an unusual musical choice since the beginning of a *borj* is typically treated as the primary time to firmly establish the fundamentals of the *borj*, meaning that interpretive flexibility or experimentation with the theme is generally reserved for later in the *borj*, as opposed to the beginning.

In contrast to what would be called locally the ‘lighter’ playing of ‘Abdāqa and Qwīder, Muḥammad Amīn Canon of Saida reinforced to me that his own playing style and indeed, that of Saida in general (thus including Qada, his older brother), was to deliver the *rās el-borj* in the clearest manner possible, to keep the embellishments to a minimum, and to stay physically and mentally relaxed in his playing—so in other words, the exact opposite of what Ben’ūda has done. Muḥammad suggested that his family’s approach is minimalistic compared to that of Oran. Here, I found it helpful to think about the ‘filler notes’ of the northern approaches (the running sixteenth notes mentioned, for example); in contrast, in Saida as well as in the playing of Ḥammūtū from Ghardaia, the approach to brāj themes is noticeably more ‘conservative’. Part of this tension is reinforced by discourse where playing at very fast tempi is often criticised.
On this note, while the starting tempi of Ḥammitū and Qada are 85 beats per minute (bpm) and Qwīder and ʿAbdāqa are higher, at one hundred and ninety-four, respectively, tempi is just one aspect of these impressions of ‘lighter/faster’ and ‘heavier/more full’.

ʿAbdāqa:

Example 6: Go to footnote for audio

Qwīder:

Example 7: See footnote for audio; \( \infty \) = string bend, hammer-on

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66 http://algeriandiwan.blogspot.co.uk/2017/03/blog-post_25.html
67 http://algeriandiwan.blogspot.co.uk/2017/03/qwider-hammu-1.html
Benʿūda:

Example 8: See footnote for audio

Qada:

Example 9: See footnote for audio

Ḥammitū:

Example 10: See footnote for audio

68 http://algeriandiwan.blogspot.co.uk/2017/03/blog-post.html
69 http://algeriandiwan.blogspot.co.uk/2017/03/qada-canon-hammu-1.html
In terms of these *rās el-borj* statements, we see variation in the number of bars taken to introduce it; Benʿūda takes the most time, with twenty bars in addition to the quarter note pick-up before the entrance of the *kuyu bungu*. This is a common point of flexibility with most *brāj*, so long as the theme is clear and the *kuyu bungu* understands the *ginbrī* cue as to when to enter. In other words, the *mʿallem* must always make it clear when he is ready for the call and response singing to begin by indicating with the harmonic progression of the theme. A *kuyu bungu* should not enter just anywhere but rather in particular musical relationship to the *ginbrī*. We will see below in the transcription of Bania an example of what happens when a *kuyu bungu* enters at the wrong moment.\(^{71}\)

A *mʿallem*’s decision to take more or less time in the *rās el-borj* has much to do with the overall ambience of the *dīwān* or *wʿāda*, such as expectations of the host—a small, private *dīwān* with fewer *jedebbīn* is likely to move more quickly through the *brāj* whereas in a *wʿāda* where there may be dozens of *jedebbīn* needing musical attention, the duration of *brāj* can triple, some taking more than thirty minutes each. In Ḥammū (see the table also) we also see that a *mʿallem* has a choice about whether to restate the *rās el-borj* before moving on to other call and responses phrases; the way he might ‘cut’ and develop the next sections also affects the trajectory of the song. Again, the number of these calls and responses (seen in the table) will have much to do with the ambience of the particular ritual event where larger gatherings generally inspire more leeway taken. Or, in cases of particular trance situations to be dealt with, such as a *jedēb(a)* being ‘ill’ (in Meriem’s story we will see below), musical attention then is directed quite specifically to the needs of the person in question: their reactions to musical activity are noted and then adapted to accordingly.

Here is the first call and response series after the *rās el-borj*, the first entrance of the *kuyu bungu* (kb) in ‘Abādaqa’s performance of Ḥammū:

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\(^{70}\) http://algeriandiwan.blogspot.co.uk/2017/03/audio-example-hammitu-playing-hammu-1.html

\(^{71}\) In my fieldwork I collected stories of *mʿallemīn* complaining about certain *kuyu bungu*-s who would ‘cut them off’ by entering in the wrong place.
Example 11: First call/response

In the above transcription, we see that the *kuyu bungu* sings for four bars plus the pick-up and is answered by the *rqīza* for four bars before the *kuyu bungu* goes on with another call, this time entering earlier, on the second half of the first beat, and overlapping the *rqīza*. In the table, the number of calls and responses refers to the number of times the *kuyu bungu* comes in with a call like these two, answered in the same way by the *rqīza*. In the following transcription, a continuation from the one above, we see the remainder of the second call and the second response (2nd iteration):

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72 This is a common quality in *brāj* although other *brāj* feature clear endings to the *kuyu bungu’s* call before the response enters.
Example 12: Second call/response

Referring this back to the table, then, in this performance there were nine calls and nine responses of this nature in ‘Abādaqa’s performance (see third row of table, ‘# of calls and responses’ under ‘Abādaqa’ and the number ‘9’). Then we move onto the second gaff’a where we see four two-bars-plus-one-beat calls from the kuyu bungu and four responses of the same duration:
Example 13: Second gatt’a

In this performance, the kuyu bungu, Hajiri, went straight into the second gatt’a—something that also occurs in Qwider’s performance where ‘Abdāqa acts as kuyu bungu—so that there is no ginbrī solo between the four-bar call and response and the two-bar second gatt’a. This differs from the performances of Ben’ūda, Ḥammitū, and Qada where there is a short ginbrī solo section with no singing (see row four of the table, titled ‘break between 2nd and 3rd gatt’at?’). Next in the table we see whether or not there is a restatement of the rās el-borj followed by the timings where the sūg motif changes, labeled with ‘A’ and ‘B’ as themes. On average, the sūg section makes up one-third of the entire borj length.

The sūg section is triggered by the ginbrī since the singers have dropped out before its entrance and do not participate in this section. Oftentimes, after the
restatement of the rās el-borj and the call and response themes, the sūg section is triggered by the ginbrī delaying the resolution of the second part of a phrase. Again, the sūg sections depend entirely on what is happening, trance wise, on the ṭaraḥ. While the rās el-borj and call and response singing phrases could entice a jinn and/or rūḥ to come into a body, the sūg section is intended to work the body of the afflicted person. Because the mʿallem is no longer responsible to deliver gaṭṭʿat or to be aware of the singers, he has more freedom to play directly to individuals’ needs, shifting gears and motifs frequently. This is why we see the greatest amount of variation in these performances in this section, from only thirty seconds of sūg with just two changes in Ḥamītū’s performance to four minutes of sūg and twenty-three changes in Ḥamītū’s performance.

Most sūg motifs are either one or two bars in length and are riff-like ostinatos often consisting of running sixteenth notes that emphasise either the tonic or dominant. Their brevity and condensed musical material means that they can be cycled through and shuffled around quickly to adapt to intensifying trance states as the tempo continues to increase; this shortening of motifstwo is also critical to the required aesthetic of compression and acceleration. It also means that it is the section of the borj that has the least amount of musical identity—many riffs can be reused between brāj or resemble those of other brāj—although some mʿallemī said a trained ear could identify which borj was being played only by listening to the sūg. As we will see in the transcriptions, certain motifs are recycled for this section by mʿallemī.

Example 14: Ḥamītū’s sūg motifs. Tonic = C (motif = D—F—D delay)
Notice that the first two bars after the first repeat sign are almost identical except for the tie on the G; this is the two-bar riff. The second line also follows a two-bar pattern with minor changes. In what is labeled the A theme, 'Abdāqa is delaying tonic by driving on the dominant (G) and leaping down to the second degree. In all except one (Qada’s) of the five performances, we find a sūg motif in modal degree of re-fa-do of solfegg. Here, 'Abdāqa delays this by playing D-F-D-F instead of D-F-C (C being the tonic so that the former delays it). Ben‘ūda also chooses to delay this first motif in a similar manner, playing G—B-flat—G instead of G—B-flat—F (where F is tonic):

Example 15: Ben‘ūda’s sūg motifs. Tonic = F (motif = G—B-flat—G, with F first bar, 3rd line)

Example 16: Qwīder’s sūg motifs. Tonic= F (motif : G—B-flat—F)
Example 17: Ḥammitū’s sūg motifs. Tonic = E (motif = F-sharp—A—E)

In Qada’s sūg riffs, the motif does not appear:

Example 18: Qada’s sūg motifs

This is just one example of variations on a single, common sūg theme in this borj but, as the table below demonstrates, there are a variety of themes and variations on repetition.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M’allem / kuyu bungu</th>
<th>‘Abdāqa / Hajiri</th>
<th>Qwider/‘Abdāqa</th>
<th>Benʿūda/ Nsar</th>
<th>Qada / Bilāl</th>
<th>Hammitū/ Aissa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of perf</td>
<td>ḏīwān</td>
<td>ḏīwān</td>
<td>wʿāda</td>
<td>ḏīwān</td>
<td>wʿāda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>istikhbār</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>33 sec</td>
<td>no, but unusual triplet entrance, 10 bars</td>
<td>7 seconds</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rās el-borj</td>
<td>12+ pick up</td>
<td>12 + pickup</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15+ pickup</td>
<td>20+ pickup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of calls &amp; responses</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>break btw 1st, 2nd gaṭṭʿat?</td>
<td>no, immediate</td>
<td>no, immediate</td>
<td>yes, 18 bars</td>
<td>yes, 66 bars (1 min 20 sec)</td>
<td>yes, 50 bars (kb @ bar 51), 1 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaṭṭʿa #2 no. of calls &amp; responses:</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restatement of rās el-borj?</td>
<td>yes, from 2:05</td>
<td>yes, from 4:02-4:44</td>
<td>no, straight to sūg</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no restatement but return to accompaniment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total min. sūg</td>
<td>1:15 min</td>
<td>2:03 min</td>
<td>1:10</td>
<td>3 min 02 sec</td>
<td>4:20 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total borj time</td>
<td>3:42 min</td>
<td>6:30 min</td>
<td>9:02 min</td>
<td>9:46 min</td>
<td>12:12 min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Five comparisons of Ḥammū 1
I am going to move on now to five performances of the second *borj* in the Ḥammū Suite (usually called Bania, not to be confused with the opening *kuyu borj* also called Bania) before tying together these data points and examples and then proceeding to concluding thoughts about these comparisons.

Bania (Ḥammū Two)

In Bania, the second *borj* of the Ḥammū series (also called Ḥammū Two) we see examples of variation in all sections of the *borj*. The transcription of ʿAbdāqa’s performance gives an example of the four key motifs: 1) the *rās el-borj*; 2) the once-only eight-bar call and response; 3) the main, four-bar call and response theme; 4) the second *gaṭṭʿa*, and 5) the third *gaṭṭʿat*, or ‘cut’, of these longer themes into four- and two-bar call and response pairs. I have only transcribed ʿAbdāqa’s performance because, despite the performances having different tonal centers, the intervallic and temporal relationships between these call and response pairs are fixed—this is part of the musical formula and one of the non-negotiable aspects of the *brāj*. What is flexible here is the number of iterations of all of these call and response pairs except the first, once-only eight-bar call and response. Like the previous example, the primary purpose of the table below is to demonstrate the variation of these call and responses, both in their number and in the ways they work with the other parts of the *borj*.

1) Looking across the columns at the table below then, the *rās el-borj* ranges from eight to twelve bars, with one or two statements of the entire theme. Here’s ʿAbdāqa’s performance:

![Musical notation](image)

Example 19: Find complete audio in footnote.⁷³

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⁷³ [http://algeriandiwan.blogspot.co.uk/2017/03/abdaqa-hammu-2.html](http://algeriandiwan.blogspot.co.uk/2017/03/abdaqa-hammu-2.html)
2) Next, after the *ras el borj*, each of the five *mʿallemin* takes the *borj* into the call and response sections and we begin first with the once-only eight-bar call and response pair noted in the table as ‘8-bar C/R’. In other words, there is no variation to this call/response pair.

Example 20: first 8-bar C/R
3) The next section of the *borj* is a longer, call and response portion made up of three parts: 1) call/response pairs (C/R) with a variable number of iterations at the *kuyu bungu*’s choice; 2) an exit phrase of consistent length, and; 3) an eight-bar *rqīza* response of consistent length. The following transcription is of the first three iterations (call and response pairs labeled in the table as C/R) in ‘Abdāqa’s performance:

![Transcription of the first three iterations (call and response pairs labeled in the table as C/R) in ‘Abdāqa’s performance.](image-url)

Example 21: Longer call/response section, 1ˢᵗ, 2ⁿᵈ, part of 3ʳᵈ iteration
After four of these iterations in ʿAbdāqa’s performance (see table), the following ‘exit phrase’ (part 2) then signals the end of this call and response volleying:

Example 22: ‘exit’ phrase

Followed by the final eight-bar long response (LR) of the rqīza (part 3):

Example 23: Final L/R phrase
These three transcription chunks above, then, have shown what is labeled in the table of ʿAbdāqa’s performance as ‘4+exit phrase+LR’ although I only transcribed three of the four call/response pairs. This three-part portion then repeats a variable number of times. It happens six times in ʿAbdāqa’s performance, three times in Qwīder’s performance, and nine times in Benʿūda’s performance (count the rows of ‘C/R+exit phrase+LR’ of occurrences in the table where C/R is just a number).

4) The next separate section of the borj is often a solo ginbrī section and, typically, a restatement of the rās el-borj. Then we have a ginbrī cue for the next main section of call and response singing including two more gaṭṭʿat (cuts), the second and third gaṭṭʿat. These are respectively noted as uppercase ‘C/R’ (Call/Response) for the four-bar call/four-bar response pairs of the second gaṭṭʿa and lowercase ‘c/r’ for the two-bar pair of call and response.

Below is ʿAbdāqa’s performance, starting from the ginbrī cue. Note that the kuyu bungu enters in the ‘wrong’ bar—he should have entered in the bar before or bar after his entrance in order to align with the melody of the ginbrī. This is because this ginbrī pattern is suggesting a kind of repeated harmonic loop of sol-do-fa-sol (here, A on the downbeat-D on downbeat-G leading back up to-A) and the kuyu bungu line should align harmonically so that the high E (re) of ‘wah-wah’ then resolves to D (‘yay’) when the ginbrī is at the beginning of its cycle on A; this is where the most stable part of both phrases are: the ginbrī on sol and the kuyu bungu on D, do.
Example 24: Ginbri cue and entrance of kuyu bungu. 2ª gatt’a

5) In the table, the number of iterations of this second gatt’a range from twelve to seventeen: fairly consistent in comparison although Ḥammitū’s second gatt’a has a different melodic contour.

Then, at the kuyu bungu’s discretion, he triggers the third gatt’a by changing the off-beat call. The words can vary for the kuyu bungu as long as they fit into the duration of the call while the rqīza always responds ‘wah-yay-yay’:

Example 25: 3ª gatt’a
Looking at the table of the five performances, iterations of this third gaṭṭʿa ranged from ten to fifty-four—quite exceptional variation. As noted in the transcription with the high E in parentheses (last bar), the kuyu bungu can switch back to the second gaṭṭʿa again by the call he gives. In this section, between these two gaṭṭʿat, we see significant variation in numbers of iterations. Also while most performances involve oscillating between the second and third gaṭṭʿa (so C/R, c/r, C/R, c/r) before another ginbri solo—meaning two each of the second and third gaṭṭʿa—Benʿūda does a third grouping: five additional four-bar C/R of the second gaṭṭʿa followed by fifteen two-bar c/r of the third gaṭṭʿa (see table).

In these examples, flexibility with the number of call and response pairs is almost always determined by the kuyu bungu because his call arrives on the second half of the second beat in the bar so that while the rqיזa are still in the process of singing the response phrase, or just finishing the response, they hear the call for their next response phrase to come. In Bania, this back and forth speeds up so that a kuyu bungu can indicate a change between gaṭṭʿat with the cue of an eighth-note and a single pitch change. Occasionally a call will be missed or not responded to. In the table these are represented as ‘+ C’. For example, in Benʿūda’s performance of the second gaṭṭʿa, there were eleven iterations of C/R (four bar call, four bar response) followed by one unanswered four-bar call: 11 C/R + 1 C. Unanswered calls happen for a variety of reasons and it is not uncommon to have some confusion if the call is not loud or confident enough. Sometimes a kuyu bungu might trail off in volume instead of just stop, for example, if he’s trying to wrap up the series; this can result in confusion for the rqיזa as to whether they should respond. At other times, a mʿ allem may shift the ginbri part against the kuyu bungu to indicate moving on to the next gaṭṭʿa and the rqיזa may respond by moving on rather than answering the call.

Finally, by showing five examples of both consistency and variation in ways that brāj motifs can be delivered by mʿ allemīn and in the ways gaṭṭʿ at can be varied and played with, I have hopefully conveyed a sense of both the regulation and the freedom with which musicians work, that while there is a sense of what is normal or appropriate in the music, warming ambience and eliciting trance also requires the flexibility to attend to a given situation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M’allew / kuyu bungu</th>
<th>Abdaqa / Hajiri</th>
<th>Qwider / Abdaqa</th>
<th>Ben’ūda / Nasr</th>
<th>Qada / Bilāl</th>
<th>Ḥammitū / Aissa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of perf</td>
<td>ḏiwān</td>
<td>ḏiwān</td>
<td>ḏiwān</td>
<td>ḏiwān</td>
<td>ḏiwān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Istikbar</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ras el- borj (rb)</td>
<td>10 + pickup</td>
<td>starts w/ 10 bars of B1 below, pickup to bar 11 rb enters, 10 b</td>
<td>two stmts @ 8 bars + pickup</td>
<td>2 stmts @ 12-bar rb+ pickup</td>
<td>2 stmts @ 8 bars + pickup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 8-bar C/R</td>
<td>1 C/R</td>
<td>1 C/R</td>
<td>1 C/R</td>
<td>1 C/R</td>
<td>1 C/R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of full 4-bar back/forth C/R + 4 bar exit phrase + 8 bar long response from chorus</td>
<td>4 + exit + LR 6 + exit + LR 3 + exit + LR 4 + exit + LR 3 + exit+ LR 3 + exit + LR</td>
<td>4 + exit + LR 4 + exit + LR 4 + exit + LR 4 + exit + LR 5 + exit + LR 5 + exit + LR 3 + exit + LR 4 + exit + LR 5 + exit + LR</td>
<td>5 + exit + LR 3 + exit + LR 4 + exit + LR 4 + exit + LR 1 + exit + LR 4 + exit + LR</td>
<td>4 + exit + LR 5 + exit + LR 4 + exit + LR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restatement of ras el-borj?</td>
<td>yes, in bars of 8, 10, 12, 4e (as 'ending' phrase); 8, 8, 4e, 4e @ 3:04 yes, bars of 4+4, 4+4, 4+4. Then transition from 3:30, bits of restatement</td>
<td>yes, bars of 4+4, 4+4, 4+4</td>
<td>3:15 gnb : 4+4, 4+4 / 4+4, 4+ dev. last bars; @ 3:49, delay res. = trigger cue, does twice</td>
<td>4+4+4 / 4+4</td>
<td>change of 1st 'call' part 4 + 4 , 4 + 4 + 4 / 4+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How 2nd gaṭṭ at is cued</td>
<td>4 bars gnb, kb enters on 5th, gnb adjusts, 7 total bars then 4:25 gnb starts cue of 2-bars, on 5th kb enters</td>
<td>6:53 repetition of cue, on the 5th statement, kb enters</td>
<td>4:16 gnb cue after 2 bars, kb enters timidly</td>
<td>3:42 gnb change of riff completely, end of 4th bar = kb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd gaṭṭ a, 4 bars each # of C/R pairs</td>
<td>12 with chorus disagreement on 13th -&gt;</td>
<td>15 C/R</td>
<td>11 C/R + 1 C</td>
<td>14 C/R but first C happens twice (mistake)</td>
<td>diff’t gaṭṭ a: @ 17 cfr (2 bars)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd gaṭṭ a, 2 bar each, # of c/r pairs</td>
<td>13 then kbchg on upbeat</td>
<td>10 c/r</td>
<td>17 c/r</td>
<td>54 c/r but begins with ‘r’</td>
<td>28 bars solo gnb; #29, kb enters reg C/R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of 2nd gaṭṭ a</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7 C/R + 1 C</td>
<td>5 C/R</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of 3rd gaṭṭ a</td>
<td>42 c/r</td>
<td>15 c/r</td>
<td>13 c/r</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>17 c/r + 1 r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(more C/R gaṭṭ at?)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>5 C/R + 15 more c/r</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>more gnb solo as sūg, 138 bars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginbri?</td>
<td>32 bars groove repeat then sug starts @ 8:50</td>
<td>Ginbri solo on 2-bar groove @ 6:49</td>
<td>into sug</td>
<td>cont’s with groove</td>
<td>return to c/r , 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total borj time</td>
<td>10:31 8:15 12:58 9:08</td>
<td>10:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3: Five comparisons of Ḥammū 2 (Bania)

Wrapping up these analyses

In this detail-heavy section, I have given concrete examples in two brāj where musicians have choices within the fixed structure of the brāj—with the fixed structure being the order of particular, recognisable themes and gaṭṭʿat. To recap, these choices included the manner in which the ginbrī presents the rās el-borj including its length, the numbers of calls and responses triggered typically by the kuyu bungu, whether the ginbrī takes a solo or proceeds to the following gaṭṭʿat, whether or not there is a restatement of the ras e-borj before the sūg section, and how the sūg riffs are triggered and delivered. Even with those choices, the ras e-borj must always be recognisable and clear enough that the kuyu bungu knows when to enter and the musical themes or melodies of gaṭṭʿat must also be recognisable. That is to say that a mʿallem or kuyu bungu cannot invent his own motif or melody or deviate from the formula as to which gaṭṭʿa comes first or second or the order of anything else in the overall structure of the borj. For example, the sūg section always has to be last in order to have had appropriate build-up.

While these details may be difficult to follow or digest for those who do not read music, the primary point to keep in mind here is simply that there are both musical choices and structures, improvisation and creativity guided within a musical formula and that these dynamics are conducive to trance. Expectation is extremely important in this context: jedebbīn need to have certain expectations met in the music since it is arguably an essential element to the emergence of trance. I will go into more detail on this point below in Chapter Three but in brief, musical cultivation of trance can only happen when certain, consistent musical factors are present in every performance—the recognisable
themes and order of gatt’at, for example—while at the same time, spontaneous musical creativity (through choices) also lends an air of suspense, surprise, and unique charm to the ambience of each ritual.

6. Final Thoughts on Recent Dīwān Musical Status

In this part of the thesis, I have mapped the emergence of dīwān practice from its origins in the trans-Saharan caravan routes from sub-Saharan Africa to Sufi order involvement across the Sahara and Ottoman influence in present day Algeria, resulting in dīwān’s multifaceted Afro-Maghribi makeup. I gave examples of this through südānī linguistic markers, organology, and ritual musical aesthetics and sensibilities after which I went into detail about the technical musical components of dīwān practice that are themselves, quintessentially Afro-Maghribi. Having assembled the trans-Saharan and North African history of the emergence of dīwān for what it is today—a task that had yet to be attempted—I would like to now turn to briefly address ‘recent’ historical processes that still live in the minds and memories of ūlād dīwān.

Despite French oppression and segregation of black communities, such segregation nurtured community cohesion and, thus, transmission. Conversely, Algerian independence in many ways fractured this cohesion of dīwān communities and their ability to transmit dīwān practice because it resulted in the subsequent demolition of the villages nègres, the resettling and dispersing of black populations, as well as the shifting of power at state and community levels that would have also potentially shifted economic and client relationships in communities. Inevitably, increasing social mobility, modernised livelihoods, economic pressures, and different social conditions for black Algerians shifted priorities, meaning that many more ūlād dīwān went to school and fewer and fewer young people have since had the time or incentive to dedicate their lives to dīwān practice. It has gradually become, more and more, something that people do ‘on the side’ of their day jobs and other responsibilities rather than a livelihood.

While it seems that the sonic identities of dīwān brāj have largely persevered through these changes—at the homes of my interlocutors, I watched and listened to dīwanat dating from the 1960s up through the present—the texts have changed
noticeably with the passing of generations; time has put greater distance between \textit{dīwān} communities today and the elders who could recount their ancestors being brought from the \textit{ˈsūdān} (black Africa) or who may have even grown up hearing Kuria. While it was never clear from the elders exactly when Kuria really started disappearing in Algerian \textit{dīwān} communities, it is no surprise that with the social shifts beginning more than half a century now it was well on its way to disappearing; with the end of Kuria and people who understood it, so evaporated certain traces of trans-Saharan historical encounters. As we will see in several cases below, the disappearance of Kuria is, epistemologically, quite significant because Kuria words—sometimes identifiable as Hausa or Songhay—are particularly powerful at calling the \textit{jnūn} or supernatural forces.

Furthermore, the Civil War in the 1990s and threats of Islamist action against any practices seen as remotely 'Sufi' also had a significant effect on \textit{dīwān} practice; in many places \textit{dīwān} rituals ceased for years on end, some experts were killed, and in several places such as Tlemcen that was once a thriving \textit{dīwān} locus, communities disappeared completely. The information I was able to glean about this period was minimal. In fact, other than being told that independence caused social upheaval and increasingly modernising lifestyles since the 1970s has squeezed ‘tradition’ to the edges, very little was recounted to me about transmission of \textit{dīwān} from the 1960s until the present day. As previously noted, there is a dearth of information on \textit{dīwān} between the gaps in the main \textit{dīwān} sources (Dermenghem 1954; Pâques 1964; Lapassade 1982) and the research span of this thesis, 2013 to 2016. Furthermore, I was limited in my own research by an inability to visit national archives—whether or not I would have found much information on \textit{dīwān}-related news—and limited access to state institutions such as the many Dar Thaqāfa who may have potentially held old records of \textit{dīwān} activity in former years. This kind of research and potential information was simply out of the scope of this thesis for reasons of time and resources. I will, however, say a bit more about transmission as a whole in Part Three and in the Conclusion. It is to the intricacies and depth of that \textit{dīwān} lifeworld that I now turn.
PART TWO: THE DĪWĀN LIFEWORLD
In this second part of the thesis, I will flesh out the nature of dīwān lifeworlds: what is real, what is meaningful, and why. Chapter Three begins with an in-depth ethnographic description of a trance event in order to give context for the critical epistemological and ontological assumptions of this lifeworld that are necessary to understand before proceeding forward. Reflecting on the trance event, I will then deal concretely with these epistemological assumptions and the many ways they broadly interconnect with Algerian culture. From here, I will explore the ways that humans engage with affect, the ways they work it, manipulate it, and reproduce it—as systems of affective labour. With these foundations laid, Chapter Four details the phenomenon of ḥāl in dīwān—an affective field of social warmth—because it is with the human and nonhuman labouring of ḥāl that everything else in dīwān ritual can or cannot emerge—crucially, trance. I then flesh out the rich taxonomy of local trance terminology, categories, and requirements of bodily movement and community care. Through the caring of illness and suffering that manifests as trance, we see local ideas of chronic affliction or contagion. The primary goal of this section, then, is to provide a feeling for the world of dīwān, as much as is possible in a textual form.
CHAPTER THREE:  
EPISTEMOLOGIES AND ONTOLOGIES OF DĪWĀN

In the simplest terms, the primary goal of dīwān ritual is, by way of music, to cultivate a variety of trance states. The purpose of these trance states is to recalibrate relationships between aspects of a 'self' and/or between individuals of the participating community, or between the self and the supernatural world. While in reality, all of these aspects are largely intertwined, some of these aspects are conceptually parsed out in dīwān discourse, particularly regarding the ‘self’, as physical/bodily, emotional/affective, spiritual/religious, and psychological/mental aspects. This recalibration, so to speak, occurs through the shifting of agency between these aspects or actors, sometimes almost complete loss of agency of certain aspects and/or functions of the self or community. For example, most trance in dīwān is understood to be one part of the self (often strong emotions or suffering) 'taking over' control, so that one loses one’s ability to entirely control oneself. This understanding is heavily reinforced in discourse and was consistently represented to me as such. The body is crucially involved also so that, at times, the body’s needs emerge with such intensity that a person is unable to stop him or herself from physically expressing. I will say a great deal more about this below but I simply wish to establish first that, again, it is this shifting of agency, this kind of recalibration of subjectivities, bodies, and energies that is therapeutic.

The other register of trance that is important to introduce here before going further is one that involves degrees of incorporation of supernatural beings into the host body. There are various different orders of supernatural beings in Islam and in dīwān. Unlike in English when we refer to 'spirits' in general or 'the spirit world', in dīwān, the use of the term les esprits in French typically refers to the arwāḥ (pl; rūḥ, sing;) in Arabic: specifically, the spirits of departed souls such as those of ancestors. But more common to the world of dīwān are the jnūn (plural for jinn) who were never human and are an entirely different order of Godly creation. For this reason, to avoid confusion below, I will always specify when speaking about the jnūn versus arwāḥ and will not refer to the jnūn as spirits or to their world as a 'spirit world'. I refer to these cases as 'inhabitation', for three reasons: it is the closest translation of the local, Arabic terminology; such
supernatural incorporation is rarely total unlike the common use of the word ‘possession’; and in order to explicitly resist the Orientalist legacy of the term ‘possession’.

The existence of jnūn is established in many chapter, or suwar (plural; sing: sūrat) of the Qur’ān, particularly in the Sūrat el-Jinn, as well as in the hadīth, collections of stories about the Prophet. The jnūn are supernatural beings made of smokeless fire that humans cannot see but who can see and hear the human world. It is widely known that they may be Muslim, Christian, Jewish, pagan, or atheist. While in general, they are typically considered mischievous and potentially dangerous, like humans they can—in theory—also be helpful, wise, goodhearted, and teach humans skills or give them special abilities. For example, I heard during my fieldwork that Harry Houdini, the magician, was believed to receive help from a jinn in order to perform superhuman acts. There is a hierarchy of jnūn; some rule over the others and the followers, like humans, may or may not obey their masters. In the words of Laḥbīb Derdīrī of Oran, a healer of jinn afflictions, various jnūn have preferable environments—some are spirits of the water, others the desert, for example—and some are particularly strong or adaptable. But just as humans cannot spend long amounts of time in unnatural environments, such as underwater without 'material' (oxygen tanks, a wetsuit), the jnūn also cannot spend much time in the human world without 'material'—that is, without a human host. Also like humans, even the Muslim jnūn do things they know they should not, like inhabit humans.

Trance, in the case of inhabitation, also involves the overlapping of or tension between multiple agencies, human and nonhuman. Sometimes the host will have limited control of him or herself, even while being inhabited while others are consciously aware of being inhabited but will have no control over their body, actions, or words. Still others are said to be completely non-present, their subjectivity entirely replaced by the jinn. Nevertheless, these relationships with the jnūn and arwāḥ are primarily considered in terms of health and sickness and I will largely treat them this way. In other words, trance in dīwān is a form of health maintenance. Here, we must ask what both personal and community ‘health’ means in this context. In turn, cultural approaches to health naturally suggest cultural categories of suffering, illness, and sickness and their possible
treatments. Such inquiry necessarily requires a close look at the epistemology and ontology of dīwān ritual, the goal of the forthcoming sections.

However, before proceeding to these epistemological assumptions that will run throughout the remainder of this thesis, I would like to provide an ethnographic grounding for these later theoretical discussions by recounting the story of one woman’s supernatural affliction and her trance experience through this affliction that lasted for several suites of dīwān songs (brāj, pl.; borj, sing.). I will then return to the discussion on Algerian cultural approaches to agency, affect, and trance, and the more specific epistemological assumptions of dīwān.

A. Meriem’s Affliction

It is three in the morning in early March 2015 and I’m sitting in the front seat of the sedan next to M’allem Muḥammad Amīn Canon, a dīwān ritual musician and authority, as we speed along the lightless, winding country road from Sidi Bel Abbess to Saida in western Algeria. In the back seat are two other friends and dīwān connoisseurs (muḥebbīn), Hūwārī and Mo, who have also come along; we’re on our way from a dīwān in Sidi Bel Abbess to attend another in Saida planned for the next day. Because dīwān has remained largely a private and closed tradition, my mobility between communities, such as in this case, was always dependent on the help and consent of the culture bearing, born-in-the-tradition family lineages of musicians and ritual experts—ūlād dīwān. Muḥammad’s kinship group are guardians of a collective zāwīya (a sacred building for ritual purposes) and they are quite well known as being a 'traditional' community who deliver a great deal of ambience: a 'dīwān ḥāmi' (lit: a 'warm' dīwān). It is for this reason that Hūwārī, Mo, and I left the dīwān in Sidi Bel Abbess early to catch a ride back to Saida with Muḥammad for the Saida dīwān: a marriage celebration for the son of the zāwīya’s moqedm (spiritual authority).

I take this opportunity to ask Muḥammad my burning questions about the dīwān treg (lit: path), or music repertoire order performed by his kin group—especially the difference between two groups of repertoire that are often conflated in other areas of Algeria, Hausawiyyn and Migzawiyyn. Hūwārī and Mo lean in from the backseat to
listen in; they are accustomed to my constant pursuit of the details, tickled by my curiosity, and are interested in what Muḥammad has to say. Muḥammad’s responses about the relationship between the brāj, however, are vague. He seems to change the subject by quizzing me on the ṭreg order (tartīb) of the Hausa repertoire. The dīwān ṭreg in Algeria varies from region to region so he contests my Oranais tartīb as I list off the brāj.74 With my questions still hanging, we arrive around four in the morning in Saida at the home of Muḥammad’s extended family and catch a few hours of sleep before the preparations for the next evening begin.

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Around eight PM, I travel with Muḥammad from the house compound to the zāwīya near the city center where groups of attendees and ūlād dīwān are already busily preparing for the dīwān. Surrounded by high walls and an iron gate, the Zāwīya Sīdī Blāl encompasses a large, open courtyard where most dīwān rituals take place. Behind the large courtyard is a long, rectangular building made up of a main hall, a central, indoor ritual space where dīwanat are held with other sectioned off spaces to the right and left. In the back right hand corner of it is a narrow door always left closed: the storage room for the sacred objects of the ritual, the kumania.

As we pull up in front of the gated zāwīya and before we get out of the car, Muḥammad turns to update me on some unusual dynamics unfolding around a young woman whom I will call Meriem, the daughter of an important ritual expert in the kin group. Meriem is quite unwell, afflicted by some supernatural presence; it has been driving her to trance relentlessly in recent dīwanat (plural of dīwān) much to the distress and displeasure of her father who, I am told, does not want her to attend tonight. When I ask what the problem is, Muḥammad shrugs. He supposes her father is upset because it is generally problematic for a young, unmarried woman to be in trancing continuously in front of the men; one or two brāj would be acceptable, but trancing borj after borj can be risky.

74 ‘Oranais’: being from the wilāya of Oran.
Several of the family members did not agree with her father’s view. Meriem’s state was beyond her control; she has something of a history of being vulnerable to such afflictions. Earlier that year, Muḥammad had recounted a story of a previous episode that had ‘spread’ or otherwise affected other women in the housing compound, including his wife, who similarly fell ‘ill’ (mrīḍa), hearing voices and experiencing supernatural affects. With this background context, we climb out of his van, pass through the left metal gate of the zāwīya—the men’s entrance—and greet the men gathered in the large front courtyard that is framed on the other three sides by high walls. I have not seen many of them for several months so there is plenty of greeting and catching up to do.

Out in the courtyard stretching the length of the zāwīya, I see Moqedm Jallūl, the spiritual authority of the zāwīya since 1997. He is in his mid-seventies but only his trimmed shock of white beard betrays his age. His height, strong eyes, intense face, and strict demeanor can be intimidating but his unpredictable and explosive laughter has a way of shattering any unease. As we are catching up he mentions that in earlier times no one ever held a dīwān for a marriage celebration. 'Dīwān is sacred!' he says, meaning too sacred for a marriage celebration that, today, would typically be animated by popular DJ music. There are many secrets to dīwān, he says—nuances that people do not grasp today.

He invites me into the zāwīya to show me the kumania in the back right corner. It is a narrow and deep room with a tall ceiling that guards all of the ritual materials when they are not in use, including musical instruments, ritual props, spices, and just about anything needed to conduct a dīwān. I had been in this room during my first visit in 2013 so I know to turn around backwards and enter the kumania with my back first, a sign of respect to the nonhuman, unknown worlds of the arwāḥ and jnūn. As I enter I say, 'bismillah', 'in the name of God'—another required gesture of respect and humility towards Allah and the supernatural world. There is a sweet, woody aroma of incense and other herbs. Moqedm Jallūl shows me where some of the special spices and ingredients for food offerings are kept. He tells me a story about a time in his youth when he found a kumania in disarray because the old man caring for it was blind. He began ordering its contents and afterwards, was quite proud of himself for having 'done a good thing'—

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75 He had taken over from the previous moqedm, Ṭayeb Canon.
helping to clean up. But the next day, he was scolded by the elders and told never to touch anything; although the old man was blind, he knew what he was doing. Making the meaning of his story explicit here, Jallūl indicates that the young generation also should leave dīwān 'just as it is'.

Shortly after we exit the kumania, Meriem arrives at the zāwīya in tears. Despite her father’s wishes that she not attend, her state had become so agitated that her grandmother sent word to Muḥammad that she be brought to the dīwān. Moqedm Jallūl tells me later that when he spoke to her, he addressed her as 'madam' and told her to go inside in the kumania and rest. His explicitly pointing this out to me, the way he addressed Meriem—an unmarried girl in her early twenties—as madam is the moqedm’s way of telling me that, in this moment, Meriem is not herself: she is incorporating—corporally—an older, female subjectivity. It is this subjectivity to whom Moqedm Jallūl defers. Feeling that I should let the moqedm attend to his ritual responsibilities, I take my leave and find a spot on the floor against the long back wall to the side of the semicircle of cushions lined up for the musicians who will sit in an arc facing the ritual space, the tarah. This particular March evening is unseasonably cold and with the open air nature of the zāwīya—grates for 'windows', for example—we are bundled up in winter attire and cover ourselves with any unused blankets. It is so cold that I tuck my spare batteries inside my coat to help them last through the night.

Mʿallem Qada Canon, the older brother of Muḥammad, tunes up the ginbrī; the contact microphone and amplifier catapult its tones against the concrete walls and tile floors of the zāwīya, signaling the qrāqeb players or genēdīz (lit.: 'disciples’) to take their seats in the semicircle flanking Mʿallem Qada. The treg begins with the brāj of Slāt En-Nābī, Prayers for the Prophet76, consisting of the brāj Salou Nabina One and Two. Unusually, the tarah is empty; it is a slow start, probably because of the cold. The third and fourth brāj, Bania and Sīd El-Youm (or ‘Sīd El-Yay’, Sīd El-Mēl’), require light-hearted, 'folklore' dancing in pairs, lines, circles, and as solos in order to 'warm up' the ambiance of the space before the ritual proper begins; such dancing is known as kuyu.77

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76 One could also say that it is this family of brāj that secures dīwān as being within the fold of Islam
77 The borj Sid El Youm is, categorically, slightly out of place since it does not reference the Prophet but it is a kuyu borj in which older men typically take the opportunity to show off their fancy footwork and
So while everyone has stayed hunkered down against the cold for Ṣalū Nabīn, the beginning of Bania inspires a group of young men to form a circle on the ṯaraḥ and, while playing qrāqeb and singing, they dance, turning slowly as a group with playful, choreographed footwork—right foot forward, small hop; left foot backwards, small kick—moving sideways. As the borj gradually quickens—a feature of every borj in ḏīwān—the coordinated movements become more fluid, syncronised, and festive.

The ḏīwān ritual proper only begins at the next major borj, Lafū, a word rich in meaning and importance often translated as 'divine grace' or 'divine pardon.' No ḏīwān can begin without this borj. Ma Yamina, an elderly woman and the ʿarīfa, the female spiritual leader of the zāwīya, enters the ṯaraḥ carrying a ṭbaq, 78 a flat basket filled with ritual offerings such as henna and smoking bkhūr (special incense). She places the ṭbaq in front of the musicians, an act of blessing the space and 'opening' (ftiḥ) the ritual proper. Bkhūr is also what invokes the arwāḥ and/or jnūn; it is at this moment when jedba (trance) can begin, but not before. Repeatedly called 'the mother of ḏīwān' (el-omm el-ḏīwān), bkhūr is essential to shifting the social field towards the divine, spiritual, and otherworldly. 79 With the bkhūr, the role of Lafū is to musick the transition of the entire social field—that is, the complete aesthetic, affective, and ontological complex—into the sacred. One senses the ambiance growing quickly and both men and women observers now begin to come through their separate entrances to the building, taking seats on the ground. The inside of the zāwīya is beginning to get crowded. The ḏīwān is warming now.

Now a tall, older gentleman, Aḥmed Farajī, Muḥammad and Qada’s cousin, moves from musician to musician, carrying a metal bowl suspended from chains and a hook, filled with hot coals over which the crystal-like shards of bkhūr burn. Each musician waves his qrāqeb playing hands in the stream of smoke—right hand over left, left over right. This gesture, msellmīn-mketfīn, signals humility and respect for elders and masters of both the human and supernatural world. It similarly serves as a spiritual purification coordination while playing the qrāqeb. It is possible that there has been some gradual collapsing of what was formerly a very large 'secular' kuyu repertoire in addition to the grouping of Ṣalāt En-Nābī.

78 The word in classical Arabic is tabaq but western Algerian pronunciation softens the letter qaf to a hard ‘g’ as in the English ‘good.’
79 According to many of my interlocutors, there are many types of bkhūr with various properties. While some types attract supernatural entities, others repel them. In addition, every maḥalla or ḏīwān kin group may have their own type.
and act of protection, *msellmīn-mketfīn* meaning 'we are Muslim (we submit) and we are bounded (we mean no harm, we come in peace').

The *bkhūr* is then taken to the front wall of the *zāwīya*, opposite the musicians, and against which sits the *mahalla*: the large, sacred trunk of ritual objects and clothing. With the help of Muḥammad, Aḥmed lifts the lid and the inside of the *mahalla* is fumigated. Various coloured, satin ritual cloaks (*abayat*, plural; *abāya*, sing.) are neatly stacked on top. It is only now that the *mahalla* has been purified that the green *abāyat*—the colour for the *borj* Lafū—can be taken out by the *shawsh*—the *moqedm*’s helper—to be given to or placed over the heads of the *jedebbīn*, dancers or trancers (*jedēb*, sing. masculine; *jedēba*, sing. feminine). The ambiance of the *dīwān* continues to warm; the *genēdīz* are singing more enthusiastically now and some lift their *qrāqeb* above their heads while playing, rocking their torsos side to side or forwards and backwards. The *jedebbīn* appropriately respond with more pronounced movements—the swinging of arms, forward bending at the waist, a dropping and side-to-side swinging of the head. The musicians and *jedebbīn* build on one another’s energy and enthusiasm so that there’s an upward, spiraling sense of ambience.

Quite immediately, at the start of Lafū, Meriem, immediately approached the *ṭaraḥ* and began to *tejdeb* (trance) quite earnestly, bending forward at the waist to her right and left. Her head and entire face are covered by a scarf for her own privacy to veil her vulnerable facial expressions and also to protect her face from the potentially risky gaze of others: at worst, the Evil Eye. On par with the ideal, this *dīwān* quickly 'launches' (*yetla*'), meaning its ambiance 'takes off'; it is electric, buzzing.

From Lafū, the *ṭreg* continues to Mūsawiyyyn, a *brāj* family that in all parts of Algeria is made of up three Mūsa *brāj*—Baḥrī Mūsa Ṣalū Nābī, Shohada (aka Mūsa Kebir or Musa le Grand), and Mūsa Sghīr or Mūsa Three)—a series of the most well

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80 The gesture is not particular to *dīwān*: it is widely understood and practiced throughout Algeria as a symbolically-charged gesture in popular Islam, typically used when approaching the tomb of a saint, in imploring 'barakā' (blessing) from a saint, or within the context of pilgrimage (*ziyāra*). Less commonly, it may be done upon hearing news of a supernatural nature, something that could have to do with spirits or *jnūn*. Not only is the gesture supposedly performed towards and for mercy from saints, spirits, or *jnūn* but also towards fellow īlād *dīwān*, especially *m alliemīn*, *moqedmīn*, or elders, when a person enters the *ṭaraḥ* to *tejdeb*. Ideally, the adept should perform the gesture towards any others on the *ṭaraḥ*, as well, to communicate his or her *niyya*, good intention.

81 *Tejdeb* is related to the root *j-dh-b* in Arabic, of which the noun form is *jedba* and meaning 'attraction', typically implying something divine or supernatural.
known water spirits (or possibly *jnūn*), a classification called Bahriyya. In Saida, as well in other areas, a fourth *borj*, Jamberika (or Berika, Mbirika) is also considered part of Mūsawiyyn and is usually played between the first and second Mūsa *brāj*. During all of these *brāj*, the green *abayat* are kept on; in most of the west of Algeria, green is the auspicious colour for Bahriyya while others use blue. Meanwhile, Meriem is still in trance, standing on the *ṭaraḥ*, and slowly swaying a bit to the pulse, rocking from one foot to the other.

It is then with the arrival of the popular and energetic *borj*, Dabu ('Bori ya bori manan dabu') that the ḥāl (ambience) peaks. Dabu is where one typically sees the first vigorous trance. Indeed, it is practically protocol that at least one *jedēb* (usually male) will use the bulalat, natural fiber whips of Hausa origin, to whip himself, alternating with one bulāla in each hand, beating his back in time with the pulse. There is a long section at the end of the *borj* where jedebbīn begin by whipping themselves as a group, in a circle, and then break up into solos, taking turns whipping themselves in front of the musicians. Meriem is still on the *ṭaraḥ* but standing near the *maḥalla*; she hangs her head while moving to the music, letting her arms hang down at her sides, with a bulāla in each hand while Ahmed stands near her, keeping an eye on her.

After this high point, Bahriyya is concluded by the *borj*, 'Nabina' (Our Prophet). It would be rare to see any serious trance in this *borj* which functions mostly as a cooling pause in order to prepare for another set of warm *brāj*, the Ḥammū series discussed at length above. These two *brāj*, associated with the colour red (but sometimes taking green, left over from Dabu) may involve knife play. In some places, including within the Moroccan gnāwa, Ḥammū or sometimes Ḥammūda is the personage of a butcher with the colour red signifying blood. These *brāj* are then followed by Habībī Raṣūl Allah ('Beloved Messenger of God'), to provide another pause of energy, another brief cooling.

This gradual ratcheting up and down of the ḥāl, this alternation of warming and cooling *brāj*, heavy and lighter *brāj*, is crucial to guiding and pacing trancing bodies and subjectivities through physically taxing processes of ritual; it may be thought of as climbing a mountain, taking rest stops as the slope increases. These 'rest stops' are

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82 In Mascara, however, Jamberika has a special purpose to 'prepare the ground' (*yfarresh*) of the diwan. It is played before Mūsawiyyn.

83 Colours of many of the *brāj* consistently vary from region to region.
always associated with the Prophet Muḥammad by text and borj name. One very much senses these rest stops in the overall aesthetics; the mʿallemʾs fingers on the ginbrī seem more nimble somehow, bodily gestures become less vigorous, feet step more lightly, the energy lifts and breathes for a moment.

Qada gets up and Muḥammad Amīn takes his place as mʿallem. Now the ritual is launched into the two ‘hottest’, heaviest, and most intense of brāj groups, Srāga and Sīdī Ḥṣen (also known as Ḥassaniyyyn) during which the most demanding and violent of trances can unfold with self-mortification through spear and knife play. Most ēlād dīwān literally refer to them as 'hot' (ʿḥāmī') brāj meaning that heat can be sensed in the ritual space due to supernatural presences. According to one dīwān ritual expert, ʿAzzeddīn Benūghef of Mascara, the reason for this heat, a form of intensity, is that, ‘here, it is the “sick” people who dance’: ‘on trouve les malades qui dansent’—’sick' here meaning 'hit' or afflicted by the jnūn. But many who 'dance' to these hot brāj do so for other reasons: some have affective 'attractions'—this is the meaning of jedba after all, divine attraction—to the songs (see more below).

These two dramatic song sets are the most popular in attracting both jedebbīn and spectators. Musically, Sergu, the first borj of the Srāga (plural for Sergu) group, and heard as quite foreboding, is often played sparsely at first by the ginbrī in a moderately slow tempo:

Example 26: Sergu, rās el-borj.

See footnote for audio of this particular performance.

With the first few notes of the ginbrī, the ritual space is often shattered by screams or moans of jedebbīn who, with these sonic indications of distress, fall immediately into trance; in these first few minutes, commotion is typical. Sergu is a Tuareg male, and

84 I clarified, ‘What do you mean by 'sick'? (‘mrād kifēsh?) to which he clarified, ‘those who are hit by jnūn.’ (madrabbīn, li darrebhūm jinn’). Interview 6 May 2015.
85 http://algeriandiwan.blogspot.co.uk/2017/03/sergu-saida-diwan-march-2015.html
hunter personage, whether spirit, idea, or memory. His adepts are draped in black abayat and some male jedebbīn simulate his Tuareg dress by wrapping black turbans around their heads and faces, leaving only the eyes visible. From the beginning of my fieldwork, I noticed the extreme distress of jedebbīn in this borj. Could there be a collective, traumatic memory of the central role of the Tuareg in the trans-Saharan slave trade collapsed into Sergu, the hunter whose prey is human, who raids villages to steal people away? Or could there be a relationship with the popular Algerian tale of Thergu, a monster that comes in the dark of the night to eat people—usually misbehaving children? While it is not entirely clear if Sergu is understood in this way by ūlād dīwān or his jedebbīn—I only got hints of these meanings—communities do speak of his blackness, wildness, and the association with danger.

Sergu’s adepts dance with long, black spears. When all the experienced jedebbīn have their spears, they form a circle facing one another and the moqedm or shawsh crouches at the center of the circle with a small brazier full of hot coals. At a specified moment signaled by the moqedm, he drops bkhūr onto the hot coals in the brazier so that thick smoke pours upwards at the precise moment when the jedebbīn turn the spears on themselves—these coordinated actions are intended to protect the jedebbīn against injuring themselves either due to the purifying, sacred properties of bkhūr or because of its ability to call the jnūn who may, in turn, protect the jedebbīn who trance on their behalf. The air rips open with uproarious ululation catapulted towards the tarah from the women’s section. This crucial sonic indexing of intense feeling is obligatory for dangerous moments like this; the non-negotiable role of women’s ululation here

86 Speaking to some of the women who tejdeb to Sergu, I was told that he is a severe spirit who torments his subjects mercilessly. Without giving a lot of detail, the women communicated a certain heaviness and ferocity to him and that one had absolutely no choice but to do what Sergu wanted. The earliest known source on dīwān—Andrew’s work in 1903—noted that the category of spirits who dressed in black and who were shared by the Bambara, Songhay, Tombu, and Gurma houses in Algiers were called ‘Ouled Sergou.’ He listed these spirits as ‘Sidi S’na; Djenghina; Nouari; Taoua; Djabayarmana; Belladj’i [Belayji] (26). Similarly, in present day dīwān, black spirits are known to come from l-khelā’, the void, the bush, or wilderness. The Hausawiyyn and Migzawiyyn brāj (see below) are also understood to be from l-khelā’ and interestingly, in Algiers, Sergu has sometimes been recently categorised as being within the Migzawiyyn family. Like Dermenghem in 1954, I observed Srāga being played at the end of the dīwān in Algiers at the point when groups also typically play the Migzawiyyn brāj (see Dermenghem 266).

87 Most but not all jedebbīn tejdeb with spears in Srāga; some jedebbīn, particularly women in deep trance, may approach the musicians directly and tejdeb on their knees, throwing their torsos so vigorously forwards that their heads nearly miss the ground

88 Holding two spears far out in front of the body either directly in front or one slightly at each side, each jedēb thrusts the points of the spears into their own torsos in time with the music.
demonstrates the importance of sound to articulate and enfold affective density. Towards the end of the borj, the circle breaks apart, the bkkūr is returned to its place in front of the mʿallem and each jedēb, moderated by the shawsh, takes his or her turn (nūba) approaching the mʿallem and genēdīz to tejdeb with the spears in a similar way. The jedēb listens for the ginbrī to musick his movements while the mʿallem carefully watches the jedēb to determine his musical needs.89

As the Sergu borj progresses, Meriem has joined in for the spear trance, embodying Sergu as well. I am beginning to see what Muḥammad meant when he said that her relentless trancing was worrying to some; the unyielding and compressed intensity of her trance has not abated, she has not left the ṭaraḥ since Lafū. No one is stopping her, however; in fact, she is being attended to, mostly by Aḥmed. Now there is a charged pause in the music while Mʿallem Muḥammad tunes up the ginbrī again—the natural, gut strings often stretch out with vigorous playing, causing the ginbrī to go flat. The genēdīz shuffle around, swapping places to get a seat on one of the soft mattresses flanking the mʿallem. One or two get up for a smoke break and wave over a replacement. There is some exchanging of pairs of qrāqeb as players search for preferable size and weight. On the ṭaraḥ, Aḥmed, acting as shawsh, helps the still-remaining jedebbīn swap out their black abayat from black to red—some impatient jedebbīn have already donned their red abāya before the end of Srāga. Many of the jedebbīn who tejdeb to Srāga also tejdeb to this next group, Sīdī Ḣsen, so that the ṭaraḥ is full of jedebbīn. They pace around the edges until, finally, the ginbrī calls out with another bottom-heavy, sauntering theme. The genēdīz immediately join in on qrāqeb and the kuyu bungu calls from the high tonic, cascading down with the vocal theme and text

89 This main Sergu borj is followed by the second prominent borj, Sergu Belayji, with a slightly 'lighter' motif that inspires similar registers of spear trance. The first two Sergu brāj take a great deal of persistence, patience, and time. They feel so cumbersome that they give a feeling of needing to be forcibly pushed through the space-time they are inhabiting. Their long, dramatic musical arcs intensify ever so gradually—sometimes a single borj can last a half hour. But the last three brāj of Srāga—Wulla Ya Rebbi, Slimani Ya Baba (aka Soulmaniyya), and Yay Wawa—set in lilting six-eight, triplet feeling metric modes, are remarkably lighter and push the tempo. Arms and torsos swing with less vigour now, and feet step more lightly. We do not hear Sergu’s name called again; these last three brāj likely index other names, spirits, or ideas that are closely related to him. For example in the last borj one often hears people singing 'Yay Wawa' and 'Slimani ya Baba': 'Wawa' in Hausa means 'monster' and Slimani, in the Sahara, is a genie sultan of the desert (Dermenghem: 287).
that will drive itself into our bodies for the next twenty-four minutes: 'Ay, Baba Inwa, Jangare Mama.'

It is the arrival of the first borj: Jangare Mama.

Example 27: Rās el-borj groove.

See this footnote for audio of entire borj, this performance.

Meriem is now in a semi-catatonic state, unable to move her body. Several men carry her carefully from her legs and under her armpits to set her down in the middle of the ṭaraḥ with her legs outstretched, her back to the musicians. Although her face is now exposed, her head is still wrapped in the scarf and it slumps down to her chest. She does not move, but she is able to sit upright. She is draped in the gold-trimmed, red abāya required for Sīdī Ḥṣen. This family of brāj is, without question, the most intense, dramatic, and 'hottest' of all the current dīwān brāj families.

From early on in the borj, in addition to Aḥmed, a group of six men have arranged themselves as a group on the ṭaraḥ—including Mo who rode down with us from Sidi Bel Abbes, Bū ‘amāma Farajī, (Aḥmed’s younger brother), and a moqedm from another dīwān family—all dressed in red abāyat, gently moving in swaying steps with the

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90 Although pronunciation suggests thatūlād dīwān sing 'Baba Noar,' this is most certainly a recent slippage from 'Baba Inwa' or 'Enwa' with Inwa being an important Hausa spirit and personage with a recorded history in Algeria. Both Andrews in 1903 and Pâques in 1964 (613) mentioned Dār Zozo in Algiers which was commanded by the genie Inwa and further afield in Biskra where Inwa was associated with the Hausa dār. To this day in Biskra, there is a brāj series (or as they say locally for song(s): nūba, nūbat) called 'Baba Inwa' with reported Bornu origins.

91 The word 'Jangare' in Hausa is the city of the bori spirits. Tremearne (1914: 255) says: 'The chief abode of the bori is Jan Gari (Red City) or Jan Garu (Red Walls), which is stated to be in the Red Country (Jan Kassa) between Aghat and Ashen. No living person has ever seen this city, but, [quoting one of his informants:] 'all travelers know of its whereabouts, and, should anyone enter it, he will never be heard of more.' In dīwān, interestingly, this entire family of brāj requires the colour of deep red.

92 http://algeriandiwan.blogspot.co.uk/2017/03/jangare-mama-saida-diw-an-march-2015.html

93 Jedebbīn must wear a red belt (hizām) around their abdomen along with the red abāya, and some wear red crowns with cowrie shells or other regal clothing.
music. They each have a bundle of two knives held in one hand. Like Srāga, the exceptionally slow beginning of Sīdī Ḥsen allows jedebbīn to make their way to the tarah and, anticipating the challenging trance ahead, they will gradually prepare their mind, body, and mental-emotional state: in Arabic, one’s ‘rūḥ’, a term that encompasses all of these. Sīdī Ḥsen tends to attract the older and most experienced jedebbīn because this series involves the playing of knives (el-l’abb l-khadām). A jedēb should ideally have his own set of knives—although not all do—with which, upon entering the tarah, he pays his respects to the m’allem and kuyu bungu as well as most of the genēdīz by performing the msellmīn-mketfīn gesture with a knife in each hand, touching just the tips of the knives to the head. The jedēb moves down the line of musicians this way, an act that is also understood to be a request for authorisation—yetlubb el-tesrīḥ—to work the knives. Such permission of senior and elder ālād dīwān is, in theory or in some discourse, required to ensure the jedēb’s safety.\(^9\)

Moqedm Jallūl takes advantage of this slow-burn crescendo to attend to Meriem. He begins by fumigating her with the metal dish of smoking bkhūr, circling it around her back and head, and then setting the dish on her head for a moment. Approaching her from the front, he lifts each limp arm by the hand, shakes it out, and fumigates underneath. He then lifts up each stiff leg and passes the smoking dish under the ankle. He sets the dish of smoking bkhūr on the ground at her feet and returns to her back. Leaning over her, using his body weight to push her forward, he reaches down to take her arms and pushes them down her shins. After several moments, he then pushes down on her shoulders and arms, as if to stretch their connection to the neck, then walks around to stand in front of her again. Taking each one of her hands in his now, he pulls them towards him while stretching out his right foot, placing and pushing it gently into her solar plexus so that she is being stretched at the rib cage. He holds this position for a moment, puts his foot on the ground to rest, and then repeats the gesture.

While the borj continues and the other six men move around the tarah, Būʿamāma Farajī is standing just in front of the ginbrī, dipping his torso forwards and backwards

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94 I was told a story by several different informants about a young man who used knives during these brāj without such permission after which he severely injured himself in a dīwān—the knives penetrated his stomach, ‘dekhlū fī kershū’—and he spent two months in the hospital in critical condition. Furthermore, the young man’s father was a moqedm and, because of the son’s negligence in working knives without permission, the father adamantly refused to visit his son in the hospital during the two months.
and to the side, as if to draw the letter V with his head: this movement signals the deepening of trance. Moqedm Jallūl then walks up to retrieve a bundle of knives at the feet of the musicians and takes them in his right hand, taking a moment to face the musicians and move to the music himself. The ginbrī theme changes to a shorter, condensed gatt’a that has the effect of speeding up the pace, signifying the next musical and ritual stage.

![Example 28: Gatt’a #1](image)

Still, the borj tempo increases ever so gradually. The ginbrī delivers a second and third gatt’a, each time followed by changes in the call and response singing.

![Example 29: Gatt’a #2](image)

This gatt’a above emphasises an overall motif of B A, E D so that the B and E can be heard as delays that resolve to the A (sol, dominant) and D (tonic). Then another shift occurs where, rather than leaping up to B from the low tonic, the A takes on more prominence on the downbeat.
The *borj* is being slowly ratcheted up.

Now, even while still sitting down, Meriem is gently swaying to the pulse, bending ever so slightly at her waist and dipping just a bit side to side in rhythm. The *borj* continues to build. Moqedm Jallūl takes another chunk of crystal *bkhūr* from the *ṭbag* at the feet of the musicians and places it in the dish of hot coals still at Meriem’s feet. M‘allem Muḥammad responds to the cue and changes the *ginbrī ṣaṭṭ‘a* again: this is the motif that signals that knife work is about to begin:

Emphasising the subdominant (G) and subtonic (E) for forty-seven seconds, Muḥammad plays variations on this theme, crucially suspending the resolution to tonic (D) and thus, drawing out the musical tension, giving plenty of time for the *jedebbīn* to prepare. The men now hold a knife in each hand; they take one of the knives and place its point against the abdomen, holding the other knife above their head, suspended and waiting. They are awaiting the *ginbrī* signal to begin slashing at their abdomens but

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95 The high D, it should be noted, is not heard as a resolution here partly because it is on the highest string which plays ‘filler’ notes but also because we are so strongly in ii / iv changes (second and fourth modal degrees).
M’allem Muḥammad delays it musically while Moqedm Jallūl, standing behind a still motionless Meriem, raises the knives above his head and makes the *msellmīn-mketfīn* gesture twice: the final preparation before the knife work.

Now the *ginbri* announces the knife work motif.

Example 32: Knife work motif

The six men, having formed a circle around Meriem, begin swinging their knives out to the side, alternating right and left, and in towards their abdomens in time with the rhythm while they simultaneously are moving their feet side to side and the circle rotates counterclockwise. Moqedm Jallūl stands behind Meriem and bends over her to gently make the same movement on her abdomen with the two knives in his hands. He is doing her affective work for her; were she more present in her body, it would be her responsibility to do this action on herself. Another *ginbri* *gatt'a* signals the rest, for just a moment, before returning to the knife work *gatt'a*. Now Moqedm Jallūl, still standing behind Meriem, so close that his legs are touching her back, works the knives on his own abdomen with enthusiasm and the entire women’s section responds with bursts of ululations. The other men on the *ṭaraḥ* are in good form, energetically swinging the knives in and out, in and out to their abdomens.

After the next *ginbri* signal to break—the *ginbri* alternates between these two motifs to ‘prepare/stop’ and ‘start’ working the knives, sensing closely what is happening on the *ṭaraḥ*—the *moqedm* indicates to one of the six men near him to come around to the back of Meriem to work the knives on her. The man is visibly reticent but Moqedm Jallūl insists, motioning for the man to lean over her and do as he has just done; he watches carefully to monitor. Following suit, several other men take a turn working the knives on Meriem’s abdomen as she sits motionless. After three rounds of this, Moqedm Jallūl stands in front of Meriem, takes both of her hands and, pulling them taught, slowly pulls her to her feet. She is able to stand now and when she turns around to face the
musicians, she places both of her hands behind her back. Into her hands, Moqedm Jallūl places two knives and she slowly approaches the musicians.

Before she starts to work the knives, Aḥmed is quick to reach around her front and tie a long, red scarf around her waist; a hīzāma, or belt. This piece of cloth is required in the Sīdī Ḥsen series—some say to protect the abdomen, others say because it indicates respect and deference to the jnūn associated with the brāj series whose colour is red and who can give or take away their protection at will. Without any hesitation, Meriem goes immediately into knife work but with a different motion: she intently thrusts both knives at once towards her abdomen in quick, measured, small bursts. Moqedm Jallūl stands to her left monitoring her and when she begins to lose a bit of her composure and control, he approaches and gently places his right hand on her upper back to communicate, 'that’ll do.' She continues for a few more strokes and when he rubs her back, she drops her arms, stops, and turns to rest her hands on his shoulders. They both acknowledge one another in this moment, bowing their heads to one another. He puts his left arm around her shoulders and walks her back across the ṭaraḥ to join the other men who stand at the back near the maḥalla, waiting for their turn—their nūba—to tejdeb in front of the musicians. Meriem’s affective state has been brought to its needed fruition; she is now in a state where she can look after herself.

One by one, each of the six men now takes his nūba so that M’allem Muḥammad can play directly to his state. Meriem now remains by the maḥalla with the others, as one of the group now, and the borj accelerates to its sudden end. Meriem’s affliction has been musically released.
One afternoon several days later, Meriem invites me to go with her to the local hammam, the public bathhouse, in Saida. Hoping to be able to ask her about her trance experiences, I agree. She is more than happy to talk about it as we’re walking back afterwards, but there is not much to say. Many people experience amnesia and do not recall their experiences at all. I was curious to know what it first felt like to enter into trance. She tells me that she hears en-ness es-salihūn, literally, 'holy people' but this term is open-ended and vague; it is sometimes used as a euphemism for the jnūn. Being quite direct here, I ask if she means the jnūn; she says no. I am intrigued because, according to official Islamic discourse, departed souls go to purgatory, to barzakh, where they await judgment and, in theory, no one is able to hear, see, or interact with these souls. If someone sees or hears a spirit that resembles a human than it is thought to be the jnūn masquerading as others. Meriem is sure this is an entirely different spirit order, however.

When I ask Meriem what it feels like when she goes into trance (‘wesh hasītī?’), such as when she hears the melody of the ginbrī, she says that as soon as she smells the

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96 However, as an Algerian friend in London told me, 'Nobody really knows what happens in barzakh, so anything is possible'.
bkhūr; her mind goes blank and she doesn’t remember anything after that. But she also spoke of hearing the voices of en-ness es-ṣalīḥīn and she seemed to associate that with the moment of smelling bkhūr as well, in those, perhaps, seemingly vague and unutterable moments when human agency is lost to nonhuman agency. Having spent two years already observing dozens of dīwān rituals, I understand that trance rarely just happens in a flash.

On the contrary, in dīwān, trance is typically a spectrum of having and losing agency; the trancer’s agency varies throughout the experience. In the dīwān described above, Meriem had varying degrees control, even if at times very little control. Even during the most intense and paralysing part of her trance, during Jangare Mama, she was at least able to hold her body upright. In this moment, there is a complication. Going nearly catatonic in an unresponsive state is quite unusual; it indicates a blockage of some kind in the transference between human and nonhuman agency and this explains the moqedm’s long and detailed work to bring her into a state where she could work the knives. When the moqedm pulled her to her feet, even though she was hardly responding at all before that moment, Meriem was able to go immediately into working the knives on herself. In the material below, I will say a great deal more about ways of understanding human agency in dīwān, even in inhabitation. However, my primary goal here has been to show, through Meriem’s story, the intertwining of agencies, the importance of affect and affective work, and the sensory transmission of information: topics I turn to now.

B. The Epistemologies of Agency, Affect, and Transmission

Despite rich and contested variation in points of view and practices, it is possible—and for the goal of this thesis, heuristically important—to assert a foundational 'epistemology of dīwān'. Meriem’s story of supernatural affliction introduces some of the key epistemological assumptions of dīwān worlds that are explored in this section and that run throughout this thesis. The three main epistemological assumptions that I will deal with here are as follows: 1) dynamic agency between human/nonhuman actors; 2) prioritisation of affective dynamics; 3)
multi-dimensional transmission (transference and reproduction) of dīwān knowledge within the human world as well as between human and nonhuman dimensions. These dīwān epistemological assumptions are critical because they open and prepare the existential space for the dīwān lifeworld; they explain how it is that dīwān comes to exist, be meaningful, and do what it does.

First, these epistemological assumptions are not altogether unique to dīwān. Rather, they are inextricable from and are made possible and plausible by the particularity of Algerian lifeworlds. It is difficult to over-emphasise this point. That is to say that understanding ‘extraordinary’ or supernatural phenomena in dīwān, such as the nonhuman inhabitation of human bodies in trance, requires understanding the broader, Algerian social context—and, therefore, the ontological and epistemological context—in which such phenomena emerge. In their social context, many of these phenomena are, quite importantly, considered not just possible but expected and even ‘normal’. It is for this reason that before going into the specifics of the ways that these epistemologies manifest in dīwān specifically, I want to first explore the roots of these epistemologies in Algerian culture at large.

The first fundamental assumption in Algerian culture, and to a large extent North African culture in general, is that human agency is always in question. A great deal of this state of affairs originates in Islamic belief such as that one’s destiny, and even the time and date of death, is already determined by God. Humans have limited control over the future. This assumption is ubiquitously articulated and reinforced in regular, daily interactions through the social norm of pronouncing, ‘insha’ Allah’, ‘if God wills it’, after any statement about the future, a possibility, or something that has not yet occurred. Despite the phrase being based in religious concepts, however, it is so culturally embedded, as an automatic reflex, that even non-believers are compelled to use the phrase. Listeners are also required to respond with ‘insha’ Allah’, particularly if the speaker has forgotten to say it or has not said it promptly. Two similar, ubiquitous expressions are ‘mektūb’, literally, ‘it is written’—meaning ‘God’s has written it, it is

97 By agency, and in considering the study at hand, I am referring to the power to make decisions for oneself and for others, power to control one’s own circumstances which may involve the power to control one’s social mobility, social standing, one’s power to speak or to have the opportunity to speak, power to decide and choose for oneself what one wants to experience or feel, and perhaps most importantly to dīwān, the power to maintain one’s own physical, emotional, and psychological boundaries.
destiny’—and ‘Allah ghāleb’, literally, ‘God is victorious, all powerful.’ In other words, ‘there is nothing that can be done.’ God is omnipotent and humans have limited agency at best over their lives and circumstances—at least in theory.

The importance of emphasising this particular epistemological assumption first is because questionable or unstable agency is so embedded in Algerian culture—to the extent that, for some, there is no free will—that the supernatural phenomena in dīwān have tremendous ontological resonance with quotidian understandings of how the world works: they are all phenomena that attest to and reinforce limited human agency. Therefore, enfolded in Algerian lifeworlds, dīwān epistemology also assumes a world of nonhuman actors, nonhuman agency, and nonhuman action that affect, interact with, and limit human agency. Agency between these human and nonhuman actors is consistently shifting, unstable, and is sometimes quite contested. As well as supernatural entities such as God, the arwāḥ, jnūn, or indeterminable affective forces like ḥāl, black magic (seher), or the Evil Eye, nonhuman agents may also include ritual objects and musical instruments.

Because there is an understanding that there are unseen forces, bodies, or beings outside of human control that can and do profoundly affect the human world, ūlād dīwān never have complete control over the feel, the events, and the development of any given dīwān ritual. For example, in the most key aspect of dīwān, the music, both the instruments (especially the ginbrī) and musicians are regularly penetrated by presumed outside agencies such as jnūn and affective forces (memories, emotions, physical sensations). While a mʿallem has rehearsed his musical skills, it is not uncommon for him to be 'taken over' (khatfū) or to 'go absent' (yghīb) so that his body and instrument become vessels, inhabited and controlled by other forces. For example, speaking with the wife of one mʿallem—women were often more willing to talk about such things—she told me that her husband reported that when a dīwān is really 'hot' (ḥāmī), meaning full of energy and excitement, it is because there are a great number of jnūn present who are also 'working' (ykhedemū), even taking part in the ginbrī playing; they are playing through her husband, the mʿallem.

Trance, the express goal of dīwān to which most of dīwān practice is dedicated, is by definition a modality of push-and-pull agency between the jedēb(a) and affective
forces. These forces—sensations, emotions, memories, and energies—can be one’s own or they can belong to other people, spreading like contagion, and/or they can belong to supernatural beings present (God, jnūn, arwah). That is to say, if there is one quality that unites all registers of trance in dīwān it is human agency loss; it is simply a matter of degree and type. Trance states are particularly legible examples of the unstable nature of agency because one can observe jedebbīn in various states of conscious awareness, working at or sometimes struggling to stay upright, to maintain a certain level of consciousness, to move, or to participate at all—as we saw with Meriem’s story. However, in other forms of trance where supernatural entities are not involved, there is still a struggle for agency. These experiences are commonly understood as a 'non-dominant' part of the self (usually strong emotions) which is usually kept in check overwhelming the thresholds of another part of the self (the editing, controlling self). This means that even within the realm of human agency, there are internal nuanced categories of agency between conscious/ subconscious, and dominant/ non-dominant aspects of the self, such as, for example, conscious action versus one’s dreams or a person’s pain that can feel to be acting on its person (see Scarry 1985; Ahmed 2013). However, as I will explore further below, affective fields or agents in the worlds of dīwān are neither distinctly singular nor exclusively human/nonhuman: they are almost always both.

This brings us to the second epistemological assumption in dīwān for which we find many fundamental conceptions throughout Algerian culture: the importance and prioritisation of affective dynamics as fields and forces. The most ubiquitous and fundamental example of a powerful affective force that, in Algeria, cuts across socioeconomics, class, and race is The Evil Eye, or lʿaīn. Belief in lʿaīn does not seem to have any connection to upbringing or religious belief; its dangers are discussed amongst upper class intellectuals educated in France as well as atheists. Known for its power to hurt, maim, or kill, lʿaīn is understood to originate from a person’s malicious envy towards another. Through the eye of the envious perpetrator, the malevolence and bad intention can be energetically transferred as a wave of negative energy to the victim and cause misfortune. It is often considered to be even more dangerous than black magic (seher, see below) since the latter does not usually end in death while lʿaīn is known to
kill. Therefore, being highly visible, vulnerable to the gaze of others can be a risk; this was the presumed reason for Meriem’s father’s resistance to her attending *dīwanat*. Because *l’aīn* primarily does its dangerous work via the envy of others, people with exceptional talent, beauty, luck, or fortune are particularly susceptible as well as those who are unusual, out of place, or otherwise attract attention.\(^9^8\) The only real way to prevent any negative energy of *l’aīn*, is to say, *'ma sha' Allah'* (*God has willed it*) when viewing something enviable, giving someone a compliment, or admiring a person or thing. Speaking out loud that God has willed such beauty or fortune serves as a reminder that God is in control, knows best, and such things should, therefore, not be envied. Crucially, this means that words, as sound, can block dangerous affective potential.

The importance of this discussion of *l’aīn* is that it illustrates a culturally dispersed example of interlocking relationships between affect, agency, and transmission: *l’aīn* is generated from an affect, a feeling of malicious envy that is transmitted from the perpetrator energetically as a harmful wave of intent (affective field) that travels, finds, and latches onto its victim and causes misfortune (transference, transmission of affect). Therefore while being humanly generated, the affective field of *l’aīn* is neither human nor nonhuman; *l’aīn* takes on its own agency acting on behalf of the perpetrator against the victim. These dynamics of *l’aīn* are revealing of the epistemological assumption that humans have the power to produce energies while these energies take on agency of their own. Positive affective fields are also possible: that of *niyya*, understood to be the state of good intention and purity of heart, an intention that can produce real effects—often magical results—that are not possible without it. Good or bad intentions can both create affective fields, in other words.

Related to this cultural understanding of affective dynamics, affective forces (such as directed energies) and affective fields (such as ritual ambiance) in *dīwān* epistemology are also of fundamental importance. In simplest terms, the 'feel of things' in *dīwān* is critical; it is not an exaggeration to say that this is the most important criterion of ritual success. One reason why affective dynamics are so prioritised is that these human-nonhuman relationships are established, flourish, and are meaningful.

\(^{98}\) But in addition to the intentional, negative affective harm caused by *l’aīn*, many Algerians I spoke with asserted that *l’aīn* can also take effect accidentally, such as by a mother looking at one’s own child too long.
through affective fields and dynamics. That is to say, the contact, the communication, the
flow, accumulation, and blockages of information between human and nonhuman actors
(ie. between humans and supernatural beings)—and the ways in which humans employ
various mechanisms of control over such nonhuman actors—happen mostly through
affective mechanisms, via the senses. For example, the presence of *jnūn* is detected by
feel—heat, usually—and their approach or enfolding of their human host has visible
affective results in the host: passing out, sobbing, becoming paralysed, or running away.
Furthermore, the main ritual aid to encourage the complete manifestation of the *jnūn*, in
order that the *jinn* might fully cross the threshold of human/nonhuman agency, is *bkhūr*;
incense—its smell is irresistible to the *jinn* and thus helps it to fully manifest so that the
host transitions into a deeper trance.

Affective dynamics are critical as well because it is through feeling—both in terms
of what we might parse out in English as sensing and emotional response—that ritual
elders know what is happening and what needs to be done at any given moment. Ritual
experts may sense heat, compression, tension, or negative energy and, therefore, know
whether to burn incense, to call for a different *borj*, to tell the musicians to play more
loudly, or to stop. Specifically, through a trance taxonomy, ritual elders and experts,
musicians, trancers, and observers have varied, complex, and hierarchical ways of
talking about and indexing the origins, natures, dimensions, and ramifications of affects
or feelings, both collective and personal ones, and including somatic and 'emotional'
ones (see section on trance). They also have a variety of contested and personal ways of
investing meaning and agency in these affects. As Teresa Brennan proposes, 'emotional
discernment is valued in cultures. . . that are more inclined to take the transmission of
affect for granted, that is to say, are more conscious of it' (2004: 11). It is through feeling
into their own states, in a kind of listening with the body, that *jedebbīn* find expression
of their trances, that they know what they need to do, such as to approach the musicians
for more direct musical (affective) 'treatment'. But sometimes these decisions are made
by others observing and sensing the dynamics: this is the precise role of the *shawsh* who
referees *jedebbīn* by observing and sensing each individual and between the group,
pushing some *jedebbīn* forwards and telling others to back away, and delivering to them
ritual objects to aid their states.
What makes this affective system of communication possible is, first, the ontological reality of affective fields, specifically ḥāl—the collective ambiance or vibe of the ritual that makes trance possible. As well as ḥāl, different but related ‘affective fields’ in dīwān include physical sensations that can travel and spread, and forces or energies—both nonhuman ones like affects created by the manifestation of spirits. We can also speak about affective fields of ‘emotion’ where emotions can be and are identified by those affected such as Mehdi’s story (Chapter Four) of feeling sadness without knowing to whom it belonged. I will say more below about how I differentiate between affect and emotion, but as previously mentioned regarding the use of these terms in affect theory, they are not so easily demarcated in dīwān.

This second epistemological assumption of affect prioritisation is critically intertwined with the first assumption of unstable agency because affective fields, regardless of their origin, regularly eclipse human agency. Trance is entirely dependent on affective fields: a trancer may see or hear things that others cannot see or hear (jnūn, voices), one may feel presences coming at him or her, penetrating him or her, and, therefore, act or respond to such feelings. Or when trance is brought on by strong emotion—such as I mentioned with nuanced registers of dominant/non-dominant agency within a single person—dīwān epistemology assumes that certain accumulations and intensities of affect can overwhelm thresholds of agency in a person: one register of trance in dīwān is said to originate from intense love that ‘takes over’ its person.

The third epistemological assumption of dīwān mentioned above, multi-dimensional transmission or reproduction, is also deeply rooted in Algerian cultural ways of knowing. Let me start by stating that, in my usage, ‘transmission’ deals with the myriad ways that information moves—be it specialised musical knowledge, secret spiritual knowledge, affects, or sensory experience—and is transferred between a sender (human or nonhuman agent) and receiver(s) (also human or nonhuman) within particular conditions. This flexible use of the term reflects the fact that transmission in dīwān ranges between varieties of implicit, accidental, energetic, and supernatural transmission at one ontological pole and explicit, intentional, humanly structured performances and systems of transmission at the other pole. Most means of transmission, however, combine elements of both. What I mean by the latter, ‘explicit’ transmission here
includes ritual performances, family lineages comprising master-student relationships with the intent of transmitting specific knowledge (song repertoires) or oral histories, and the annual state-sponsored production of the Bechar dīwān festival. Using the terms 'explicit transmission' is my way of attending to these particular, 'structured' pathways of learning and reproduction that are primarily humanly organised (see Chapter Six and Seven).

Although I will deal most explicitly with ‘transmission’ as a whole in Part Three, in the interests of continuing to establish the epistemological foundation of the dīwān lifeworld and its close relationship with Algerian cultural systems, it is necessary here to mention a couple of key examples of energetic or affective transmission because such phenomena are entirely enfolded with agency and affect, the focus of this section. For example, the ways that energies move through space and time and between people or 'bodies': the transmission of affects (Brennan 2004) and the concept of contagion we saw in Meriem's kinship household. This kind of energetic movement can happen of its own accord or can be directed, such as the way the Evil Eye is said to be able to cause harm both accidentally and intentionally. In some cases of trance, affect may not necessarily have so-called 'cognitive understandings' with it but may be closer to the transference of affective experience from one 'body' or realm to another. This is not to reinforce a false binary of cognitive versus affective domains, but rather to posit that the 'receiver' of transmission may not always know or understand why or what is being transmitted, even while he or she may feel it—such as Meriem's falling 'ill' and receiving messages from the ‘spirits’, the message or reason of which she did not understand and that later 'spread' to other women in the family compound.

One example of energetic transmission phenomena shared between broad Algerian cultural ways of knowing and dīwān epistemology is the way that affect can be transferred through material agents. In Algerian culture, a widely understood phenomenon cutting across socioeconomic class and background is that of seher, a kind of black magic, that binds certain jnūn to do its evil labour through physical agents that come in contact with the victim. Seher comes up in a variety of quotidian contexts, not simply occult or religious ones. People turn to seher out of a malicious type of envy,
ḥesed—an affect—in order to harm the person whom they envy.\textsuperscript{99} Seher takes the form of certain material but 'living', organic ingredients that are invested with agency—commonly strands of hair of or bodily fluids of the victim mixed with other ingredients, or stolen objects of clothing of the victim. Seher may be a potion or a small bundle of material items and seems to be commonly placed on the threshold of the victim’s door, or in their house, or may be hidden in food served to the victim. It is understood that a jinn is 'employed' by his 'chief', a head jinn, as responsible for guarding the bundle so that it cannot be found and destroyed.

One victim of seher, 'Zeynep', ingested seher in food served to her by her perpetrator and it had lodged in her side. With the seher physically inside her, she then suffered several years of ongoing jinn affliction where the jinn, energetically attached to the seher in her body, would take over her body, emotions, and thoughts in spells that she called 'crises' ('les crises'). Many Algerians told me that dīwān could not rectify seher and that the only solution was finding and destroying the ṭalasim (talisman) or evil, magical bundle or, if it had been eaten, being treated with Qur'ānic ruqiyya, recitation of certain chapters (suwar) by a healer. Others, however, implied that the kinds of people who frequent dīwanat may also be the type who are accustomed to working closely with the jnūn, and/or who may seek their victims at a dīwān. In other words, the precarious and dangerous world of the jnūn is porous and extends into various quotidian and ritual domains, including other Sūfī tūrūq (orders), such as, most importantly in Algeria, the ʿĪssāwa. This idea of powerful affects (including positive ones) being transferrable via objects is also important in dīwān as we saw in Meriem’s story with the agency of the knives being worked on her to bring her out of her catatonic state, or the ways that an important part of the shawsh’s role is to deliver ritual objects in the maḥalla to aid trance states of jebībīn.

Indeed, Meriem’s trance story helps to illustrate all three of these critical epistemological assumptions of dīwān. First, the flux of distributed agency: Meriem’s person/body/self is understood to be inhabited by an outside force, a force that makes its presence known through affectivity. It is a force that changes what she feels, that

\textsuperscript{99} Throughout my fieldwork periods in Algeria, I regularly heard stories of magic being used against people, usually for reasons of jealousy.
changes her ability to feel, that changes what her body can do, that makes her catatonic, that makes her unable to physically or emotionally respond when she’s sitting on the tarah, but that eventually recedes so that she is able to rise and tejdeb. This process of fluctuating agency in varying affective states is often a struggle and is sometimes an unpleasant one. That agency is negotiated through affect, as the above examples show, speaks to the second epistemological assumption, the prioritisation of affective fields and energies.

In addition, I explained that Moqedm Jallûl had to physically enact for Meriem the required actions of stabbing her abdomen with the knives as an offering and placation to the jnûn of Sîdî Ḥsen. Afterwards, the moqedm indicated for the other men present to also enact this motion in lieu of Meriem. These men were then affectively taking on her state, taking on her responsibility to the jnûn, implicated in the affective action. Their bodies, their intentions, and their actions serve to stand in for hers; regardless who does it, the action of stabbing shifts something in Meriem’s affective relationship with the jinn. Here, agency is taking place at the site of Meriem’s body and in her affective state, agency is shared here between Meriem (the physical body being acted upon), the agent acting upon her and inhabiting her so that she is not entirely conscious or agentive, and the men, physically acting out the knife stabbing on her with their own bodies. In this example, we also see the two epistemological assumptions of dynamic agency and affective prioritisation.

Lastly, in terms of multi-dimensional transmission, dealt with primarily in Part Three, we need to consider what is being transmitted here in these final actions with the knives. Most obviously, perhaps, Meriem’s duty to the jnûn—the stabbing motion—is transmitted through and by the men; this is a very intentional transmission (transference) of affectivity in lieu of Meriem. The work that these other jedebbîn do to Meriem is also a primary example of what I consider to be affective labour in trance: affective labour that asserts agency with and over affect to produce and transmit other affects. Affective labour, as I see it, is the process through which agency, affect, and transmission—the critical epistemologies and ontologies of dīwân—come alive together. It is to this conceptualisation of affective labour systems in dīwân to which I would like to turn now.
C. Affective Labour Systems in Dīwān

Why ‘affect’, why ‘labour’, why ‘affective labour’?

The term 'affective labour' at least partially emerged out of a branch of Marxist thinking, the Italian school known as 'autonomous Marxism', that was turning to ideas of 'immaterial labour' in the mid-1990s (Toscano 2007: 73-74; Lazzarato 2007). Later, these ideas were taken up around the theme of precarity—'insecure, casualized or irregular labour'—and in consideration of worker's subjectivities, such as 'creative labour, network labour, cognitive labour, affective labour and immaterial labour' (Gill and Pratt 2008; Neilson & Rossiter 2005). A key turning point here is the notion that ideas, affects, and feelings are not only effects or products to be consumed by other forms of labour but are, rather, also centrally productive, perhaps even independently intelligible systems of labour.

As a concept, affective labour is critical in order to be able to attend to and discuss the affective epistemology of dīwān. I consider the epistemology of dīwān broadly as an ‘affective’ one because feeling (sensory, emotive) is the primary means through which agents are perceived, experienced, known, and considered ‘real'. My use of ‘labour’ serves to highlight the actual 'working' or 'labouring' of affects and affective processes in dīwān. While affects and affectivity are fundamental, affects do not 'simply' happen or arise. This is where the concept of labour is important. Affective labour is the activity—the sounding instruments, the trancing bodies, the caretaking of those bodies, the shouting of directions—for the purpose of perceiving, engaging, producing, manipulating—in a word, managing—affects and affectivity in order to arrive at a successful ritual. Sometimes expert affective labour is required such as the way a moqedm knows when and how to release paralysing affects in the body of a jedēb(a) by the application of knives or fumigation with bkhūr. Although dīwān practice does involve the exchange of money, and although it is increasingly emerging within a market economy as cultural capital and as a 'service' or part-time paid work, I want to primarily attend to the obligatory and exhausting human (and nonhuman) labour of 'working' the ritual ambience (ḥāl), how working musicians 'work' the jedebbīn who 'work' the rūḥ or jinn inhabiting their bodies, or the ways jedebbīn 'work' their sensations and feelings that
come up in certain trance states, and affects that have to be 'worked' to be processed and transformed. There is also the dynamic of the arwāḥ or jnūn working the jedebbīn, imposing upon them the impulse to move and trance. Especially in serious cases of inhabitation or ‘illness’ from supernatural agents, the jedēb(ā) has no choice in the matter but to move and placate the will of the supernatural agent, otherwise s/he will fall extremely ill.

In dīwān, the Arabic term 'to work', ykheddemū, is used literally here to mean, ‘to make someone work [for another]’, to impose labour upon another. For example, the jnūn ykheddemū the musicians (‘they work them’, ykheddemūhum), meaning that they require, even demand, the musical performance of certain brāj in order to be placated. In addition, the musicians ykheddemū the jedebbīn—meaning the musicians, through their music, oblige the jedebbīn to trance. Therefore, using the term affective labour indicates the ways in which affects and affective states have to be perceived, launched, manipulated, taken on, transformed, or otherwise actively engaged with human labour, whether it is the moqedm directing, the musicians musicking, the shawsh refereeing the ritual space, the jedebbīn trancing, and the community caring for unconscious jedebbīn. Furthermore, 'affective labour' allows for the consideration of the systems of labourers in dīwān: all labourers whose job it is to work for the movement and transformation of affects and affective fields. Four codependent systems of affective labour can be noticed here: ritual experts, musicians, jedebbīn entangled with supernatural agents, and the public.100

The labourers with the greatest authority are the ritual experts who oversee the workings of the ritual and what is transpiring on the tarah. While these experts may include older m’allemīn and kuyu bungu-s who may chip in with advice, the moqedm has the highest authority over the ritual and is understood to have the greatest amount of knowledge and experience. In particular, he understands the workings of and has agency over the supernatural world; he therefore, has the largest overview and greatest ability to direct a dīwān towards a beneficial outcome. He is ultimately responsible when individuals in intense trance states are in need of expert care. We saw this in Meriem’s

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100 The first three of these systems were described to me by Nūreddīn Sarjī except he did not mention the supernatural agents as part of the system with jedebbīn. This is just to say that my ideas are rooted in local discourse.
story such as the ways Moqedm Jallūl knew how and when to treat Meriem with bkhūr and with the mimicking of the knife motion on her abdomen—both affectively-charged gestures—in order to transform her affective state.

The moqedm’s assistant, the shawsh, also attends to jedebbīn, partly acting as a referee on the ṭaraḥ; he often knows the jedebbīn personally and, thus, closely understands their affective needs. Part of this affective management, by both the moqedm and shawsh, involves the manipulation of ritual objects which can be invested with supernatural agency in ritual—meaning arwah or jnūn may use them to transfer affect—because these objects also manipulate and transmit affect (ie: bkhūr) and thus, support and affect trance processes. The ‘arīfa, or female assistant to the female jedebbīn, is part of the system of ritual direction although this official role has almost completely disappeared and more experienced women from the public may step in to help female jedebbīn as needed.101 Broadly, the primary nature of affective labour of this group is overseeing and managing the ritual ḥāl, and helping to manage the trance states of jedebbīn.

Just below the hierarchical authority of the moqedm, we have a second system of musician labourers: the m’allem on ginbrī, the kuyu bungu as lead singer, and the rqīza as response singers and players of the qrāqeb. As I will discuss more in Chapter Four, their critical roles involve the launching and sustenance of ḥāl, working the jedebbīn, and calling the arwah or jnūn to manifest. The m’allem is the key authority supported by the kuyu bungu and genēdīz. Musicians work in cooperation with the jedebbīn who, in return, inspire the musicians or ‘work’ them, too; they also have the ability to stop the musicians when they are done. I elaborated in Chapter Two on musicians’ abilities and musical flexibility to adapt to and manage the ḥāl of the ritual, adjusting by adding phrases, sūg motifs, or, on the other hand, by keeping the ginbrī line ‘minimal’. In Chapter Four below I will go into even more detail about musical controlling of ḥāl but it is worth clarifying here that this ‘work’ is affective work, affective labour.

Jedebbīn and supernatural agents, together, are also intertwined in a flux of co-creative affective labour. In trance, bodies perceive affects, sometimes drastically and

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101 Both in current discourse and in early writings regarding dīwān (Rozet, Dermenghem), women previously had roles with more authority. Some Algerians told me that it was the increasing influence of Islam in Algeria from independence that gradually minimised female power in the ritual.
violently, and are obliged to move these affects, to physically work them in order to transform and release them. The bodies of jedebbīn can become hosts for the arwaḥ or jnūn to affect or inhabit them to varying degrees of agency so that while the jedebbīn are said to ‘work’ the ‘spirits’ (arwaḥ or jnūn)—working them with their bodies’—the supernatural agents also work the jedebbīn—they impose on their hosts affectively, they force them to labour through the body, they force them to move, they impel them to cry, to scream, or to hit themselves. Who is labouring for whom in this dynamic is precisely the first epistemological assumption of distributed agency.

Finally, the community of ūlād dīwān and other public in attendance—the fourth system of labourers—labour for the jedebbīn, coming to their aid in trance, attending to their states (see Chapter Four). Communication between these labouring groups flows in multiple directions. The moqedm has the most agency, in theory, over all the labouring groups (musicians, trancers, objects, and the public) so that his authority often flows top-down. Many times, however, I saw a kuyu bungu or a m’allem in attendance rise and act as the shawsh or moqedm when one was needed. There is a certain understanding that, with the exception of roles with very honed skills (such as musical expertise of the m’allem), age and experience often eclipse labourer rank.

In this chapter, I have outlined and fleshed out the epistemologies and ontologies of dīwān both in terms of how they relate to Algerian culture at large and how they are particular to the dīwān ritual. I did this by reflecting on the thick description of a trance event and connecting its phenomena with these critical epistemologies and ontologies of dynamic agency between human and nonhuman agents and the central importance of affectivity. I ended this section by introducing how it is that humans engage with affectivity: through organised systems of affective labour. Let me conclude by reiterating that all of this affective labour on the part of the ritual elders, musicians, jedebbīn, and public is a means of perceiving, absorbing, launching, manipulating, and transforming affect in order to cultivate the favourable affective milieu—ḥāl—to engender therapeutic trance. Trance is also a modality of affective labour, perhaps the most legible example of it. Therefore, I will now turn to the obligatory production of favourable ḥāl and therapeutic trance that affective labour realises.
CHAPTER FOUR: THE SOCIAL FIELD OF TRANCE

In this chapter, I consider trance as not just a personal, individual, subjective experience but as a totally encompassing social field. That is to say that the precipitation, flourishing, transmission, and abatement of trance is dependent on social relationships and dynamics, most specifically in the social organisation of ritualised affective labour. Considering trance as a social field comes directly from my fieldwork in Algeria as I observed the consistent reference to the concept of ḥāl that functioned in this way. I will begin this chapter by explaining the background of this concept after which I will move on to how it is produced and how it functions in dīwān. With this social, dynamic field cast in front of us, I will then move on to the vicissitudes of trance in dīwān that can only arise in this particular social field.

A. The Cultural Background of Ḥāl

In May 2013, when I asked a reputable moqedm in Algeria, Sheikh Moqedm Hocine Daijai, 'What do you feel when you are directing the dīwān?' he replied, 'I feel everything.' Ritual experts learn to keenly sense ritual ambience. Affective sensibilities and interpretation are privileged because the ability to do this determines the success of the ritual. This importance placed on how a dīwān feels cannot be overemphasised. How ritual experts come to learn what a proper dīwān should feel like is what I would like to begin to explore now.

Teresa Brennan has asked, 'Is there anyone who has not, at least once, walked into a room and “felt the atmosphere”? (2004:1). In Algeria, it is expected and taken for granted that we can feel a place, a person, or an overall energy. What we sense as that atmosphere or energy is called ḥāl. The baseline of this entire affective epistemology of dīwān and, thus, the primary means of sensing, measuring, and talking about it begins with the concept of ḥāl. However, the ontological terrain of ḥāl is not particular to Algeria; it is widespread in the Muslim world and ubiquitous in North African popular Islam. It is often translated broadly in formal Arabic as 'a condition', 'situation', or 'state
of being’. These common translations, however, fail to attend to the equally conceptual, fleeting, and abstract qualities of ḥāl. Ḥāl is generally understood within the context of its long history in Sufism where it is quite central to ideas of the transcendental and alternate states of consciousness in this pursuit of communion with God, from the pursuit of divine love to evaluating a Sufi’s personal character. Mukhtar Ali explores ḥāl as the primary step in the attainment of divine love: 'In the terminology of Sufism, it is that which a wayfarer receives by pure divine bestowal and is neither dependent on his will nor connected to his acquisition (4). Within Sufi practices in Africa, ḥāl may be synonymously glossed with wajd, ecstatic trance (Frishkopf 2008: 496).

In Algeria, however, while ḥāl in general distantly echoes Sufi epistemology, it is much more intertwined within the fabric of popular culture and quotidian exchanges. In its most simple usage, ḥāl can address the weather and yet, where it differs from other terms for 'weather' (such as 'el-ṭaqṣ') are the ways in which it comments on how the weather feels. One could use ḥāl to express that the frequency of rain in London feels calming, oppressive, or conducive to introspection. Similarly, ḥāl can be used to ask about a health condition or one’s mood such as in the common greeting, ‘kīf el-ḥāl-ek?’: literally, ‘how is your ḥāl?’/‘how are you?’ Ḥāl can also be used for an abstract sense of time, but, unlike the term 'waqt' that specifies an hour or minute, using 'ḥāl' in reference to time is to comment on conditions. In other words, the common phrase, ‘mazel el-ḥāl’, while translated as, 'the time has not yet come' in English, refers to the network of relations in order for the given event to take place. Ḥāl can index the intensification of joy or pleasure. A popular comment heard at music concerts in Algeria is 'jebū el-ḥāl!': literally, 'they brought the ḥāl', meaning 'they rocked the house.' Most broadly, ḥāl is understood as the vibe, ambience, energy, or, in musical contexts, the groove: it is collective of everything present and happening in a given situation. When people talk about the energy of a speech being 'electric', for example, or that during a meeting 'things just clicked', or individuals in a team felt 'in synch', in a North African context, these expressions would be identifying the situational ḥāl.

Like so many words in Arabic, ḥāl, as a single term, retains a broad conceptual integrity while having a rich symbolic imaginary that can expand or condense with context. For example, in Algeria, 'dēr ḥāl-o’, literally, 'he turned his ḥāl' could mean 'he
changed his mind' in one context but, in another, roughly translates to 'he’s gone a bit mad.' Here, the descriptive potentialities of the verb *dēr*; 'to turn', range from turning at a traffic light to 'turning' one’s state of mind towards another direction—and with increasing intensity—to 'turning one’s state' to a point of mental-emotional instability and dubious lack of self-control. Quite differently in the Moroccan Ḥamadsha context, when in trance, one is 'out of one’s conditions’, *kharj el-ḥwāl* (*ahwāl*: plural) (Crapanzano 1985: 117). Hence, *ḥāl* can often index abstract and somatic and/or mental-emotional states and processes that surpass social norms. One regularly hears a common lyric in traditional and popular songs, particularly those referencing the saints, ‘*dāwī ḥāl-i*': heal my *ḥāl*. In these registers, *ḥāl* occupies a coinciding existential space of what we linguistically parse out in English as mind, soul, and heart.

Despite all of this nuance and contextual complexity, *ḥāl* retains its identity as a signifier because of the myriad ways that it consistently attends to textures of energy and feeling. *Ḥāl* attends to all of the affects we would identify in English as 'emotion' (like grief), and sensory feeling (like burning skin) as well as anything that might move between and beyond categories (hairs standing on end, spine tingling, hearing voices, unexplainable sensing of *something*). While these experiential registers can be linguistically and conceptually separated in English—by talking about an emotion versus a physical sensation—*ḥāl* is very important here for the way that it *enfolds* emotional and bodily sensing capacities.

Allow me here to explain how I use the terms of 'emotion’, 'feeling’, and 'affect’. I prioritise and favor the word 'feeling' for its pliability as verb and/or noun and precisely because of its ambiguity in indexing both emotional and/or bodily experience that can and do take place simultaneously. As mentioned above regarding the work of Cromby (2012), I would reiterate that 'feeling' is a more helpful term for its ability to encompass a variety of usually quite blurred bodily, 'cognitive’, and affective registers. *Ḥāl* is also ambiguous in this way; it takes for granted an intermingling, coinciding capacity for total sensing where bodily experience is at once emotional experience. Except when referring specifically to an emotional register the way it is understood in *dīwān*, such as when my informants have used *'les emotions'* in French or talked about 'emotionality', I favour and use the term 'affect' as in 'affective' worlds and fields to include both what we
consider (and often separate) in English as emotional and somatic experiences. Indebted to William James who posited that there is no such thing as a bodiless emotion, and drawing heavily from Teresa Brennan’s work on affect (2004) wherein she argued that, ‘affects are in the flesh’, I consider ḥāl as an 'affective field' because it encompasses the multiplicity of response and action. Like Brennan argues, ḥāl, as a feeling register, very much 'gets into the flesh' (2004: 25).  

Ḥāl in the Context of Dīwān

Put plainly, ‘proper’ ḥāl is like the ideal radio frequency upon which messages can pass. However, certain exterior conditions—in this metaphor, take the weather for example, like a storm—can affect the ability for the frequency to be transmitted. But when conditions are right—in ḥāl’s case, dedicated and rightly intentioned human labour as well as favourable external conditions like the location of the ritual, the mood of the crowd—this frequency is vibrant and conductive. Human labouring in order to produce ideal ḥāl is so important because the ‘right’ kind of ḥāl makes trance possible. Therefore, we can also think about ḥāl as a kind of setter-in-motion, an affective agency pregnant with possibility.

In the dīwān ritual context, the term ḥāl has two main uses. It is a register of trance in which the jedēb has very little, if any, control over himself (see below). However, the broadest usage of the term ḥāl in dīwān is to index overall ambience: the collective vibe or energetic milieu of the dīwān ritual composed of the community of participants and observers and also the energy of the physical place where the dīwān is held. I draw particular attention to this usage of ḥāl as a dynamic, affective, social field and use the word ‘affective’ here to mean that ḥāl may include anything and everything that can be felt physically, emotionally, or psychically as well as anything intuited or imagined.

I consider ḥāl a 'field' primarily because it is non-localised, spatially diffused and distinctly palpable. Ḥāl is not just the ambience 'in the air' but it is the air. It extends

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102 As Brennan similarly clarified, 'the person forged in a culture in which the transmission of affect and energy is taken for granted is more likely to be treated by methods that accept that such transmissions take place. This means methods that accept that the traffic between the biological and the social is two-way; the social or psychosocial actually gets into the flesh and is apparent in our affective and hormonal dispositions' (2004: 25, my emphasis).
everywhere in all directions (up, down, in, around, out, through) and permeates all dimensions, enfolding divine and supernatural dimensions. However, I should clarify that while 'field' might evoke a sense of agentless neutrality, horizontality, or a space devoid of power dynamics, on the contrary, ḥāl absolutely accounts for agency, power, complexity, and contradiction. Ḥāl collects agendas, moods, intentions (niyya), and actions of the entire community present, the same way we understand in English that a 'good vibe' or 'bad vibe' of a given setting comprises everything in its perimeter (the 'feel' of the building, the mood of the people in it, the weather, a certain 'buzz' in the air).

Being energy, ḥāl can stabilise, it can move, it is adaptable, receptive, sometimes stubborn, and, over time, in the discourse of memory as an assemblage of sensoria, it can be remembered and thus, historicised. For example, musicians often recount past dīwanat for their quality of ḥāl and often do so by describing how they felt, such as one description I often heard: 'ychowwek el-ḥam'; 'it makes the flesh [body] tremble'. During and after each dīwān, praise or critique or indifference is leveled as to how fulfilling the dīwān is or was; dīwanat are judged first by their quality of ḥāl. Furthermore, ḥāl has to be noticed, commented upon, and engaged with in order to be meaningful. Ḥāl and its discourse co-function as a social barometer: talking about ḥāl is a way of critiquing feeling, energy, and intensity.

To elaborate more on the importance of discourse here, the ephemerality of ḥāl is practically tethered to and entangled with ālād dīwān's discourse about it. One can only really process and understand what ḥāl is and what it does by way this discourse. That is because, while ḥāl is intangible it is palpable; talking about it gives it enough presence that it can be reacted to, contested, affected, or remembered, much the same way that thoughts or beliefs are unlocatable (where do they exist in space?) and yet we conceive of them, nevertheless, as things with very real, material consequences (such as human action taken in response to them). In addition, ḥāl, like fire, retains its identity only through movement and flux up to the point of being so unstable that it dissolves. Mukhtar Ali paraphrases a classic Sufi understanding of ḥāl in a similar way: 'Ḥāl in its verbal root suggests change, and mutability. Once it becomes permanent it ceases to be ḥāl and becomes a maqām [station]. In the terminology of Sufism, it is that which a

103 Also a phrase to mean gooseflesh.
wayfarer receives by pure divine bestowal and is neither dependent on his will nor connected to his acquisition. While physical spaces and structures may have their own ḥāl based on their histories (the ḥāl of a cemetery as different from that of a mosque), and while arwāḥ or jnūn might also bring a certain ḥāl with them to the dīwān (ie: playful or devious), ḥāl has the potential to be transformed by human agency. That is because, although the ḥāl of other agents can affect the ḥāl of humans, human action has the limited ability to change, modify, or purify ḥāl. Reciting Qur ’ānic passages or using purifying bkhūr to cleanse a person or space, for example, transforms ḥāl for the better.

B. How Ḥāl Is Produced in Dīwān

Like the radio frequency metaphor, despite the fact that there are certain external conditions that can also influence the status of ḥāl, it largely takes human labour to produce and human labour to maintain and diffuse it. This production, management, transformation, and sometimes failure to affect ḥāl is done, firstly, through dīwān music, more so than any other ritual constituent. This is where the majority of regulation—affective labour—occurs. First, in this section, I will outline the specific 'big picture' concepts about dīwān music, such as the overall, spiritual, ritual role of the mʿallem and his need to command the sacred workings of the music. Secondly, I will attend to the technical musical details of how, aesthetically, music shapes ritual ḥāl (and therefore, precipitates trance). Thirdly, I will deal briefly with the intermingled and sometimes inseparable roles of trancers (jeDebebbīn) for the ways that they are instrumental in working with the mʿallem to launch and stoke dīwān warmth.

While opinions often differ on mʿallemīn’s styles, talent, personal 'touches,' or their control of the energy, positive ḥāl is always 'warm'. An exciting and successful dīwān is praised as having been 'a warm dīwān': dīwān ḥāmī. Conversely, a struggling or failed dīwān—one without an adequate buzz in the air—is critiqued as a 'cold dīwān': dīwān berd. Warmth here is, first, social warmth. A dīwān ḥāmī is inviting, uplifting, flexible, relaxed in ritually appropriate ways (smiles, laughter, friendly chatter among the public) in much the same way that friendly people are 'warm' and rude people are

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'cold' in English. But these warm/cold descriptions are not 'mere' metaphors; musicians in particular discuss them as imaginaries and sensibilities for 'real,' palpable experience. Warm ḥāl is full of motion and vibration. For them, music should literally 'warm' (move, imbibe, activate, ignite) the atmosphere. This warmth is musically delivered and it is affectively sensed.

At the broadest level, music produces and directs the energy of the ritual as the primary structural, temporal, and dramatic blueprint of the entire ceremony; musical trajectory orients ritual time. We know where we are and where we are going in the ritual because of the consistent ordering of the repertoire. 'Real' connoisseurs and ālād dīwān will know what classification of brāj have come and gone and which suites lie ahead; this orientation affects their experience and behavior, from anticipating or dreading certain brāj that put them in trance to timing their coffee and cigarette breaks during those they do not favor as much. As music casts the ritual pathway—launching, stoking, and maintaining the ḥāl—the dīwān takes on its personality, its mood, its affective world that fleshes out the ritual moment. As Richard Jankowsky points out, in ceremonies like dīwān, music 'is not epiphenomenal, or even merely expressive, but is rather pragmatic; it constitutes a bodily, sensory intervention through which realities are constructed, perceived, and transformed' (2010: 4).

Musical control of ritual ḥāl primarily rests on the mʿallem as the leader of the musical ensemble. Part of his role is the 'big picture' management and leadership of the musical trajectory: pacing, affective build, and deciding which brāj to play or skip based on the needs of the dīwān sponsor, the jīdebbīn (trancers), and/or the individual contexts of location. The complete dīwān repertoire is almost never played in full for reasons of time. While playing and directing, the mʿallem consistently monitors the kuyu bungu and the genēdīz with their response singing and especially their qrāqeb playing; a hard glance or head jerk to musicians can indicate any number of performative directions, from 'ease off' to 'bring me a different ginbrī.'

Most broadly speaking, in terms of musicality and performance, a mʿallem's authority and respectability revolves around his ability to 'launch' (ṭullʿā) the dīwān.105

105 Some of the big picture decisions are shared with the moqedm whose ritual authority surpasses that of the mʿallem (see more below).

106 In French, 'faire monter.' Very occasionally I heard people use the French to clarify.
While its grammatical root is connected to the idea of lifting or launching, ṭullʿā in ḍīwān usage is coloured with poetic imagery, implying care, attention, and niyya required for setting the ritual in motion. For many ālād ḍīwān, 'el-m'āllem yetullʿā ed-ḍīwān’—the m’āllem launches the ḍīwān—means, at a more nuanced level, 'el-m’āllem yḥāmmī ed-ḍīwān': the m’āllem warms the ḍīwān. This connection with 'heating up' may very well be a familiar colloquial transformation of the classical Arabic word 'wellʿa' or 'twellʿa' associated with passion or adoration, indexing fire—in a sense, to feel warmth for another, somewhat like the French verb 'enflammer.' In other words, the conceptual root of ṭullʿā sprouts a sensorial domain encompassing the affective textures of launching, elevating, caring, infusing, imbibing, heating, and loving. However nuanced, all of these understandings serve the same purpose. If a m’āllem does not successfully ṭullʿā the ḍīwān ḡāl, jėeddīn, and the jnūn or arwāḥ will not be drawn to the ṣarrah: trance will not happen. Everything depends on this adequately warm ḡāl. If the ḡāl is not right, ālād ḍīwān have no qualms about walking out in protest.108

Musical agency over of ḡāl begins with baraka (blessing); that is, the m’āllem’s gift, his musical prowess understood to be God-given talent that belongs partly to him but ultimately to God. In moments of remarkable musical genius, the notes of the ginbrī are understood to come 'on their own’—yjīū waḥedhūm—from the divine or from other worlds. An exceptional m’āllem must have adequate skill to musically respond when 'something else' speaks through him. Much of this discourse is based in the understanding that the ginbrī, itself, is an agent with the ability to affect people and the overall ḡāl of the ḍīwān. Being made out of natural, 'living' materials—the body made from the wood of a tree, the strings made of sheep intestine, the sound membrane made from the skin around the neck of a camel—it contains the spirits or energies of the previously living beings that provided its material. Trees, in particular, are commonly thought to be inhabited by ‘spirits’ (usually jnūn). I heard from various m’āllemīn that it is for this reason that the ginbrī is ‘roḥāmmī’: spiritual. Some stated outright that the

107 Algerian dialect commonly repurposes words from classical Arabic, changing them slightly with local pronunciation.
108 Early on in my fieldwork when I always attended dīwanat accompanied by chaperones and because these young men considered themselves responsible for educating me on 'good dīwanat'; I was consistently out-voted to leave versus stay and listen if the quality of the ginbrī was judged by them to be aesthetically subpar, despite trying to persuade them that I was interested in hearing 'all dīwanat "good" or "bad".'
ginbrĩ itself can be inhabited (maskān), and that its link with the supernatural world is what allows it to ‘call’ supernatural beings through sound. This is where the ginbrĩ has the ability to take on power, to be an agent outside human control.\(^{109}\)

A mʿallem must have control and technical skill for thematic material, as well as necessary virtuosity and an ability to inspire trance through a potentially ‘inhabited’ instrument. In the dīwān context, 'mʿallem' refers to the mastery of ritual knowledge such as the order of the brāj, texts, histories of the songs, ability to musically manage jedebbĩn, particularly in difficult trance moments, and a sufficient amount of technical skill on the ginbrĩ. However, the most important musical skill, discursively, that determines success or failure in launching ritual ḥāl is the mʿallem’s mastery of ‘la cadence’, French for ‘cadence’. Here, 'cadence' refers to rhythmic or temporal consistency—mʿallemĩn are praised for keeping time 'like a metronome’—as well as the importance of phrasing on the ginbrĩ to establish harmonic rhythm.

In addition, 'cadence' points also to broader concepts of pacing; that is, rate of intensification and development, examples of which we saw in Chapter One of the five performances of the Ḥammū suite. Cadence is the temporal structuring of everything in the dīwān because everything in the dīwān (especially ḥāl) ultimately depends on what the mʿallem is doing with his ginbrĩ. Cadence and the musical regulation of ḥāl include the acceleration of tempi in brāj, the variation of tempi between brāj, changing musical phrase lengths and harmonic cadences, ginbrĩ ornamentation that thickens texture, the compression or expansion of song texts, and special attention to the bodily movements of jedebbĩn, such as 'driving' a particular section of a musical theme so that the jedebbĩn respond with more energetic movement. All of these nuances are addressed with the idea of ‘cadence’. At times when ḥāl needs a noticeable warming—with a tempo increase, by developing the musical motif—emotional response heats up with shouts, cries, and ululations, and copious amounts of bkhūr are chucked onto the hot coals in the brazier to saturate the space with plumes of the heavy, sweet odors. In other words, warmth can be

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\(^{109}\) Similar to ideas I encountered in Morocco with the gnāwa, dīwān elders spoke of times when the ginbrĩ was considered so sacred and dangerous that it was kept out of sight and reach of anyone but the mʿallem. Children, especially, were not allowed to touch it. I encountered various stories of gnāber playing on their own in the middle of the night, or ‘refusing’ to be played, to be tuned up, or by the bridge falling over constantly.
sensed through heightened *musical* activity transferred to movement and accompanied by smell and sound. More bodies fill the *тарах* and trance is much more probable.

Very much like stoking a fire, attending to *ḥāl* and sustaining its social, tangible warmth is a delicate, nuanced business; it takes extraordinary patience and sensitivity. The musical body of *dīwān* has within it dramatic peaks and valleys that give it cohesion and a broad, dramatic arc. Even the shortest *dīwān* rituals deliver a minimum of seven to ten *braj* suites—totaling around sixty-five songs. Each of these have their own affective identity, such as particular musical aesthetics (tempo ranges, for one), required physical gestures, *abayat*, and crucial ritual props or symbols such as particular spears, knives, or whips. So while keeping the ritual *ḥāl* in mind, the *mʿallem* also must accommodate the dramatic arc of certain *brāj* families that are meant to be warmer or cooler (more calm) than others. Furthermore, *every* *borj* in the repertoire must have an accelerating, intensifying temporal arc; it must be temporally structured as a long and gradual quickening of tempo, sometimes over the course of twenty to thirty minutes for more popular *brāj*. It is with attention to both the macro and the micro that the *mʿallem* realises the dramatic role of each *borj* and the musical body as a whole. *Ḥāl*, needing to be monitored over six to nine hours of music, means that the consequences of musical failure can mean ritual failure.

Music is not only the main engine of *ḥāl* but, perhaps most apparently, it is also what *jedebbīn* are trancing *to* or rather *with*. It is generally understood that it is with the 'musical motto' or the *rās el-borj* on the *ginbrī* when most *jedebbīn* will feel the first 'pull' to trance. Therefore, the musical usage of this motif becomes extremely important. As we saw in Chapter Two, the call and response themes continue to build the energy and are then 'cut' into pieces—*gaṭṭʿat*—quickening the feel again. The *mʿallem* may embellish (*zewwaq*) these cuts, giving them a bit of time before the final and quite anticipated *sūg* section also explored in Chapter Two where trance is brought to its conclusion.

In addition to the musical authority of the *mʿallem*, the *moqedm* is the ultimate judge presiding over the affective labouring of *ḥāl* in a *dīwān*: he verifies that everything is in line with protocol, that the energy is right, and that the musicians are drawing *jedebbīn* to the *тарах*. He has the final say over what happens both musically—
whether the tartib (song order) needs adaptation—and in terms of ritual activity: use of cloaks, spears, knives or other ritual props, or behavior that is permitted or not. At times, the moqedm will request the repetition of certain brāj—such as if an experienced jedēb fails to realise his trance—or may request that some be skipped in the interest of time, or that the tartib needs adjustment, often based on the case-by-case needs of jedebbīn. In the middle of a borj, moqedmīn may give non-verbal musical cues to the musicians (to repeat certain phrases, adjust the volume) and admonitions for not playing in synch, or not listening to one another, again based on what he sees happening with jedebbīn who are his greatest concern. This very specific musical direction happens especially when experienced jedebbīn are on the tarah or when a jedēb is going through an especially intense trance, requiring careful musical attention.

Other indications of the importance of warming the ḥāl is emphasised by another technique reported by several ritual elders: ‘When there’s a cold dīwān, the m‘allem calls up his faras’ (‘Ki ykūn dīwān berd, el-m‘allem yjīb el-faras’). The faras (lit.: female horse) is the (usually male) expert jedēb, known for his nimble, skillful, energetic dancing that not only warms the energy but encourages others to enter the tarah as well. In some dīwanat I observed, if there was no faras and the ḥāl needed warming, I witnessed older men, even the kuyu bungu, pull certain attendees to their feet and push them onto the tarah; knowing these men, I could determine that the kuyu bungu had selected them for their known history of being ‘good jedebbīn,’—that is, inciting a warming and inspiring energy so that others might also be encouraged to tejdeb. Thus, there is a certain contagious quality to ḥāl; once it gets going it is easier to sustain. I was also often told that if the ḥāl is not launched from the beginning of the dīwān, it is much more difficult, if not impossible, to get it going. It was for this reason that the most dependably exciting m‘allemīn would often be asked to begin the dīwān

Finally, jedebbīn also have some authority to direct the musicians so that they too are permitted to labour for and attend to the texture of ḥāl. It is not unusual to see an experienced jedēb in the middle of his jedba advise the musicians to ‘pick it up’ or ‘slow down.’ At the height of trance, jedebbīn often flap their arms at their sides to indicate to

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110 The most common problem tends to be inexperienced qrāqeb players who are not able to keep time at high speeds.
the qrāqeb players to stop playing in order to concentrate on the sound of the ginbrī—this gesture is widely known and used. An experienced jedēb has the ability to stop the musicians entirely upon finishing his trance by placing a hand on the neck of the ginbrī—this is a role that normally belongs solely to the moqedm. In several dīwanat I observed there was controversy over a younger jedēb who would repeatedly stop the mʿallem when his own trance was complete, regardless of how many other jedebbīn were still on the ṭaraḥ and wanting to continue. This was seen as his asserting too much authority and self-importance; mʿallemīn largely ignored him and continued playing for the remaining jedebbīn.

Despite the majority of good intentions ḥāl can absorb any of the energies present, including ‘bad energy’ of insincere or misbehaving jedebbīn, for example. Young men who appear to be 'showing off' (ytekeberū) rather than sincerely 'working' their jedba are critiqued openly: ‘get serious’ or ‘that it not how it is done.’ Experienced members of the public can and do shout out criticism to jedebbīn whether or not the ritual experts do. For example, on many occasions spectators critiqued the way young men lashed themselves with the bulalat if the men appeared to be inexperienced or showing off. The offenders are asked to stop or leave the ṭaraḥ because their lack of niyya—demonstrated by their showing off—unsettles good ḥāl. During one dīwān in Mostaganem, in the middle of playing, the mʿallem looked directly at a jedēb who was crawling on the ground and moaning—not typical trance behaviour—and said, ‘Get serious, brother. You are welcome here but you need to be a bit serious.’ In another dīwān in Mascara, an older woman shouted at and scolded a young man for disrespecting the ritual materials by throwing the bulalat off to the side (rather than placing them down on the ground) after he was finished whipping himself.

Finally, despite all of this collective effort and purifying agents such as bkhūr or the recitation of Qurʾānic passages, there are simply times when human labour and intention, musical or otherwise, is inadequate to master ḥāl; there is always a danger of it escaping human agency and ūlād dīwān take this seriously. A dīwān I attended in Ain Temouchent was cancelled after only a few brāj had been played due to an inebriated gentleman who refused to keep a safe distance from the dīwān; the gentleman’s undesirable state was polluting the collective ḥāl. Another time in Relizane, the dīwān
was stopped for several hours until an unruly bunch of men could be herded away after which the ritual picked up again. Despite the members of this dīwān having had bkhūr or other means to 'purify' the collective ḥāl, the ritual experts in these circumstances decided that the imbalance was serious enough to warrant stopping the dīwān altogether. In summary, producing and monitoring ḥāl during a dīwān is a full-time job shared between the collective community of labouring ritual experts, musicians, jedebbīn, and the public. Ḥāl is permeable: it can spread, and it is contagious. And again, this is absolutely critical because ḥāl makes or breaks a dīwān: it precipitates or impedes trance, the subject of the next section.

C. Trance Types

I have arrived late for the Mascara wʿāda being held in a large outdoor courtyard between apartment blocks. Thanks to some special treatment from the hosts who let me enter the ritual space via the metal barriers they are guarding, I manage to carefully pick my way through the immense crowd of women sitting on the ground, tenderly stepping around their outstretched legs and overnight bags to find a spot on the ground in front of another metal barrier. It partitions off most of the women from the rest of the ritual space—a barrier to provide a sense of protection and to keep out any men who might stray off the ritual space—so that I am just behind the qrāqeb players, sitting precisely where the women's section ends and the men's section begins.

Once I have settled in, the borj for Bū Derbāla comes up—indicating that I have missed approximately the first two hours of the ritual—and immediately to my right, there is suddenly shuffling and commotion. I turn to see that a man is lying face down, his body straight as a board, as if he is paralysed. Several men have crowded around him, others motion to the moqedm and, from the ṭaraḥ, a man brings two medium sized butcher knives. A gentleman standing at the head of the paralysed man crumbles small pieces of jāwī (benzoin) on his back and another man, kneeling at his feet, begins to gently lay the knives flat on the body of the victim at the joints: the backs of the knees, the ankles, the hips, the shoulders. A couple minutes later, the man is pulled slowly to
his feet by two other men and is then limber enough to be able to helped, half walking, half stumbling, to the ṭaraḥ.

It is critical to note that the knives here work as a physical agent through which affect flows: an energy force—perhaps the jinn itself—used the knives as an agent, flowing through the knives to release the man’s body enough that he was able to get to his feet and tejdeb (trance). This was a moment of affective blockage: the man versus the jinn, manifesting as affect—both energies—struggle over a body. Members of the public are then responsible for being present to aid such a release, to attend to the affective threshold between the man’s agency and that of the affect/jinn, to transition him from paralysis to the ability to rise and trance.

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In this section, I will illustrate the interconnected ways that all trance types in dīwān and their taxonomies reveal trance as, primarily, an affective experience that must be physically moved through the body. Movement in the body imbibes the affective state so that whatever blockage—the manifestation of suffering—whether it be 'physical', 'sensorial', 'emotional', or some combination of the three, can be loosened, transformed, and released. While the human body here may be comprised of and/or inhabited by multiple energetic, psychic, material, and spiritual bodies at once, its tangible, moving, trancing materiality is critical: the trancing human body enacts suffering, makes it legible, and provides the material 'site' for which the public, the attendees and dīwān community, must offer care and compassion. From here, my point is to demonstrate how all of these stages—from trance states to bodily movement to caretakers—are processes of crucial affective labour.

I would like to begin with an introductory word about my use of the term 'trance' and the work it does in this thesis before immediately progressing to the very particular trance worlds of dīwān. In the same manner that both 'insiders' and 'outsiders' to dīwān use the French term la transe to speak generally of the phenomenon, I use the term 'trance' below to address broad questions and points in common between the varieties of altered states in dīwān. The importance of making theoretical space to speak generally of trance is that there are certain fundamental, epistemological and ontological
assumptions to all kinds of trance in dīwān that are intimately connected to the epistemologies of agency, affect, and transmission that I outlined above. While dīwān ritual protocol regarding trance does impose a certain kind of social and sensory choreography (Pinto 2013:84)—certain kinds of movement and expression are more cultivated than others.

So what might these nuanced registers look like?

**Every** variety of trance in dīwān ritual begins with a musically triggered bodily-affective response, an unsettling of what is thought of as a 'normative' state. This unsettling, as I will explore more thoroughly below, is an unsettling of boundaries, of agencies. It is a marker of active thresholds and the penetration of those thresholds—thresholds of the physical body, of one's emotions or affective state, of one's mind, of one's sense of self, among other conceptions. This bodily-affective response is the moment—a visible, physically experienced moment—when agency loss occurs between the person in question, the 'individual' entering into any kind of trance state, and some 'other' agent—whether it be a strong emotion, a rūḥ or jinn, or another energy. What I mean by 'bodily-affective' response here concerns both the ways that trance is a sensory domain and the ways that it involves what we could call feelings or emotions in English. Understanding such cultural patterning of the senses is critical to understanding the work that dīwān does, as Kathryn Guerts argues: 'a culture's sensory order is one of the first and most basic elements of making ourselves human' (2002: 5). Here, sensory orders, which are completely tied up with the emotions, are the primary language with which people speak about trance in dīwān: altered states come first as a feeling.

At the moment of musical triggering, often soon after the beginning of the borj, I often saw seated women bring a hand up to cover their eyes, as if reacting to a headache—one of the early indications that the woman’s own agency is slipping, that she is struggling to maintain control. Others nearby usually respond by indicating to the moqedm to bring bkhūr. Some people feel dizzy at the onset of trance or their head may feel foggy or heavy. Others might curl into a ball and bury their faces in their knees upon hearing the borj—the response can involve the contraction of muscles, for
example—or some might gently hang their heads and sway. Still others demonstrated more intense responses, throwing their arms about, clenching their abdomens in a fetal position, or throwing their heads back with grimaces of pain. Sudden, loud sobbing is considered particular to variations of supernatural inhabitation. In fact, a wide spectrum of ‘uncontrollable’ crying, even silent tears, is one of the most prominent markers of a crossing of thresholds between human and nonhuman agents. Crying is ubiquitously associated with the jnūn and this association occurs even outside of dīwān worlds; it was consistently explained that crying indicates a softening or weakening of self boundaries that make a person even more porous to forces. Discourse around this phenomenon includes both jnūn ‘causing’ the crying—the jedēb(a) may cry in fear at the arrival and affliction of the jinn—and/or the jedēb(a) may be crying due to difficult life circumstances, after which a jinn may take advantage of the weakened boundary and afflict or inhabit him or her.

I spoke with several men who reported that they become immediately paralysed (tʿawwej)—much like the man in the wʿāda above—when they hear the melody to a certain borj while others go limp or faint. One gentleman known as 'Ba 'Amran' whom I saw regularly at dīwanat around the West would abruptly pass out several times during a single dīwān, often falling straight backwards so that there was often someone assigned to stand near him. For still others, the intensity is such that they might scream or hit themselves—slapping at or pounding one’s own thighs is consistently reproduced by both men and women. Others tear at their clothes or hair, collapse into a ball on the ground, run towards the tarah, or run away from the tarah. It is conventional to see adepts try to escape the sensations brought on by the music—particularly in cases of inhabitation where the adept will make a bolt for the exit, knocking over objects and trampling people in their path at the first sensory indication of a jinn coming to inhabit them—a couple times I was nearly trampled by jedebbīn in this way. Here we see, again, a struggle over bodily agency.111 In Saida, I was told a story about a woman who jumped out of a window when she heard a particular melody that put her in trance.112

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111 Ritual protocol determines that these people should be chased after and brought back.
112 Personal communication, Muḥammad Hazeb Weld Bent Saleḥ, Sept 2014.
Trance brings with it a world of memories, images, feelings, and sensations. Some people, for example, spoke to me of 'seeing' deceased members of their family or friends standing before them. One jedēb in Oran, Mo 'C', reported that when he is in trance, he doesn’t feel like himself and that he has tunnel vision: he cannot see the people standing or seated before him. Meriem in Saida, for example, said she heard the voices of holy people ('en-ness eš-ṣāliḥīn'), voices that no one else could hear. One of the most common affective markers of trance mentioned by numerous women and men was feeling a knot in the solar plexus from the beginning of a song. Many said at the moment trance comes on, 'I just don’t feel right/good' ('ma ranīsh normale', 'ma ḥasīt mlīḥ'). Many tremble (zenzel) and experience nausea, or dread; in fact, like crying trembling is particularly common. Several ritual elders spoke to me about the common sensation of shivers or gooseflesh when being musically triggered: 'chuwwek'. Others remember very little and sometimes do not remember anything they did or said after smelling the bkhūr brought to them because bkhūr, acting as a threshold aid, may help a jinn to complete its inhabitation of the host.

All of these bodily-affective responses are unanimously understood to be personal reactions to personal conditions that might vary in every dīwān even for the same person: 'kūl waḥed ū kīfēsh ydīr'. I heard this expression in nearly every conversation I initiated regarding the 'why?' of trance—the expression explains that, 'everyone does something different', that, 'it all depends'. Even when certain informants had particular ideas about what separated one state or affective response from another—differences between the three main categories of trance: jedba, ḥāl, and bori, with the latter being indisputably a case of supernatural inhabitation—humility was always consistent around limiting these categories.

To index the various kinds of 'trance' and how these different altered states feel, uālād dīwān use a nuanced taxonomy, rich with sensoria that explode the bodily-affective imaginary. For example, to be in trance can feel, 'stormy, turbulent, like waves of the ocean in winter time', churning and crashing. For this affective experience in trance, uālād dīwān use the verbs yhīj and yetḥawwel. That is to say, jedebbīn explained that the physical body feels like stormy, crashing waves. Most trance, particularly jedba (see below), was consistently explained to me as a means of purging troubles, a sense of
emptying out or unloading, very much like Brennan's description of affective movement as a 'dumping, externalizing or projecting outward' (2004: 2). For this experience, ālād dīwān most often use the French verbs défouler (Arabicised as dīfūlī), dégager, or the Algerian dialect verb yfājī— or in eastern Algeria, skhāf.

In other ways, trance is a 'being away', to be out of one's senses, to 'go absent': yghīb. Here, some part of human presence becomes untethered to the physical body, at times resulting in amnesia, and this is quite commonly expressed as one being 'in another world' ('fī 'ālam waḥed ākhar'), sometimes implying the other world of the jnūn mentioned in the Fatīḥa, in the opening verse of the Qur'ān.113 Yghīb is also used to mean 'being unconscious'; when discussing degrees of trance experience with ālād dīwān, we used this term (or yduwwakh) to distinguish when people could not remember what they did or said during trance. Similarly, some express trance as a feeling of traveling—'he went [away]': Raḥ! And on the same register of experience, trance can actively 'take' you (jjebdek) or steal you away (ykhatfuk).

Despite fluidity and variation of classifying registers of trance, the most common categorical term for non-possession trance is 'jedba' and even as a category, a noun, it implies motion: it is usually translated as 'attraction' from the Arabic root j-dh-b but pronounced locally j-d-b. This attraction equates with a certain magnetism: it is understood as a feeling of being pulled on, at least partly if not fully, against one’s will, to the tarah to tejdeb. That is to say that jedba trance is always understood to involve some degree of loss of agency on the part of the jedēb(a)—terms also derived from the same Arabic root indicating attraction, to be attracted, the one who is attracted (by something). Accounting for the sense of movement here, it is a loss of agency to that energetic attraction, to the magnetism that is oftentimes considered divine. This magnetic attraction is entirely responsible for how affect moves, as I posited earlier regarding the ways that affect does not only move as waves or forces or as isolated events in the body.

Like gravity, affect pulls matter together, and constructs worlds of experience. This attraction pulls on the jedēb(a), pulling him or her to the tarah, and this push-pull of agency between jedēb(a) and the affective dynamics of such 'attraction' are what

113 'el-ḥamdu lillah rebbī el-ʿalamīn'.

173
account for the trance experience. The *jedēb(a)*, still at least partly conscious, wrestles here with this pulling energy and an urge to physically move that is said to be more powerful than any impulse to resist it: the feeling is commonly expressed by *jedebbīn* as ‘*ḥadī kebīr Bennī*’: ‘the force is bigger than me’. Most of the stories one hears about trance, in fact, seem to gravitate to this kind of particular affective experience, to what is considered ‘*jedba*’ trance, but even *jedba* moves along a spectrum; it can develop into ‘deeper’ states, even into supernatural inhabitation. In other words, it is not uncommon to see a *jedēb(a)* start out in *jedba* trance and eventually reach a state of less agency, of *jinn* inhabitation; this is because the *jnūn* or *arwāḥ* may be attracted to inhabit a host by their affinity for *jedba* trance.

Not to be confused with *ḥāl* as the ambience of the *dīwān*, there is also a register of trance intensity called *ḥāl*. This use of *ḥāl* tends to signify an intensified register of *jedba* with less conscious awareness and agency on the part of the *jedēb(a)*. It is *ḥāl* that most often references being ‘in another world’, and, for some, does presume the presence of supernatural entities. Given the potential for the term *ḥāl* to represent ‘going mad’—*dēr ḥālollo*—it indexes a transcendental potential that *jedba* usually does not. While *jedba* tends to be personal—like dancing one’s disease (Friedson 2009), moving affects, even while the *jedēb(a)* may not be entirely in control—*ḥāl* is often more transpersonal and dissociative. However, again, it is important to underline that these terms are ‘nodes’ along a spectrum that, while having no consistent definition, also move and transform into other nodes.

On one end of the spectrum, trance can be ‘gentle’ or meager in stimulus (*‘khelwī’*) so that the *jedēb(a)* is mostly or entirely consciously aware and—although it might entail a bit of struggle—has the ability to end his trance at will (having primary agency). On the other end of the spectrum, trance includes degrees of supernatural inhabitation, the register in which the *jedēb(a)* has the least amount of control, if ‘none’ at all. Most trance in *dīwān* flourishes somewhere in between these two extremes but *jedebbīn* consistently move along the trance spectrum of fluctuating agency to move in, out of, and through a range of affective intensities even in a single trance episode—like Meriem’s story. Furthermore, because all trance has a trajectory, somewhere it is headed,
a point of completion and something that it serves to accomplish, its processual nature similarly encourages this flux between points on the spectrum of experience.

On another affective register of experience, trance can superimpose upon, permeate, or enfold a person’s subjectivity: M’allem Tūfiq ‘Abdesslam of Algiers considered this the essence of 'trance' and used the Arabic term sāken. This might be cause for some confusion because the adjective form, maskūn, from the same Arabic root (s-k-n) means 'inhabited' and the term is regularly used in possession contexts to index jnūn or arwāḥ overpowering bodies. However, M’allem Tūfiq insisted that sāken, like all other forms of trance, is by degree ('par degré'): one can be sāken just as easily with emotion, or pain as with some other presence or external agent. He even considered James Brown’s passion and presence on stage as such, saying: 'That’s trance! It’s his sāken!' ('C’est la trance! Sāken ent’āw!'). M’allem Tūfiq brought up another affective experience in trance, the feeling of mounting something, the verb—yerkeb—or the adjective, being presently mounted by something—merkūb. Like sāken this experience can but does not necessarily reference inhabitation by supernatural bodies; the mounting of or being mounted by a presence or energetic force similarly varies by degree of intensity. And yet, while the terms sāken or merkūb indicate a range of affective textures without necessarily pointing directly to the 'cause' of the affect (jnūn or not), other affective states do consistently indicate the 'cause' (such as jnūn) but similarly range in affective intensity.

A common example of this are the three words of memsūs, merīūḥ, and mādrūb, all three of which point to a spectrum of experience of being touched or hit by a jinn. In my own fieldwork, I most often heard memsūs, the lightest in intensity of the three terms; it was usually explained as the feeling of being brushed by a 'wind' (rīḥ) of the jinn. ‘Azzeddīn Benūghef of Mascara explained that this kind of being 'hit' might just make a person tired and want to go to sleep. Merīūḥ, also indicating being 'hit by a wind' is typically more serious. That is to say, one can lose consciousness if one is merīūḥ but not usually with memsūs, even though both involve being touched or hit by a supernatural wind. Mādrūb, on the other hand, is to be hit with so much force by a jinn ‘that a person may not be able to walk’.

\[114\] Drawing attention to this kind of graduated

affective experience with the *jnūn* is also important for highlighting that encounters with them are more varied than being simply inhabited or mounted. In one *dīwān*, when a man passed out near the women’s section, one woman turned to the other to ask, ‘What’s wrong with him? Is he inhabited?’ (‘*Wesh bih? Rah mrīḍ?’* using the adjective *mrīḍ*, literally ‘sick’). The other woman answered, ‘No, he’s *merīūh’.*

Trance As An Expression of ‘Sickness’

Earlier, in my overview of affect theory, I narrated the story of a man I observed in Mascara in August 2016 with a chronic illness of *jinn* inhabitation that began in the *borj, Bū Derbāla*. He was deemed to be ‘sick’ and, based on the intensity of his trances, seen to be unlikely to escape from the pattern. In the *dīwān* communities that I frequented, this was the most common way to denote *jinn* inhabitation: *mrīḍ(a)*, the masculine/feminine adjective meaning ‘sick’. The term can be used in quotidian circumstances to indicate common illnesses like a cold or flu, and it can also be used, like in English, to mean someone who is mentally ‘sick’, repulsive, or socially deviant. However, its use in *dīwān* is particularly interesting in that it highlights the concept of bodily-affective thresholds and loss of agency, a weakening of self-other boundaries, and a concept of contagion—in this case, the contagion is the *jinn*. In other words, *mrīḍ(a)* is the primary way to refer to inhabitation or what is often called possession. The use of this term is revealing for ways of thinking about trance and affect, particularly because the more literal, Arabic term available ‘*maskūn’*, which means ‘inhabited’ is rarely used. In my conversations with people, it was only used to specify exactly what was meant by the term ‘*mrīd’* by asking, ‘“Sick” how? Do you mean ‘inhabited’? [*maskūn(a)*]’.

Thinking here with the work of Ed Cohen (2009) and Lisa Blackman (2012: 6-7), if we consider the immune system as ‘involved in boundary making and defence’, with the ‘concept of the fortress defended self that is enacted as immunity-through-defence as a form of biopolitical individualization’, the invasion, penetration, and breaching of the *jinn* then challenges personhood and, at the same time, evokes an

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115 Plural = *mrāḍ*. 

176
affective milieu of compassion for the victim because the victim is understood to be helpless in this situation. The term mrīḍ(a) also implies the processual, ongoing nature of such a relationship with a jinn—like the way an illness emerges, develops, and abates and might return or become chronic. This is quite different than 'maskūn' which, crucially, does not place the victim in a time-space milieu of process but speaks of inhabitation as a state.

This difference between certain kinds of trance being conceived of as a process of chronic sickness is critical because, for the jedebbīn, there is very rarely a sense of ever being 'cured' of their pain and suffering. As Obeyesekere (1990) posits about the category of ‘cathartic’ rites, there is not an attempt to resolve psychological conflicts although in dīwān, there is some attempt to recalibrate them. It is almost unheard of that any 'child' of dīwān would stop attending dīwanat or leave the tradition altogether—most ūlād dīwān begin attending dīwanat from childhood and continue to do so into old age, meaning that one might attend hundreds over a lifetime.116 This lifetime relationship to dīwān is not necessarily reserved for victims of supernatural inhabitation wherein hosts have kinds of ‘contracts’ with the jnūn. Indeed while it is quite common to hear of a jinn choosing a person early on in their life and afflicting them for the duration of it, the processual nature of suffering, illness, ritual healing and subsequent improved wellbeing also applies in jedba or hāl registers of trance. A jedēb(a) never stops being a jedēb(a) much as individual's health and wellbeing is always an ongoing process—we are never 'done'. In other words, dīwān ritual is not a 'cure' but, rather, a dependable, recurring structure for self-maintenance—and one that is at once personal and public; over the course of their lifetimes, their stories of suffering and illness also become public knowledge and memory. These stories are then reproduced and repeated. The kind of treatment or medicine—ed-dwāʾ— that dīwān entails, then, is one of continual attention, not just attention by the sick to attend to their sickness but also the attention of the community who, over and over, witness and care for other’s struggles.117

116 Philip Schuyler described a similar 'recovery' from 'sickness' in gnāwa practice as remission. Personal Communication, Nov. 2016.
117 Suspending for a moment the predominantly medicalised, pharmaceutical, and biochemical connotations for the term 'medicine' in the English language, an expansive consideration of ed-dwāʾ could enfold the ways that various substances, energies, intentions, and objects are invested with meaning, as therapeutic agents, and come to be effective aids for a person's wellbeing. Such thinking may harken back
This therapeutic process is an ongoing attending to equilibriums of agency, to the balance of power in relationships.

D. Bodies and Movement

Trance ultimately challenges notions of a bounded self; it is always in the process of emerging or fading, of coming in and out of focus. The dynamism and porosity of the physical body is a given in ḏīwān and, thus, lends itself quite fluidly to other kinds of permeability, such as altered states. The 'physical body' is never simply singular as material, but is always as much outside itself, in the world, as inside itself (Seigworth and Gregg 2010:3). It is 'more assemblage than form, more associated milieu than being' (Manning 2010:118). Such a porous conception of the body is key to the dynamics of movement; movement that involves agents crossing thresholds. Trance is almost always about moving the body, moving affects, moving the ḥnūn, moving towards one's own pain. From the moment of the musically triggered affective response, there is a sensory listening with the body (see Guerts 2002), of the music penetrating the ḣedēb(a) and stirring action. Trance, then, develops and deepens only through physical movement and expression of the affects experienced by the ḣedēb(a). It is the job of the ḣedēb(a) to make his or her way to the ṭaraḥ (often with difficulty or some help from others) to move and cultivate its presence with the help of the music. Trance has to be moved to be realised, to ease unpleasant symptoms. This is why when a ḣedēba is in such a deep state that she cannot move herself—like in Meriem’s story—she was propped upright and her limbs were moved for her.

to the orientalist, Edmond Doutté, who, in his survey of magic and religion in North Africa (1909), suggested that the line between a doctor and a sorcerer, between miracles or magic and 'medicine' is often quite a fine line. I would propose that such a consideration, if taken in the spirit of medical anthropology, divested of orientalist notions of the 'primitive' versus 'modern' (see Amster 2013), has potential to be quite instructive. In ḏīwān where the nature of dis-ease, troubles, or ailments tend to be acute or ongoing such as affective, psychological, social, and interpersonal struggles, ed-dwā’ is very much an ongoing process rather than a one-off solution. Ideas of medicine and treatment, then, include the social dynamics of community witness and care implied in ḏīwān.

118 While embodiment theory in anthropology advocated for the body as subject, the continuous fluctuation of agencies in trance renders the object/subject dualism clumsy. Nevertheless, regarding the statement 'the body is the key' it would be most accurate to understand the 'body' here as subject rather than as object as the statement might suggest.
The body-as-key is a central idea around all types of trance in Algeria; it is the mechanism through and with which trance needs to be physically 'worked' in order to be culminated and contracted. It is not unusual for jedba trance to occur in varying social contexts and during family or community events, from various branches of 'Sufi' ḥadrat (gatherings), to 'secular' wedding parties, mourning rituals, and music concerts. Culturally, there is an understanding about access to other 'states' that can be cultivated through bodily technique, particularly at moments of heightened emotion. For example, in Constantine while staying with a well-to-do family, during a family party when the relatives were dancing to recorded music in the living room, I watched as the oldest aunt became increasingly enthusiastic and began to cultivate a trance-like choreography with her body, bending more deeply forward at the waist, and gradually entered an altered state. The family kept dancing, seeming pleased for her, and appropriately responded by keeping an eye out so that she did not lose so much control as to risk running into the furniture, hitting her head, or otherwise hurting herself. Someone tossed her a scarf that she loosely wrapped around her uncovered head. Her trance went on until the end of the song. Having had many opportunities to spend time with Algerian families of all backgrounds and socioeconomic status, I found such 'light trance' events to be common and it was understood that it is through the body in motion that suffering is 'worked out'.

In dīwān, many forms of trance are extremely physically demanding and involve subtle management between learned, codified movement patterns, a jedēb's own spontaneity, sacred or divine inspiration, and forces outside the control of the jedēb(a) such as affects, supernatural beings, and divine attraction that all have the potential to act upon and overpower the jedēb(a). A jedēb(a) learns how to move his experience in an aesthetically appropriate way—there are beginners and advanced jedēbīn, for example. A jedēb learns how to share some of the control of his movements with forces (jnūn, powerful emotions, pain) that are doing things to his body and to his senses of self. Less choreographed than a 'dance’ but more structured than spontaneous movement, there is a certain performativity and aesthetic importance to a jedēb’s motion, even while the ways he moves are not so shaped by him as to make his movement a 'performance' per se. So while it is cultivated and learned, unsettling
binaries of volitional and non-volitional (Kapchan 2007), trance in dīwān is not typically a choice.

The exceptions to this are jedebbīn with some ability to affectively self regulate and/or who have strong wishes to remain sitting, usually for reasons of modesty but occasionally out of fear—because arising and making one's way to the ṭaraḥ can often immediately intensify the state. As some women told me, if there is a jinn or rūḥ in question, that action of getting up signals compliance. Remaining in one's place, however difficult, may sometimes prevent the affective state from developing but this is viewed as less than ideal and understood to intensify symptoms, worsening the situation so that other women will prod the victim, ‘Get up!’—‘Nōdī!’ However, I often did see women vehemently refuse and there was a common trick for dampening the affective state: eating jāwī. A few small pieces of the benzoin chewed up and swallowed acted as an 'anaesthesia' for some. Having clarified with several women whom I watched do this, the affective regulation, then, was quite particular: to smell jāwī quickens the affective state, but to eat it dampens it.119

On the other side of the spectrum, there are times in which jedebbīn explicitly act upon their own persons, in self-harm. Some in the world of dīwān might suggest that, in these cases, a jinn incites or requires its host to hurt him or herself. But there are other examples that demonstrate that this is not always the case, that in some instances, there is some kind of work that self-harm does for the affective process. In Meriem's trance story, I spoke of the brāj group, Srāga, in which jedebbīn tejdeb with long, pointed spears turned on themselves and the brāj group of Sīdī Ḥsen where they do the same with knives in time to musical cues. Other brāj call for knives as well, like Dāwī, and a handful of Hausawiyyn brāj in which a jedēb (male) must work smaller knives on the tops of his thighs—a trance specialty in Mascara and Saida. What interests me here is to explore what the affective labour of violence to the self might do for one's own suffering and recovery. These moments of self-mortification are, observably, quite performative, one might even say theatrical. Some ūlād dīwān are quite critical of such practices partly for this reason—not only is it haram (forbidden) to harm oneself, but the manner in

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119 Other reasons I encountered for women remaining in their place had to do with particular high standing males who did not like women to enter the ṭaraḥ, and who preferred to keep dīwān as performed 'for men, by men'.
which people do it is commonly criticised as 'showing off' or doing 'magic tricks' that enable them to perform super-human feats (stabbing themselves unharmed); essentially, 'lying to people' (ygeddebū lī en-ness). But leaving performativity aside for a moment, as well as possible supernatural explanations for how individuals are able to endure such pain—if indeed they are present enough to feel it, or why they might not be able to feel it—I want to narrow in on the behavior of inflicting pain on the self as a means of intensifying affect, as a way of 'going deeper' or moving towards pain as a means to fully feel it, realise it, manifest it, and thus complete it.

During one dīwān in Kristel, I watched as Belkhīr, a ritual elder in his eighties living in Sig, approached the musicians and began taking over the role of the kuyu bungu, singing the 'call' of the borj, Lillia—doing so pushed him further into his state and he began to pump his arms forward in quick rowing-like motions after which he fell to his knees. On his knees, he began slapping the ground in front of him with both hands in time to the pulse, then pounding his own legs. His energy kept accelerating, and still on his knees, he 'hopped' around in a circle. Watching the energy escalate, someone brought bkhūr to his side to fumigate him and from this moment, he rose to his feet and found a graceful cadence of movement, exiting the intensity of his state until he bent over and calmly touched the neck of the ginbrī, the sign to the mʿallem, 'that will do'. Observing many moments like these, there appears to be a consistent affective crescendo in these states, bringing the jedēb up to a threshold; the moment of self-harm feels to be a condensing of the struggle.

In another example, an older moqedm entered into a trance, similarly by beginning to sing the text after which he began to cry. At this point, he took a pair of qrāqeb from one of the musicians near him and began hitting his forehead with them forcefully until one young man near him stopped him, giving him a long, concerned look. There is a sense here of the jedēb's striving to meet and mingle with the affective intensity, of the jedēb working himself, to move towards the intensity, to magnify it, to condense it and speed up its vibration. In these moments, it is an intensification of affect, a seemingly intentional digging into the suffering or pain, and this leaning into the sharpness serves to push past the threshold where the suffering hovers. We may even find some resonance here in Brian Massumi's treatment of the Snowman study wherein
nine year olds ranked sad scenes with pleasantness, the 'sadder the better' (1995:84). Trancers might actually find ‘pleasure’ in condensing and intensifying certain painful states.

I pursue these ideas because of what is at stake epistemologically; that movement towards pain, for some, might be the only way through it. This is, in other words, a therapeutic approach: a movement towards suffering—and in these cases, a magnification of it in order to resolve it—rather than moving away from it. The importance of this idea is that trance in dīwān operates on this approach: that, through the body, techniques are cultivated in which suffering and pain (as well as other affects) are 'worked', are 'performed', are entered into more fully—affective labour. Keeping this in mind, self-harm in trance is more explicable.120

'Performance' of suffering, whether self-harm or not, needs to be understood as re-presentation of the self, as part of the self-organisation of the self, a cultivated self. That suffering is 'performed', in other words, does not suggest that it is not genuine. *Jedebbīn* perform for themselves as much as they might perform for others and because some kinds of choreographic movements are more appropriate than others, the performance of trance can be stylised and aestheticised. Sometimes the 'performance' of suffering might very well be enacted without being genuinely 'felt' as one *jedēb*, Munir, told me. He was quite well known for being on the *ṭaraḥ* during certain *brāj*; they were known as 'his *brāj*'. He once explained to me that even when he was not 'feeling it', even when he was not really in the mood to *tejdeb* or was not particularly enjoying the *ḥāl*, he would often get up and move on the *ṭaraḥ* anyway because those who knew him expected him to. I witnessed one time when he remained seated during some of 'his *brāj*' and he was pulled to his feet by a friend who then shoved him in the direction of the *ṭaraḥ* insisting he *tejdeb*.

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120 There are some connections here with other kinds of Sufi trance as well as *tarab*—trance triggered by heightened emotion. We hear of people tearing at their clothes or hair, for example. See Racy 2003.
E. Care

Figure 19: Man in trance is cared for. Photo by Tamara D. Turner

Finally, as jedebbīn or others present in the dīwān fall into trance states, ritual elders and fellow ūlād dīwān react accordingly, coming to the aid of the jedebbīn. Care, the final means of affective labour I mentioned above, comes in many forms. Members of the community or ritual experts shout at jedebbīn who have fallen over or become paralysed to 'get up [and dance]!', they bring bkhūr to the jedebbīn to fumigate them (incense that helps the jedēb cross the threshold into deeper trance), they help them to the ṭaraḥ, protect them from falling or from hitting their heads against objects, they cradle them, hug them while they dance, cover them with appropriately coloured drapes (abāyat), stroke their backs, spray them with orange flower water (mazhar), place ritual objects in their hands, and circle money over their heads for good luck. Many will enter the ṭaraḥ to assist a friend or loved one in trance, to tie back loose clothing so it does not obstruct movement, to push them towards the musicians if they start to lose will or momentum, or tell them to ease off if they take too long or go too deeply into their state,
saying 'nūba, nūba!' your turn is up. With intense trance states, some women will tie a band of cloth around the waist of the jedēba and hold onto it as a tether in order to allow the jedēba to release more deeply while keeping her physically safe.

When I was encouraged to get up for 'my brāj', I was treated in these ways as well, even as an amateur jedēba still learning how to let go into the experience even while maintaining appropriate control of myself. In one instance, a female ritual elder, an ʿarīfa, kept her right arm around me during the entirety of the borj for ʿAlī, practically showing me the steps she thought I needed to take. Two years later, in the summer of 2016, during several dīwanat I frequented and that were also attended by the same 'regulars', seeing me again ‘labouring’ to the borj ʿAlī, Nūreddīn Sarjī began taking me under his wing and coming to my side during my jedba to pat me on the back and speak encouraging words. In Meriem’s story we also saw the way family and kin cared for her in a variety of ways: her grandmother insisting she be allowed to attend the dīwān, Moqedm Jallūl instructing her to go inside the kumania and rest, the way Aḥmed Farajī stood by her to monitor her state, tying her clothing back, the way Moqedm Jallūl carefully fumigated her, pulled on her arms and legs, stretching her out, attending to her body in various ways, and finally asking the other jedebbīn to act out knife stabbing on her. This example in particular is important for illustrating that affective labour of trance is not just the 'work' of the jedebbīn, but the work of the community.

While the performance of care in ritual can serve to render visible alliances and ruptures and mend relationships, its enactment is, first, critical at a basic level of safety: trance can be unpredictable and some responses can be potentially dangerous. I observed jedebbīn fall over into the musicians and bump into microphone stands on occasion, fall backwards and hit their heads, and come close to inflicting injury on themselves or others nearby with ritual fire, whips, spears, and knives. Individual trance experiences ideally result in some form of personal and communal reconfiguring—what some may call catharsis or 'healing'. The recurrent, nature of such treatment and the ways it positions individuals with regard to their experiences of themselves and within the community matrix of the ritual further demonstrates that 'healing' here is a process of constant becoming that has more to do with temporality and experiencing oneself across expanses of time than it has to do with ‘end results’. Because there is no such thing as
leaving behind suffering, we must reimagine the meaning of 'healing' and 'treatment' and the outcomes or goals towards which trance is always steered.

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In Part Two, it has been my goal to address the lifeworld of ḏīwān—that is, its epistemologies and ontologies—in order to best make comprehensible a world that might be considered quite distant from that of a western subject. To do this, I began in Chapter Three with a trance event from a ḏīwān ritual to set the stage for discussing the most important epistemological assumptions of ḏīwān, showing the dynamics of agency, affect, and transmission and the ways music engenders such events. I then explained the importance of the ways affects have to be worked—they cannot just ‘emerge’—by suggesting overlapping systems of affective labour in ḏīwān with the goal of manipulating affect: ritual experts, musicians, jedebbīn with their potential supernatural hosts, and the public.

Thus, having laid the groundwork for the ḏīwān lifeworld, in this chapter, it has been my goal to look at the social field in which trance emerges and is abated. This social field began with the crucial baseline of ḥāl with ways that the affective labour of human and nonhuman agents produce ideal ḥāl in order to generate favourable conditions for trance. Next, I elaborated on the vicissitudes of trance as an affective epistemology: the ways it feels, can be observed in ritual, and the ways people talked about it and categorised it. I explained the variety of terminology to attend to the affective textures of trance explaining, for example, why the idea of ‘sickness’ and contagion are important, and then suggested that presence and absence can be more helpful means of thinking about such states rather than the common understandings of trance as related to ‘consciousness’ or being ‘in the head’. Finally, I attended to the ways that bodies are required to move such affective states and how publics are then required to attend to those bodies, in the affective labour of care. I now turn towards Part Three to address transmission, particularly the social structures and interpersonal negotiations that circulate, guard, and reproduce ḏīwān.
PART THREE: TRANSMISSION: HOW DĪWĀN THRIVES, STRUGGLES, AND IS REPRODUCED
In this third section, I now want to consider how the knowledge that emerges from the epistemologies and ontologies of the dīwān lifeworld is transmitted across time. The primary goal and thematic thread of this third section is to consider how ūlād dīwān, seeing themselves as the caretakers of a centuries-old tradition, currently negotiate the transmission of dīwān practice in the face of a changing, ‘modern’, Algerian context. For heuristic purposes, I refer to the binary poles of ‘tradition’ and ‘modernity’ as a framework in which to situate and analyse the struggles and negotiations between different ways of being in the world—ways that include different expectations, priorities, and goals. I enclose these terms in scare quotes to account for their imagined stability as signifiers and for their symbolic role in discourse, recognising that both categories are dynamic and enfold one another. These terms are used both by dīwān insiders and outsiders to situate the difficulty—even crisis—of transmission they are faced with and have been faced with since at least Algerian independence and its upheavals in social structures. While positing this spectrum of ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ lifeworlds, I resist the traditionalising or modernising sides of ethnography by illuminating specifically how these lifeworlds are intermingled and in tension, sometimes productive tension and at other times, outright conflict.

As I pointed out in Chapter Three, in terms of intermingled ways of being ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’, Algerians educated abroad and who consider themselves quite cosmopolitan and ‘modern’ often hold beliefs that could be labeled as ‘superstitious’ or ‘old fashioned’, such as belief in jnūn or the Evil Eye. What I mean to underline here is that even a conception of a ‘contemporary Algerian lifeworld’ does not make mutually exclusive values and beliefs that predate the modern period with those of modern science—especially in the context of Islam and what it means to be a Muslim in today’s Algeria. Of course, Algerian lifeworlds are fashioned from pixelated ontologies of what is ‘real’ and what is possible.

So in order to be more specific about what I am referring to with these categories, let me specify that my treatment of a contemporary Algerian lifeworld features national

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121 I mentioned some of these changes above, such as the destruction of the villages nègres or grāba and thus, the relocation and dispersal of ūlād dīwān in many locations. I do not have any archival evidence to back up of these claims but it seems that changing lifestyles, demands, and priorities in a modernising world had as much to do with the crisis in transmission as anything else. The death of elders with no one to pass on their knowledge to was often recounted.
culture, the market economy and its products and desire for those products, and
expectations that ‘Algerian culture’, as a product (particularly when funded by the state),
should be publicly accessible. But even more pertinent here about the modern world is
the expectation that knowledge should be democratically available, inscribed, and
transparent. This is particularly challenging to the dīwān lifeworld because, for many
ūlād dīwān, part of dīwān practice and knowledge involves dealing with the nonhuman
world of jnūn and arwāḥ, This kind of knowledge can be dangerous in the wrong hands
and therefore should be painstakingly earned and carefully guarded within family
lineages and/or with other ‘insider’ relationships.

Furthermore, what interests me here, particularly, about how ēlād dīwān negotiate
their place and the transmission of practice today has to do with their minority status
within Algerian culture at large. Their own battles with how to reconcile (or not)
‘traditional’ approaches to knowledge transmission with modern expectations is quite
specific given their history and their status in society: descendants of slaves, being
‘black Algerians’ where racism is still alive and well, and identifying with Sufi
epistemologies that are sometimes also seen with suspicion. That is to say that ēlād
dīwān do not particularly have power, resources, and influence on their side, something
that contributes to being self-protective and guarding identities.

By considering how ēlād dīwān negotiate transmission in a today’s Algeria, this
brings us to a more specific question: what kinds of ‘knowledge’ and its movement (or
blockage, sedimentation) are being negotiated? To begin answering this, I present three
case studies—Chapters Five, Six, and Seven—that address three domains of knowledge
transmission and the interplay between these domains and such negotiations—
‘interplay’ because negotiations are not always successful, particularly when some
transmission is set in motion by nonhuman agents. These three domains are: 1) through
the discursive role of secrets and the performance of this secret knowledge; 2) through
the structures of family lineages and place; 3): in the state-sponsored dīwān music
festival.

The first case study, Chapter Five, considers secrecy as a site for negotiation. Such
negotiation happens primarily in discourse, first by the manner in which people talk
about or around secrets, referring to their existence and to their keepers. The contents of
‘secret knowledge’ are also shared, in varying degree of detail, between ālād dīwān and others so that, as we will see, in their sharing they are invested with symbolic power and meaning in stories. The secret performs the boundary between insiders and outsiders, indexing—to begin with—who has such secrets to tell or talk about versus who has lost them, and who should and shouldn’t have secret knowledge.

Chapter Six looks at three geographical sites where dīwān family lineages are exceptionally strong in Algeria—Oran, Mascara, and Saida—and the ways that family lineages and their associated ‘signature’ practices are also involved in the negotiation between different approaches to being in the world. In this chapter, I explore how the dominant lineages are faring today and the ways they present themselves as either or both ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’.

Finally, Chapter Seven addresses the annual Dīwān Festival of Bechar with its inherent expectation that Algerian ‘culture’, such as dīwān music, should also be publicly available for consumption, particularly as ‘intangible cultural heritage’, meaning part of Algerian national culture and identity. When knowledge in dīwān tends towards secrecy and containment and is kept in families, the question, then—that is never explicitly stated—is: does dīwān really belong to all Algerians for consumption? Whose intangible cultural heritage is it? In the festival, then, we see complex negotiations of ritually trained musicians asserting their ritual authority but in a space that suggests performative codes that these musicians struggle to reconcile with their own codes.

Let me now proceed to these three case studies of explicit ways that ālād dīwān grapple with dynamics of transmission in a quickly changing world.
CHAPTER FIVE: SECRET KNOWLEDGE

A handful of dirt, when clenched in the fist of blessed *mʿalley*, transforms into *jāwī*, benzoin used as incense. Smoldering coals taken from the fire being stoked to keep the sacred incense burning are thrown into the air by a *jinn*-inhabited *jedēb* and, in mid-air, turn into hard candies wrapped in glittering foil. A woman locked in a windowless room by her husband to prevent her from going to a *dīwān* had disappeared into thin air when the husband went back to release her. Another woman throws herself out of a window when she hears a *dīwān borj* but is entirely unhurt. Back in the 1960s, the engine of a ferry from Mostaganem broke down and despite every effort to repair it, refused to start. The captain had ties to a *dīwān* community and their *moqedm* suggested that a bull needed to be sacrificed; sure enough, shortly after the offering, the engine fired up. An uncle fixing up an abandoned building for his home, adjacent to a *marabout* shrine in Kristel, suddenly finds that one of his hands begins to bleed. The bleeding persists until someone advises him to make a sacrifice to the *marabout* after which his hand finally stops bleeding.

During a *dīwān*, a young boy watches in amazement as his aunt, a reputable priestess, spits in the face of a handicapped woman in a wheelchair who is subsequently able to get up out of the wheelchair and dance. A group of *ūlād dīwān* processing through a village are invited to stop at a *boulangerie* by its owners who ask if the group might fumigate with *bkhūr* their wheelchair-ridden son. The *moqemda* (female *moqedm*) does this and places a long, wooden rod near his lame leg and then begins to push him around in his chair up and down the street. When she returns the boy to his parents, the boy's leg is miraculously healed. Men dancing with knives in the *dīwān brāj* suite Ḥassaniyyyn slice open their abdomens that begin spilling blood; however, after the *moqedm* fumigates the wounds with *bkhūr*, the bleeding ceases and there is no sign of injury.

The above anecdotes are truncated examples of miraculous stories I heard from my interlocutors over the course of my fieldwork. A couple of these stories turned up in various different places, such as the ferry story that I heard both from a *dīwān* family in Saida and in Mostaganem—only the identity of the ferry captain changed. I heard these
stories during dīwanat, when conversing with ritual experts before and after dīwanat, and especially during the outings with my male interlocutors in Oran who regularly brought me along to their social café outings. Particularly in these cafés, various kinds of family stories were shared and discussed, sometimes even debated for their meaning and possibility.

Such legends and miraculous stories are an important register of oral transmission of dīwān worlds. While explicitly, such stories trace histories of kin relationships and the reputations of my interlocutors' ancestors, the telling of these stories, most importantly, articulates power around and within the storyteller's dīwān community. For example, the subtexts of the stories about the ferry engine refusing to start or mysterious bleeding communicated that supernatural phenomena follow and envelop 'authentic' ālād dīwān even in contexts outside of the ritual; even ‘undesirable’ events like a bleeding hand still enfold the subject and storyteller into a divine web of insiders and outsiders. In other words, these sorts of things rarely, if ever, happen to the uninitiated.

Furthermore, anecdotes such as the mʿallem's personal, supernatural ability of trans-substantiation, turning dirt into benzoin, or a woman escaping a locked room often function quite explicitly in discourse as critical social capital, pointing to those who possess particular supernatural 'powers' over the natural world as opposed to those who only happen to be in its vicinity or one step removed, telling the story. While pointing first to the individual power of the story’s subject—suggesting who has power and who does not—the telling of these stories also points to who has such stories to tell. Put another way, the simple telling of such a story is a small claim to power. Furthermore, while pointing to power, such oral transmission indexes past successful transmission or failure of transmission of power, sometimes serving as a warning to be mindful of supernatural interference. With the context above in mind, there are two critical underpinnings to these discourses to establish here. Firstly, whether considered an unintentional, unexplainable happening (the ferry), or some kind of personal power (trans-substantiation), all manner of such mysterious events are most typically situated in one way: the intervention of the jnūn. Secondly, dīwān discourse enfolds these
interventions or any other mysterious events into one convenient, discursive indexical sign: a 'secret'. This is expressed both as es-serr in Arabic and 'un secret' in French.\(^{122}\)

While I will provide examples of what some of these secrets attempt to conceal, my primary assertion in this chapter is that secrecy is performed——both discursively and physically, such as in ‘secret’ actions taken in ritual—and that such performances divulge anxieties about transmission under contemporary circumstances. These are: that dīwān is often performed in public, in front of outsiders whose interests may be ambiguous, and that the music is performed today under the gaze of media systems, operating within desacrilised frameworks of national culture and 'heritage'. In the examples that follow, I show that secrecy is a way of enacting some kind of imaginative control over these circumstances. Therefore, 'transmission' in this context is one that necessitates an analysis of such performances, asking key questions such as: what counts as this ‘secret knowledge’ in these examples, by whom is it being evoked, and for what purposes, and with what kind of listeners/viewers in mind?

A. Secrets

‘A secret that two know is no longer a secret.’

In speaking with ālād dīwān, particularly elders above the age of sixty, the importance of secrets was brought up consistently. There were secrets about the history of the brāj, about why there were several brāj with the same name (i.e.: multiple Ḥāmmū), and why certain acts were performed during brāj, like why rwīnā (raw, doughy balls of grilled wheat flour, water, and sugar) had to be made and fed to the musicians and attendees during the second Ḥammū borj. There were secrets about the powers of the ginbri, the ‘real’ words and ‘real’ meanings of the texts of brāj, especially texts in the Hausawiyyn and Khela’wiyyyn suites that still contain Hausa words and phrases with supernatural powers. There were secrets about what was ‘really happening’

\(^{122}\) The exception to this rule is that, with strong enough niyya (pure intention), or baraka (divine blessing) a person might be able to perform miraculous acts, but would still be aided by the supernatural: ancestor spirits, saints, or possibly God.
when certain people fell into trance. This ‘domain’ of secrets regarding trance, especially, was not something that was discussed casually or without hard-earned trust.

There were secrets about the meanings and purpose of the offerings of henna, eggs, milk, bkhūr, rwīna, and perfume in the ābag (basket) and why they were dumped onto the ground at the moment of sacrificing an animal, and who these offerings were for (many said the jnūn). There was a mystery around why salt was thrown down on the ground at the moment of sacrifice, too. Or, as I saw one time, it was thrown on the ṭaraḥ during a borj for the Prophet. Later, the wife of the m’āllem playing at that moment explained in hushed tones that it was a way of dispersing the jnūn when the dīwān was getting too ‘hot’. There were secrets about what incantations the ritual elders would chant as they set bkhūr alight or as they set down the ābag of offerings in front of the m’āllem. In other words, secrets were invested in nearly every aspect of dīwān: the music (notes), texts, instruments, trances, incantations, objects, and actions.

For many ūlād dīwān, secrets reference the jnūn and their world or some kind of relationship with them. Secrets often functioned as the primary euphemism to avoid saying the word ‘jinn’ because they could easily be called. At other times, secrets as a euphemism were used to smooth over or obfuscate the fact that jnūn were being dealt with at all: dealings with the jnūn are widely seen to be harām (severe taboo) and dangerous. ‘Abd Zamūsh in Mostaganem told me that while people used to be afraid of the jnūn, now the jnūn are afraid of people, suggesting that humans have become too bold, dangerous, and fearless. Yet, despite this common understanding, the meanings and bearings of ‘secrets’ could not be stated explicitly because, of course, as Simmel points out in the citation above, to disclose a secret is to destroy it. Furthermore, I spoke with many ūlād dīwān who believed that there were no longer spirits or jnūn in dīwān ceremonies, even while they left open the possibility that there might have been in previous times.

Therefore, even while it is often difficult if not impossible to nail down exactly what these secrets are and might stand for, secrets provide a way of talking about, measuring, critiquing, judging, and investing in dīwān’s efficacy and authenticity. In the short-hand, it is easier to talk about ‘secrets’, as a broad category, for example, and as a vague barometer of the mysterious, unexplainable, and ineffable. ‘Secrets’, as a
category, allows for a broad spectrum of signification, from a general sense of enchantment to the possibility of *jinn* inhabitation.\(^{123}\)

As I suggested in the introduction, secrets do most of their work in discourse, in the ways *ūlād dīwān* situate themselves as insiders. Secrets are social and performative rather than private. They are most effective and legible when circulating as social capital. Simmel proposed that the ‘application of secrecy as a sociological technique as a form of commerce’ was self-evident (1906:464). Talking about secrets meant talking about who had them and who did not, if the secrets had survived or not, or if there was anything secretive left about the *dīwān* at all. They are a way of publicly staking claim to knowledge: knowledge one does not have to account for, prove, or necessarily pass on if one does not want to. For example, one *mʿallem* I met in Bechar who publicly stated at a conference to have memorised more than three hundred and sixty-five *brāj* but who, upon being asked for details by other *mʿallemīn*, would not divulge the list of names because they were his ‘secrets’. Sometimes these kinds of secrets were property of families and so played a part of the individual qualities of lineages, like with the infamous *moqedma* Kheira Foṭa, sister of Shaykh Majdūb, about whom many tales are still told for her ability to heal the sick with her saliva.

Secrets are also a primary way of talking about enchantment. It would be difficult to imagine a *dīwān* without any ‘secret’, without any magic, enchantment, or mystery. After all, those who frequent *dīwanat* look forward to them as a space ‘away’ from daily life, where mysterious, wonderful, magical, and secretive things can happen. Without the potential for re-enchantment, reinforcement of relationships, and/or transforming and remaking undone things (like psychological and emotional distress, suffering), there would be no reason to go to a *dīwān*. Like *hāl* that is similarly mysterious and difficult to articulate, secrets are magnetic signifiers of the unknown, the unspeakable, the inarticulate, the nonhuman, and the ‘other’ that is necessary to enchant *dīwān*. We are, once again, in a world of affect, pluralistic agency, and issues around movement of information. As we will see later, this enchantment and mystery is crucial to staking out the thresholds between what is ritual terrain and what is ‘secular’ or non-

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\(^{123}\) A more cynical view might also suggest that the opacity of ‘secrets’ also allows for critiquing one’s contemporaries without accountability on exactly what is subpar.
ritual terrain—what was often disregarded as being ‘folklore’—particularly regarding insiders and outsiders and regarding ritual and staged contexts.

I now want to share three partial transcriptions of the most productive conversations I had with ritual elders where secrets emerged and were central to the discussion. These conversations illustrate three perspectives on how secrets work to establish power, index insiders versus outsiders, and the ways they are involved in transmission of knowledge, even outside of human control.

1. A Conversation with Moqedm Jallūl Moṭam: Secrets have been damaged, lost, and are so dangerous that it’s better that they disappear

I first met Mʿallem Muḥammad Amīn Canon when he was acting as a member of the jury for the 2013 Diwan Festival of Bechar. A tall, poised gentleman in his thirties, Muḥammad spoke at length about the dīwān tradition in Saida and had with him a thick pamphlet on his Saida group, ‘Association Culturelle Folklorique Traditionnel Sidi Blel Saida.124 After our long discussion, I took his contact details and the next month, arranged a trip to visit his community and the Zāwīya Sīdī Blāl Saʿīda. At this early stage in my research when I was still getting to know the community of ʿūlād dīwān and was still unsure if traveling alone might be unsafe I persuaded an older Algerian colleague and linguist, Sī-Muḥammad Belkhādem, to accompany me to Saida for several days.125 Belkhādem, also a dīwān muḥeb primarily familiar with the Oran scene, was keen to discover the zāwīya in Saida.

On our second evening, July 19, we gathered in the outdoor courtyard of the zāwīya in order to meet and speak with Jallūl Moṭam, the moqedm (spiritual leader) of the zāwīya and dīwān mahalla since 1997.126 Along with the moqedm and Muḥammad, several others joined Belkhādem and me in the outdoor zāwīya courtyard: those who were the zāwīya’s protectors and 'members,' muḥebbīn or otherwise connected ʿūlād dīwān. We sat in a circle on mats carefully laid out over the ground—it was a warm summer evening after all—and one of the men served up sweet tea on a small gas stove.

124 A cultural, traditional 'folklore' association of Sidi Bilāl in Saida.
125 Algerian friends had been recommending to me that I not travel alone outside of major cities.
126 He had taken over from the previous moqedm, Ṭayeb Canon.
After some time of introductions and polite conversation, the men began to talk about the history and dire state of dīwān. I turned to Muḥammad to ask if I could record; he chuckled and nodded. Being the only woman and non-Algerian present, as well as a stranger to most of them, I opted to stay quiet for the first hour or so, letting Belkhādem take the reigns. To my surprise and interest, Belkhādem quickly engaged the moqedm and pressed him on his seemingly vague descriptions of dīwān transmission, particularly how certain ‘secrets’ [using the French ‘secret’] of dīwān practice had disappeared.

Pushing back, Moqedm Jallūl tried to explain, using the case of a hypothetical weld dīwān (‘son of dīwān’) who had unwisely shared his secret(s) with others:

‘I’m going to tell you how his secret was lost. Because, say he had given me his secret, I would have spoiled his secret, ruined it [‘khasserha’, lit. broken]. Because I don’t do things the way he did’. [‘Ma nemshīsh kīma mshā hūwa’.]

Belkhādem jumped in, ‘So [dīwān] has deviated a bit?’ [‘tinḥerref shwīya?’]
‘... Meaning, it becomes his fault [the weld dīwān]... he, sometimes he, he, it’s his issue. That’s it, that’s why... Everybody’s secret is lost. And it has stayed like that. Now, here...’.

Interjecting again, Belkhādem presses, ‘But how do you explain, that is, something founded on a secret [mebnī ‘āla serr] and yet it is passed down from generation to generation? [entāql men jīl, jīl, jīl, jīl]. How is that possible?’

‘It is passed down...’ [entāql...]
‘That’s the thing!’, Belkhādem speaks over him.
‘It is passed down, this is what I’m trying to tell you...’
Interrupting one more time, Belkhādem pushes:
‘Something based on secrecy and yet it is transmitted!’
‘No, it’s passed down! [Lā, entāql, entāql!] This is what I’m trying to tell you! [wesh ranī ngūlek?]. It is passed down. From the first ones [the first ūlād dīwān], it was like that, each time it [the transmission] was approximate, approximate [taqrīban]. I’m telling you, eighty percent... of what the first ones left. And it went on like that, gradually, and it dwindled. It dwindled [‘zed kemmel’]. And... now, there’s nothing, no dīwān left now. Now, nothing remains...’.
Moqedm Jallūl lets out a hearty chuckle that seems like uncomfortable laughter.

‘No . . . there’s still a blessing. It remains’ [‘Mazēl baraka. Mazēl’], Belkhādem insists.

Impatiently, the moqedm scolds, ‘No, no, no, no, no! There’s no more blessing, there’s none!’ [ma bqatsh el-baraka, ma bqatsh!]

‘There’s none?!’ Belkhādem raises his voice.

Pausing and taking his words slowly now, the moqedm professes,

‘Dīwān, as it was before, was something . . . Something profound!’

[‘Haja ‘aḍīma’ or marvelous, immense].

‘Yeah . . .’

‘But now, there’s no dīwān. Today it’s, it’s . . . all . . . something entirely . . . Not . . .’ The moqedm’s words trail off and he sounds defeated, resigned, unable to find the words.

Belkhādem softens a bit: ‘Hmm…’.

Searching, the moqedm tries, ‘All of it . . . I don’t know… I’d tell you, I…’

‘In other words’, Belkhādem offers, ‘it’s been really mixed up?’

[tkHELLAT: jumbled, polluted]

‘Mixed up a lot! Mixed up a lot!’ [‘TkHELLAT bazzēff, tkHELLAT bazzēff!’]

‘Ahh…’ Belkhādem’s tone of voice indicates that he can relate.

‘And it got even worse, and worse, and worse with the independence of Algeria here in Oranais [the wilāya]. It slowed and slowed [stopping, getting worse]. Because the elders, the few who were left, the little that was left, disappeared [‘raḥū’].’

‘Hmm…’ Belkhādem pauses.

The moqedm’s voice is sounding tired now, but he continues:

‘Here, here, it’s like . . . Here in Saida, there are no elders left . . . it’s all approximate, it’s all diminished, so that it’s only approximate [to what the elders did]. You see some guy just learning from another guy, who’s learning from another guy. You see? There’s no, no . . . nothing left. No foundation [lit. ‘nothing to mount,’ ‘ma kāynsh ʿāla yerkeb’]. No foundation. There’s nothing on which to fasten oneself, [‘ma kāynsh ʿāla yerkez’]. Le vrai tsemma ma kāynsh! [the real dīwān, to so speak, is gone.]’

197
Sounding worried or a bit desperate now, he turns directly to Belkhâdem, 'Don’t you understand me?!

MB: 'Yeah, I understand you… I understand you' ['wah, fahmtek, fahmtek'.]

MJ: 'That’s what’s going on. I’m telling you.. There’s not . . . remaining. . . it’s diminished. It’s been diminishing until now. Everything is all mixed up [jumbled]. Now it has all diminished [evaporated, slowed to a halt]. It has all diminished. All of it. It has all evaporated.'

Qada, the older brother of M’allem Muḥammad and also a prominent m’allem, then entered the zāwīya courtyard to join us, greeting each of us one by one. Underneath the greetings and cheer, barely audible in the recording, Moqedm Jallūl says to Qada, off the cuff and half chuckling, 'I’m drowning here!' ('rānī gharq m’a'), referring to all of Belkhâdem’s questions. Qada, continuing to greet the others, laughs heartily and teases him, 'You’re sinking, Sīdī?' ['wesh gharqti, Sīdī?']. Qada is a tall and strongly built, easy going man; he smiles and laughs easily, enjoys teasing everyone, especially the kids, and has a pronounced, resonant voice. He’s also quite articulate and often seems to speak on behalf of the dīwān community; he often uses his voice in a theatrical way, knowing when to speed up or speak louder for dramatic effect.

After finally taking a spot on the mats with us, Qada begins setting out some of the basic values of the dīwān tradition within the family grouping, speaking mostly in French, to which Moqedm Jallūl adds several, punctuated, approving chuckles and 'yeah!'s ['wah!']. The conversation eventually turns again to the challenge of dīwān secrets. Moqedm Jallūl begins explaining how when others—mostly journalists—have come to ask questions about dīwān, he couldn’t give detailed answers to their questions and therefore, they thought he was intentionally withholding information:

'We don’t know [the tradition] correctly!' the moqedm starts. 'They [the elders] did not give over the information, they did not give over the information. Here, [the tradition, secrets] they have not hung on. I told you, I told you that, long ago, people did not ask questions!'
Another man sitting nearby whispered, 'True!' and Qada added, 'That’s what we’re saying . . . ['C’est ça qu’on disait!']

Moqedm Jallūl continued, 'Someone would come to the dīwān, find the dīwān, he lives the dīwān, until the morning or until whatever, and he’s not paying attention [lit.: it escapes him]. He doesn’t try to understand ['il cherche pas comprendre'].

Qada adds, 'Meaning, they [the secrets] dwell in mystery [gʿād fī mystère]. That means that every time someone leaves [dies], he takes with him an entire library [of knowledge]!' Qada and all the others burst out laughing.

Moqedm Jallūl jumps in immediately: 'That’s it! There you go, there you go. Each person takes his knowledge with him.' ['Yddi mʾa swaleḥ']

Chuckling more now and seeming quite pleased with his explanation, Qada brushes his palms against one another as if to brush off dust between them, symbolising this knowledge being lost forever.

'Exactly! He takes his knowledge with him and . . .'

Moqedm Jallūl interrupts again: 'And thankfully!' ['mzīyya!']

Qada agrees, 'Fortunately, fortunately!' ['heuresement, heuresement!']

There is more boisterous laughter now between all the men and I wonder if it is tense laughter or if the idea is just so shocking that they cannot help but laugh. Belkhādem cuts through the laughter, raising his voice:

'But why ‘fortunately’?!!'

There is some slight backpedaling now.

Qada: 'No, because . . .'

Jallūl: 'Because . . .'

Qada, laughing: 'Now he [the moqedm] is going to tell you…

Jallūl: 'Because . . .'

The laughter rises up again and Qada’s voice is playful now, 'This one [the moqedm], he’s going to tell you why!'

There is something in this moment that feels important and telling, the way Qada and Moqedm Jallūl circle around the suspense, the way Qada starts to explain but then
defers to the *moqedm* out of respect. The way he teases, 'This ones’s going to tell you!' like he’s dodged a bullet.

Belkhādem, chuckling now also, pushes a little: 'Say it, say it!'

Finally, with a dramatic pause, Qada takes the floor, blending Algerian dialect and French: 'Because, no . . . Because . . . Now we see these people who have nothing to do with it [dīwān], they, they . . . invent these things, telling you this, to do that, or we heal with such-and-such, or ‘do this’, misleading people, and then suddenly, they’ve got a group of people following them.'

In other words, just like Moqedm Jallūl was trying to explain to Belkhādem, Qada also suggests that secrets in the wrong hands are dangerous; especially when someone 'takes' or is 'given' a secret and doesn’t know what to do with it, or worse, 'damages' it—*khasserha*. Better to let certain knowledge die than see it pass on to the wrong people.

This is an important point worth pausing on. That is to say, for some *ūlād dīwān*, at least discursively here, the preservation or transmission of the tradition is *secondary* to the content of transmission.

As Moqedm Jallūl summed it up: 'Kanet kayn niyya, kanet kayn niyya!' In the past, 'There was niyya! There was niyya!'

This particular visit in the *zāwīya* of Saida lasted upwards of three hours. It was after midnight by the time Muḥammad took us back to his house to sleep.

*   *   *

Belkhādem was not remiss in asking how it is that secret knowledge passes down from generation to generation. Over the course of my fieldwork, I, too, regularly posed questions to *ūlād dīwān* and *muḥebbīn* about how *moqedmīn* are chosen, learn their craft, and transmit it to others but in all cases, responses were vague at best, usually implying that *moqedmīn* were chosen based on age or that knowledge was simply 'picked up' by being a permanent part of the *dīwān* community. Paradoxical as the generational transmission of secrets seemed to Belkādem and despite Jallūl and Qada
insisting that there was no transmission of these secrets or that they were being corrupted, Georg Simmel’s analysis here is helpful for getting at this tension between whether or not secret knowledge should and can be both protected and transmitted—as dīwān transmission has required and continues to require to some extent:

‘[T]hroughout the form of secrecy there occurs a permanent in- and out-flow of content, in which what is originally open becomes secret, and what was originally concealed throws off its mystery. Thus we might arrive at the paradoxical idea that, under otherwise like circumstances, human associations require a definite ratio of secrecy which merely changes its objects; letting go of one, it seizes another, and in the course of this exchange it keeps its quantum unvaried.’ (1906: 467-68)

Moqedm Jallūl never did explicitly articulate what these secrets were that had been lost or damaged but it is common knowledge in dīwān circles that the role of a moqadm requires him to know how to deal with the jnūn and arwāḥ—particularly ones that can be devious or dangerous—and what to do when someone is inhabited and takes up knives or hot coals, how to make spirits leave when necessary without creating trouble, and how to sacrifice animals. It should be no surprise, then, if much of this knowledge is private knowledge for a select few. As I came to know and speak more at length with Moqedm Jallūl over the course of the next three years, regularly visiting Saida to attend their dīwanat and their famous annual wʿāda, the views he expressed in this first meeting partly transcribed above were gradually contextualised by more and more detail that he slowly revealed—detail having to do with dangerous 'secrets'—perhaps curses, spells, and other harmful deeds—but that were so powerful that they could kill a man.

It is not just in Saida that ideas about transmission pool around concepts of secrets, niyya, and purity—many elders like Moqedm Jallūl see the ritual tradition today as having changed a great deal, to have been mixed up—tkhellet, from the root kh-l-t, to mix up, confuse, or jumble—or even damaged or broken—emkhasser. While there are strategic discursive and political moves being made by an insistence on the disappearance of secrets, there are also undeniable logistics about how dīwān and its transmission have, indeed, faced drastic and sometimes insurmountable change in Jallūl's lifetime. It is worth also considering that Moqedm Jallūl’s insistence on there being no dīwān left—no baraka, no magic—might be partly, a performative move.
Algerian social codes frown on boasting about one's talents, gifts, or good fortune: such behaviour is thought to attract the Evil Eye and, thus, invite disaster. It is much more common to hear people speaking of their struggles, troubles, and health issues, inviting sympathy but also the opportunity to express gratitude to God: *el-ḥammdūlīlāh*. Discourse around secrets, then, also would need to be conservative, humble, and protective.

Jallūl told us later in the visit that some journalists thought he was withholding information from them during interviews and, while he claims that they simply 'don't know the answers', it would be understandable for him to do so. Such modesty might be a way of drawing attention away from himself: I was told that certain practices in the ritual are not done at the annual *wʿāda* if television crews or journalists are present because they might be misconstrued in a negative light. I often overheard anecdotes about other *moqedmīn* misleading or tricking naïve journalists or other visitors with false answers to prying questions and it is not difficult to sympathise with such an approach when many Algerians—even the young men in Algiers who love the music—see *ūlād dīwān* as transgressive for dealing with the supernatural world.

There is an understanding, therefore, about knowledge being earned, sometimes even the most basic knowledge. But *dīwān* is by no means the only *tarīqa* to have ideas about secret knowledge; on the contrary, this is a common theme in Sufi epistemology. When I interviewed a *taleb*, a sort of diviner and shaman, in Oran who had connections to *dīwān* as well as other Sufi-like practices, he explained from the beginning that he could not tell me much about his work: some knowledge, he said, were he to share it with me, could kill me. Powerful and even ‘dangerous’ knowledge is not meant for everyone. Within and outside of *dīwān*, *shyūkh* are expected to select one main *gendūz* (disciple) to whom he passes his knowledge, despite many *genēdīz* who may be training.

However, aside from this world of secrets, miracles, and dangers, there is explicit musical knowledge—upwards of hundreds of songs and texts to remember and in a particular order, not to mention the musical and technical proficiency and musicality required to inspire the *jedebbīn* and the public. There are bodily kinds of knowledge, too, such as what kinds of 'dances,' trances, or movements a *borj* might require and how to musically engage with such expression. Knowing how to play to and with an expert
trancer versus an amateur, or which one to follow, or when to give more or less—these are all musical sensibilities required of a mʿallem. Much of this 'technical' or 'practical' information seems to have always been transmitted through observation and imitation with little to no verbal explanation.

This first meeting with Moqedm Jallūl was impressionable: I was intrigued by the polarisation of Jallūl’s perspective on the 'sad state of dīwān' in Algeria, in contrast to the very active and 'traditional'-minded younger contingent I knew and spent time with. In addition, even when this was pointed out by Belkhâdem in this first meeting—‘But there are youth like Muḥammad here, God bless him, and he's very faithful to the traditions; so what about that?’—Jallūl still found nothing to praise in the current generation and insisted that dīwān had slipped and continued to slip through the fingers of negligent generations. This dynamic set the tone for my future visits to Saida in which I observed very different approaches and ideas about 'tradition' and practice even within this relatively tight-knit kin group, further emphasising the complex dynamics of transmission, and both its perceived 'success' and 'failure'. I will say more about this in Chapter Six on transmission as attached to place.

2. A Conversation with Shaykh ʿAbd el-Qādr Guellāl: Secrets are everywhere, they are what make a dīwān ‘warm’

ʿAbd el-Qādr Guellāl is a tall, thin, friendly, older mʿallem and kuyu bungu with a pinched, tenor voice and one of the last in a long chain of dīwān experts from Mostaganem. Known as ʿAbdāqa, he comes from a family of guellal (goblet drum) players, hence the family name given by the French administration. He grew up in Mostaganem going to dīwanat with his whole family from a very young age. Back then, he says, there was a dīwān every week and, as young boys, they would often participate in the pre-dīwān processions, carrying small flags and the like. As he grew up, his shaykh, ʿAjāl, began teaching him to play ṭbel and later on, taught him the role of kuyu bungu. Later still, the ginbrī started ‘calling’ to him. Much like other ūlād dīwān

127 Also, his late father was a friend of Nūreddīn Sarjī’s paternal grandfather, Muḥammad. I will discuss the Sarjī family in the Oran section of the family lineages, Chapter 6.
have told me, he specifies, 'we don't go seeking out the ginbrī, it has to find you.'

Eventually, he began frequenting the homes of Shaykh Hamza, the shaykh of Majdūb, and the well-known moqedm, Qada Būsū—a real sūdānī bousou man who spoke [a] sūdānī [language]—with whom he began to learn the treq. He remembers that Qada got so accustomed to having 'Abdāqa around that sometimes he would drift off into trance, leaving 'Abdāqa’s alone to practice.

'Abdāqa is also well known outside of Mostaganem; many ūlād dīwān in Algiers had recommended that I meet with him. Although 'Abdāqa and I had previously met at a dīwān in Mostaganem six months earlier, we had not yet spoken at length. Nūreddīn, his half brother Hammiya, and I arrived at 'Abdāqa’s house late one weekend morning in February 2015. 'Abdāqa welcomed us into his sitting room where we settled in, kicked off our shoes, and sat in an oblong circle along the walls lined with cushions. There was much chattering and catching up on news while the women of the house brought us tea, coffee, and sweet cakes. After twenty minutes or so, 'Abdāqa turned to me to ask what I would like to ask. Wanting to properly introduce myself, I asked if my chaperones had explained to him what I was doing in Algeria—I wasn’t always sure what people knew about me before meeting me and wanted to make sure he knew that I wasn’t a journalist.

'Yeah, they told me that you’re doing research.'

'I'm doing a doctorate in musicology on dīwān, and . . .'

'I know,' he interrupted me, with an uninterested tone. Before I could say more, he jumped in:

'But! You’re no longer doing research. That’s it! You’re caught up in it (it has taken you). The word he used was mamlūka, which can mean 'owned', as in being the property of something or someone else—it can also potentially mean possessed by spirits depending on the context. I started to agree that my work was more than 'just research' but he jumped in again, 'That’s it!' with a seeming connotation of, 'you’re not in control anymore': 'Ça y est! Nīta mamlūka! Ça y est!'

Nūreddīn agreed and jumped in at this point to tell a story of a dīwān he held at his family’s home in Mostaganem in 2013 during which he watched me 'trance' (tejdeb) like it was something I had been doing a long time. For me, the experience was simply moving to the beat and imitating what others did but, in his view, it was significant,
indicative of something bigger happening. This discursive way of wrapping my subjectivity—foreigner, outsider, white, non-Muslim, American woman—into the mysterious workings of diwān thus involved me and my research in some of the issues around transmission, on how diwān moves in and between and through people, teaching them things with or without their 'control', consent, or official association. More tea and sweets were followed by heaps of couscous topped with roasted vegetables. As we ate, the conversation grew more intense. By way of sub-Saharan origins of diwān, ‘Abdāqa addressed the group of us:

'How is it that some diwanat are [properly] launched?' [yeflāja].

No one answered.

He turned to me, 'You’ve seen diwanat, haven’t you?'

'Yeah.'

'Well, there are diwanat in which you feel warmth (‘chaleur’). You feel real heat (tehessī hummān), that’s there. And there are diwanat in which there is no mood (‘aucun goût’ in French). There is no taste (‘binna,’ in Arabic), there is none.'

'Why is that?’ he urges me. 'Here we say, we say that a diwān that is warm [‘ḥāmī’] and everything, it has [inside it] a secret [fiḥ serr]. And the ginbrī. The ginbrī has [inside it] a secret. The secret of diwān is also the ginbrī! What calls the borj of the diwān? So that the borj begins? It begins with the ginbrī. The ginbrī, that’s what captures [‘entaqbed’] the borj. That borj that is captured, that one, it belongs to the jinn’.

Trying to clarify the last part of this phrase, I ask, 'The ginbrī speaks with the jnūn?'

Speaking more softly now, he confirms, 'It’s the one who speaks' ['ḥūwa lī hadder']. Then he adds, 'There are two things that speak to the jnūn in diwān: the ginbrī and the jāwī [benzoin, incense]. Both of those.’

Later on, he elaborated the jāwī is not just 'calling' the jnūn but it is a door to the human world. It is their secret, their way in. He went on:

'Their [the jnūn] secret, what is it? Their secret is the jāwī. The secret of this path is the jāwī. What does the jāwī bring? Jāwī brings the jnūn. ('El-serr ent āhum, shawāla? El-serr ent āhum huwa el-jāwī. El-serr ent ā ṭariqa hādī, huwa jāwī. Jāwī wesh yjīb? Jāwī yjīb el-jnūn.')
Knowing him to be a kuyu bungu, I playfully teased, 'And the kuyu bungu, he doesn’t speak to them [the jnūn] too?'

'The kuyu bungu [speaks to them] later!' he declared with enthusiasm. 'He comes back to call [them].' Abdāqa went on to explain the differences in various kuyu bungu-s but pointed out that the kuyu bungu is the one who literally names the borj—by singing it into presence. This is significant as the recitation and utterance of names, particularly of spirits or saints, can also call forth their presence.

He speaks about the many conditions and possibilities in a dīwān, and returns to the idea of warm dīwanat and cold dīwanat. Now Abdāqa’s adopted daughter joins us in the sitting room and occasionally adds to the discussion. Her father says that she also learned dīwān ‘just like that’, without trying; certain knowledge just became accessible to her. She seems to have particular authority on the subject of the jnūn to which even her father defers. We discuss some of the controversies around particular brāj that are linked more directly to the world of the jnūn; the borj Brāhīm—Abraham, the prophet—has a twin borj called Ṭō Brāhīm' which he says is the name of a jinn, and while there is no connection between the two personages, Ṭō Brāhīm is a Muslim jinn. To demonstrate more clearly, Abdāqa explains the same phenomena in the brāj suite, Ḥammū, which usually includes two to three brāj. Ḥammū is another name for the Prophet who can be called by many related names: Muḥammad, Ḥammū, Aḥmed, Bū Medīna, or Ḥammūda. In the first of the brāj for Ḥammū, he says we are singing about the Prophet. But in the second Ḥammū, with the making of rwīna, this indicates that we have entered the world of a jinn.

'Is that the food of the jnūn?' I ask, having heard this idea before.

'That jinn, his secret is the rwīna,' Abdāqa says.

His daughter interrupts to clarify, 'It’s not his [the jinn’s] food, it’s his secret. His secret.' [Māshī mekeltu, serru, serru.]

‘Abdāqa agrees and recounts some of the lyrics to this borj to prove his point:
Bābā Ḥammū, ṣalū en-Nābīna,  
Ḥammū mūl el-kūrsi  
Ḥammū mūl el-dīwān

Father Ḥammū, pray to the Prophet,  
Ḥammū possessor of the throne  
Ḥammū possessor of the dīwān

What emerges with this example is that in the dīwān ṭreq, the order of the repertoire where we have sets of brāj that invoke 'Muslim' personages (like the Prophet Muḥammad), or songs for Jews like Solomon (Souleyman), or Jesus (ʿĪssa), or 'pagan' personages, we are also calling the accompanying jnūn usually of the same faith. Referencing the example of the borj text, ʿAbdāqa explains that Ḥammū is a Muslim jinn because, 'would a pagan jinn pray to the Prophet? Of course not!'

At this point in the text then, ʿAbdāqa says, 'here, we have entered, we are with the jinn.' [ʼHenna dakhelnā fī jinn.ʼ]. It seems obvious to me now, particularly with the reference to the kūrsī (throne).

Hammiya, sitting in the corner, says, 'There are people who don’t know what they’re singing', and ʿAbdāqa agrees. There are moans and chuckles of understanding from the other guys, too. Repeating again, ʿAbdāqa tells me that the secret of that jinn is the rwīna; there are those who heal with it. When someone sick comes, they give her that rwīna and, with her niyya—if her heart is in the right place—it can heal her.128 He explains another borj in the same way, one called Būya Madānī, yet another name for the Prophet (Father of Medina, one of the holiest cities in Islam).

ʼThis Būya Madānī, it’s the name of the Messenger, peace be upon him. But! Later,' his voice picks up speed, 'here, we enter the secret! We enter the secret of the jinn! That egg, that thing. That was a jinn'. [ʼBūya Madānī ism Raṣūl, ṣalih ʿalīh u sillem. Bssah

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128 Although I did not confirm it at the time, ʿAbd el-Qādr is suggesting that this jinn is also Muslim which is why he is being reminded to pray for the Prophet. Given that we are in a series of brāj and the first Hammū does sing of the Prophet, the second borj for the jinn could very likely be the qarīn of the Prophet, the jinn that attached himself to the Prophet and whom the Prophet converted to Islam, as communicated in the Qur’ān, Sūrat Al-Jinn, number seventy-two.
men bʿād, hennaya nedkhol fī serr, nedkhol fī serr . . . entʿā jinn. Hādak el-bayd, hādak. Hadak kān kāyen jinn!"

That is to say, in the moment we see a ritual elder bring out hard boiled eggs, part way through the borj, we know that we have entered the world of the jnūn again. He says that, sometimes, a person will lie down on the ground and act like serpent, taking the egg in his mouth. ‘Abdāqa asks us collectively:

'So who is that? [acting like that]? Not Būya Madānī! It’s the jinn who takes that borj. That’s the secret of that borj.'

He goes on to give me more and more examples of secrets, such as those that protect trancers from getting hurt when they dance with knives and slash the bare flesh on their abdomens. Those who injure themselves or who draw blood obviously have no secret. One of these brāj is Jangare Mama, discussed at length in Meriem’s story. The jinn, the possessor of the knife, is called 'Chenguer', he says, from which the borj name comes. He tells a story about debates around the meaning of Jangare Mama and other brāj named after jnūn but laments that few people know about this. He explains how with time, the mispronunciation of texts has shifted the meanings of songs, such as the borj that is now sung as 'Muḥammad Dawa' having originally been that of Muḥammad Ṭawa, a jinn who incites his trancers to dance on sharp pine needles (ṣidra) until they become powder—this is a detail I had heard all over Algeria.

'That was his secret. And he [the jinn] was Muslim. He was called Muḥammad'. ‘

Abdāqa then explained why it is that certain dīwān are so warm: many jnūn are present. He spoke of secrets, zooming in on the primary secret being this world of the jnūn. When I continued to ask for clarification on ‘Abdāqa’s descriptions about the nuances of secrets and jnūn, the conversation turned back to me. The daughter believed I was having interactions with the jnūn that I either did not realise or that I was denying; perhaps this was her interpretation of why I was asking so much about them. I also realised later in the conversation that she had seen me 'trance' at that dīwān in Mostaganem six months earlier. She interrupted and appealed to her father, taking up my cause, in a sense conveying that she could sense what was going on with me:

'She [Tamara] is trying to understand but you [the men] didn’t explain it to her. She’s trying to understand the jinn. What dīwān is'.

208
I am a little puzzled but fascinated by the daughter’s insistence and what might be going on here. Although I’m already feeling quite satisfied about the amount of detail on the *jnūn* I’ve already been given, I don’t say anything, wondering where this next development is going. ‘Abdāqa, pausing and thinking, speaks for several minutes now, explaining more in detail how some *jnūn* have secrets and if he were to tell me, if I were to write those things down, they would hurt me. ‘Are you willing to risk that?’ he asks me. I decline. ‘No, no, I don’t need to know, don’t worry,’ I assured them. Putting my notebook away. I’m feeling awkward partly because I’m quite aware that Nūreddīn and Hammiya are uncomfortable with so much talk about the *jnūn*. The conversation moves on, ‘Abdāqa pulls out the photo album and we admire pictures of the late ritual elders of Mostaganem whom the guys all recognise. After we have been at the house for around three hours, Nūreddīn pipes up, 'Tamara, shall we go? Until next time?' immediately apologising to the hosts.

* * *

On the drive back to Oran, there is a great deal of anxiety about so much talk of the *jnūn*. When something like this has happened before, Nūreddīn considers it his responsibility to situate for me all the information I have been given, sometimes telling me not to believe what I have heard. His position is quite consistent, that while in earlier days people might have known what they were doing, today, people use or talk about the *jnūn* as ways to swindle people, make money (telling fortunes, etcetera). Nūreddīn has a point; there are people who make very good money preparing charms and spells against curses and *jnūn* or to combat the Evil Eye. But over the course of these several hours with ‘Abdāqa, I had come to understand a great deal more about the importance of secrets and what they had to do with transmission.

To ‘Abdāqa, secrets give *dīwān* its warmth: that infamous ḥāl that is so important to the success of the *dīwān*. The *rwīna*, the eggs, the *jāwī*: these are all secrets of the *jnūn*. And the *jnūn*, they are the secret of *dīwān*. *Jnūn*, after all, are what make a good *dīwān*; a warm *dīwān*: a ‘*dīwān ḥāmī*.’ That’s also why *brāj* special to *jnūn* are called ‘hot’ *brāj*.

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129 I went to visit one of these ‘*ṭālebs*’ in Oran who prepared an amulet for me to protect me from bad effects of *jnūn*—this gentleman determined that I had been brushed by a *jinn* (*mensūs*) leaving the body of another woman near me during a *dīwān* and I required future protection. The full treatment and amulet cost me the equivalent of what could easily be two day’s pay for many of my *dīwān* contacts.
And the *ginbrī*—it has a secret too: it speaks to the *jnūn*. The *mʿallem* playing the *ginbrī*—’he, too has a secret’ in order to speak through his *ginbrī* to the *jnūn*, he would have to be included: ‘*Hūwa tānī ’andū serr.*’ ʿAbdāqa’s viewpoint also might shed light on Moqedm Jallūl’s cynical take on the state of *dīwān* to some degree and why loss of knowledge might even be ‘fortunate’ if secrets have to do with precarious information that could fall into the wrong hands. But up until this discussion with ʿAbdāqa, I had never been given such an explicit explanation as to what these secrets might actually be. In the next conversation, we will hear a bit more about specific secrets as texts.
3. A Conversation with Mʿallem Tūfīq ʿAbd Es-Selam: dangerous secrets can be spread unintentionally through lack of knowledge

Above, ‘Abdāqa mentioned that when certain words are sung in a *borj*, ‘here we enter the world of the *jnūn*.’ I encountered this same problematic in Algiers in March of 2015 while speaking with Mʿallem Tūfīq ʿAbd Es-Selam and Mʿallem Allal Bembarka. Tūfīq particularly emphasised that such words have inherent agency to invoke worlds and call forth *jnūn*, with or without the knowledge or intention of those singing the words. The idea that words can have magical and/or healing effects, whether or not they have a direct relationship with a supernatural world, is quite common in West and North Africa but has also been explored in numerous other anthropological sites and studies (Malinkowski 1935; Tambiah 1968; Ong 1967, for example); however, the most closely related to this thesis is that of Stoller’s (1984, 1996) exploration of the power of sound for the Songhay.

I first came to meet Mʿallem Tūfīq and Mʿallem Allal because both mʿallemīn are regularly invited to *dīwanat* in the west of Algeria where I was based throughout my fieldwork. I arranged to meet with the mʿallemīn over the course of two afternoons and was accompanied by a friend and young dīwān muḥeb and musician, Lotfi Slakem, along with his friend, Ayoub, who tagged along. We gathered in Allal’s lounge refreshed by sweet mint tea while an old cassette tape of solo *ginbrī* fluttered on low volume in the background. Mʿallem Tūfīq, being slightly senior in status, did most of the talking and required no prodding from any of us to discuss the key issues at the heart of *dīwān*. He was particularly interested in *dīwān* texts that supposedly contain Hausa words or those generally identified as survivals from the sūdānī language, Kuria.

'I'm not going to lie to you,' Tūfīq says. 'I'm against all the brāj in which there is not Arabic (the language). I don't trust them (*ma amansh biya*).’ He goes on to explain the problem of certain people in *dīwān* continuing to sing in a language that they don't understand or speak: 'If you know Kuria well, you understand it! But later when you ask [those who sing it], “What did you say?” they respond [inadequately], “From the old times, they sang it like that” [*bekrä kānū gūlūha*]. And that's serious [dangerous]! (*et ç'est grave!*.') Tūfīq means here that even people who appear to sing well in Kuria do
not know what they are saying and fall back on the explanation of 'that's how I learned it' or 'this is what people have always sung.' This anxiety about not knowing what one is singing is widespread among *kuyu bungu-s, moqedmīn, and muḥebbīn*; I encountered it in nearly every conversation with ritual experts, especially when we discussed specific *sūdānī* words that turned up in otherwise Arabic texts—such as the *borj* for Sidi 'Alī (see below). As an example, Tūfīq uses the song Migzu, the chief and hunter of the forest. He sings for us the *rās el-borj* in what appears to be Hausa:

\[
Mīgzu, nāma, āy nāma bāni! : Mīgzu! Meat! Hey, give me meat! 
\]

Example 33: Migzu. Audio link in this footnote.\(^{130}\)

'That [first] line, you cannot change it (*ma tranš*) because it's the key (*la clé*) of the song.' Allal and Lotfi audibly agree; one **must** sing that in order for the *borj* to be the *borj*. 'But later', Tūfīq adds, 'you have to cultivate something [the words] that the public knows', meaning that, after this first line, the text should switch to Arabic. To illustrate his reasoning, Tūfīq goes on to tell a story about a time he was playing in a *dīwān* along with Hūwārī, a *kuyu bungu* he often works with. During the *borj Bū Derbāla*, a particular elder from small, western hinterland city began singing in Hausa or Kuria. Tūfīq complained that, first, the singing was not in rhythm with the *ginbrī* and *qrāqeb*. He demonstrates the singing for me, how it stumbles in time because there are too many *sūdānī* words to fit into the *ginbrī* cycle. In this case, Tūfīq is not pleased with *Bū Derbāla* being sung in Kuria because the *borj* is another name for 'Abd el-Qādr Jīlānī, a saint and holy man; the implication is that one should sing about such a saint in Arabic.\(^{131}\)

A key part of Tūfīq's argument here, taking us back again to the question of agencies known or unknown, is that the meanings of words have power to affect circumstances whether or not those meanings are understood by those singing them. In

\(^{130}\) [http://algeriandiwan.blogspot.co.uk/2017/03/chapter-7-diwan-festival-of-bechar.html](http://algeriandiwan.blogspot.co.uk/2017/03/chapter-7-diwan-festival-of-bechar.html)

\(^{131}\) There appears to be some connection between this *borj* and Hausa origins as many elders sing in Kuria in this *borj*. Its trance is often more intense than one would expect, by *dīwān* protocol, for a saint's *borj*.
other words, if a kuyu bungu is singing in Kuria or Hausa or a language he does not understand, he could inadvertently attract spirits or energies drawn to or called by those words. As he explained, 'You can sing to [the jnūn] with certain terms! Why did I tell you that you have to know [what you are singing]? There's something like fifty percent of the terms [like this in dīwān]. There are terms that call them [the jnūn] without your awareness! You're calling them! Because [the words] are theirs, theirs! It is their domain! And they come and hang out with you and everything. There are brāj that are theirs.' (Kayn des terms, ntā ta ʿitelhūm, ble ma ʿala belek. Teta ʿitelhūm! Parce que entʿāhūm, entʿāhūm, had el-domain entʿāhūm! Ījī yrīḥū mʿak ü aʿitelhūm ü gʿā. Kaynin brāj entʿāhūm.)

Tūfīq goes on to give us a specific example about the Ḥammū brāj suite that I transcribed in Chapter 2 and that 'Abdāqa mentioned above that requires rwīna:

'When you listen to Ḥammū. Why is there a Ḥammū One [borj], and a Ḥammū Two [borj], for example?' He jokes, 'Do you think there's one Ḥammū, the master ('mʿallem') and one Ḥammū, the engineer?' We all chuckle. 'It's not possible!' The way Tūfīq explains this phenomenon in a joking manner implies that it should be quite obvious. He continues:

'Very simply! There is Ḥammū, a human being, the saint. And there's a jinn!' Ayoub interjects here: 'Qarīn entʿāū': his qarīn.

A qarīn is the individual jinn each person is born and dies with, like a double. Tūfīq affirms:

'Ay! Basha Ḥammū'. ('Yes, that would be Basha Ḥammū'). Ayoub suggests here, 'Like Sīdna Mūsa?' and Tūfīq agrees again.

'But why do we say, 'Ṣīdīn'?' Ayoub asks, referring to the jinn.

Sidna roughly translates as 'our master'.

'Because they [the jnūn also] are Muslim!' Elaborating, Tūfīq continues:

'Dīwān—what is it made up of? You recount the descendants of the Prophet (shorāfā), you recount the Prophets (anbīyya). Okay! But in order to really understand this, how many brāj are there in Mūsa? In the West (Morocco] they say “Mūsawiyyn”. They have twelve. We, we have five. But not five brāj for the Prophet Mūsa [Moses].
In other words, just one of the brāj is for the saint, the human. The rest are for the jnūn. The lack of mastery of texts—or disregard, or otherwise 'mixing' of them—also becomes a problem when words that reference the world of the jnūn are mixed with words that reference the Prophet Muḥammad. This commonly comes up in the borj for the spirit Sergu (considered Migzawiyyn in Algiers) where I noted that in every version I heard, kuyu bungu-s and their chorales sing, 'Ya Rebbī’ over and over (‘Oh God!’). At least one dīwān muḥeb pointed out this problem to me as well: 'it's harām (blasphemous) to mention the name of God when singing for a jinn!'

However, Tūfīq’s example went the other way around: in one of the several Šalou Nabī brāj for the Prophet Muḥammad, and just after singing, ‘Šalou Nabī, Nabī Muḥammad’, singers go immediately into a new gaṭṭa ‘t, singing, 'Yay, Janari Yumyum' on the same melody. Janari Yumyum is a borj for a non-Muslim, Migzawiyyn ‘spirit’ and, in this borj, one of the jedebbīn is meant to eat raw meat, tearing it with his teeth ‘like a wild animal.’ Here, I’ll call the entity a ‘spirit’ because it is not clear if the entity for Janari Yumyum is a jinn or some other order of supernatural being. Its text seems to reference the powerful kuri spirits of the Bornu region. The important point, however, is that to go from singing about the Prophet Muḥammad to eating raw meat (forbidden in Islam) without skipping a beat poses a serious problem for not just Tūfīq, but other ritual experts I spoke with. These worlds are meant to be kept separate musically, textually, temporally, and materially—as in the ritual objects used for these brāj must also be kept separate—over the duration of the ritual. A key point here to take away is that agency is invested in nonhuman bodies and things: Tūfīq is saying that words referencing the world of the jnūn call the jnūn even if the singer is unaware of it and does not have such intent. Here, even human niyya is eclipsed by the nonhuman agency of words.

About this borj and some of these same issues, Shaykh ʿAbbess Zerwālī of Perrigaux sang for me his version of the text:

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132 The idea that these worlds should be separated seems to extend beyond discourse. In Saida, for example, all of the ritual materials for the Migzawiyyn, non-Muslim jinn-personages, are also stored separately and should never be mixed with that of the other ritual personages and their respective brāj from the first half of the dīwān.
Ya janari yo yay kuri
Ya janari kuri ya Bornu
Yay janari yumyum ya bawa
Yay janari yo ay kuri
Janari kayba ya kuri
Janari kuri, koye
Ay janari baba ya kuri
Yah kuri m Bornu ya kuri
Yay kuri madi, kuri

Except for what is most likely the Arabic bābā, for ‘father’, and bawa as the Hausa term for ‘slave’, the meaning of the text is unknown. Another way of thinking about this example and other brāj with ontologically ‘mixed’ texts is that they may represent stratified, historic layers of changing languages and shifting meaning as sūdānī ritual orientations to supernatural beings encountered North African personages of various holy men and prophets. The borj for ‘Alī is an example of this kind of ‘layering’, of textual 'back stories' or double meanings. For the most part, it is portrayed as praising ‘Alī Ibn Alī Ṭālib, the cousin and son in law of the prophet. The nashāṭ (required actions, gestures) of the borj involve jedebbīn 'dancing' as if they are riding a horse, slashing a sword (sīf) to represent ‘Alī’s courage in battle and his special sword. While the texts vary moderately from region to region and maḥalla to maḥalla, in general, the text is said to praise ‘Alī’ and his lineage:

(‘Alī … he doesn’t have/give me an opinion' see below)
Ḥsen u Ḥsin, bābāhum ‘Alī, mani shawara
(Hasan and Hocine, their father is ‘Alī)
La ila ilā Allah, La ila ilā Allah mani shawara
(There is no God but God…)
Lalla Faṭīma, bent er-Raṣūl, mani shawara
(Lady Faţīma, daughter of the Prophet…) 

ʿAlī ʿAlī, ʿAlī dodo mani shawara

(ʿAlī… evil spirit… )

Nebki wahed denni, refāq habābī mani shawara

(I was crying one time, my friends [gave me] company…

[Then towards the end]

ʿAlī, ʿAlī dodo, ʿAlī dodo…

(ʿAlī evil spirit…)

In the beginning, the text fits the portrayal. 'Mani(sh) shawara' was translated as 'he doesn’t have an opinion' or, because some people sing instead, 'bani shawara’, here it was explained as 'give me advice/a consultation' with the first word, bani, in Hausa, shawara in Arabic. But the most galvanising part of the text are the words, ‘ʿAlī dodo’. To my knowledge and from the information from my interlocutors, dodo has no meaning in Algerian dialect. I first encountered the word while researching Hausa connections to dīwān in Besmer’s (1983) descriptions of the Maguzawa (Hausa) bori spirit pantheon where he translates it as ‘evil spirit’ (p. 6, 158). Later, in a conversation with an Algerian scholar in Algiers, Salīm Khīfat, we mused at the possibility that the borj for ʿAlī might, on some other register, be referring to another very important ʿAlī in the history of Islam in Africa: Alī Sonni Ber, the first, fifteenth century king of the Songhay Empire, known for his adherence to animism while also professing to be Muslim and considered by some to be quite terrifying.

In speaking with several Algerian scholars in Algeria with some musical knowledge of dīwān, each proposed the idea that brāj often have multiple layers of meaning and reveal cross-sections of trans-Saharan Islamic history much like sediment layers in soil. Dermenghem (1954) also rightly pointed out that, ʿulād dīwān do not seem to make much distinction between saints or spirits’ so that perhaps dodo is a similar slippage, simultaneously referencing ʿAlī, the cousin of the Prophet, ʿAlī Sonni Ber as a potentially ominous figure, and/or the Maguzawa word. When I repeatedly asked ʿulād dīwān about this word, dodo, explaining its meaning in Hausa, a few musicians
responded vehemently: ‘This is why we shouldn’t sing in Kuria! We don’t know what we’re saying!’

Reflecting on these song texts, their supposedly problematic mixing of worlds, and Tūfiq’s advice, we see again the inherent agency of ‘secret’ words to affect reality and, in this case, cause potential harm to humans—secrets because most people, according to Tūfiq, don’t seem to understand what they are doing and what is at risk. Tūfiq makes very clear that, even when one does not intend it but sings particular words in Kuria, he can call the supernatural world, because ‘these are their [the jnūn] terms.’ Transmission of negative, harmful—albeit, unspecified—affects from these words, then, can happen accidentally and against the will of the humans involved in the accident. Also important to note here is that, as much as niyya is so frequently used discursively as a fail safe for such mishaps in dīwān—for example, the idea that if one’s intent is pure, good things are possible, even happen because of the intent—in this case, intent does not matter. This is also a crisis for transmission of secret knowledge that cannot be contained, which is why Tūfiq advises that people stop singing any non-Arabic words.

From his point of view, we see resemblances here, also, with ‘Abdāqa’s point of view: if these words have such power, there are very much still secrets present in dīwān. And when we compare this with Jallūl’s perspective, perhaps this one example of secrets being lost or damaged—secret words that could call the jnūn are being sung without awareness. In Tūfiq’s monologue, we can also see the enactment of power dynamics: he knows that these Kuria words are dangerous where others apparently do not seem to know this.

Now that I have given three examples of conversations exploring the discursive power and ritual use of secrets, I would like to turn to two ethnographic examples of mysterious happenings I observed and collected in my fieldwork: events that are tied to secrets in terms of being supernatural acts and not the kinds of things that come up in regular conversation. I will then conclude by tying together these examples with the propositions laid out at the beginning of this chapter.
Supernatural Involvement in Transmission

One: Punishment if Transmission Codes Are Neglected

It was the second night of a two-day *mʿarūf* (a small *wʿāda*) in Mostaganem in September 2016 and during the two *brāj* for Ḥammū, during which *rwīna* should be prepared and then distributed, that one of the men had brought over the large basin (*gasʿā*) of *rwīna* to the women’s section, after having distributed it to the men. For some reason unbeknownst to me—perhaps everyone was tired or no one was paying attention as it was, after all, the second sleepless night—none of the experienced women rose to take the *gasʿā* and so it happened that an ‘outsider’ girl stood up, took it, and began distributing *rwīna* amongst the women, handing each of them a small, doughy ball.

Moments after the girl placed a ball of *rwīna* in the left hand of a woman whom I will call Haja, sitting immediately to my left, Haja grew very agitated: her whole body began shaking, she made a fist with her left hand and pumped it in the air while her facial expression was one of distress and what looked to me to be anger. Haja’s daughter, sitting a few rows in front, saw this happening and rushed to her mother, scolding the young outsider girl. The daughter then rushed to the *moqedm* on the *ṭaraḥ* in such haste to retrieve and bring to her mother the brasier of *bkhūr* that she did not bother to cover her head as a woman normally would when moving into the male space. Haja, in her state of distress, did not seem to take well to the *bkhūr* and refused it, shaking her head ‘no’ and turning away from it. Next, the daughter offered Haja more *rwīna*; it helped ease Haja a bit but she was still visibly agitated, her body still jerking. A few moments later, one of the older women of the hosting *dīwān* family, Aisha, approached with a second *gasʿā*, also full with *rwīna*, when she was quickly informed by the daughter what had happened. Aisha then scooped up a very large ball of *rwīna*, the size of her palm, and placed it gently in Haja’s left hand. Haja nodded, accepting the *rwīna*, and quickly became more calm. Several minutes later, she seemed back to her normal self.

Later, when I asked Haja what had happened she explained that Ḥamū is her *borj*—in the *dīwān* context, this is a way of saying that during this *borj*, a *jinn* may take hold of
her, or that she has a relationship with that *borj* that includes its *jinn*. Usually this is a type of contractual affective relationship meaning that every time Haja were to hear Ḥamū, its *jinn*, or possibly other nonhuman agents associated with it, would manifest and inhabit her. She explained that only an insider, a *weld* or bent *dīwān* (‘son’ or ‘daughter’ of *dīwān*), should serve *rwīna* to ʿūlād *dīwān*. As discussed above, *rwīna* is considered one of the 'secrets' of the *jnūn*, meaning it has a sense of transmittable power. Here, the *jnūn* have a say in who is allowed certain kinds of agency and who can get close to or involved in their secrets: they act to enforce who has the power to transmit *rwīna*.

That is to say, one of their own has to be the server: an insider, someone with some degree of initiation. The young girl who served Haja the *rwīna* was a *berraniya*, an outsider to the tradition, and possibly just a girl from the town who had turned up for the outdoor *mʿarūf* to watch; this is quite common when rituals are held outside in tents. While outsiders are more likely to make mistakes, *jnūn* do not just punish ʿūlād *dīwān* for such mistakes; throughout my fieldwork, I also heard stories of *jnūn* punishing those outsiders who disrespected them, such as video cameras not functioning properly or breaking. As with what happened to Haja, if insider/outsider transmission lines are crossed, even inadvertently, affective ‘reminders’ are given and sometimes punishment is exacted.

Two: Supernatural Contracts Between Human and Nonhuman Agents

Even when people are not born into *dīwān* families, transmission can cross lines of birth through nonhuman agents exerting control over the human domain and claiming an insider (ie: being chosen by a *jinn*), or through the collaboration of human and supernatural action. An example of this is the 'selling' (*ybīʿū*) of children to the supernatural world of *arwāḥ* and *jnūn*. With an incantation or particular ritual acts, children are offered up to be assumed under energetic contracts with the *jnūn* and/or *arwāḥ* and are henceforth obliged to be bodies in which nonhuman agents may descend

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133 This tradition has been noted at least since the 1930s by Gouichon (1931, vol. 2: 276-277) and later by Pâques (1964:658-665).
and dance at will from that point forward. I encountered a specific story on this phenomenon in Oran in 2014 about a dīwān jedēb and interlocutor of mine whom I will call Munir.\(^{134}\)

Although Munir did not grow up in a dīwān family or have relatives who were directly involved in the ritual, he recounted to me that when he was a child, his grandfather had set him on the back of a bull during a procession of ūlād dīwān near his house. He explained that, from the moment he was placed on the bull, something had taken ahold of him. As an adult now, he could feel in his body the physical, sensorial, and overwhelming need to attend dīwānat; he could sense when a dīwān was going to happen, and, if he did not go, he would become agitated. A day later I had a chance to speak with Munir’s wife and she confirmed that she used to try and stop him from going but that she eventually realised that, if prevented from going, he would become upset and difficult to be around. In other words, Munir’s wellbeing and that of his family’s depended on his going.

One evening during Ramadan of 2016, I was invited to break fast with his family. There, I had the chance to speak with his mother, ‘Layla’, about Munir having been ‘sold’ to ūlād dīwān. Layla recounted the story about the bull, that someone told little Munir to grab hold of the bull’s horns and he rode around on the bull for a moment while the ūlād dīwān continued to walk the bull around and burn bkhūr. It was from that moment, Layla explained, that Munir had been ‘sold’ to ūlād dīwān. At the time, she said, she did not understand what had happened. It was not until Munir was grown and she saw him trancing in a dīwān that she became very upset and began asking questions about her son’s dilemma.

‘After I saw him trancing, I cried for a week’, she told me. ‘I didn’t want to see my son like this.’ Once Munir was grown, there was no way to undo the agreement between him and the nonhuman world. He had become an offering, he was their property, their labourer. Layla continued to explain how such contracts worked: Munir’s qarīn, his own personal jīnn or double, had a liking for the jnūn of dīwān. She recounted

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\(^{134}\) According to many of my informants, the most common way that this happens is that, during a dīwān ritual, a baby or toddler is taken in the arms of a moqedm or male, ritual elder who, dancing in front of the musicians, smears the sweat of the brow of the m’allems, kuyu bungu, and each gendāz, working his way down the line of musicians. This sweat, the baraka of the musical labourers, is the agent that seals the child to the dīwān community and to all the nonhuman conditions that go along with it.
one particularly memorable time that the qarīn took over him: Munir was getting ready for a dīwān, showering, and getting dressed. When she saw him, ready to leave the house, she said, ‘It was not him’ but rather, she saw that his qarīn had taken over his body: 'he was white, fat, a bit old, and very tall. It wasn’t my son.’ As others told me at earlier points in my fieldwork, the qarīn is the human’s direct connection to the world of jnūn; a person’s qarīn communicates with the jnūn and it is through one’s qarīn, then, that links may be developed with other bodily and affective states.

Several days later, spending time with his family for ‘Aīd el-Fṭor, Munir’s grandmother chimed in on why ūlād dīwān ‘sell’ children in such ways, using the word”’dekhlūhūm’, 'to initiate them' or, literally, to 'make them enter’ adding, ‘they sell them to the dīwān so that they will also become one of them.’ That is to say that here, transmission is equally in the hands of nonhuman agents.

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‘Dīwān is like a knife. If you grasp it carelessly, it will hurt you.’

[‘Ed-dīwān, hūwa kīma el-mūs. Īda teddī ghīr hāka, yejrek.’]

—M’allem Ben’ūda Benbrāhīm of Relizane, 2013

Ben’ūda’s comment to me above was explaining that dīwān is not something that anyone can or should ‘handle’ or try to grasp; it requires care and attention. His comment also hinted at an aspect of risk, referencing the kinds of ‘secrets’ I have been talking about, the types of things that could hurt a person if not dealt with correctly or if they were to fall into the wrong hands.

In this section, I have provided three conversations with elders about secrets—how they get damaged or lost, what they might be, and how they get transmitted—as well as two short ethnographic stories of mysterious happenings—nonhuman enforcement of transmission boundaries and nonhuman claiming of young adepts. With these examples, I have begun to illustrate the roles, agencies, and uses of secrets with regard to transmission.

As I outlined in the introduction to this chapter, these conversations are also examples of the varying discourse on secrets that perform insider and outsider relationships. However, these ethnographic examples also reflect the ways that elders see their ritually organised, ‘secret’ world of dangerous knowledge threatened by a contemporary mentality where people no longer respect the value of the secret so that they are indiscreetly shared, lost, or damaged as Jallūl described or are uttered without awareness and care as Tūfīq described. Here, I find Simmel’s analysis helpful for situating the deep anxieties around secrets that I encountered in the dīwān context:

‘In general, men credit themselves with the right to know everything. . . . In point of fact, however, indiscretion exercised in this way may be quite as violent, and morally quite as unjustifiable, as listening at key holes and prying into the letters of strangers.’ (1906: 455-56)

In both Jallūl’s and Tūfīq’s words, there was practically a sense of violence being done to dīwān worlds with the indiscreet sharing of secrets. For ‘Abdāqa, however, secrets are still alive and imbibing the ritual. These ‘traditional’ approaches then
encounter a world where democratic flows of knowledge are usually celebrated, and where its distribution is typically considered ‘liberating’ and mobilising for those who hold it; hence the anxiety.

To add a final thought here: secrets also conveyed a sense of unspoken, vulnerable grasping at meaning. Secrets seemed to function, quite importantly, as traction for holding onto a sense of enchantment with the world of dīwān. They were usually referred to quite vaguely and served as a social barometer of ritual magnetism and charisma—recall ‘Abdāqa saying that they were what gave dīwān its warmth and ‘flavour’ (‘goût’). To own secrets also represented a sense of belonging to something special, as proof that dīwān is still important in today’s modernising world because not just anyone has access to its hard-earned and valuable contents. After all, ‘that which is withheld from the many appears to have a special value’ (Simmel 1906: 464).

While we saw some specific examples of what these secrets might actually be (texts, rwīna), in this chapter, I have wanted to draw particular attention to the play of human and nonhuman agency across the symbolic category of secret knowledge. As I laid out in the beginning of this chapter, much of this ‘play’ of agency is discursively and ritually performative and these performances, at least partly, enact an imagined agency over the transmission of certain kinds of knowledge. The difficulty and even irony here is that, despite all of these human attempts for control, because this ‘secret knowledge’ usually enfolds the supernatural world, such human efforts can be eclipsed at any moment by nonhuman intervention. This takes us back to the first critical epistemological assumption of the dīwān lifeworld that I laid out in Chapter Three: unstable human agency. Let us turn now to one of the foundational structures of dīwān knowledge transmission with more capacity for human agency: family lineages.
CHAPTER SIX: FAMILY LINEAGES AND PLACE

In this chapter, I will show how the role of family lineages’, as containers of knowledge and systems of transmission, has both persevered and changed in a contemporary Algeria. While relationships within lineages continue to define ḏīwān transmission—and they do so with striking differences between particular ḏīwān communities—musical authority now works in very different ways.\(^\text{135}\) This is because ‘transmission’ today includes the circulation of some kinds of ḏīwān knowledge in modern fields of technology, mass media, festivals, and national cultural heritage schemes initiated by the nation state. To this end, I will be looking at the primary family groups with whom I spent the majority of my time and whose ḏīwanat I attended and came to know best: the Majdūb Sarjī lineage and family group based in Oran and Mostaganem; the Canon-Farajī-Būterfās kinship assemblage in Saida; and the Bel ‘Arabī family group in Mascara, best known as ‘Ūlād Meriem’ for their aunt and sister, Meriem, as well as the connected group of friends and experts down the road from the Bel ‘Arabī family and centered around the Mascara zāwīya Bāb ‘Ālī: namely the well-known kuyu bungu, ‘Azzedīn Benūghef and his most common collaborator, M’allem Ben’amar Zendēr, along with one of their most active genēdīz and my most faithful friends and contacts, Chekīb ‘Aīnār.\(^\text{136}\)

In the west of Algeria, one typically sees a consistent group of muḥebbīn, musicians, and adepts attending ḏīwanat; like them, I became a ‘regular’. As my fieldwork deepened, I moved between family groups via connections of kin or friendship between these groups. While I was based in Oran, attending ḏīwanat that primarily featured M’allem Qwīder and close contacts of his, I made frequent trips to Mascara and Saida because these two cities also had familial ties to Oran and very active ḏīwān communities. Some of these ties can be traced back to trade and caravan routes

\(^{135}\) On this topic, the works of Neuman (1990), Basra, Widdes (1989), and Dāśaśarmā (1993) on gharanas are particularly relevant.

\(^{136}\) Due to challenges and barriers of city size, transportation, and decreased ḏīwān activity, I spent limited time in Algiers with the surrounding ḏīwān communities: the Sūdānī family of Kolea, the Behāz family of Blida, as well as the young ‘dīwān’ music groups who stage ḏīwān brāj but do not attend, much less practice, ritual, Wlad Bambara, Diwan Bahia, and Ifrikiyya Spirit. Nevertheless, many of these connections remained important and influential throughout my fieldwork and I will note this where possible.
between Oran and the hinterland. More recently, however, Mascara and Saida, as agricultural centers with demand for labour, had active railroads connecting them with the coast. Within diwān worlds, it is common to find family groups dispersed between Mascara, Oran, and Saida; my connections also followed these lines.

My frequent trips to the town of Saida and Mascara were highly motivated by my interest in learning more about the Hausawiyyyn and Migzawiyyyn brāj: the least known, most ‘sūdānī’, and currently most popular and coveted suites of the diwān repertoire. Because they are seen as the most ‘exotic’, these brāj have recently gained immense cultural capital so that, while Saida and Mascara are known as the ‘hot spots’ for these brāj, many groups are staking a claim to them. This dynamic is triggering debates around ownership and lineage, and how these brāj should and should not be claimed or transmitted. For example, Nūreddīn Sarjī and his family group based in Oran and Mostaganem also claim some authority to Migzawiyyyn expertise because his father’s (Sarjī) line reportedly established this repertoire in Saida.

My time with each of these family groups taught me something unique about various ways of transmitting diwān, particularly if it is seen to be in crisis. The young people or at least those aged forty or younger, for example, were always my way ‘in’ to the communities and were consistently very interested in how to keep diwān tradition alive and vibrant while the elders were consistently more skeptical about the intentions of the young people and their ‘modern’ mentalities such as some wanting to present diwān music on stage and, in the elders’ view, make money from it. So while I will discuss the family lineages and mahalla structural organisation as well as giving some basic historical background to the diwān scenes in these areas, I mean to highlight the various ways of negotiating transmission within and between groups in these places and the ways these groups situate themselves in relation to one another.

Migzawiyyyn was especially popular amongst ūlād diwān and as we will see in the Diwan Festival of Bechar; its representing black authenticity means that it has exceptional cultural capital. For reasons of space, I have not been able to cover these repertoires in this thesis as I would have liked. Look for a future publication on this ‘Hausa Songs in Algeria’.

Given that the Northern Nigerian ‘Maguzawa’ after whom the Migzawiyyyn are undoubtedly named, were Hausa and cultivators, as well as many other Hausa groups, and given that we find a Hausa concentration in an abundant agricultural region of Algeria, Mascara and Saida, perhaps it is not so surprising that these brāj flourish here, the hinterland.
Oran and the Lineage of Majdūb

Shaykh Majdūb Sarjī or Messarjī (18 February 1935-16 December 2000) is widely recognised across Algeria as one of the greatest mʿallemīn in present day dīwān memory. He traveled extensively, cultivating connections with dīwān families across the country, and is said to have visited every wilāya in Algeria—spending significant amounts of time in Algiers and Blida as well as periods in Bechar and Constantine so that ritual elders there still remember him with fondness and admiration. He is probably best known for having 'modernised' (French, 'modernisé') dīwān music in several ways: with technology—by introducing a microphone and amplifier to the ginbrī—with his approach to ginbrī performance temporality and modal deviations—by 'bending' the musical time and inserting pitch bends or ‘bluesy’ notes—and in his overall playing style: combining the two main ginbrī styles of shergī and baladī (see Chapter Two). Given that during his lifetime we were already at a moment of ‘modernisation’, I am interested in what it means in this context to be ‘modern’ and what might be considered ‘traditional’. What can be known about Majdūb’s playing is primarily thanks to recording technology—amateur cassette audio recordings taken from dīwanat—even while most audio or video documentation dates from the 1980s or 1990s with only a handful going back further to the late 1960s or early 1970s. There is plenty of discourse about his playing, however, and about what he thought dīwān could and could not do. In this section, particularly considering Majdūb’s reputation, I want to discuss the ways that ritual musicians place themselves with regard to ‘modernity’, sometimes by rejecting what they see as ‘tradition’ as Majdūb is said to have done in some cases. Interestingly, because recordings of mʿallemīn do not appear to go back much further than his legacy, he is simultaneously often thought of as ‘traditional’, in terms of being the first well ‘documented’ mʿallem relative to today’s dīwān practice. First, I would like to provide the context in which I came to know and learn about Majdūb after which I will proceed to more detail about his life, legacy, and symbolic meaning for īlād dīwān.

* * *
Nūreddīn Sarjī (1972–), the son of Majdūb, and his pal Nūreddīn ‘Nounou’ Khīter were my first two contacts in the western Algerian diwān scene when I first arrived in Oran in May 2013. At the time, Nounou, was a student (gendūz) of M’allem Hüwārī Būsmāha, who himself was the last gendūz of Shaykh Majdūb; this attachment to Majdūb is what brought the guys together. I had first ‘met’ Nounou over Facebook by following the tightly knit network between diwān musicians and connoisseurs. These two ‘brothers’ became my ticket into diwanat in the West and I immediately began meeting numerous diwān mahallat and ālād diwān from around the country. As the son of Majdūb, Nūreddīn, himself a very active kuyu bungu, was an especially valuable contact to help me into the diwān world; he is widely respected for his own good nature but also because of his father’s reputation.

In the months that followed my first trip to Oran in 2013 and again in 2014, Nounou and Nūreddīn regularly took me to diwanat, making a point to introduce me to ritual experts, and by way of their ‘vouching’ for me, I gradually came to know and be known by most of the western mahallat who increasingly welcomed and warmed to me. Some of these experts were usually former friends of or admirers of Majdūb, particularly those who had attended diwanat of Majdūb—such as Shaykh El-Hādī Ben Wālī of Mostaganem, a beloved and notable ʿĪssawa shaykh who turned up to every diwān I observed in my fieldwork—or those who had worked alongside Majdūb, such as ‘Abd Zāmūsh who formerly sang as kuyu bungu with Majdūb. Nūreddīn liked to take me to those who could talk about his father, who knew his father better than he had, and who could answer my questions about the family history, if not confirm what Nūreddīn had been telling me.

From early on in my fieldwork, Nounou, Nūreddīn, and I took countless road trips in the evenings after work and on weekends, traveling around the western hinterland as far as Perrigaux and Ain Temouchent. It was during these regular trips that we listened to hours of recordings of Majdūb: old recordings from cassette tapes, some thirty years old, that Nounou had been slowly digitising into MP3s and that he carried around on thumb drives. Nounou liked to point out to me the genius of Majdūb’s playing: that he varied the rhythm of the ginbrī in ways that made him extraordinary and unlike any other master in current memory. These hours of recordings, oftentimes distorted and from
diwanat performed at least twenty years earlier, filled my ears and computer hard drive for months on end. They were indeed remarkable; as Nounou had said, I did find that they were particularly striking for the ways that Majdūb experimented with ginbrī rhythm, letting the qrāqeb hold down the tactus while his phrases skirted the edges of the metric cells with elaborate hemiolas. In one recording the guys played for me, the borj for ‘Abd el-Qādr Jīlānī, Majdūb’s consistent use of hemiola is so insistent that the qrāqeb players are thrown off, lose track of the tactus, and drop out entirely; they wait for a full eight seconds while Majdūb continues to play and eventually find their way back in.

Example 34: Find an audio example in this footnote. Transcription begins @ approx. 1:04 in recording (Notice how Majdūb is playing ‘between’ the beats starting in the third measure and continuing until the qrāqeb drop out in the tenth measure. In the recording, one can hear that they’re losing the pulse by the ninth measure. See recording, ‘Majdūb ’Abd el-Qādr hemiola’)

Such a mishap would have been and would still be quite rare and shocking as, particularly at that time, qrāqeb players would have had to earn their spot next to the m’allem by possessing an exceptional sense of musical time.

Over the years, I saw less and less of Nounou: he married, had a daughter, and, by my 2016 trip, was working two jobs to support his family. In turn, I spent more time with Nūreddīn and his extended family, as well his closest male dīwān friends in Oran, my ‘band of brothers’. These regular, informal café chats with the guys were

http://algeriandiwan.blogspot.co.uk/2017/03/audio-example-shaykh-majdub-syncopation.html
surprisingly insightful gatherings as the men casually discussed stories about dīwān, histories, current events, and worked out how to organise the next dīwān. Some of these cafés were favourites with many ālād dīwān in Oran so that these outings also provided opportunities to run into other ritual experts, reminding them of my presence and interest. Sometimes, simply knowing that I was cooped up in my apartment in Oran hard at work, Nūreddīn would pop by—always, unannounced—and take me for drives around Oran. As we drove around, we planned our future trips to see other dīwān experts he felt I should speak with—again, usually those who knew his father—and we reflected on dīwanat we had recently been to or paid visits to his other friends. Nūreddīn was eager to help answer all of my questions, particularly about the supernatural world and the polemic around the existence of jnūn in dīwān. Here, he often quoted his father—thus, lending authority to the claim—who, according to Nūreddīn, did not deal in such things and was very skeptical of others who claimed to, reportedly saying, ‘The jnūn in the dīwān? Nonsense! Show me them, then!’ This attitude is not uncommon these days and would be considered to be a more ‘modern’ approach to life and music: that dealing with the jnūn only happened in former times before people were properly educated in Islamic principles.

The Sarjī family were originally from Saida where Nūreddīn’s grandfather, Muḥammad, led Gurbī Sarjī as one of three grāba at Greb el-Ouēd. At one point, however, Muḥammad Sarjī closed the gurbī and moved the family north, first to Arzew then later Mostaganem where Majdūb was born in 1935. In Mostaganem, the Sarjī locale was known as Dār Sʿaīdī (Saida House), referencing the Saida connection. Majdūb built his life there, had at least one wife, home, and many sons. His open-air house in Mostaganem is still the basecamp where his sons gather and put on dīwanat and where one of his wives still lives. Mostaganem is still rich with historical dīwān sites important to the Sarjī family where, in the old days, following the first ālād dīwān, the family did their animal sacrifices at the seafront tomb of Śiddī Majdūb, the saint, or the site of Śiddī Őbd El-Qādr, a small summit overlooking the Mediterranean. Majdūb

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140 The two others were Gurbī Jemā’a, and Gurbī Ma Sūṭra.
held his diwanat there and, quite consciously in 2016, Nūreddīn held his first state-funded mʿarūf there as part of his newly established association.¹⁴¹

Majdūb later had a wife and other close connections in Oran and in Algiers, too, and was close with the Sūdānī dīwān family in Algiers and the Behāz dīwān family in Blida. Such family connections are noteworthy because these dīwān families intermarried across dīwān mahallat between the West and Algiers. For reasons of these family connections as well as Majdūb’s signature ginbrī aesthetics, his lineage still resonates as far away as Constantine. This is quite different than the case in Saida, as we will see below, where the shyūkh and close kin associations were all based there, stayed there, and have long histories there—their musical aesthetics mostly stayed there, too. In addition, Majdūb took in genēdīz from outside the family and outside of Mostaganem, further producing a multi-sited silsila (lit. ‘chain’ of transmission). That is to say, despite his base and legacy in Mostaganem, Majdūb’s lineage does not exemplify the same rootedness to place. Rather, what makes Majdūb’s lineage different is that while place is still quite important to transmission as his home base and not the home base of his ancestors (Saida), Majdūb’s style, like no other, is known across Algeria and began its own lineage.

In the larger picture, because so many maḥallat, particularly in the north, have broken apart, shifted ‘members’ significantly or dissolved due to rapid urban growth and social change, the death of elders, and changing social conditions and lifestyles of the younger generations, the Majdūb silsila therefore stands as one of the last ‘intact’ and easily traceable lineages in Algeria in general, but especially in the north where few others are still remembered. It is also quite a ‘recent’ silsila in that Majdūb is seen as the initiating shaykh even while it is one of the last lines of transmission that both harkens back to transmission practice of earlier days (from shaykh to gendūz), lending him somewhat of a ‘traditional’ impression. That said, Majdūb’s rise also coincided with the development of audio recording technology so that while stories are still told of other impactful m’ allemīn before his time, there is little sonic trace of the others. Amateur recordings of Majdūb’s playing in dīwanat circulate widely across Algeria—they were

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¹⁴¹ Lecomte reports that in the 1970s, ritual sacrifices were performed at the tomb of Sīdī Majdūb and that they had reportedly always been there.
played for me from as far away as Biskra to Algiers—particularly amongst young dīwān muhebbīn who make a habit of collecting and circulating recordings.

To detail, then, the specific ways Majdūb was impactful—and, in discourse, ‘modern’—his introduction of the amplifier to the ginbrī in dīwān, reportedly in the mid- to late 1970s, was a watershed moment and one that is said to have caused outcry in the dīwān world. According to one of Majdūb’s former kuyu bungu-s, ‘Abd Zamūsh, the master was widely criticised and even threatened for this move. ‘There were those who loved him and those who despised him’, he explained, such as elders and ‘purists' who detested this change and spoke against him. ‘Abd Zamūsh also recounted that when he was criticised for his innovation, Majdūb responded with the spirit of, ‘This is not religion, it’s music!’—to make such a remark would be perceived as antagonistic to tradition as well.

M’allem Tūfīq in Algiers, mentioned above, is also a fan of Majdūb’s and similarly recounted this turning point, arguing that the amplifier made things technically easier for m’allemin, allowing a drastically clearer sound to flow from the ginbrī with much less effort on the part of the m’allemin. It would have championed the sound of the ginbrī, making it dramatically more audible with much less effort so that it was no longer drowned out by the qrāqeb. Tūfīq reported that Majdūb saw no reason why people should resist the amplifier if they were confident m’allemin. Today, every m’allem uses an amplifier in dīwān; it would be rare to find one who does not—although Ūlād Meriem in Mascara proudly informed me that they were the very last maḥalla to introduce the amplifier and therefore, were ‘traditional’ longer than others. While dramatically changing ginbrī playing technique—subtle touches and intricate ornamental phrases could now be heard clearly—and allowing m’allemin to play longer with less energy, the use of the amplifier also seems to have, by and large, ended the use of the chenchāna (see Chapter Two). It is unusual to find recordings of dīwān music in which the chenchāna is used except in intimate, non-ritual contexts since the amplifier is now ubiquitous.

In dīwān discourse, Majdūb is also unusual for being known as ‘a musician’—that is to say, ‘not just a m’allem.’ Despite the ambiguity of the term previously discussed, many emphasise that his greatness was due to his being a musician, meaning he paid
attention to musicality, he varied his phrases more than others and he was endlessly creative and imaginative in the ways he executed *brāj*. He also played the keyboard among other things, did mixes of *ginbrī* with other instruments, and played in other non-*dīwān* musical groups, which made him unique (and ‘modern’) because few ritual *m' allemēn* play music in other Algerian genres. On the contrary, *m' allemēn* or, in particular, the young men in Algiers who play in ‘*dīwān*’ music groups are commonly discredited for ‘just being a musician’, implying one is only doing it for the money. Here, the critique implies ‘musician, but not a master’. In other words, ‘musician’ stands for the ‘modern’ and a ‘*m' allem*’ stands for ‘traditional.’

Majdūb was also known for his high, pinched, tenor register voice when he sometimes accompanied himself as *kuyu bungu* and for personalising the texts for the listening audience. The most well known example is a recording—one that turned up all over Algeria among *ūlād dīwān*—of him singing and playing the *borj* for Sīdnā ʿAlī. In this recording, at a moment when women are going into trance, he sings, 'Nora, get up for me, get up for me' and, at another time, 'I'm sorry, please forgive me.' This example was presented to me several times with awe by various *muḥebbēn* as far away as Algiers because no other *m' allem* is reported to have been so bold as to personalise the texts of a *borj* to such a degree, much less address a woman friend directly in a *borj*—meaning this would have been seen to break with convention. Then again, Majdūb had a reputation for being daring, no-nonsense, and direct. While Nūreddīn told me many stories about how stern his father could be, that many were quite intimidated by him, other stories indicated that he was quite distressed by the ways others spoke against him.

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142 Nounou told me that he had a 'morning' time and 'evening' time way of playing the same *borj*, meaning he knew how to adapt the *borj* to the surrounding mood or conditions.

143 Some exceptions are the brothers ʿĪssa and Faysal Sūdānī of Algiers who play in other folk and rock groups, including *dīwān* fusion rock groups such as ʿĪssa's group, Wlad Haoussa, and Faysal's primary position in the group, Wlad Bambara, that broke apart and was reformed with new members in 2015.
While it is said that Shāykh Majdūb had many *genēdz* all over the country, his most well known *genēdz* today—again, all from outside the family—are Qwāder ʿArūbī of Oran, Benʿūda Benbrāhīm of Relizane, and Ḥūwārī Būsmāha of Oran. With Nounou and Nūreddīn’s introductions, I met and spent time with all three masters shortly after my arrival in 2013. Because Qwāder was the most active as a ritual *mʿallem*—Ḥūwārī mostly played for ‘secular’, folkloric ‘spectacle’ performances associated with cultural institutions—and because his home in the Medīna Jdīda *quartier* of Oran was quite convenient to reach from my lodging,

I spent a significant amount of time at his home visiting with the family, as well, occasionally spending the night with them after *dīwanat* that Qwāder played. Qwāder had towering stacks of old *dīwān* videos, as far back as the 1970s and 80s and enjoyed sitting me down in front of the television to watch them for hours on end—even while he would then disappear to go off to the mosque—while his generous wife, Fāṭī, would sit tea and cakes in front of me. On many of these occasions, after being there for hours, I was then coerced into staying for dinner. In exchange, I brought Qwāder CD and DVD copies of the audio and video recordings I made of him at his *dīwanat*. Whenever possible, I tried to compel him to recount to me bits of information about the Oran *ṭreq*. Over the years, mostly by attending his *dīwanat* and keeping close track, I managed to gradually assemble his list and some of his commentary about the *brāj* meanings. Even despite knowing me for years, however, he was reluctant to go straight through the *tartīb*, start to finish. Perhaps this was, again, another test in patience of knowledge that needed to be earned over time.

Benʿūda is another of Majdūb’s main *genēdz* and is especially well known across Algeria for his signature virtuosity—recall the Ḥammū examples in Chapter Two. He is based in Relizane, a small city about two hour’s drive from Oran, that also has a long history of *grāba* and *dīwān* activity. I had the misfortune of often missing his *dīwanat* for various reasons but finally had the opportunity to attend his three-day *wʿāda* in 2016. While we did not have significant amount of time to talk about the meaning of *dīwān*, he too saw it as mostly addressing suffering.
As for Hūwārī, I had several interviews with him both in Oran and during the Diwan Festival of Bechar (see section below). For the first two years of my fieldwork, from 2013 until sometime in 2015, Hūwārī formed and ran a state-recognised association he called ‘Turāth Gnāwa Diwān Wahrān’ (Gnawa Diwan Heritage of Oran) made up of himself as m'allem—he preferred ‘Shaykh’, as everyone called him—and Nūreddīn as kuyu bungu with more of Nūreddīn’s half brothers, Sma’īn and Būbakar as kuyu (dancers) and with occasional musical help from Hāmmiyan and Ḥūsīn of Mostaganem, also half brothers. During the first two years of my fieldwork, the group performed for secular, cultural events such as in 2014 for the First of November parade for the sixtieth anniversary of the beginning of the War of Independence, events organised by the French Institute of Oran (Institut Français d’Oran), and even at an elderly care home. Nounou, as Hūwārī’s most educated and entrepreneurial genēdīz, ran errands, made and distributed business cards, did much of the administrative work, and on rare occasion, played ginbrī with Hūwārī at one or two events.

While Nūreddīn encouraged me to join Hūwārī’s weekly, collective ginbrī lessons with his group of teenage male students, my presence caused enough gender tension in the first lesson that I returned to learning from recordings, as most aspiring ginbrī players do today. By the end of 2015, however, for interpersonal difficulties, Turāth Gnāwa Diwān Wahrān begun fracturing and no longer exists as such. At the same time, starting in 2015, Nūreddīn was more invested in organising and securing frequent dīwanat and dīwān ‘spectacles’ (non-ritual performances of dīwān brāj) with his half-brothers in Mostaganem and often in partnership with the cultural center there, Dār Thaqāfa. In tandem, he was spearheading the revitalisation of the formerly state-recognised Sarjī ‘association’ in Mostaganem, linked to his father who had established it and that eventually went through various incarnations.¹⁴⁴ He calls the association Migzawiyyn Ūlā Majdub—here, staking a claim to Migzawa ‘worlds’, whatever those might be imagined to be. Part of the purpose of reestablishing such an association is to receive state financial aid and support for putting on cultural events while also lending

¹⁴⁴ I do not have firm dates on these iterations but Nūreddīn mentioned three separate initiatives that Majdūb recorded with the city of Mostaganem, probably at Dār Thaqāfa, House of Culture.
credibility and visibility to such activities. By the end of my trip in 2016, Nüreddīn succeeded at securing and producing his first, state-funded two-day mʿarūf.

Nüreddīn had explained to me upfront that Hūwārī, Qwīder, and Benʿūda are the three genēdīz to have best preserved the knowledge and 'sound' of Majdūb; that is, one can hear his influence even while each mʿ allem has his own personal ‘touch’ (using the French ‘touche’ here) and therefore, can also be identified by his own style. One of the hallmarks of Majdūb’s ‘touch’ is the way he highlighted the lowered third degree of the pentatonic mode, sometimes referred to as a 'bluesy’ note, in an otherwise major pentatonic framework (as in the transcription above). He often slid in and out of it, as a kind of ornamentation. This ‘note’, therefore, accumulated association with Majdūb, becoming known as part of his musical signature, particularly amongst his next of kin and genēdīz, and can still be detected in the playing of all of the main genēdīz of Majdūb, even in the Sūdānī family lineage in Algiers with whom Majdūb associated. At the same time, his main genēdīz have their own styles so that Hūwārī, for example, can be identified from Benʿūda and Qwīder. As well as lowering the third degree, in another recording, in the istikhbār for Brahīm (Abraham) he also lowered the sixth degree as an ornament to the fifth: another rare 'colour' or embellishing tone that would be unusual to hear outside of his lineage today. The lowered sixth is even more striking, unsettling the feeling of pentatonic, because the relationship between the sixth and fifth hints at the hijāz maqam (Arabic mode) since a minor sixth would not exist in the pentatonic mode in dīwān. This probably explains why the lowered sixth turns up in the istikhbār but not later in the borj.

![Figure: 21: Uses of the minor 3rd and minor 6th modal degrees](image)

Again, this ‘signature’ lowered third, particularly, is often identified with Majdūb’s personal style when it turns up in the playing of his genēdīz. On that note, despite disagreements about what ‘style’ means in a larger sense, Majdūb’s sons say that he combined the playing styles of shergī and baladī (see Chapter 2).
While there is, to begin with, no clear idea on what either of these styles are, the clearest evidence I could hear in recordings of Majdūb’s playing was that, while his ginbri style was typically ‘heavier’ than shergi, reminiscent of the heavi ness of the Saida style, he had moments of illustrious, florid embellishments and stunning virtuosity. Sometimes in his istikhbār, the long unmetered introductions on the ginbri, he unleashed incredible virtuosity, taking great liberties with the rhythmic consistency of the ginbri, stretching its musical role. It is also difficult to parse out what it is in Majdūb’s style that is particularly ‘shergi’ versus ‘baladi’ and/or what is his own personal ’touch’. For these reasons, transcriptions and recordings are not particularly helpful as despite years of investigating the nature of these styles, I cannot claim to understand how it is that Majdūb ‘combines’ these styles. I am also quite aware that perhaps this so-called mixing of styles is more of a strategic discursive move to simply index that Majdūb’s style is complex and without clear categorisation while still being rooted in ‘tradition’: these two styles, despite having vague boundaries, symbolise ‘traditional’ approaches to ginbri sound.

Qwider, Benʿuda, and Hūwāri each have their own genēdzi although these associations can sometimes be quite tenuous so that a gendūz might just be an aspiring ginbri player who often hangs around the dīwanat. Such is the case with Qwider who, while he considers ‘Abdāqa Sāmī of Oran his gendūz, Sāmī is an accomplished mʿallem in his own right, is close in age to Qwider, and identifies as the gendūz of another, late gendūz of Majdūb, Būshāma. This kind of claiming can happen discursively without much practice or real relationship to support it. Hūwāri’s most well-known former gendūz is Laḥbib Canon of Oran, a young, prodigy mʿallem who, even while being associated with the lineage of Majdūb through Hūwāri, is criticised in the south for playing too quickly and criticised in the north for using synthetic ginbri strings and for being too innovative and daring in his playing—in other words, too ‘modern’—despite Majdūb’s notoriety being so fundamentally based on his innovation. Important to mention here is that the primary marker for ‘traditional’ versus ‘modern’ playing has to do with speed, where the slower styles mentioned earlier and labeled thaqīl would be classified as probably ‘older’ ways of playing but, undoubtedly, speed is associated with youth, the new generation, and therefore, a ‘modern’ approach. Nevertheless, Laḥbib
continues to attract attention amongst the young people for his brilliance both in playing
and for his stunning, tenor voice; he is one of the few mʻallemīn who regularly
accompanies himself as kuyu bungu and who performs exceptionally well both in ritual
contexts and on stage. 145

This kind of complicated, interpersonal tension with regard to transmission and
its protocol and structures certainly appears to be common. However, what seems to be a
hallmark of Majdūb’s lineage is that, despite those who might criticise innovation and
even for those who profess to dislike his style, he is nevertheless admired and respected
for his historical impact and the influence of his 'sound.' Having introduced the
amplifier, experimented with the possibilities of ginbrī voice and temporality, and
having revolutionised ginbrī playing style, Majdūb is one of the most influential
‘modern’ and yet oldest mʻallemīn in recent memory. He made such an enormous impact
on dīwān music that his influence seems nearly inescapable in Algeria.

Saida Lineages

Saida, a medium sized city three hours by car south of Oran in the dry and hilly
terrain of the High Plateau, is commonly thought of as one of the 'sources' of dīwān, an
area where dīwān practice is considered more ‘traditional’ compared with Oran and
dīwān mahallat (groups) further north. 146 Viviana Pâques’s descriptions of Saida and its
ceremonies in the early nineteen-sixties were of particular interest because they arose
from a ‘quite pure black environment’ and because the former slaves were able to
develop their rites and intertwine them with daily life (1964: 511). At this time, Saida
still had remnants of former dīwān social organization: two main grāba (gūrbī:
singular), groups of bidonvilles or shanty towns constructed by blacks—the descendants
of slaves from sub-Saharan Africa—and what the French commonly referred to as ‘the
black villages’, les villages nègres.

145 He took the second place prize at the Bechar Diwan Festival in 2014, for example where, incidentally,
Hūwārī was on the jury.
146 Salīm Khīat, an Algiers-based anthropologist working on black communities in Algeria at the National
Center of Research in Anthropology, Prehistory and History (Centre National de Recherche en
Anthropologie, Préhistoire et Histoire; CNRAPH) later recommended it as well, since much less is
known about their repertoire—particularly the Hausa repertoire—in comparison to dīwān practice of
Algiers (in the work of Dermenghem and Pâques).
After the abolition of slavery in 1848, the French government granted blacks land on the outskirts of the city where they constructed grāba in two main suburbs of the city: Dwi Ṭabet, now called Greb el-Ouëd (it was west of the River Saida) in the south of Saida and Greb el-Amrus in the North (Pâques 1964: 511). The latter, Amrus, which was somewhat more solidified, came to be known, particularly, as ‘le village nègre’. Pâques notes that in 1955, it was made up of six parallel rows of housing of which only seventy homes were still inhabited by blacks; the others had been rented to poor nomads who had settled near the city or to ‘Gurari’ people from the South near Timimoun. Greb el-Ouëd, however, after being granted to the former slave population, was then dubiously reclaimed by the apparent ‘landowners’ so that many blacks had to relocate (1964: 512).

Despite their geographic separation, these two main grāba had regular joint gatherings (wʿādat) and pilgrimages to saints’ tombs although Pâques’s descriptions of their different symbols and colours draping the sacrificial bull suggests that they had each honed ritual specialities. Although documentation is sparse, it is almost certain that before the grāba establishments and French administration, these black communities had long histories of living together, particularly organised around ethnolinguistic groups such as we see in the larger cities with Ottoman social organisation. It is also highly likely that kinship relations between the two groups went back quite distantly as oral testimony shows that different ethnolinguistic groups intermarried.148

Oral and written history of Saida concur that both Greb el-Ouëd and Greb el-Amrus (now remembered as just ‘Amrus’) were composed of smaller grāba which were made up of families, tribes, and friends or relatives who associated with one another as a unit and who established an identity of dīwān ritual practice.149 While these two main grāba were geographically separate and had stylistic differences in dīwān practice—their musical styles were slightly different and the order (tartīb) of the musical repertoire

147 I have not yet found information on where blacks lived before 1848.
148 Personal communication, Muḥammad Amīn Canon. His father’s side was Hausa, mother’s side Bambara.
149 Pâques (l1964: 511-12) cites Amrus and Dwi Ṭabet as the two main groups with the former also being known as 'le village nègre.'
varied—many of the families between the two groups were connected through kinship. For example, the Farajī family, originally from Greb el-Ouēd, are cousins of the Canon family who were mostly based in Amrus. Other ties were based on master-disciple relationships, such as with the late Mʿallem ʿAbd el-Qādr Būterfās who, while being associated with Amrus, learned the ginbrī in Greb el-Ouēd. It is important to mention here that family names or surnames only became standardised with French administration and otherwise, naming tradition followed Arab customs so that even today, most ʿulād dīwān know one another primarily by first name only or by one’s father’s name. Muhammad Amīn Canon explained, for example, that the family name of ‘Canon’ was taken because of French administration protocol and referenced their origins in Kano, Nigeria.

Greb el-Ouēd included the subgroups Gurbī Jemʿā—the first gūrbī built in 1904 at the center of the old village—and Gurbī (Muḥammad) Sarjī, the father of Majdūb mentioned above. And, for example, in an interview with an elderly dīwān muḥeb, Muḥammad Hazeb Weld Bent Saleh, he identified himself as being from Greb el-Ouēd and the Sarjī ‘camp’ although he is not related to the Sarjīs—in fact, he’s ‘white’. Mʿallem Qwīder described Greb el-Ouēd as made up of extended family around the great mʿallemīn Qada Khwāna, Hadj Naily (a family of blacksmiths), Bū Dīna, and the great kuṣu bunga, Lʿaīd Hassānī, who was, quite notably, ‘white’. Other important names at one time associated with Greb el-Ouēd were Tayeb Canon, Mbarek Bambou, Mīlūd Bambra, Mīlud weld ʿĀdīa and a grandfather Banbou. Greb el-Amrus, on the other hand, was associated with the family groups of Mʿallem Zendrī (probably from Zinder in Niger), Qaʿīd Belkhīr, Mʿallem el-Qaʿīd Bellou and his son, Mʿallem Lʿaīd weld Qaʿīd, the family Moṭam, and the family Būterfās. Oral

150 Personal communication with Muḥammad Hazeb Weld Bent Saleh who said that after the main baḥara section, the freg varied between the two groups. He also said that Perrigaux, approximately fifty-two miles away, was highly influenced by the Greb el-Ouēd style.
151 Personal communication, Muhammad Amīn Canon. 18 Feb 2016.
152 Pâques (1964: 513) called him Bū Serjī and describes his group as being one of three families, the remaining two as ‘Kada Futa’ and ‘Mostra’.
153 Algerians typically use the French word ‘blanc’ here and by this they usually mean Berber or even ‘Arab’ in origin—in other words, not ‘black.’
154 Personal communication, August 2014.
155 Personal communication with Muhammad Amīn Canon 18 Feb 2016.
156 The family of moqedm Jallūl I mentioned earlier.
histories regarding the fate of these grāba vary but, over time, with the disintegration of these shantytowns and especially with the social reorganisation of cities after independence and subsequent growth, dīwān practice also shifted and splintered, with some ālād dīwān moving to other mahallat both in and outside of Saida.\textsuperscript{158}

Today, not surprisingly, there are still debates and tensions around the various Saida dīwān family groups and their legacies. While there is no longer any trace of Amrus or Greb el-Ouēd, there is one primary dīwān zāwīya, Zāwīya Sīdī Blāl Saʿīda, that was built close to the city center in 2001 with 'minimal' help from the Algerian government.\textsuperscript{159} The zāwīya was built mostly with the personal funds of the family groupings who run it: that of Canon, Farajī, Būterfās, and Moṭam.\textsuperscript{160} In all of Algeria, it is the largest, most organised, and most reputable zāwīya for the annual dīwān wʿāda (large festival-like gathering) the families host there in late early autumn, regularly inviting at least five other dīwān maḥallat (troupes) from Oran, Mascara, Perrigaux, Ghardaia, and Bel Abbess. In this wʿāda every year, dīwanat are held throughout the night for at least four nights in a row, although the freq (ritual path) tends to be more varied and does not so strictly follow the typical tartīb (order) of brāj. (see more below).

Along with Mascara, Saida is well known for specialising in the so-called Hausawiyy and Migzawiyy repertoire of dīwān, the latter, I believe to be also of Hausa origin. Muḥammad Amine Canon recounted to me that his late, Hausa-speaking uncle, Lʿaīd Canon, made him wait and persist for thirteen years before he began sharing information with Muḥammad, particularly how to sing in Hausa—this is what Jallūl and the other men meant above about the elders 'not sharing secrets.' Even then, with his uncle’s meager help, Muḥammad did not know the meaning of the words and began asking one particular Hausa-speaking immigrant living in Saida. Despite or perhaps because of how he struggled, Muḥammad’s current approach to sharing these Hausa texts is not dissimilar from his uncle’s: while he was passionate about explaining the 'real meanings' of Hausa words to me that others mispronounce or misunderstand, he

\textsuperscript{157} Personal communication, August 2014. This information was corroborated by another interview with an elder in Saida, Muḥammad Hazeb Weld Bent Saleh.

\textsuperscript{158} Many mʿallemīn in Oran, such as ʿAbdāqa Samī, have family roots in Saida, for example.

\textsuperscript{159} The minister of culture supposedly donates just enough each year to pay for the electricity and water and, according to Muhammad, that is only because the family group has formed an official 'association'.

\textsuperscript{160} Apparently the family Farajī may have come from Greb el-Oued to Amrus, according to some accounts.
does not actively correct his comrades and, when I asked him about this, he admitted that he does not want to teach the words and their meanings to others, having had to work so hard for the information himself. When asked, he will, however, select a few of the most popular mispronunciations in Hausa brāj, the most common being about the hunter, Migzu, that contains the word 'nama' meaning 'meat' in Hausa whereas others often mistakenly sing it as 'nana'.

But apart from this particular uncle, Muḥammad identified his main shaykh as Mʿallem Lʿaīd weld Qaʿīd (see above) because, he says, his own playing is the most like this shaykh and it was he who encouraged and pushed Muḥammad. Even shaykh-gendūz relationships are oftentimes tenuous, however; Muḥammad never received any explicit instruction from Lʿaīd weld Qaʿīd but rather, it was a recognition of similar approaches to the ginbrī—what the men always referred to as learning by observation.

During one trip in 2014, Muḥammad took me to meet the much admired, late Mʿallem Būterfās and his family. As we left, he told me that Būterfās considered him, Muḥammad, his gendūz because he admired the way Muḥammad played the Baḥriyya brāj and saw himself as an expert of these brāj. Once we were out of earshot, Muḥammad indicated that he did not necessarily see himself in this way. So while it is possible that a gendūz may sit by the side of a mʿallem, attending his dīwanat for decades, gradually picking up techniques that are quite possibly personal ‘ touches’ of the shaykh, and while there might rarely be explicit instruction, I gathered that these shaykh-gendūz relationships are often informal and discursive or symbolic connections. It may be best thought of, from the point of view of the gendūz, as having an older mʿallem that one especially admires, with a sound that one gravitates towards. This is what might make a gendūz claim a master, as if to say, ‘I aspire to learn from you and play like you.’

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161 Muḥammad’s semi-secretive approach included me, not surprisingly. I somehow never had my recorder handy when he began to clearly pronounce and sing the Hausa texts in their entirety; I was only able to catch a few words and phrases here and there.

162 I even found myself doing this as I practiced ginbrī on my own at my apartment in Oran and found myself most often listening to recordings of Muḥammad’s playing, trying to imitate it for its elegant minimalism and his ability to draw out of the ginbrī such deep resonance through the smallest touch. I half-joked with him once that he was my shakīh, although a woman could never be taken seriously as a mʿallema.
As for transmission today in Saida, despite generational transmission challenges and the disheartening or cynical views of Moqiedm Jallūl and Qada mentioned above, even if secrets and precious knowledge is being lost forever, dīwān is still being learned: transmission is taking place. The most explicit and visible negotiation is the annual wʿāda, held in the Zāwīya Sīdī Bilāl, organised by the kin groups of Canon, Farajī and Būterfās; it is the largest and most popular wʿāda in the country, drawing attendees who travel for days to observe or participate. Young men and women help out in the zāwīya’s kitchen, help organise, clean, herd children, set up barricades, and otherwise prepare the zāwīya for events sometimes weeks in advance. Mʿallem Muḥammad and his brother Qada are actively involved in keeping the wʿādat running smoothly, organising meetings among the elders, sending out printed invitations to other maḥallat across the country, and buying the provisions for hundreds of attendees.

Probably most famous about their annual wʿāda is the last day entirely dedicated to the Migzawiyyīn brāj alone.  

This day, in itself, says a great deal about transmission, lineage, and physical place because it is the only maḥalla in the country to do such a thing. Using only ṭbel, qrāqeb, and call and response singing, the entire repertoire is played during midday, preceded by a ritually prepared sacrifice of a black bull, black goat, and chickens. For the long musical suite, women, children, men, and boys are all invited to dress up in costume, lending a carnivalesque sensibility, and they process one by one in a large circle, dancing through the outdoor courtyard while singing along. The shawsh distributes the Migzawa drink, doghnu, a slightly sour and fermented rice drink that replaces the alcohol that would have purportedly been drunk in pre-Islamic times. The Migzawiyyīn brāj repertoire takes several hours alone and its annual performance continually establishes Saida and this particular family grouping as its holders. While some typical dīwanat might touch on a few of the brāj, particularly in a wʿāda context where more time might be allowed, none cover the entirety of the repertoire with such depth as this dedicated day in the Saida wʿāda.

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163 See this link for a video: http://algeriandiwan.blogspot.co.uk/2017/03/migzawa-during-annual-saida-wada-2014.html

164 See a video link of the first borj, Migzu, at this link: http://algeriandiwan.blogspot.co.uk/2017/03/migzawa-during-annual-saida-wada-2014.html
Muḥammad and his brothers, cousins, uncles, and other extended family—many of them living together in one large housing compound—continue to guard and document their lineage. Inside the zāwīya, the walls are adorned with several old photographs of the great mʿallemīn of Saida as well a pair of ancient qrāqeb several times larger than current ones. Parked against one of the walls are several large, movable glass display boards covered with photographs from Saida dīwān history, such as photos from wʿādat in the 1960s and 70s.

Figure 22: Photo board inside zāwīya. Photograph by Tamara D. Turner

The continuation of the zāwīya and its activity are so well cared for that every detail seems to have been considered: a small prayer room on the far left side of the main hall for the men to pray, cabinets filled with blankets and pillows so that during long dīwanat, members of the public can curl up in a corner to sleep, sometimes with the dīwān still in full swing. Because proper dīwān and wʿāda hospitality means providing tea, coffee, cakes and, for the bigger events, a meal usually of couscous, the entire right
hand side of the zāwīya building block comprises a fully stocked, two-room kitchen and storage room packed with plastic tables and chairs, thermoses, hundreds of tiny tea glasses, and a freezer.

Keeping these traditions going while knowing how to benefit from state funding is quite visibly intergenerational and the young people are now well aware of the cultural treasure they possess, particularly with UNESCO’s 'Intangible Cultural Heritage' label on everyone’s minds and lips. M’allem Muḥammad, in particular, is publicly engaged with cultural associations and other activities outside of the dīwān locus; he organises the young men of the family to play at cultural events, for example. As I mentioned previously, I first met Muḥammad at the 2013 Bechar Diwan Festival when he was a member of the jury. Saida, thus, presents a solid example of a historical family lineage and place very much being a foundation of ‘tradition’, including keeping ritual traditions going, while negotiating the expectations and resources of a ‘modern’ world of cultural associations, festivals, and national media and while working around day jobs and other financial and family responsibilities.

Figure 23: Saida zāwīya during a dīwān. Photograph by Tamara D. Turner
Mascara Lineages

The wilâya of Mascara is well known as a dīwān locus with unique musical aesthetics and approaches to the ṭreq tartīb, especially compared with that of Oran and the coast. The small towns and cities best known for holding active dīwanat are the cities of Mascara, Perrigaux (also known as Muḥammadia) and Sig, in order of most to least activity. I spent the greatest amount of time in the city of Mascara but also took several trips to the small city of Perrigaux to meet with ritual elders and experts of the two main maḥallat there: that of the family Maḥārrar and the family Zerwālī, the former being based at the old gurbi or village nègre where there is a zāwīya and house compound standing. However, for reasons of stronger contacts and uncomplicated mobility between groups, I came to know best a network of four dīwān maḥallat in the city of Mascara. This network, in particular, provides another example of the ways that certain kinds of knowledge and its transmission are embedded in structures of family and cross-family lineages based in physical locations with long histories of dīwān practice.

Mascara (Mʿaskar) is a small city of approximately two hundred thousand inhabitants and an hour’s drive north of Saida, also in the High Plateau beyond the rolling hills that gradually give way to Oran and the Mediterranean. While it is discussed in the key sources of dīwān, the area triggered my own interest in the first month of my fieldwork when I was taken by Nounou and Nūreddīn of Oran to my first wʿāda in Kristel, a small seaside village about an hour’s drive from Oran. It was there where I heard the very unusual ginbrī playing of Mʿalleem Daḥū Ḥarār—known locally as Ṭammī Daḥū—the octogenarian brother of Moqeddāma Meriem Bel Ḥarābī of Mascara (see below). Ṭammī Daḥū is one of the eldest living mʾalleemīn and one of the finest makers and prominent suppliers of gnāber and ginbrī strings in the west. In addition, at this same wʿāda, I first met and spoke with the acting moqedm Hūsīn Daīdjaī, also originally from Mascara and with a ubiquitous reputation of knowing much about the Hausa and Migzawa repertoires so abundant in Mascara. Finally, a month later, at my

165 Ṭammī, literally means ‘uncle’ and is used frequently as a term of endearment for older men.
first Bechar Diwan Festival in 2013, I heard and met the extended Bel `Arabī dīwān family lineage and arranged a visit.

I first turned up in the city of Mascara at the beginning of my second trip to Algeria in 2014, an exceptionally hot July, and just after the end of Ramaḍān. Waiting for me at the shared taxi station was Chekīb `Aīnār, a young, fair skinned, blond, and impressively dreadlocked dīwān muḥeb in his early thirties. Chekīb is well liked and known in the dīwān community for being a free spirited, musician, actor and artist. Despite not being a 'weld dīwān’, and being ‘white’, he is quite immersed in its world—something I did not often encounter with the young generation in Algeria. Chekīb quickly became my passport into every corner of the Mascara dīwān world, not only serving as a guide but as an escort—something that was especially needed in terms of etiquette and safety in rural areas such as Mascara. Chekīb was my primary guide to the city, taking me by foot and taxi to little-known corners, especially those that had associations with dīwān. Chekīb’s story with dīwān was also notable; it had 'saved' him, giving him structure and something to love and work at during a difficult time in his life. He recounted to me how, when he was young, he would turn up to dīwanat to watch from the door until, very gradually, he worked his way inside, literally and metaphorically. Today, he is as dedicated as any of the genēdīz, singing, playing qrāqeb, and dancing with all of the mahallat of Mascara. He moves especially easily and without complication between the groups, likely because of not being a weld dīwān attached to any particular family group or maḥalla of Mascara. His history with dīwān, then, is an example of transmission surpassing background, family lines, and racial categories where belonging is based in shared feeling and affinity.

To begin with a brief history of maḥallat in Mascara today, oral history among ālād dīwān in Mascara concurs that the ‘first’, foundational dīwān family group in Mascara is that of Sīdī `Alī Muḥammad Būfrah, otherwise known as Hāj Muḥammad Ganga, or Bū Ganga (Father [of the] Ganga), as he is often known today, because he was a genius ṭbel player—ganga being a sūdānī appellation for a ṭbel. According to current testimony, Bū Ganga played a ṭbel that weighed eighty kilograms but was also a mʿallem of the ginbrē as well. As his day job, he worked for a Jewish man they called 'Sādun' who had a grocery shop in town. The son of Bū Ganga, ‘Abd el-Qādr Būfrāh, known
today as just Mʿallem Bīkādī, was born in 1934 and took over as Mascara’s most prominent ritual elder, the case still today. According to one weld dīwān, Bū Ganga died in 1963 at the age of seventy-six, suggesting that he was born in 1887. It was with Bū Ganga and Mʿallem Bīkādī that many other ālād dīwān in Mascara studied and learned, and therefore, this is how they came to be connected. Many of these elders and their family groups are still active in Mascara and have their own maḥallat. When I had the chance to meet and visit with Mʿallem Bīkādī in 2014, already quite ill, he was still living in a home close to the perimeter of the former village nègre; one could still make out sections of the walls from former buildings, most of which had been torn down decades earlier. One can also still make out traces of the railroad that drew so many to work in Mascara.

As far back as local memory extends, Mascara began with two main grāba or les village nègres: that which is referred to as 'Bab ṬAlī' a neighborhood of Mascara where a main dīwān zāwīya still stands and is used; and that of Sīdī ṬAlī Muḥammad, the latter of which was relocated twice. According to 'Azzeddīn Benūghef, the first known locale was formerly in an area called Duwār Sbāys—apparently from 'houses' of the Spanish—also known as the location of the lycée, Jemʿā El-Dīn. In 1918, the grāba was moved to the neighborhood of Sīdī ṬAlī Muḥammad, not far from where Mʿallem Bīkādī still lives. One of the main family groups who frequented the home and learned with Bū Ganga and Mʿallem Bīkādī was the Bel ʿArabī family. They are now likely the best known maḥalla of Mascara, having performed several times at the Diwan Festival of Bechar where they took first place in the competition in 2014. Known outside of Mascara as 'Ṣīdī Bilāl Mascara' they are a tightly knit maḥalla of brothers, cousins, and close relatives known by insiders as ‘Ŭlād Meriem' for their aunt ‘Moqeda Meriem’. These are the first two connected maḥallat today: that of Sīdī ṬAlī Muḥammad (Bīkādī) and the Bel ʿArabī (Ŭlād Meriem) family.

A third very active maḥallat based at the Bab ṬAlī zāwīya is centered around the prominent mʿallemīn Benʿūmar Zendēr and his main, well known kuyu bungu, 'Azzeddīn Benūghef, who also regularly attends and performs at dīwanat in Saida and Oran as well. I had several long, fruitful meetings with Azzeddīne, Mʿallem Zendēr, and Chekīb where, for hours on end and often including pauses only to eat couscous and
drink tea, we went through the Mascara ʿfreq borj by borj with historic and textual details. ʿAzzeddīn, being a kuyu bungu and thus, required to know all the texts to brāj, was an encyclopedia of musical knowledge while, being in his mid-forties, was also old enough to have known some of the elders.⁹⁶

Musically speaking, the mahalla of Ūlād Meriem—including their mʿallem, Bilāl, their kuyu bungu, Abdāqa ‘Gousgous’, and their moqedm Ben ʿĪssa—perhaps has the strongest reputation of its own, sonic ‘Mascara’ signature. Before traveling to Mascara, I began learning about its particular style of ginbrī playing mainly through a discourse in Oran: one can immediately recognise the Mascara sound for its 'strange, out of tune' ginbrī tuning: what is normally tuned to be an octave between the lowest and highest strings was instead, a slightly larger interval, sometimes a half step larger. In addition, Ūlād Meriem are well known for having the strongest and most precise chorus (‘chorale' or rqīʿza) in Algeria: they sing exceptionally vibrantly, in tune and in high registers. And, concerning ‘modern’ approaches, while Ūlād Meriem reported to me that they were the last group to add the microphone to the ginbrī, they are the only group I witnessed who regularly, in ritual, use a lapel microphone on their kuyu bungu, ʿAbdāqa. The power and high register of his voice often creates distortion in the amplifier but this appears to now be somewhat cultivated and aesthetically preferred, perhaps relating to the infamous ‘buzzing’ that the chenchēna used to provide. On that note, Ūlād Meriem were also the only group I witnessed who still occasionally use the chenchēna—definitely a more ‘traditional’ approach—while also using microphones on the ginbrī and voice.

When in Mascara, I was particularly interested in speaking with Ūlād Meriem after seeing their performance at the 2014 Saida wʿāda where they played the longest set of Hausawiyyn and Migzawiyyn brāj I had ever observed, including several that I had never heard before. Interested in their approach to these repertoires, I made a special trip to visit with them in early 2015 and brought them recordings of this performance.¹⁶⁷

⁹⁶ A fourth main mahalla in Mascara is that of the nearby village of Rachidia with Moqedm ʿAlī ‘Gargu’ as the leader. While I did not have conversations with the ritual elders of this mahalla, I did attend several of their diwanat along with Chekīb, and because they often used the Bab ʿAlī’ zāwīya or worked closely with the members of the other Mascara mahallat who attended.

¹⁶⁷ It is hard to say why Ūlād Meriem, in particular, seem to be the keepers of Hausawiyyn and Migzawiyyn in Mascara. While Zendēr and Benūghef (mʿallem and kuyu bungu who work together but who are not related) are also knowledgeable, my conversations, interviews, and ritual recordings of their turuq indicated that Ūlād Meriem have been the most prolific at maintaining these repertoires. Another
carefully went through each recording, and compared it with a list of titles they had written down, coming up with thirty-eight combined Hausawiyyyn and Migzawiiyyyn brāj as compared to the typical dīwān in which one would, on a good night, hear approximately eleven brāj, all Hausa except the very last: Boulal, Rima (1, 2, 3), Yurah, Makanjane, Ya Juru, Bawshki, Maysama, Kobana Diki Diki, and Bani Showara Dogomah. In addition, the texts of these brāj are noticeably different than performances in Saida so that, oftentimes, what allowed me to compare brāj was a basically shared melody or the borj’s place in the tartīb, and/or if words sounded similar, such as Yajrou in Saida pronounced as Ya Juru in Oran and Natiro in Mascara. Having memorised melodies and parts of the Hausa brāj from Saida, I was then able to crosscheck with Ūlād Meriem. What is important about these Hausa and Migzawa repertoires and their transmission in Mascara as compared to Saida—and what drew me to spend time in both places with the goal of comparing them—is the example of knowledge being kept within family lineages or maḥalla groups. Despite their close distance, the Mascara and Saida approaches to these ‘specialty’ brāj are quite different, suggesting that there is no, or very little, regional influence where one might expect it.

Furthermore, and broadly speaking, what is most unique about the approaches to transmission in Mascara is the way that several very active mahallat but of different lineages—Ūlād Meriem (Bel ʿArabī), Zendēr, and Gargu—share a foundation in Bīkādī while the latter two also share a zāwīya and will, on occasion, perform for the same dīwān. In comparison, none of the Oran mahallat with whom I was involved have an official zāwīya or locale being actively used and, instead, are invited into others’ homes for the rituals. Saida, on the other hand, has one well-known zāwīya but it is exclusively used by the Canon-Farajī-Buterfās kin group. Whether the shared zāwīya and shared founding father of Mascara has an effect on the sharing of ritual approaches is hard to say but there is, at least, a sense of overlapping communities as concentric circles with Bīkādī in the middle—again, something unique to Mascara.

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issue tying Migzawiiyyyn to Mascara is that Moqedma Meriem is regularly afflicted by Migzu; she would often fall quite ill so that only a dīwān could cure her. Her family explained that someone who spends a great deal of time in the country or out in the ‘wild’ may be henceforth afflicted by him.

168 For example, ‘is the borj, Natiro in Mascara what they sing in Saida as ‘Yajrou’?’
In this chapter, I have highlighted the vicissitudes of family lineage transmission in three locations in today’s Algeria. We saw that each of these lineages demonstrated unique relationships to emplaced dīwān history: the way Majdūb’s lineage surpasses place, the way the Saida kin group is very much still rooted in place, and how Mascara, also rooted in place, is the most flexible in terms of cooperative non-kin based family networks. We saw how knowledge moves or doesn’t move within and between groups; this is part of the various ways that ʿulād dīwān both guard insider-ness while also maintaining a sense of a larger dīwān community.

Because certain kinds of dīwān knowledge circulate in new ways with new kinds of audiences—for example, the recordings of Majdūb and videos from private rituals that circulate nationally—transmission today implies that lineage-based musico-ritual authority fails to exert control over some modern fields of transmission while it adapts to others. One of the most legible examples of such adaptation is the very recent efforts of ʿulād dīwān to create associations, distribute business cards and formal invitations to their wʿādat and dīwanat, and to work increasingly as ‘artists’ and ‘musicians’.\(^{169}\) The establishing of dīwān associations, in particular, has been picking up in the last decade. We saw examples of this in Oran with Nūreddīn and Hūwārī’s associations and in Saida with the official ‘folkloric’ association led by Muḥammad Amīn Canon. These efforts are at least partly influenced by the Bechar festival where all maḥallat take on an official ‘band name’ with a biographical history printed in the festival program. There, dīwān is shaped into a more commodified space. Let us turn now to this festival.

\(^{169}\) See Chapter 2 for a discussion on the politics of what it means to be a ‘musician’.
CHAPTER 7: THE DĪWĀN FESTIVAL OF BECHAR

The festivalisation and popularisation of sacred musics is familiar ground in ethnomusicology and anthropology, including such endeavours in ‘Sufi’ contexts (Shannon 2003; Kapchan 2008; Frishkopf 2009; Jankowsky 2010; Kirkegaard 2012) where common questions emerge about representation and audience expectations (particularly ‘sonic translation,’ see Kapchan). In this next chapter, while familiar themes emerge, I will draw particular attention to the struggles for authority over transmission—specifically the anxieties of ritual experts about festival protocol—and how this protocol is in tension with those of ritually based performances.

I provide an ethnographic perspective on how ritual musicians, that is ʿulād dīwān, speak about and grapple with the expectations and guidelines of the national festival of dīwān music, including the confusion around what ‘dīwān music’ on stage might consist of. While giving background information about the festival, I highlight conversations with ʿulād dīwān during the festival over the course of three years in order to show how they discursively represent the issues to one another and to several journalists from Algiers. I conclude by recounting an incident that occurred at the festival in 2015 that, to many ʿulād dīwān who were present, seemed to confirm their mistrust of the challenging expectations of the festival. These contestations are all, of course, taking place against the backdrop of historical and current social relationships between ʿulād dīwān and wider Algerian society. That is, given that ʿulād dīwān have been historically segregated, marginalised, and critiqued, the recent attention of nation-state heritage programs—whose interests do not necessarily benefit ʿulād dīwān—creates great ambivalence. While recognition is appreciated and desired on the one hand, we see that experts are often quite unsettled, if not outright hostile, toward what can be experienced as yet another form of displacement and outsider profit from their labours.
A. Background of the Festival

Only fifty-eight kilometers southwest from the Moroccan border, the Sahelian town of Bechar has been annually hosting the National Cultural Festival of Diwan Musique (Festival Culturel National de la Musique Diwane) since 2007. The festival aims to 'protect, preserve, and lift up dīwān'—in other words, dīwān music—by staging it and presenting it to a general, Algerian public. After troupe auditions held in each wilāya, successful portfolios with DVDs are sent to the Bechar festival committee and then twelve to fifteen troupes are selected for the competition—referred to as 'le concours,' in French. First, second, and third place winners receive cash prizes and earn a place at performing in the Algiers' International Diwan Festival ('Le festival culturel international de la musique diwane') several months later. This competitive environment, therefore, often generates quite a lot of discussion and tension around outperforming other groups and enchanting the jury that is usually made up of scholars and typically at least one ritually trained dīwān mʿallem, whose merit and qualifications are always under intense scrutiny.

Typically, about half of the competing troupes come from dīwān lineages, including musicians who have learned from within ritual—whom I will, for the sake of brevity, refer to here as ūlād dīwān. The other troupes are made up of young men who have learned the music from file sharing audio recordings and very occasionally, from having attended the odd dīwān ritual; these troupes are often referred to, somewhat condescendingly, as 'les jeunes' (the youth), or 'les amateurs' (amateur musicians). The festival also attracts dozens of journalists from around the country, music and culture scholars, and a handful of dīwān muḥebbīn.

The festival concerts, competition, and any other evening events are held outdoors on a circular sports pitch with modest, stadium like seating on the far end facing the small stage. Most of the public watches the festival from midway up the pitch, standing behind several layers of metal, waist-high barriers that are guarded by security. On the other side of those barriers, on the stage side, a limited amount of plastic chairs are lined up for the families of performers, delegates, and other relative 'insiders' with badges. There is a large open and empty space between the front of the stage and the first row of
chairs or the jury, for use by the press. This space, however, tends to not be used. Many of participants of the festival whom I spoke with found this quite unfortunate to be looking out at an empty space in front of the stage; it made it difficult for them to connect with a physically distant public.

The first evening of the festival groans into movement with the long, opening announcements (*edition d’ouverture*) by and mostly for the important local authorities for whom large, plush recliner style chairs are lined up just this once in the first row of the public space. The evening is then properly kicked off by an Algerian 'traditional' or acoustic music group, warming up the atmosphere for the first competing *dīwān* troupe to perform. After this single competing troupe the evening is rounded off by an Algerian popular band, typically one quite familiar to a young and predominantly Algerois, male public with pan-African, reggae, and otherwise 'Afro' sensibilities.\footnote{170 For example, Raina Rai, Djimawi Africa, or Freeklane are some examples.}

The following three or four evenings are mostly made up of the remaining twelve to fifteen competing troupes, generally with three to a night, and also end with a non-*dīwān*, Algerian popular music act. The last evening begins with *dīwān* troupe who won the previous year’s competition and is followed by the awards ceremony in which first, second, and third place cash prizes are awarded. Once again, this last night is highlighted by at least one Algerian popular music group, often the favorite local groups Es-Sed or Gaada Diwan Bechar. The festival evenings are, thus, quite charged, typically ending well after midnight and are often followed by communal hotel room jam sessions into the wee hours of morning.

Each morning during the festival week, organised buses arrive at the hotels around nine AM to pick up sleep-deprived musicians, journalists, and academics for the morning academic papers held in the large and plush auditorium at the *Dār Thaqāfa* (House of Culture) in Bechar. Except for the occasional guest scholar from abroad (typically France), the papers are mostly conducted by Algerian scholars and the vast majority are given in classical Arabic, taking historical and anthropological approaches. These formal academic presentations are mostly populated by journalists and scholars attending the festival; they are not especially well attended by *ūlād dīwān* and, from what I gathered in conversations afterwards, are not particularly well received by them.
either. Language barriers (papers in French) and ways of thinking about dīwān are very much contested in this space; there is often a good deal of pushback in the Question and Answer session from the few ūlād dīwān in attendance who consistently challenge scholarly interpretations. With dīwān being such a racialised minority practice in Algeria, it is not surprising that ūlād dīwān have difficulty hearing their worlds expressed by those whom they perceive to be 'white, privileged', outsider scholars. The lunch hour discussions immediately following these panels are similarly wracked with debate. However, the knowledge and expertise of ūlād dīwān is invited and privileged at the festival, primarily in the above mentioned informal, afternoon discussions organised by festival committee members. These are particularly well attended by ūlād dīwān. Every year I attended, the first order of business was to invite feedback on how the festival is and could be organised in order to 'protect' dīwān 'heritage'.

Having attended these discussions over the course of three years, I noted recurrent and common themes: journalists prod ūlād dīwān to consider musical transcriptions, writing down texts, and classifying all the brāj by ethnicity. Ūlād dīwān are, not surprisingly, unable to respond to these suggestions clearly since transmission has always been oral and classification varies even within their own communities. Classification can be a contentious topic as there are often strong feelings around whose treq is 'correct.' Furthermore, ūlād dīwān are typically more concerned with pressing, logistical needs such as the everpresent problem of inadequate real estate to host dīwanat: 'ma kāynsh locale’ is the repeated quip: ‘there’s no place.’ These annual discussion-debates find tenuous common ground in the general acceptance that the festival—or perhaps just its official stance—is only trying to show the 'artistic side' (la côte festive, la côte artistique) of dīwān. But here, the elephant in the room is the question about separating ritual music from its ritual context for purposes other than the sacred and therapeutic. Can the sacred be stripped from the sounds so that such a separation of ‘just the music’ is possible? And if so, who should do it and how should one do it? What stays, what goes? These anxieties are often the topic of much discussion in Bechar.

Lʿamārī Ḥamdānī, the commissaire of the Festival (muhāfaḍ al-mahrajān), assumes we can and must cultivate, and thus separate, the music. He sees the goal of the Bechar
festival as the preservation of national cultural heritage ('le sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel national'). Lʿamārī’s goal, as he stated it to me, is to attract attention to dīwān; he wants it to take its place among the icons of Algerian culture, particularly in light of the UNESCO buzz around the protection of ‘intangible cultural heritage’. He also sees the competition as being an important part of doing this. The concours is the most hotly debated aspect of the festival among the vast majority of the participants I spoke with, particularly amongst ālād dīwan. Many of them see it as demeaning to compete against young, amateur (non-ālād), musicians who 'have no shaykh' (master) or who 'just learned dīwān yesterday' ('tʿallemū dīwān ghīr elbareh') while they, ālād dīwān, were born into the tradition and have spent a lifetime learning 'inside' ritual. For Lʿamārī, however, the competition is essential as the only real way to motivate musicians to work hard and think seriously about their performances and presentations of the heritage. Were there not a competition, he said, few troupes would apply to participate and even more so, there would be no incentive to augment the artistic level of performance. He elaborated on the problems he already had getting quality submissions and consistency in the troupe makeups.

The question around de- or re-contextualised dīwān music is particularly important when 'dīwān music' is considered by many ritual experts to be 'more than just music'. While there is nothing wrong with enjoying it aesthetically, its main purpose is understood to be therapeutic, something 'spiritual' (roḥānīya), even supernatural; it sometimes renders people unconscious (yghīb) or sends them into other dimensions (yrūḥ, to travel). But of even greater concern to some is that, as we saw above, dīwān music has the ability to call arwāḥ and jnūn, some of them quite potentially dangerous; therefore, dīwān music poses a potential risk.

Keeping this in mind then, what does it mean to 'preserve' and 'protect' such a musical culture at national festivals, particularly when this musical culture is bound up with such 'risky' kinds of knowledge that are not intended to be widely known or publicly presented? And if 'culture protecting' governmental bodies understand that ritual practice cannot be 'captured' (publicly re-presented) to be protected—as Lʿamārī

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171 In 2013 the imzad, a gourd-shaped bowed lute played only by Tuareg women of southern Algeria, was listed with UNESCO under this project.
seems to recognise by focusing on the 'artistic side', or 'the music and choreography' alone—then what does it really mean to produce a diwān festival in order to 'preserve and protect' intangible cultural heritage when the festival attempts to desacrilise a musical practice for public consumption when ‘sacred’, ritual meanings are continually invoked in texts, with stage choreography, and ritual dress or objects (such as spears or abayat)?

When diwān songs are 'arranged' for the stage, without a jedēb(a) to interact with the music, the number of calls and responses and timings of gaṭṭ at have to be worked out in advance and the m’allem then plays for the sake of it, not for the sake of another. Spatially, given that the stage imposes microphones and microphone stands, a sound cable attached to the ginbrī, and pre-determined lighting choices, it is clear that the stage encourages and discourages certain bodily dispositions onto the 'experience' of the music, like standing with the ginbrī instead of sitting, or only being able to move side to side because of microphone stands. Therefore, even basic festival logistics, not to mention competitive protocol and rules, already pose challenges to some ritually-trained musicians. Let us now hear more from them.

B. Talking with Ritual Experts

During one of the sluggish June afternoons discussion sessions of the seventh annual Bechar festival in 2013, three m’allemīn from around the country and three journalists from Algiers gathered in an air conditioned lounge to discuss the relationship of 'traditional' (ritually situated) diwān music and the diwān festival context. They were seated in a circle on couches and plush armchairs and a long wooden coffee table stretched between them on which sat several burgeoning ash trays, dainty white cups of strong, sugary espresso, and flashing recording devices. Cigarette smoke filled the room as the journalists, Sāra Kharfī, Nadīr Hammū, and Faṭma Barūdī took turns questioning M’allem Muḥammad Amīn Canon of Saida, M’allem Muḥammad Raḥmānī of Ain Sefra, and M’allem Hūwārī Būsmāha of Oran, the latter being the most senior m’allem.

172 For example, even on stage, when brāj are performed, their required movements are usually enacted—in Dabu, it is expected to see 'dancers' (rather than jedebbīn) enacting the beating of the bulalat whips against their backs, even if they do it in jest without whips.
(although still in his forties). All three journalists specialise in cultural issues and have a particular liking for all things dīwān or gnāwa. As mentioned, a large number of the participant-performers at the Bechar festival are young muḥebbīn musicians—in other words, not ūlād dīwān: they typically learn the repertoire through sharing recordings with friends.

As one would expect, the festival project prioritises musical and performative aesthetics that appeal to the general Algerian public, an audience that knows little about dīwān—that is to say, modern, performative sensibilities like aesthetically pleasing costumes, coordinated choreography, and tight musical arrangements. Many of the musicians, including the festival committee and personnel, similarly know very little about the history and ritual aspect of dīwān. The journalists’ meeting with the m’allemīn, therefore, was an attempt to ‘go to the source,’ to ūlād dīwān, in order to understand how the ‘masters’ feel about the festival.

While Nadīr started off the questioning by asking if it was possible to classify the songs of the dīwān repertoire, the conversation quickly moved to how dīwān should be presented on stage and issues the m’allemīn had with adapting and adjusting to the stage. M’allem Muḥammad Amīn Canon, hereby referred to as Amīn for clarity, was quite eager to explain:

‘Let me give you an example: as our brother [the other m’allem] was telling you, one cannot do dīwān on stage’. [Dōk n ‘āṭīk exemple. Kīma kān ygūlek el-ākh, matqaddersh tdīr dīwān sur scene]. Before letting Amīn finish, Faṭma interrupts to confirm that this means 'leaving out' ritual elements:

‘So you’re only prepared to deliver the festival side [côté festif ent‘ā dīwān] of the dīwān and nothing more?’ ['pas plus ‘]

Amīn quickly responds, 'That’s it. Yes.' [Voila! Oui.]

Hūwārī adds, 'Nothing more, yes, thank you!’

Amīn continues, 'It’s a show, a show' [C’est un spectacle, un spectacle]. The term spectacle helps to clarify the non-sacred here and seems to be more widely agreed upon than what 'dīwān' might mean at the festival. To some, the word 'dīwān' automatically implies ritual where to others, as a shorthand, the term is used to reference the music.
But this confusion is important for the ways that it indexes, again, the conflict around trying to separate the music that is, in the minds of so many, inseparable from the ritual.

While Hūwārī is hesitant and soft spoken, his anxieties over festival protocol urge him to speak up now—in a strained but authoritative tone of voice, speaking quite quickly, he outlines the basics to what he finds distressing about this 'show' aesthetic, the requirements of playing on stage:

'Because! Dīwān, dīwān! Even just to introduce one song in a dīwān [looking at Amīn]—the m'allem here, he knows what I mean! [Amīn softly says, yes: n'ām]. In order to just enter into that song, I have to prepare it, [prepare] my spirit, [prepare] myself. I am required to [do] that tahwiss [long unmetered introduction]. That takes time. Me, I can’t… I have to take my time [literally, I play the time].'\textsuperscript{173}

Nadir says softly, 'Of course,' and Hūwārī keeps going:

'It’s not the same thing [as a festival]. Do you understand? [At the festiva] one has to do it quickly, one has to play fast. . . To give people a ‘cocktail,’ to give them a show.'\textsuperscript{174}

In other words, much of the anxiety has to do with these two spaces of ritual/home and stage or public space and the kinds of aesthetics they require: a general public is not going to be very interested in a long tahwissa when they came for a 'show'.

A discussion then develops around the various ways that the m'allemīn would like to see 'rules' of the festival instigated. There are some questions about what items the jury is considering—Amīn, being a member of the jury in 2013, offers that there is no rule that says that a m'allem has to play standing up, for example. This issue around playing the ginbrī standing is one of the most troubling to everyone. 'A m'allem lives the dīwān best when he’s seated,' Amīn says. There is anonymous agreement. Practically speaking, it’s much more comfortable for the m'allem.

\textsuperscript{173}‘Khatersh! Dīwān, dīwān! Déjà bēsh emqadem āğhnīyya fī dīwān, el-m'allem y'arref! Bēsh emqadem ghīr āğhnīyya, besh nedkhol dīk āğhnīyya ilīqlī... il préparé, rūḥī, nafṣīyya. ilīqlī dīk tahwissa hādī, ça prends du temps. Ana ma nenjemsh, ana n'l'āb el-wāqt.
\textsuperscript{174}‘C’est pas pareil. Fehmt? iliq, il vaut faire vite, il faut jouer vite... Bāsh neddīh wāḥed le cocktail, u ndīrūh hād el-spectacle.'
Then, the idea comes up that, since each group is only allowed twenty-five minutes on stage—the time constraint that Hūwārī was referring to and that many others heavily criticised—that perhaps every troupe should be required to play only a single borj in their allotted time. This, they thought, would allow the jury to see if the musician playing the ginbrī was really a mʿallem or not. What is not addressed is that such a performance would be difficult to pull off in a national festival with a public who knows little of the ritual background and without jedebbīn to interact with the mʿallem during the twenty-five minutes of a single borj. Furthermore, given that the performances are being judged, how would a jury account for knowledge that is ritually based? Who should the jury be? Raḥmānī is the most explicit, saying:

'Already this jury here, this jury of dīwān, it’s not easy. Not easy [mashī sahel]. Me, I dance kuyu. What jury? The jury of Ain Temouchent? The jury of Ain Sefra? Of . . . ? What jury?! Me, I’m against there being musicologists [in the jury]. Because what does he [a musicologist] see? He has no way of seeing/judging me [ma `andha ma ychuffnī]. And the ginbrī? It speaks. And at the end, if he were to tell me, ‘You didn’t place in the competition’, I would tell him, ‘The ginbrī speaks with a supernatural voice [une voix surnaturelle]. You, you don’t know it [the voice]. Me, I know it. I feel it [Ana nʿarrepha. Nhess āh]. You, you don’t understand it”. This jury? I don’t understand. Now, how they . . . [trailing off]. I don’t understand [whispering]. I don’t understand.¹⁷⁵

There are sounds and exclamations of support for Raḥmānī’s statements. Amīn later suggests that a jury should be made up only of ālād dīwān. How could an academic possibly judge dīwān? Here, Sāra seizes an opportunity to get more specific about what the men would prefer, addressing Hūwārī:

'How do you see the stage?’ [kīfēsh rāk chūf la scène?]

'How do I see the stage? Ah! Good question.' Sounding content and confident now, Hūwārī begins:

¹⁷⁵ Here, the way he uses the Arabic word ‘fahm’ with ma fahmtsh, this can also equate to the English of, 'it doesn’t make sense', or, 'it’s beyond me', or, 'it doesn’t add up.'
'I consider the stage, firstly . . . well, I have to be seated. In order to work with my
instrument. I sense. . . I cannot work the instrument while standing. It’s not. . .
You see, there’s the m’allem of the stage and there’s a m’allem of the ṭaraḥ [ritual
space], in the blood. The m’allem of the stage, it’s not possible for him to do a
pure dīwān ritual. Impossible! There are sacred things. There’s communication,
this, that, there are tricks. There’s… there’s the need to launch the dīwān, the
m’allem he sees our masters [before him], he relaunches the dīwān, he can’t rush,
he can’t push, like that… he has to follow in the path of his grandfather [like what
his grandfather did]. He doesn’t play by chance [improvisation]. That’s…that’s…
like we say here [at the festival], it’s all about the fashion. That’s the young
people of today!' (whispering the last word).  

Hūwārī goes on to say that he’s not criticising les jeunes, not getting down on
them, but, if one doesn’t have a shaykh to follow, one is 'just playing' (ghīr tl’ab,
meaning there is no deeper purpose), just going around in circles (literally: turning in the
emptiness, ydūr fī el-khwā'). Interesting to note here, however, is that Hūwārī himself is
not seen as a particularly ‘traditional’ m’allem, especially given that he is not a ritual
musician, as previously mentioned, but only really plays cultural events for non-ritual
publics.

In any case, we see here another peek into the conflicting desires of m’allemīn:
dīwān ritual, or at least certain aspects of it, cannot and should not be performed on
stage (ma tqaḍdersh tḍīr dīwān sur scènë') because of the restraints and limits of the
stage. But what it is, exactly, that you cannot do when you can play the music, don the
abayat, play a single twenty-five minute borj? Where are the thresholds, in other words,
between acts, their intentions, and social contexts? And yet, at the same time, to only
focus on 'the music' and perform something that is solely 'artistique' or that defers to
typical stage aesthetics—coordinated dancing, playing while standing, having visually
appealing costumes—does not work for Hūwārī either. Here, he points to the main
problem being that these young men do not have a shāykḥ and this is where the big

176 'Nchūff la scènë déjà, eh, ḫliq nkûn jemm’u. Bēsh netf’al m’ā āla (instrument). Nhess… Mā nenjemsh
nekhdem āla bel waqaf. C’est pas... bon... c’est... Kāyn m’allem ent à la scènë u kāyn m’allem ent à
ṭaraḥ fel demm. El-m’allem ent à la scènë, c’est pas possible bēsh ykhdem līlā ent à dīwān pur. Im-}
possible! Kāyn swāleḥ, kāyn communication, kāyn hekda, kāyn ‘afsāṭ, kāyn tell’u, el-m’allem ychūf
shāykhnā, y’āud liq tell’u, mā ḫrēbah, mā ykhūffsh, hekda, yteb’u m’ā jeddah, mā yla ’bssh au hasard…
Hādū c’est le... c’est... kīmā ngūlū hennāya c’est libess, naqās, hakda... hādā hūwā les jeunes ent à derwek
(whispering last word).
Later, when Hūwārī elaborates, he goes even further, however, saying that he thinks the festival is brought down by the young people with no experience who just 'want to dance', referring to stage choreography—'ṣghār; khawīn, baghīn neshtū, hadī yteḥ festival'. He suggests that the festival should only allow 'pure' dīwān, and should require participants to show proof of their having studied with a shāykh.

In an effort to relate to the mʿallemīn about their discomfort with competing against les jeunes, the 'amateurs', and in order to make a connection with their ritual, 'authentic' self image, Faṭma Barūdī then spoke up, almost confession-like: 'Je suis puriste'—'I’m a purist'—in order to situate her position which seems to be an attempt to cushion a potentially sensitive question after all the talk about les jeunes. She asks Hūwārī what happens when someone from 'inside dīwān' (men dākhel ed-dīwān) is not apt to deliver a show ('une spectacle') on stage, purely artistically speaking ('dans une vision purement artistique')? In other words, previous editions of the festival had shown that many 'traditional' mʿallemīn had never played on stage before, were awkward with using microphones, and did not have experience regarding stage sensibilities: how to 'give a good show'. Faṭma was suggesting ever so slightly that perhaps there are certain skills that young people possess, certain sensibilities that a weld dīwān wouldn’t possess, that he wouldn’t be 'apt' (she uses the French 'apt').

Hūwārī clarifies: 'Artistically? No, he’s apt. Why not? He’s apt.' : 'Artistiquement? Non, il est apt. 'Alesh la? Sur scène? Il est apt'. But this is precisely a central issue: the stage simply requires a different skill set, a different aesthetic than ritual, such as how to perform well with microphones, face an audience while standing, and get the crowd going. So far in Bechar, it is generally understood that it is les jeunes who possess these particular skills, despite have little to no ritual background. So when put in competition against ritually trained mʿallemīn who may be twice or three times their age and who are not necessarily motivated to 'put on a good show,' les jeunes often do come out on top.

Hūwārī interrupted to try and explain why, perhaps, the three of them were being so particular and perhaps critical of the young people:

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177 While most of les jeunes who participate in the festival have, in fact, learned the repertoire through recordings, a handful of them do follow a teacher in the sense that some have attached themselves to a mʿameleon, try to learn some of the context and history of songs, and understand the texts. That said, all of the young men in this situation whom I spoke with avoid the ritual as much as possible and emphasise that they are 'only doing the music.'
'Because, the mʿallem, why are we—just to explain to our brothers—the mʿallem, why are we saying these things about the stage, about being seated, about these conditions, why do we do them? Not to complicate things, or... Some might say these are complications, like why one won’t play standing up. Why? Because here, at a certain moment, the mʿallem, he travels [goes into trance]. He’s just smiling, he’s playing this and that, then later, without realising it, that’s it! He goes absent. That’s it! [Amīn: He also goes into trance!] Ahh! He enters, he enters into trance! That’s it. He’s not paying attention.

'He needs... he needs, in order to work these [sacred] things! Ahh, the mʿallem [speaking about Muḥammad Amīn Canon near him], he knows. You see Muḥammad, he looks normal, he’s playing along [the ginbrī], borj after borj, then he’s seized by something. Ayee, that’s it! His shāykh appears before him [in spirit], his father [he sees the spirits of his father] sitting over there, and he remembers the jedba of his shāykh, and that call of his shāykh. . . All that ambiance [or humour, temperament], it gives you a certain yearning [desire] you can only sense in pure gnāwa. You can’t experience that on stage.'

What is not clear from Hūwārī’s comment is if he was using this example of going into trance as rhetorical reasoning for only allowing ritually trained mʿallemīn to play in the festival or whether he thought it could be possible, even probable, that such a thing could happen on stage, at the Bechar festival, should a weld dīwān be the mʿallem. However, what interests me about this last long quote is also the strategic entrance of nonhuman agency—the mʿallem being 'taken by something' when he’s not paying attention, something that sends him into trance. Hūwārī uses this as justification for what might be seen as intolerance towards outsiders: those who have not been ritually trained. Hūwārī also says that this loss of agency on the part of the mʿallem must happen, the mʿallem must 'go absent', meaning go into trance, in order to 'work' the sacred things—yghīb besh ykhdem swāleḥ. But these 'sacred things' that a mʿallem 'works' while in trance, can they be 'worked' on stage? Should they be? Part of the discussion above

seems to suggest that maybe they cannot or should not be but this is not clarified in the discussion.

Furthermore, this 'ambiance' that Hūwārī speaks of that produces a yearning—'gʿa mizāj yʿatih wahed nefḥa'—is essentially ḥāl. Ḥāl is often described as an 'attraction,' a pulling or yearning, something that draws on a person. In the way that I read the meta-discourse of these discourses, and that despite the fact that the mʿallemīn are talking about actions and protocol of how dīwān music should be performed on stage—all the various specifics that we have seen above—the larger anxiety, the meta-discourse here is, I believe, one about ḥāl. Given how fundamental ḥāl is to the epistemology and ontology of dīwān as a whole, we can read the above discussion in understanding that there is a certain incompatibility and tension between the social fields of ritual and festival, between the ṭaraḥ and the stage, even as there are attempts to mediate these tensions. Social fields, like ḥāl do not have clear boundaries or thresholds; their boundaries or limits are porous and ever shifting. As we have seen, humans have limited ability to control ḥāl, something Hūwārī hints at by saying that at a certain moment, when he’s not paying attention, the mʿallem may be seized by something. That is to say, that spiritual energies can inadvertently 'leak' into the secular and the secular can, in turn, also 'leak' into the sacred, such as the way that inappropriate behavior in ritual risks 'polluting' the atmosphere.

Considering that these mʿallemīn are coming first from ritual contexts and attempting to adapt to festival sensibilities, perhaps it is not surprising that the ḥāl that they attach to 'dīwān music', to even the ginbrī alone—'that speaks with a supernatural voice' as Raḥmānī said—is difficult to reconcile with festival sensibilities. Their recommendations that mʿallemīn sit on stage, play a single borj of twenty-five minutes, and that the mʿallemīn have their credentials checked, all suggest ways of somehow guarding a certain aspect of ritual 'authenticity' or ḥāl—what from the outside is loosely indexed as 'traditional'. And yet the fact that 'you can’t do a dīwān on stage'—meaning that there are still certain elements, actions, and feelings to ritual that can never be produced on stage—suggests that this domain of ḥāl is not entirely compatible with the social field of a festival setting whose goal is to entertain, to put on a show, and, as Lʿamārī Ḥamdānī hopes, to 'protect and preserve dīwān tradition'.
C. The Rabbit Incident

On June 12, 2015, the last night of the competition of the ninth edition of the Bechar festival, firqa 'Ṣīdī Blāl Beshār' performed and choreographed two Migzawiyyn brāj back to back, Mikere Gzawa and Migzu.179 Three of the eight members dressed up as hunters, donning brightly coloured tunics with stripes and swirls of geometric shapes, feathered headdresses, strands of objects shaped like animal teeth hanging across their fronts, and long spears tied into bundles on their backs. They skipped around the small stage, pumping their spears into the air, enacting a hunt. The other five members continued to sing and drive the swinging rhythm of the two ṭbola drums and qrāqeb.

Migzu, again, is understood broadly to be the primary guardian spirit and chief hunter of the Forest (Ṣīād el-Ghāba), and the group sang the borj as such:

*Migzu*! *emsha l*-ghāba
(Migzu! went to the forest)

*Migzu*! *Jeb l*-gnīna
(Migzu! Brought [caught] the rabbit)

*Ay nama bani*!180
(Hey, give me the meat!)

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Example 35: Migzu phrase

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179 I use the spelling for the town the way it is represented locally in French while when referring to the group’s name in Arabic, I use the typical transliteration for ‘sh.’

180 Seemingly Hausa language but disputed. ’Bani’ means ‘give me’ and ‘nama’ means meat in Hausa.
Shortly after completing this key verse, one of the young men ducked back behind the stage and pulled a live white rabbit from a cage. Carrying him by his ears and dancing with him a moment, he then dropped him in the middle of the circle formed by the other two 'hunters' who went on dancing while the rabbit flopped around, having had his back legs tied together. After a few minutes, the borj ended and the firqa exited the stage to lukewarm applause.

Speaking with members of the public, many were surprised and some shocked about anyone being so daring to bring a live animal on stage. One journalist standing near me shook his head, 'They do something like this every year!'—indeed, the year before, this same group had brought onto stage their mahalla (sacred trunk) including donning the abayat and setting up a large incense burner that fumigated the stage with bkhūr—again, an agent that can call the jnūn—while one of the members of the firqa sat by the mahalla, acting as a shawsh and dressing the 'jedebbīn' with abayat, and stoking the bkhūr, just as is done in ritual. The act of bringing a mahalla on stage generated controversy for many months after the festival—I especially heard much critique from ālād dīwān and muḥebbīn but also from journalists who thought a sacred boundary had been crossed. Following this up with the act of bringing a live rabbit on stage, then, was alarming. For those ālād dīwān 'in the know', during dīwān ritual, a rabbit is sacrificed for Migzu after which some jedebbīn, deep in trance, might drink the fresh blood from its slit neck. The production of a live rabbit in that moment was, therefore, quite concerning—along with the suspense as to what the troupe was going to do with it. Even for those who did not make the sacrificial connection—journalists and others who I found myself explaining the connection to—the presence of a live animal was itself inappropriately crossing an unspoken barrier. It was understood by many as a 'taking it too far'—'bazzeff!'

Immediately following their performance, I trotted after several, buzzing journalists who raced to interview the group, forming a circle around one member, Dabu Hamū Drīss. Nadīr Hammū of Algeria Press Service (APS) took charge of posing the questions while the rest of us crowded in and pushed our microphones forward. Prefacing his question by mentioning the previous year’s performance with the mahalla on stage and then seeing this year’s rabbit, Nadīr asked if the firqa believed that they could bring any
ritual object on stage without a problem. Did they not have a problem with this? Drīss answered, 'We have no problem [with it]. It’s work. We just employ ['work'] the ritual things. And when there’s no festival, in the last days of Shabān [the month before Ramaḍān], we close the mahalla. . . . It’s not forbidden. It’s normal, normal.'

Perhaps even more interesting is that, later on that evening, as I was circulating among ūlād dīwān backstage, I walked up on a conversation between a journalist and a mʿallem, the latter who was explaining that the firqa Sīdī Blāl Beshār had to rush off because their home had just caught on fire—this fire, he indicated, was considered a 'consequence' for their having brought the rabbit on stage. As he said this, the journalist made the msellmīn-mketfīn gesture—the gesture of humility and deference that is customary after hearing of supernatural, miraculous, or ominous events. The discussions that ensued throughout the night over the rabbit incident and the house fire revealed much anxiety around the breach and the porosity of certain crucial ritual/festival (or ritual/folklore') boundaries. While these boundaries are not explicit, like common sense, the broader dīwān community of practicants, musicians, connoisseurs, and fans treats them as if they should be obvious.

The discourse around the fire as a punishment from the spirits (or some other being) for bringing a rabbit on stage—possibly seen as 'mocking' the spirits or tempting them, as local discourse would typically assert—is also a prime example of the epistemology of shared agency, of outside agency—specifically nonhuman agency—that even in a national festival that presents 'just the music' and that is understood to be 'secular' and 'folkloric', there is always a risk of agency slippage. As I mentioned as well with regard to insiders and outsiders, we can see that no matter to what degree humans assert these boundaries—as we see attempts to do this here in the Bechar festival as well—the supernatural, nonhuman world may intervene at will and have the last word. Just as I explained in the opening of this section around the supernatural dangers of breached boundaries of insiders and outsiders, we saw here that the perceived disrespecting young people—by bringing a live rabbit on stage—were seen to be later punished by the jnūn

181 'Ma ʿandnāsh problēme... là, là henna, dert had el-muḥaseb ʿentā festival... bghīt... hādī khedma. bsīf ʿalina ma bʾaylu ṭuqās . . . ghīr khedemmāhūm. U kān ma jāsh festival, mahalla mbell u hākda fī had el-yemat Shabane,. . . normale, ʿādī' Closing the mahalla means to not use it for the entire month of Ramaḍān, to keep it tucked away safely, while the jnūn are in lockdown.
by setting their house alight. In the end, the supernatural finds its way into the natural, leaking into the most explicit attempt to transmit ‘dīwān music’ in a ‘secular’ context.

Concluding Thoughts on the Festival

In the exchanges I have recounted above, it is hopefully clear that there are certainly territorial battles being waged here through the performance of dīwān music—discursive battles around insiders and outsiders, about who has the right to transmit dīwān, to present it to the public, and how one should go about presenting 'dīwān' to the public, given its connection to the supernatural. Despite anxieties around ḥāl or what Hūwārī implies is a 'higher' discussion around the spiritual world, one cannot deny also the very basic sense of turf wars going on here. I have presented these exchanges above because they are quite typical of the discourses that fill the week of the Bechar festival and these discourses are some of the most legible examples in the world that surrounds dīwān of an explicit grab for agency over transmission: 'the public is going to think that they’re watching Moroccans'; 'the young people bring the festival down', for example. These exchanges above also show very decided, intentional, strategic, and competitive ways of seizing control or of wanting to even while all of these mʿallemīn struggle to articulate what it is that they are trying to control, wherever that line is between ritual and festival, between tarah and stage. This all poses the crucial question—one that never seemed to be asked—who is the festival really produced for? At least at first glance, it’s for a small public in Bechar who do not (apparently) know much about dīwān. But from what can be gathered by the discourse and debates surrounding it, it is as much for the young musicians and experienced ritual experts, both with very different approaches to what should happen.

Although the ambivalence of these mʿallemīn around the tension of ‘tradition’ and ‘modernity’ is never stated outright or commented on, as such, in the discussion, it is hopefully apparent. While these ritually-trained 'purists' want the exclusive right to present dīwān on stage as they see fit—sitting down, having one’s credentials checked, playing only a single borj in twenty-five minutes in order to prove that one can really work a borj, all protocol that actually come from dīwān ritual—regardless of having
mixed ideas on what 'dīwān' might mean on stage (do you allow the ritual materials to be used on stage, too, like abayat and spears?), they insist that ritual feeling isn’t possible on stage. Hūwārī suggests that a m’alleml of the stage and m’alleml of the ritual are two separate categories—a m’alleml of the stage could never play a ritual—he says here, 'Impossible!'

Nevertheless, the three m’allemlin, over the course of this discussion, have repeatedly suggested that a ritual m’alleml would always give a better performance on stage. They also suggest that even on stage supernatural things could happen—this is the reason Hūwārī gives for being so strict about who should be on stage and how they should play on stage (sitting down, for one), even while he says that ritual ambience is not possible except for in ritual—'All that ambience, it gives you a certain yearning [desire], you [...] can’t experience that on stage’. Nailing down the solution, then, as the journalists have found out, is nearly impossible. I would argue that none of the m’allemlin know quite where the line should be between the perceived separate worlds of 'ritual' and 'festival'—perhaps they recognise that there is no firm 'line' because the worlds are porous, even though this is only hinted at despite their continuing attempts to limit and separate the social spaces as well. Whatever the situation is, they want to be the ones with the control to determine it.

The Bechar festival provides a meeting point of exchange, dialogue, and debates for dozens of dīwān troupes from around the country, as well as dīwān connoisseurs, journalists, and scholars. In this way, it acts as a vessel of transmission where ideas, songs, and repertoires are shared. It also, however, galvanises insider-outsider rivalries and disputes, exacerbated by the competitive and monetary elements of the festival. Lastly, in what is seemingly an entirely human-controlled, non-sacred context—a state funded, national festival with an interest only in the music and choreography of dīwān—we also saw that, even here, the supernatural world has the last word so that, as I indicated from the beginning of this thesis, human agency is always slippery.

* * *
In this third section of the thesis, from secrets to family lineages to the Bechar festival, the overarching theme has been to illustrate how ālād dīwān negotiate crises of transmission between the so-called ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’, and to demonstrate what counts as knowledge here. Now, perhaps the most impending question is, ‘Why? What is at stake?’

In the eyes of ālād dīwān, on the grand scale, what’s at stake is the survival of the dīwān ritual and its constituents: integrity of the brāj order, the ritual acts, the song texts, the secrets behind those actions and texts, and the art of a well-played borj that can launch the dīwān, last twenty minutes, and still be engaging. These matters are said to be threatened by ‘modernity’ and the inattentiveness of younger generations who are seen to fail to learn properly or not have the focus to do so—particularly at the festival this generational dynamic is apparent.\footnote{On this note, during the 2013 festival, I heard a young, Algerois mḥeb plead with a mʿallem, ‘But I really want to learn the old ways, the tradition, but no elders will help me or share anything’—to which the mʿallem responded, ‘It’s a test. It takes time.’} Part of the larger issue at hand here is the ability for dīwān generations to be together in the same way: where younger genēdīz sit patiently at the sides of older shyūkh and learn the histories that can only be learned over a long period of time with plenty of patience, and when nobody has anywhere else to be.

Also at risk, as I illustrated above, is supernatural retribution exacted against ālād dīwān if certain ‘traditional’ codes of transmission are not maintained. In other words, safety is at stake. This oftentimes happens when an ‘outsider’ makes a mistake in a ritual context although we saw it happen in the festival, too (the rabbit incident)—that warrants punishment from the nonhuman world. This potential risk also explains part of the anxiety around transmission and who has what knowledge.

At stake is a competition for cultural capital and financial resources when dīwān ‘culture’ or practice is not particularly celebrated or broadly recognised in Algeria. For example, I found that, outside of dīwān worlds, few Algerians know much about dīwān and I often had to reference my research by way of mentioning the ṭbel and qrāqeb groups that play for weddings—usually called ‘qarqābū—or who, in former times (and rarely today), paraded through the streets for alms; the latter is the ‘folkloric’ face of dīwān known within dīwān as ‘kerma’ but that is more popularly known to outsiders as
‘Būsʿadiyya’ or ‘Bābā Sālem’. The short supply of resources also includes access to physical spaces in which to hold rituals—most are held in homes these days as there are fewer and fewer zāwīyat available and funds to maintain them are hard to come by.

Resources also include what modest attention from the press and media dīwān practice sometimes attracts as well as modest funding from the Minister of Culture or from local city governments in order to hold events. For example, Nūreddīn negotiated for months to get partial funding from the House of Culture, Dār Thaqāfa, in Mostaganem to put on his two-day mʿārūf. The enormous, annual wʿāda in Saida is mostly privately funded with the costs shared between individuals who are fortunate enough to have funds to spare or who have the ability to raise funds in the community.

Because resources symbolise the ability to transmit and continue the practice, thereby representing mobility and prosperity, it is understandable that there is a sense of ‘not enough to go around’ for a community who has never been on the side of power, recognition, and influence in Algerian society but who, these days, might feel they are more entitled to it.

On a personal scale, what’s at stake with the challenges of transmission are the survival of family lines of knowledge and therefore, authority, prestige, and power. What kinds of power? To begin with, I mean to address the power to guard and protect ritual information that so few have, or should have access to, meaning that dīwān knowledge remains special and important. Inside discourse amongst ūlād dīwān, there is an unspoken sense in the air that the more people who practice or know the details of dīwān ritual, the less power it has—very much like the case with a ‘secret’ as Simmel (1906) points out—especially if these ‘other people’ learning it do so from outside ritual contexts and are young men with no shaykh to guide them. Since power is a means to control one’s circumstances in the world, loss of power over knowledge can be experienced as the lack of an ability to survive oneself. And given that ūlād dīwān have not historically ever had power, influence, and prestige on their side, loss of ritual knowledge may be experienced as the loss of the only real power ūlād dīwān have held and that has been solely theirs, linking them to their ancestors.

183 The term ‘Būsʿadiyya’ is known much more widely in Tunisian stambelli but in dīwān tends to emerge more often in the East. See Jankowsky 2010 for a full explanation of the history of the term in Tunisia.
In this chapter, while familiar festivalisation themes rumbled in the background, such as how ‘sacred’ music should be consumed and by whom for what purposes, I featured the specific anxieties that experts articulated around festival assumptions and protocol as these experts were pressed by journalists to contextualise their ambivalence. Especially because the festival claims to be trying to ‘protect’ and ‘promote’ dīwān ‘music’ (whatever that may or may not include), there is a sense of struggle over who has the right to take on such a task. Given that the state-sponsored festival is a manifestation of nationalist ideologies of cultural heritage and that it involves the gaze of national media whose discourse is largely out of the control of the participants, the festival project is sometimes perceived by ālād dīwān as a threat to ownership and representation.
CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

This thesis has, first, ventured to document and analyse *dīwān* ritual in unprecedented ways, particularly as the first ethnomusicological study of the practice. By ‘ethnomusicological’ I mean treating the totality of *dīwān* ritual worlds—ritual objects, actions, aesthetics, discourse, songs, trance events—with an anthropological methodology that accounts for music as a social practice. This has meant illustrating not only what is musically meaningful to the community and how the music does what it does, but it also means providing specifics on how songs are constructed and how they are classified into repertoires (Chapter Two and the appendices). To contextualise the material, I established a functional history in Chapter One of how *dīwān* emerged historically as well as the intellectual legacies and historical processes that I needed to grapple with as a researcher, from colonialism to Western academic approaches to the Maghrib and treatments of trance.

With previous *dīwān* sources in mind, particularly Dermenghem and Pâques, I set out to fill in the gaps in knowledge, specifically regarding my concern about researcher and theoretical distance in those sources. I, therefore, aimed to treat *dīwān* with a more intimate approach by featuring specific ritual experts, their ideas, and our conversations, by focusing on taxonomies of feeling within sensory/affective worlds, and by providing multiple ethnographic examples of ritual events, acts, and their discourses. From the beginning of my fieldwork, in order to understand the goals of *dīwān*, I made a point to get as close to trance experience as possible while focusing on the critical role of musical labour in producing the experience of trance.

My proposition of an affective epistemology in Chapter Three emerged because, in the rituals I witnessed and in the conversations I had with experts, everything boiled down to *ḥāl*: the ambience had to *feel* right before anything meaningful—especially trance—could happen. In order to translate my understanding of this affective epistemology and its lifeworld for a presumed Western reader, I was obliged to detail the quotidian, Algerian cultural understandings that set the stage for the phenomena of *ḥāl* and trance. Therefore, in Chapter Three, I detailed how *dīwān* epistemology connected to Algerian lifeworlds in order to adequately argue for this particular *affective* approach.
on my part, as opposed to taking some other framework of analysis. I concluded the chapter by illustrating the primary way that the affective epistemology of dīwān manifests in practice: through systems of affective labour. In Chapter Four, I then proceeded to get into the textures and taxonomies of trance and its critical bodily-affective manifestations.

As part of the broader theme of Chapters Five, Six, and Seven in Part Three on dynamics of dīwān transmission, and in order to address internal anxieties that transmission is in a state of crisis, I gave three case studies of domains of knowledge transmission that I regularly encountered in my fieldwork: modes of secret knowledge, family lineages, and the festivalisation of dīwān. I ended by featuring the dynamics of the Diwan Festival of Bechar because I was interested in the kinds of present tensions around authority over transmission that the festival reveals. This final chapter perhaps leaves the reader wondering, then, ‘what does the future look like for dīwān?’ To attend to this question, I want to reflect here on dīwān transmission across the longue durée since surviving structures of transmission—particularly ritual practice—have not only made it possible for me to experience, study, and write about dīwān worlds but these structures will also largely affect the future of dīwān worlds—something I want to take stock of with the conclusion of this thesis.

In 2017, there is still a vibrant and active ritual world with multiple rituals happening all year round and nearly every weekend in summer time—particularly before and after Ramadān. During the most active months, it would be possible to spend more days at dīwanat than away from them. In other words, rituals are persevering and with them, the knowledge embedded in them, however transparent or secret it may be. As well as ritual performances, transmission has endured through some shaykh-gendūz relationships, despite how tenuous they might have been, and through resilient family lineages who not only guarded their ritual practice, but also possess audio recordings, videos, and photographs.

Because rituals are organised by and constituted of these family lineages and related or friendly kin groups, interaction between these groups, from marriages to reciprocal invitations to historic relationships between family groups has also assured transmission. Ritual protocol, ways of playing, and song repertoires can also be shared between
groups especially in large settings like *wʿadat* where many *mahallat* are present with varying repertoire orders. In addition, such large, usually open-air, publicly accessible rituals where anyone can wander in are also important to transmission as the primary way that ‘outsiders’ can witness and often record *dīwanat* as opposed to the more common invite-only and small, private *dīwanat*.

Transmission happens through oral stories that circulate both within and outside of *dīwān* worlds. Like the music, all *dīwān* history ‘on the inside’ is orally transmitted; I am not aware of any *weld dīwān*, meaning a ritual insider, who has attempted any kind of written history. As noted, the primary occurrence of oral history in my fieldwork was that of secrets and mysterious happenings and these kinds of stories meticulously established the insiders from the outsiders—something that, of course, is fundamental to transmission because what gets shared follows these lines.

Outside these ‘traditional’ and ritually-based structures, contemporary transmission has involved the circulation of amateur ritual and festival recordings and videos that can be shared with thumb drives or online (YouTube) between friends; I witnessed a great deal of this transmission between *muḥebbīn* in the cities. Furthermore, the Bechar festival has also played a part in transmission not just for those participating or in attendance but also for wider publics when the troupe performances end up on national television and musicians later make radio appearances. At the same time, young, stage-savvy *dīwān* troupes and *dīwān*-inspired fusion projects are cropping up amongst young men, especially in the cities and particularly in Algiers. With this youthful enthusiasm comes increasing concert performances (small scale ‘spectacles’), visibility, and media coverage, and even a radio station—Jil FM—with regular ‘*gnāwa*’ centered broadcasts. This thesis, too, is hopefully one contribution toward an understanding and transmission of today’s *dīwān* worlds. In brief, there are plenty of reasons to be hopeful for *dīwān*’s future.

Despite all of the above, it is important to attend to the discouraging experience of *dīwān* transmission for many older *ūlād dīwān* for what it might suggest—beyond an

184 Compromises are made or one group might assert its *ṭreq* over the others.
185 In these programs, *gnāwa*, *dīwān*, and *ṭambelli* tracks are often played in the same show and not always demarcated as separate traditions. In fact, the term *gnāwa* is much more widely known than the other two so that it often functions as a broad, referential category, glossing all three traditions together.
analysis of cynicism or nostalgia—about how dīwān’s shifting place in Algerian society is remembered today. Like we saw with Moqedm Jallūl, the primary reason given to me by multiple informants about the ongoing transmission crisis in dīwān was the death of elders who have not passed on their knowledge to the younger generations—perhaps because of changing times during which priorities had shifted, perhaps because of fear of the shifting politics where occult practices were increasingly seen with suspicion.

It is difficult to construct alternative possibilities and viewpoints about the remembered past and present of dīwān transmission because, in my fieldwork experience, historical information on dīwān emergence, practice, and transmission was already particularly elusive. There was a distinct absence of discourse about how information has actually been passed down, such as how ritual elders were selected for their roles and what was involved in initiations, or if there was any kind of formal training. Most insisted that ritual knowledge was transmitted by observation, talent, and divine blessing (baraka). Despite numerous trips back and forth to Algeria over four years, it was difficult to capture the vicissitudes of dīwān transmission in present day memory except basic information on the local grāba or villages nègres and testimony that rituals did persevere, even through times of great political crisis such as the War of Independence and the Civil War.

As for these larger, destabilising historical processes and their affects on dīwān transmission, Algerian independence was identified as a key problem period by many. While independence certainly caused communities to shift dramatically and while, over time, society grew, modernised, and changed, I collected very little specific information about when and how exactly these dīwān communities broke apart or stayed together, and how modalities of transmission have changed over time.186 The only relevant long-term history openly referenced was the claim by older ūlād dīwān that the brāj were, themselves, stories about Islamic history as far back as the life of the Prophet. While the actual brāj texts almost never supported this claim, I often saw Islamic and trans-Saharan history in the gestures, ritual activities, and ritual objects, such as the borj for Sīdī ʿAlī with the enactment of a warrior on his horse in battle or in the portrayal of

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186 While such detailed information proved to be out of the scope of this thesis, it warrants future attention.
Tuareg hunters in the *borj*, Sergu, who simulate hunting—historically, their ‘prey’ would have included slaves.

This brings me to the most glaring absence of discourse around longterm *dīwān* transmission: the topic of ongoing conditions of slavery and racial segregation that had everything to do with the emergence, practice, and transmission of *dīwān*. In my fieldwork, discourse about slavery was rare in the communities I frequented; it occasionally came up when I began asking for individuals’ perspectives on the history of *dīwān* and its emergence. When it did come up, the tendency was to claim that *dīwān* had no relationship to slavery—except in the ‘south’ such as Ghardaia, Timimoun, and Ouargla where discussion about slavery was dramatically more explicit. In the North, the most memorable mention was by Nüreddīn Sarjī who commented that certain texts about slavery had been ‘removed’ from songs over time (ostensibly by *ūlād dīwān* elders) because they reminded people of this trauma.

Like my own challenges around the dearth of oral history testimony, the scantness of *dīwān* oral histories in all of the *dīwān* sources is not off-set by the textual or ‘official’ histories of *dīwān* either. However, I would propose that a cumulative assemblage of ethnohistory (Harkin 2003, 2010) is emergent between the various forms of transmission practices across time and emerging today: performative transmission (rituals and festivals), discursive transmission (oral history as mysterious happenings, secrets), and technological transmission (audio, video, television, radio).

Reflecting on the kinds of histories I was able to collect as well as the silent gaps, Harkin’s (2003) attention to the relationship between ethnohistory and traumatic events may shed some light on the ways that collective memory or forgetting of slavery and its conditions has been transmitted—or not—through ritual practice: possibly, for example, through the Hausa and Migzawa *brāj* suites that are the most apparent legacy of forced *sūdānī* displacement. In terms of ritual practice, I also wondered about senses of forgetting or repressing—senses, literally, such as how a traumatic, affective load might be transferred, pixellated, or erased across time through the sensorial schemata of trance.

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187 Musicians were willing to talk about their relatives being slaves, even as recently as grandfathers.
188 He said, ‘People used to sing, “They brought us from sub-Saharan Africa [jēbūnā men es-sūdān]”; but they have eliminated these words because they remind people of slavery.’ Personal communication, 2015. Other political traumas are not typically discussed either, such as the Black Decade of the Civil War and how *dīwān* survived in some places and disappeared in others, such as Tlemcen.
Nevertheless, I did not assume that the predominant silence around histories of slavery necessarily indicated forgetting. Alternatively, I wondered about the possibility that trance—the need to publicly and physically imbibe a loss of agency to some ‘other’—might also be a way of precipitating and confronting collective, affective legacies from such a past. Harkin argues, ‘events are experienced and remembered with emotion’ (2003: 262) and the fact that the trance I witnessed and spoke about with my interlocutors was always an affective—and often explicitly emotional—experience within a cultivated affective schemata only reinforced to me the need for this thesis to attend to emotions/affects, subjectivity, agencies, and the phenomenology of experience.

In the simplest of terms, I have wanted to ‘take emotion seriously as a mode of experience and category of analysis’ (ibid: 262). In order to do so, I demonstrated throughout this thesis the importance of how things feel, the prioritisation of affectivity, and the plays of human and nonhuman agency throughout this affectivity. If there is one idea that I want to leave with the reader, it is that dīwān ritual dynamics offer ways of understanding the nexus of music, trance, and ritual as an affective epistemology.

189 On this note, see Kapchan 2007 on other interpretations of the experience of ‘being possessed’ in ritual, such as a metaphor of being possessed by slave masters.
APPENDICES
Appendix 1: Notes on the companion website

Audio recordings of the musical examples in the thesis text can be found on the companion website/blog: http://algeriandiwan.blogspot.co.uk/

Each musical example in the text will have a URL link placed in a footnote. Additional information about each musical example can be found at the linked URL, such as date of event, musicians, and any other performance notes.

In addition to these musical examples, feel free to explore the site for additional photographs, videos, and recordings of my interlocutors.

The site will be regularly updated to include blog entries and updates on musicians or additional media.
Appendix 2: List of Figures, Tables, and Musical Examples

**Musical Examples:**
1. Mūsa 2, *baladī* style 87
2. Mūsa 2, *shergī* style 87
3. Hausa *sūg* in Bilāl and Jamangaru 90
4. Hausa *sūg* in other *brāj* 90
5. *Rās el-borj*, Ḥammū 1 92
6. ‘Abdāqa, *rās el-borj*, Ḥammū 1 100
7. Qwīder, *rās el-borj* Ḥammū 1 100
8. Benʿūda, *rās el-borj*, Ḥammū 1 101
9. Qada, *rās el-borj* Ḥammū 1 101
10. Ḥammitū, *rās el-borj* Ḥammū 1 101
11. First call/response, Ḥammū 1 103
12. Second call/response, Ḥammū 1 104
13. Second *gaṭṭʿa*, Ḥammū 1 105
14. ‘Abdāqa, *sūg* motifs 106
15. Benʿūda, *sūg* motifs 107
16. Qwīder, *sūg* motifs 107
17. Ḥammitū, *sūg* motifs 108
18. Qada, *sūg* motifs 108
19. ‘Abdāqa, *rās el-borj*, Ḥammū 2 110
20: First 8-bar C/R, Ḥammū 2 111
21. Longer C/R section, Ḥammū 2 112
22. Exit phrase, Ḥammū 2 113
23. Final L/R phrase, Ḥammū 2 113
24. Ginbrī cue for *kuyu bungu* to enter, Ḥammū 2 115
25. 3rd *gaṭṭʿa*, Ḥammū 2 115
26. Sergū, *rās el-borj* 132
27. Jangare Mama, *rās el-borj* 135
28. *Gaṭṭʿa* #1, Jangare Mama 137
29. Gaṭṭʿa #2, Jangare Mama 137
30. Gaṭṭʿa #3, Jangare Mama 138
31. Preparation for knife work motif, Jangare Mama 138
32. Knife work motif, Jangare Mama 139
33. Migzu, rās el-borj 212
34. Majdūb hemiola 228
35. Migzu, kuyu bungu and rqīza 264

**Figures:**
1. Photograph of the village nègre, Perrigaux 60
2. Nüreddīn Sarjī and ʿAmmī Daḥū Ḩaḍar 66
3. An Algerian ginbrī 71
4. Qrāqeb pair 75
5. Ṣbola and qrāqeb 76
6. Pentatonic mode with major 6th 77
7. Pentatonic mode with minor 7th 77
8. Isochronous and non-isochronous beat organisation 79
9. Quatre-quatre metric mode, binary triple; binary duple 79
10. Fuson's adaptation of Baldassare 80
11. Off-set quatre-quatre in dīwān 81
12. Triple groove into quatre-quatre 81
13. Fuson's three-stroke 82
14. Evenly spaced six-huit 82
15. Fuson's three-stroke, binary feel 83
16. Jankowsky's three-stroke compression 84
17. Jankowsky's three-stroke compression, graph 84
18. Photograph: Aḥmed preparing bkhūr in Jangare Mama 141
19. Photograph: Trance state 183
20. Types of bkhūr and jāwī collected in Algeria 210
21. Uses of minmor 3rd/minor 6th modal degree 235
22. Photograph: photo board in the Saida zāwīya 243
22. Saida zāwīya during a dīwān 244

Tables:
1. Structure of a borj 94
2. Five performances of the borj Ḥammū 1 compared 109
3. Five performances of the borj Ḥammū 2 compared 117
Appendix 3: Treq Comparisons

The following tables compare the five maḥallat about whom I collected the most complete information regarding treq tartīb, meaning the maḥallat whom I observed play dīwanat most often and with whom I could spend some time discussing the brāj. Tartīb can vary even between groups who play together, such as between the two main maḥallat of the city of Mascara with whom I spent time (BelʿArābī and Zendēr) and even between members of the same maḥalla. Using data both collected in my own observations of rituals as well as what ālād dīwān listed off to me upon my asking, I have represented these āturāq to the best of my knowledge. It is not unusual that the order given to me by ālād dīwān often did not concur with what I observed in ritual. Here, I have separated out these kinds of data with asterisks (see below). As I stated previously, the entire repertoire is never played in one single dīwān; there was not a single dīwān or wʿada I observed that did not skip at least one or two brāj, usually in the interests of time or for being less popular. I have also tried to adapt to this situation by providing brackets when I did not witness a borj in ritual but that I suspect would likely be played in ideal circumstances: enough time to perform every borj. Even after several years of coming and going, observing and asking about these āturāq with ritual experts, new and differing information about the brāj continued to emerge; therefore, these tables should be taken as an estimate and guide.

Brāj can be classified in two overlapping levels of smaller and larger groups: suites and families. Suites contain groupings of two or three brāj, such as Srāga, Mūsa, Sīdī Ḥṣen, and Ḥammū while families, larger groupings that include suites within them, include Baḥriyya, Hausawiyyn, Insaʾwiyyyn, or Şoḥaba, etcetera. I have mainly indicated in these tables below the order and makeup of the families because these are the groupings that tend to vary the most. The larger family groups are in all-caps and bold

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190 The one exception to this is the treq of Ghardaia (technically the Mzab town of Lʿatef, maḥalla of Ḥammitū Samāwī but known most commonly as broadly ‘Ghardaia’). This is because Ḥammitū’s treq begins with quite a number of brāj particular to the Mzab region [number?] which would off-set the comparison chart by too much. Secondly, for reasons of space I have not been able to adequately contextualise the unique and rich tradition of dīwān practice in the Mzab, not to mention the more commonly known musical practice of dūndūn, utilising that while being part of the Bilāliyya treq, uses strictly ṭbel and qrāqeb with call and response singing and elaborate circle and line group dances involving elegant turning.
type while suites, if they are named as such, are in all-caps but regular type. I have colour coded the levels of categorization so that yellow is a brāj family, green is a suite, and blue is a cooling borj.

There is a fair bit of unclarity about how much the Bahriyya brāj family extends. In Mascara, as the table shows, according to my interlocutors, it extends from Mūsa One until Raṣūl Allah Muḥammad, the end of the first main section of the dīwān. I occasionally heard this same categorisation in Oran, too. My educated guess is that there are, in fact, other families and groups but that perhaps ideas of these groups are much less codified so that ‘unknowns’ might get slotted into the category.

I have also noted when some maḥallat include or exclude particular brāj in families, such as that I never heard the Maḥarrar maḥalla of Perrigaux play Ḥammū Two (Bania) although one of the m’allemīn listed it in a conversation about their tartīb.

Other comments, exceptions, etcetera:

• Şalat en-Nabī: prayers for the Prophet
• I have marked the entry to the ritual proper with the borj Lafū, this is where the sacred is invoked with bkhūr. One might argue that this is where the jnūn are called as they would not be called during the brāj for the Prophet—that would be seen as blasphemous.
• Bahriyya: brāj of the water, sea
• Insa’wiyyyn is a family group for the ‘women’, for female jnūn (jinniyat) or female supernatural entities that is noticeable by the names of the brāj: usually mostly female names like Malika, ‘Aisha, etcetera.
• Buḥaira in the Saida category in Table 1, starting with borj five, was the name given by Muḥammad Amīn Canon, referencing ‘lakes’ or fields, or otherwise agricultural areas of which Saida is one.
• Sema’wiyyyn references the sky, Soḥaba references the companions of the Prophet and in Oran, these are often used interchangeably.
• Bambara refers to brāj that are believed to be of Bambara/Bamana (Mande) origin. In some places Bambara brāj were also a kind of water category; people sometimes referred to them as Baḥāra, also referencing the sea.
• Tafilalet, Filali: from the Tafilalet region in Morocco, patron spirit of Sīdī Mīmoun; not commonly heard, primarily only in Saida or extremely western regions near the border. According to local discourse, Bechar purportedly once had the Filali repertoire but it has since been lost. One chart I encountered in Algeria, made by some muḥebbīn in Adrar, Īlād Sīdī Laḥṣen, listed Tafilalet as part of their treq; upon asking later, the list was, I was told, primarily copied from the Mascara treq. Musicians would most certainly know the brāj whether or not they are performed. This is because of the great amount of contact between maḥallat.

• As previously mentioned, there various thoughts about how one splits apart Hausawiyyn/Migzawiyyn/Khela’wiyyyn so I have aimed to stay true to regional classifications

**ORAN**: average of observed and dictated ṭuruq of dīwanat and wʿadat, primarily maḥalla of Qwīder Ben ʿArūbī

**MASCARA**: City of Mascara, average of observed and dictated ṭuruq of dīwanat and wʿadat of maḥalla Īlād Meriem and the partnership between Azzeddīn Benūghef and Benʿūmar Zendēr

**PRGX Z** = Perrigaux maḥalla BelʿAbbess Zerwāli; average of observed and dictated ṭuruq of dīwanat and wʿadat,

**PRGX M** = Perrigaux, maḥalla Dīden Maḥarrar; average of observed and dictated ṭuruq of dīwanat and wʿadat

**SAIDA**: average of observed and dictated ṭuruq of dīwanat and wʿadat of maḥalla kin group Moṭam-Canon-Farajī-Büterfās.
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* = listed by elder but never observed in ritual
** = observed in ritual but not listed by elder
[ ] = although not listed or observed, likely to be there
NC = was not able to classify

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<td>12 Natchero Nanata (Ya Joro)</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 Bori Bangabo*</td>
<td>13 Namandukye Kedadi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Dekori Madendaki (Kobana Diki Diki)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Keri Keri Nachendadi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Matukoyo Tehentecheni</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17 Babag Dji Dmbarki</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Salem Salem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Maalem Kounona</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Kahra Bouka Maalem Kabra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Ya Sidi Sil el Madani</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Elora Elora</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Djouli Ya Djouli</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Youp Youp Aminiame</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Negri Tchahto (Jato)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Dai dai Yedai Kelani Kenkebu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Dendene Bounia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Kelikoulma Djibougerba (jib el ma or Kiri Kiri)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Yena Harbaoua (Ina or Yinna Herbawa)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Notes:**

- **Bori Bangabo**
- **Sayou**
- **Rima Obana**
- **Ya Moulana, Lafou**
- **Rijal Allah, prayer song**

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289
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORAN</th>
<th>MASCARA</th>
<th>PERG Z</th>
<th>SAIDA GINBRI</th>
<th>SAIDA TBEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Migzawiyyen</td>
<td>Migzawiyyen</td>
<td>'Khelawiyyen'</td>
<td>Migzawiyyen</td>
<td>Migzawiyyen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dayday</td>
<td>Kirem Mdawa</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mikerc Obana</td>
<td>Mikerc Gzawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikerc Gzawa</td>
<td>Aroro Makedawa (maybe w/ Dayshakay)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mikerc 6/8</td>
<td>check mascara diwan 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikerc Kupananay (Obana nay)</td>
<td>Jaroro Mawakachi (Jaroro Bawakachi)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Boubounis</td>
<td>Boubounia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikerc 6/8</td>
<td>Mikerc</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Jocroro Mawakashay</td>
<td>Mikerc Kobana Nay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boubounia</td>
<td>Migzu</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Jamarkay</td>
<td>Mikerc Obana Nay 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bani Shawara Dogomah (Dogowah)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Gar jari migzawa</td>
<td>Migzu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mani Magani</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Kororo Makedawa</td>
<td>Jambarkay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabi Lafi Ya Moulané</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Migzu</td>
<td>Jato</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ya Juli</td>
<td>Jaroro Bawa Katchi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Giring Jato</td>
<td>Migzu Makaray</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Mi aleen Kugana</td>
<td>Ya Juli</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Ya kben m aleem</td>
<td>Nini Buka</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Obs Obana Digowah</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bati Magani</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Do Allah Do Anabi</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sadani Qaima</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>[Jarabhayay]</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[Sayou]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bi Lafi, Salat u slam (prayer)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4: Ritual Action (Nashat) Table

The following table is an attempt at the most thorough representation of what happens in an average dīwān ritual, particularly what kinds of ritual actions are required during certain brāj, to show the dominance of the quatre-quatre metric mode, and to show consistency and variation in colour scheme for the brāj.\textsuperscript{191} In the table tartīb I have more or less followed an Oranais ṭreq but with adaptations to Hausawiyyn from Saida.

Migzawiyyn is particularly interesting because it is rarely heard in dīwān ritual (with ginbrī) but almost exclusively turns up in large wʿadat. With the exception of the Arzew wʿāda and/or if Ŭlād Meriem of Mascara are playing with Moqêdm Hūsîn Daïjâî in charge—in which case the brāj will be played with ginbrī, being a family of brāj he is fond of—it is more common to hear them for processions or at festive (folklore, Cultural Center) events, using only ṭbīl, qrāqēb, and with call and response singing only.

X = no information, not classifiable; never observed in ritual nor spoken of by interlocutors.

Tables are split by where there are categorical breaks or common pauses in the repertoire.

\textsuperscript{191} There does not seem to be a great deal of strictness about colour usage in the dīwān ritual, certainly compared to my experience in gnāwa lilat where I found enforced protocol on 'correct' colours for songs. In dīwān, it is not unusual to see several colours on the ṭaraḥ at the same time. Green and red are the most commonly variable (i.e.: Ħammū in Saida is green but red just about everywhere else).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BORJ</th>
<th>CATEGORY(S)</th>
<th>METRIC MODE</th>
<th>COLOUR</th>
<th>RITUAL ACTION, PROPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bania</td>
<td>layu, no official, named category. Might come before Šalū Nabiha in some wadis</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Just qarqem and ibel, call and response singing and circular, group kaya dancing with fancy footwork. Men only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Šalū Nabiha</td>
<td>Šalat en-Nabi</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Group kaya dancing with qarqem in hand by members of the eqaqa. A rotating circle dance that then breaks into two lines facing each other—or sometimes facing the same direction with one person up front like in prayer—with musically cued bowing to the four directions. Three bows to each direction before the lines rotate together to the next direction. Rotating circle reforms, more coordinated dancing followed finally by semi-circled individual footwork solos up and down the tarah with m 'illem giving musical cues for 'approach' and 'retract'. Men only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sid el-Yum aka Sid el-Mal or Sidi Yay</td>
<td>layu/ Salat en-Nabi although this is the one that doesn’t fit.</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Group, circle kaya dancing, rotating circles with hops and special footwork. Circle can later break apart into solos with the gishebi. Men only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lafi</td>
<td>nose</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>green</td>
<td>Bkhar is brought out along with thay of ritual offerings. The mazalia is fumigated with bkhar. These actions transition into the sacred ritual proper so this is where the first trance can happen, now can be men or women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musa 1</td>
<td>Misawiyya suite; Bahriyya family</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>usually green, blue @Perrigaux and Relizane</td>
<td>regular jedha, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jemberka</td>
<td>Bahriyya family, often on its own</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>green (also blue like above)*</td>
<td>Jedha with multicolored flags seen in one diva in Mostaganem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musa 2</td>
<td>Misawiyya suite; Bahriyya family</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>green*</td>
<td>regular jedha, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musa 3</td>
<td>Misawiyya suite; Bahriyya family</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>green*</td>
<td>Sometimes small green flags held in both hands of the jedebbin, waved while dancing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dabu</td>
<td>Bahriyya family</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>green*</td>
<td>Jedebbin take two natural fiber whips, bazalzab, which they hold behind their backs and qarqem with for most of the borj's gatt a until the gishebi and kaya hantq signal a particular gatt a to begin whipping themselves; holding one whip in each hand and alternating B/D, whipping each other over the shoulder in time with the pulse. Some jedebbin might whip in a rotating circle or between two or four jedebbin before individuals approach the m 'illem to be 'worked'.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nabina</td>
<td>Borj for the Prophet, a cooling borj</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>green or no colour</td>
<td>regular jedha, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BORJ</td>
<td>CATEGORIE(S)</td>
<td>METRIC MODE</td>
<td>COLOUR</td>
<td>RITUAL ACTION, PROFS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hammū 1</td>
<td>Hammū suite</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>Usually red. Crema la Saida, Perrigua</td>
<td>Making <em>rwina</em> here if not in the next <em>borj</em>, but often made here in order that it is distributed in the second <em>borj</em>. All ingredients and the containers for water and the basin are fumigated with <em>bkhīl</em>. When the small balls are put on the places, one must do so with crossed hands, the <em>mell/min-mell/min</em> gesture. Rwina is distributed to men and women first, then men, then women. Traditionally it was made by women but today usually made by men except for in Saida and the occasional <em>wada</em> where plenty of elderly, respected women turn up. In Saida, <em>jedebbin</em> also <em>jedab</em> with green flags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hammū 2</td>
<td>Hammū suite</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>red*</td>
<td>Someone feeding <em>rwina</em> to highest ranking musicians, <em>ārid dāwān</em>, and <em>nukashbin</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Hammūda)</td>
<td>Hammū suite</td>
<td>6/3</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habibī Rašū Allāh</td>
<td>Prophet, priest <em>borj</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>regular <em>jedab</em>, no special action required</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BORJ</td>
<td>CATEGORIE(S)</td>
<td>METRIC MODE</td>
<td>COLOUR</td>
<td>RITUAL ACTION, PROPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dawi</td>
<td>indefinite, Sohâba</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>red</td>
<td>Occasionally knives with similar motion to langare Mana but not in groups. Those who don’t want to use knives occasionally use buiallet but this is criticized as breaking tradition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Abd El-Qâdr Jillâni aâlk ‘Shaykh’ because he is known as the King of Saints, Sultan El-Awiliya</td>
<td>Sohâba, Senna’wîyn. There is a sense of ‘Abd El-Qâdr Jillâni, Merziq, and Bû Derbila being a suite of three but with no title</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>white</td>
<td>Typically one or two jedehîn put on a white cloak, take a wooden staff in one hand, and in the other hand, hold a long chain of prayer beads or a rosary (sobhî) or a candle, taking on the personage of the saint, moving slowly, a bit hunched over like an old man.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merziq</td>
<td>Sohâba</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>black</td>
<td>Not discussed widely in NW Algeria but I believe to be Merziq, the saint from SE Algeria, near Biskra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bû Derbila</td>
<td>Sohâba, Another name for and additional personage of ‘Abd El-Qâdr Jillâni</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>white</td>
<td>Sheep skins (lehûnna or haydina) are placed on the backs of jedebûn who hold them on with their hands. Some have strings attached so a jedebîn can nedeh hands-free.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gourma-Jayba</td>
<td>Baiîriyya, sometimes considered part of Sohâba</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>possibly blue, x</td>
<td>Gourma: Circle dance around a large metal basin filled with a small amount of water (gas’a el-ma) around which jedebûn dance, each holding a long stick acting as an oar. Moving in a circle around the basin, they make rowing motions with the sticks, with small hops, occasionally turning to go the other direction. Eventually, someone moved to do so, gets down on the ground, on hands and knees, holding the basin at the sides, turning over it (moving the head and torso) then eventually picks up the basin, may fling out some of the water on the audience as a blessing, and then dumps the rest of the basin over their head. Jayba has no particular action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahîn</td>
<td>Sohâba</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>red, usually.</td>
<td>Traditionally, razors were used to mimic blood-letting at the ankles. This might be done in jest now, with light tapping on the ankles with the razor blades, no real cuts being made. Not commonly seen anymore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BORJ</td>
<td>CATEGORY(S)</td>
<td>METRIC MODE</td>
<td>COLOUR</td>
<td>RITUAL ACTION, PROPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamanguru</td>
<td>mixed</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>green;</td>
<td>regular jëdža, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilia</td>
<td></td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>regular jëdža, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ali</td>
<td>possibly Bahiryya (the green), Sema'wiyyyn (the light blue)</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>green, red, or light blue depending on makalla</td>
<td>One or two people dance with a sword, swishing is high in the air, mimicking slow motion battle moves while dance steps mimic that of a horse running</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdullah</td>
<td></td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Someone acting as 'Abdullah sits in a chair, acting as if they're at a desk pontificating and writing with a quill while at least one person stands by to fan the writer/scholar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buana Madani</td>
<td>mixed, sometimes Insa'wiyyyn, Sehaha</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>sometimes white: Oran</td>
<td>Hard-boiled eggs are given out to the public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rasûl Allah Muhammad</td>
<td>Prophet, cooling boy</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>white</td>
<td>Large satire while lapsed, sometimes inscribed with the words Rasûl Allah Muhammad, is held up at the center and sides by 4-8 men who sometimes also hold candles in the free hand. Under the lapsed is typically an older man or someone who is being blessed by this action, also might be holding a candle. Eventually, as the boy progresses the lapsed is draped over the man in the center. He might sit down. On one occasion this was done for a newborn held in the center man's arms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manou</td>
<td>sometimes Insa'wiyyyn</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>black</td>
<td>regular jëdža, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Babacar ('dayy Allah')</td>
<td>Sehaha</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>regular jëdža, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suleyman (Solomon)</td>
<td>Sehaha</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>regular jëdža, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sali Nabi Muhammad</td>
<td>Prophet</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>regular jëdža, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janari Yum Yam</td>
<td>unclear</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>According to my interlocution, in former times, inhabitants jëdžhin would grab raw meat with their teeth and rip into it. That this borj immediately follows one for the prophet, enschins, is often stated as problematic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naria Narziyay</td>
<td>Insa'wiyyyn</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>none observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havayay</td>
<td>Insa'wiyyyn</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Large baskets filled with hard candies, sugar cubes, and peanuts are carried by a weli dwain, usually a woman, who distributes handfuls to the public. The basket remains covered with a cloth until the time of distributing the sweets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malika</td>
<td>Insa'wiyyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>regular jëdža, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nara Marrano</td>
<td>Insa'wiyyyn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>regular jëdža, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lalla Mimouna</td>
<td>Tafiatta or Insa'wiyyyn</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>regular jëdža, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidi Mimoun le-ghumami</td>
<td>Tafiatta (mostly only played by Said)</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>yellow</td>
<td>regular jëdža, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidi Mimoun 2</td>
<td>Tafiatta</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>yellow</td>
<td>regular jëdža, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mimoun le-grizzi</td>
<td>Tafiatta</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>yellow</td>
<td>regular jëdža, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bousarra (yà wàli)</td>
<td>Insa'wiyyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>regular jëdža, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salamiga</td>
<td>Insa'wiyyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>regular jëdža, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jarayay</td>
<td>Bambara</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>green for some</td>
<td>regular jëdža, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Il Shukur Ruba</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>regular jëdža, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sayou</td>
<td>Bambara</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>regular jëdža, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billima</td>
<td>Bambara</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>A gentleman fergins being inebriated, drinking from a pretend or empty bottle and stumbling around playfully. Although I never heard an explanation for this ritual action, I believe it is connected to the town of Blima in Niger that became known for its supply of fermented drinks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sawarday</td>
<td>Bambara</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>regular jëdža, no special action required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BORJ</td>
<td>CATEGORIE(S)</td>
<td>METRIC MODE</td>
<td>COLOUR</td>
<td>RITUAL ACTION, PROPS</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beulal</td>
<td>Hausawiyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>trance but no particular action observed/noted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rima 1</td>
<td>Hausawiyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>trance but no particular action observed/noted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rima 10a</td>
<td>Hausawiyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>trance but no particular action observed/noted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jaferima</td>
<td>Hausawiyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>trance but no particular action observed/noted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yarah Say</td>
<td>Hausawiyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>trance but no particular action observed/noted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makaniye</td>
<td>Hausawiyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>trance but no particular action observed/noted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ya Juju</td>
<td>Hausawiyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>An expert/jedi takes two small knives and drives them into the tops of his thighs in time with the music pulse. The only bory in Hausawiyyn with a seeming regular ritual action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bewhikli</td>
<td>Hausawiyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>trance but no particular action observed/noted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jangere Kaba</td>
<td>Hausawiyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>trance but no particular action observed/noted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayaama</td>
<td>Hausawiyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>trance but no particular action observed/noted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kebida Diki Diki</td>
<td>Hausawiyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>trance but no particular action observed/noted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BORJ</th>
<th>CATEGORIE(S)</th>
<th>METRIC MODE</th>
<th>COLOUR</th>
<th>RITUAL ACTION, PROPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mikere Ozawa</td>
<td>Migawiyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gay Gay (Dayday)</td>
<td>Migawiyyn</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Azzeddin BeniAch of Massawa told me that this bory has to do with flies biting so sometimes jedefis would imagine imaginary flies. I never observed any ritual action myself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toubaouma</td>
<td>Migawiyyn</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Punching flies in the air, exciting a fight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikere Koba Nay</td>
<td>Migawiyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikere Obana Nay 2</td>
<td>Migawiyyn</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizu</td>
<td>Migawiyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>A wild, white rabbit it set loose and an inhabitant jedefis would catch and kill the rabbit. In former times, I'm told that the jedefis would kill the rabbit by biting into its neck and sucking its blood. The only time I saw this happen in Massawa, it was an inhabitant girl. The rabbit's throat was cut by someone with a knife after which she took the rabbit, sucked at its throat and tore its body in two. In this state, it is understood that Mizu is acting through her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jambakki</td>
<td>Migawiyyn</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jato</td>
<td>Migawiyyn</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Plausible reports that her interlocutors told her that inhabited jedefis would go to the toilet and then smear feces on walls, etcetera. I attempted to confirm this; my interlocutors confirmed that it was a 'bad spirit who did bad things.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacero Bawa Kachi</td>
<td>Migawiyyn</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizgu Makanay</td>
<td>Migawiyyn</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>never heard in ritual, only in Saida w adda with jedefis and q'edah, call/response singing only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ya Julli</td>
<td>Migawiyyn</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>never observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nini Butu</td>
<td>Migawiyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>never heard in ritual, only in Saida suqad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ob Saaba Digiwal</td>
<td>Migawiyyn</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>never heard in ritual, only in Saida suqad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bari Magal</td>
<td>Migawiyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Allah Do Arabi</td>
<td>Migawiyyn</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudani Qaina</td>
<td>Migawiyyn</td>
<td>6/8</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 5: Glossary of commonly used terms

Singular (masculine, feminine)/plural where used:
abāya, abayat: coloured, hooded, usually satin cloaks used as ritual props
ʿarifa, ʿarifat: female aid to the moqedm, attends to trancing women in ritual
bkhūr: special incense used in ritual
borj, brāj: song/s
bulāla, bulalat: animal hide or natural fiber whips of Hausa origin
chenchēna: a flat, metal plate pierced with metal rings around the edges, inserted into the end of the ginbrī neck, with the purpose of jingling and vibrating with each string stroke
gaṭṭ a, gaṭṭ at: ‘cut/s’, usually refers to the cutting of musical mottoes into smaller pieces
genḏūz(a), genēdīz: disciples, referring to the musical ‘disciples’ who play qrāqeb/sing
ginbrī, gnāber: three-stringed, fully transpierced lute, main instrument of dīwān ritual
gurbī, grāba: a shantytown or all black village and often housing a zāwīya or ritual space for the local dīwān community. Also called villages nègres
ḥāl, ḥwal: both a trance state but used more commonly as overall ‘ambience’ in dīwān
istikhbār: long, unmetered introduction
jāwi: benzoin, burned sometimes in dīwān ritual
jedba: a ‘state’ of trance, possibly translated as ‘divine attraction’, ‘emotional trance’
jedēb(a), jeddebīn: trancers, those who trance
jiinn, junun: order of supernatural being, make of smokeless fire, non-human
kumania: a sacred room or large closet where ritual materials are kept when not in use
Kuria: a sub-Saharan, composite language that black slaves are said to have spoken in Algeria and that still makes up some texts of dīwān brāj
kuyu: acrobatic, playful dancing done by male members of the rqīza or public before the ritual proper begins (before bkhūr is brought out)
kuyu bungu, kuyu bungu-s: lead singer who initiates the ‘call’ of call/response singing
maḥalla, maḥallat: can refer to the musical troupe and the trunk of ritual materials
mʿallem(a), mʿallemīn: ‘masters’, usually means one who plays the ginbrī, always male
moqedm(a), moqedmīn: a kind of spiritual leader, oversees the ritual ambience
msellmīn-mketfīn: crossing gesture made with hands to indicate respect and surrender
muḥeb(a), muḥebbīn: ‘lovers of’, connoisseur(s), tends to reference ritual public of ‘regulars’, those who turn up regularly
nūba, nūbat: ‘turn’, refers to someone’s turn on the ritual space in front of musicians
qarqābu, qrāqeb: double-headed metal castanets that accompany the ginbrī
rās el-borj: ‘head’ of the borj, or the main and usually first theme of a song
rażīa: response group of singers, also sometimes called the ‘chorus’ or chorale
ruḥ, arwaḥ: order of supernatural entity, typically thought to be soul of a deceased human. Often translated as ‘spirit’
rwīna: doughy, uncooked balls of grilled wheat, water, and sugar served during certain songs
shawsh: aid to the moqedm, helps referee the ritual space, delivers ritual props to trancers
silṣilā, silṣilat: ‘chain’, here meaning human chain of transmission
ṣīg: to ‘drive’, the last section of most brāj where the ginbrī ’drives’ a riff
tejdeb: most common use of the verb, ‘to trance’
talḥwissa: long, unmetered introduction
ṭaraḥ: the oval-shaped ritual space created by the semi-circle of musicians and public at sides
tarīb: order of songs
ṭbag: flat basket where ritual offerings are placed
ṭreq, ṭurq: ritual path, usually meaning the song repertoire order
ūlād dīwān: children or ‘sons’ of dīwān, meaning those born in the tradition or ‘insiders’
ẓāwīya, zāwayat: lodge or Sufi locale; in dīwān context, a building dedicated for dīwānat
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Benjamins.


