



Review: [untitled]

Author(s): Michael Frishkopf

Reviewed work(s):

Soufis d'algerie: Mostaganem [Algeria: The Sufis of Mostaganem] by Charles Duvelle ;
Jeremy Drake

Chant soufi de Syrie: Dhikr Qâdirî Khâlwatî de la Zâwiya Hilaliya, Alep [Sufi Chanting
Front Syria: Dhikr Qâdirî Khâlwatî of the Zâwiya Hilaliya, Aleppo by Pierre Bois ;Arwad
Esber;Kiam Hamoui; Frank Kane

...

Source: *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, Vol. 35 (2003), pp. 232-234

Published by: International Council for Traditional Music

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4149359>

Accessed: 30/09/2008 15:44

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublisher?publisherCode=ictm>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1995 to build trusted digital archives for scholarship. We work with the scholarly community to preserve their work and the materials they rely upon, and to build a common research platform that promotes the discovery and use of these resources. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



International Council for Traditional Music is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Yearbook for Traditional Music*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

record and share the repertory—hundreds of *maqam* have already been lost or forgotten over the centuries. Further, the notes include copies of his letter to Sayyed Nasreddine Haydari Guran, the Yarsan spiritual leader of Guran (a mountainous territory on the Iran-Iraq border where many Ahl-e Haqq sacred places are located), requesting permission to pursue this recording project, and a reply from Sayyed Nasreddine, granting his approval.

This collection features compelling performance, good recording quality and informative liner notes. It promises to fulfill the artist's preservation objectives and serves as an important resource for researchers and students of Kurdish sacred musics.

Reference cited

Mir-Hosseini, Ziba
1994 Redefining the truth: Ahl-i Haqq and the Islamic Republic of Iran. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 21/2: 211-28.

WINNIE LEE

Soufis d'algerie: Mostaganem / Algeria: The Sufis of Mostaganem. 2003. Prophet Collection 31. Philips 472 503-2. Recorded and annotated by Charles Duvelle. 19 pages of notes in French and English. English translation by Jeremy Drake. 2 colour photographs, 1 map. 1 compact disc, 8 tracks (69:44). Recorded in the field in June 2001.

Chant soufi de Syrie: Dhikr Qâdirî Khâlwatî de la Zâwiya Hilaliya, Alep / Sufi chanting from Syria: Dhikr Qâdirî Khâlwatî of the Zâwiya Hilaliya, Aleppo. 2002. INEDIT/Maison des Cultures du Monde W 260109. Recorded by Pierre Bois. Annotated by Arwad Esber. 28 pages of notes in French and English. Poems translated by Kiam Hamoui. English translation by Frank Kane. 5 B/W photographs, 1 line drawing. 1 compact disc, 8 tracks (72:11).

Maroc: L'art du samâ' à Fès / Morocco: The Art of Samâ' in Fez. 2002. Disques VDE-GALLO VDE CD-1104. Recorded by Ted Levin. Annotated by Azzeddine Kharachafi. 19 pages of notes in French and English. English translation by Ted Levin and Marie-Helene Thibeault. 4 B/W photographs. 1 compact disc, 4 tracks (58:42). Recorded in the field in 1997.

Sufis (Muslim mystics) often reconcile the diversity of their ways (*tariqas*) with the one Divine reality (*haqiqah*) by likening the former to a wheel's spokes, and the latter to its hub. Some may consider Sufi CDs (sorted in "world music" bins) and staged performances as far from those "ways". Yet, there is nothing essentially new about a representation self-consciously designed to attract "foreigners"; this is something Sufis have always done. These three CDs, though presenting diverse sounds, and occupying contrastive positions within Sufi "tradition", nevertheless serve to illustrate its remarkable unity.

Sufi music conjoins aesthetics and spirituality. To promote spiritual growth, Sufis deploy corporate rituals (*dhikr*, *hadra*) featuring textual recitations, often tonally modulated. Musicality increases with melodic performance of devotional poetry (*sama*'), sometimes with instruments. Unifying Sufi practices across regions, poetic genres and themes (supplications; praise; love; intoxication) are remarkably consistent. So are performative features, such as acceleration or tonal ascent, designed to facilitate spiritual emotion (*wajd*). But the musical dimension of Sufism is also rooted in local musical traditions. In times of change, it helps preserve them. Presenting Sufi-musical sounds of Algeria, Syria and Morocco, these CDs provide instances of these phenomena.

All three discs include background notes containing information on Sufism (general, historical, local), Sufis (relevant saints, *shaykhs*, performers), rituals, and poetic and musical traditions. Though abbreviated, notes are on the whole accurate and useful. All but *Soufis d'algérie* provide at least some poetic texts and translations, though unfortunately not transliterations. None adequately explains musical traditions in such a way that components (modes, rhythms, textures, forms) could be appreciated and linked to broader currents of Arab music. All but *Maroc: L'art du samâ' à Fès* provide individual track notes.

Soufis d'algérie focuses on performances of three orders (*tariqas*) of Mostaganem, Algeria: the 'Alawiyya, 'Issawiyya, and Buabdaliyya. An explicitly-stated concern for authenticity—replicating the experience of "authentic" events (not driven by world music markets) through respect for ambient sound and natural temporal boundaries—shapes recorded representations in both rural and urban settings. Two distinctive tracks of women performers (*faqirat*) help illuminate this crucial but oft-ignored area of Sufi practice. The disc's centrepiece is the remarkable 'imara, an extended 30-minute recording of an 'Alawiyya ritual, enabling a truly immersive experience of dizzying intensity. This clear recording, respecting ritual boundaries and recorded *in situ*, exemplifies ritual documentation at its finest. Three specific shortcomings: (1) lack of texts or translations—a critical omission in poetry-centric Sufism; (2) lack of musical contextualisation, falsely implying an isolated Sufi music; (3) missed opportunity to interpret performative differences between orders. But this is a wonderful disc.

Chant soufi de Syrie presents a representation of the complete *dhikr* of the Qadiri Khalwati order (Aleppo, Syria), a crystal-clear recording of a mock-ritual performance staged in Paris, clearly intended for aesthetic more than spiritual appreciation. However, from the standpoint of repertoire, sequencing and pacing, this staged version is faithful to the spiritual ceremony of the *zawiya* (prayer room). The cycle contains a full complement of Sufi musical types. Notable is the use of ambiguous love poetry, close proximity (in use of *muwashshahat* and *qasidas*) to the broader urban Levantine musical heritage, and remarkable examples of ascending tonal motion (tracks 4, 5), suggestive of a parallel spiritual one (*at-taraqqi*), though these significant facts are given scant attention in the notes. Commendably, all poetry is translated.

Moving one representational step further afield, *Maroc: L'art du samâ' à Fès* presents musical aspects of the general Moroccan Sufi tradition, detached

from any particular order or ritual, as performed by the Ahl-Fas orchestra. Professionalised trans-*tariqa* musical performance has a long history in Sufism. Though Si Muhammad Bennis' broadly preservationist agenda is perhaps new, and the prominence of instrumental resources is surely related to the group's concert-going audiences in the Arab world and in Europe, the basic repertoire of *qasidas*, *muwashshahat*, *zajals* and *mawwals*, overlapping with secular urban art music (*ala*), is essentially traditional. Sufi poets whose work is performed—for example, Shushtari and Ibn al-Farid—are sung across the Arab world. Detailed track-by-track notes would have been helpful. Only textual excerpts are translated (Arabic texts are available in the French notes section).

Sufism's ubiquity, inherent conservatism and appreciation of music's spiritual power have enabled it to preserve traditions of musical-poetic performance, while modulating them according to its purposes. These discs, providing outstanding examples, are superb resources for students of Islam, Sufism and Arab music, as well as for all who wish to understand the important historical, aesthetic and spiritual connections among these domains. They also enable, for the listener who is so inclined, a taste of the Sufi experience itself.

MICHAEL FRISHKOPF

The Yemen Tihama: Trance and Dance Music from the Red Sea Coast of Arabia. 2002. International Music Collection of the British Library National Sound Archive. Topic Records TSCD 920. Recorded and annotated by Anderson Bakewell. 15 pages of notes in English. 2 colour, 1 B/W photographs, 4 drawings, 1 map. 1 compact disc, 15 tracks (60:23). Recorded in the field.

This is an expanded reissue of an LP originally published by Lyricord (LLST 7384) in 1985 under the title *Music of the Tihama: The Afro-Arabian Crossroad*. The recordings were made by Anderson Bakewell as part of the Tihāmah Expedition, a multidisciplinary project that brought together scholars and artists for two months in 1982 (see my review of the LP, Lambert 1987). As in the original, the CD includes mainly instrumental music from Tihama: lyres, reed clarinet, flutes and, above all, percussion ensembles. Most of the pieces are meant to accompany dance, some trance dances. The African influences emphasised in the 1985 subtitle are still noticeable in the CD. As these recordings were made in the field, they have great documentary value, especially since this region is not easily accessible. By comparison with the LP, the CD has been augmented (tracks 6-9 and 12-13 comprise new material) and re-mastered with the original tracks in a different sequence.

The six new tracks include a song from the *zār* possession cult played on the *tanbūra* (a large lyre locally called *tunbara*; track 6); a special rhythm, *tahdīra*, played for pilgrimages to the shrine of the holy man Shamsi al-Ahdal (track 7; track 15 provides another example of this rhythm); and two additional examples of drumming from the saint's day festival of Shamsi al-Ahdal (tracks 11 and 12). Track 9, "Sharah Dance", ought to be another piece named after its rhythmic pattern. However, the *sharah* rhythm (a polyphonic 2 against 3) does