

# THE MUSICAL AFTERLIVES OF AL ANDALUS: IDENTITIES AND ENCOUNTERS BEYOND HISTORY



Online Workshop, September 9-11, 2021

Programme



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**UNIVERSITY OF  
ABERDEEN**



**UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE**  
Faculty of Music



The University of Manchester

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## INTRODUCTION

We are delighted to welcome you, our distinguished participants, to this workshop hosted by the Universities of Aberdeen, Cambridge and Manchester. The workshop forms part of the European Research Council funded project, 'Past and Present Musical Encounters across the Strait of Gibraltar' (MESG\_\_758221), which runs from 2018–2023.

MESG explores the musical encounters that take place between North Africa and Southern Europe, focusing in particular on musical styles and communities associated with Spain, Morocco, France and Algeria. Combining historical research and ethnographic fieldwork, we trace music's role as a form of cultural encounter in both colonial and postcolonial settings. We are interested in how music has been used to suit different cultural and political agendas: to legitimise European colonialism and the representation of North African peoples; to perform a collective cultural memory across the Strait of Gibraltar; as a form of cultural diplomacy between different ethnic and religious communities; and as a form of transnational identity formation for North African communities in the diaspora.

This workshop forms an integral part of the project, where we seek to examine and disrupt the 'standard narrative' associated with musical representations of al-Andalus. The MESG team is delighted to bring together such a prominent group of scholars working in this area, and we look forward to the discussions that will take place. It is a shame that we are unable to meet in person, but we hope that the online environment will still enable a fluid and in-depth exchange of ideas. We have decided to keep the workshop closed to the public so that we are able to share our work and facilitate feedback and a free exchange of ideas in an intimate environment as we work towards an edited volume.

Welcome, and we would like to thank you for your participation and hard work.

The workshop has been organised by:  
Samuel Llano, Veronika Lorensen, Matthew Machin-Autenrieth (Chair),  
Vanessa Paloma Elbaz, Eric Petzoldt, Stephen Wilford

## CONTEXT AND AIMS OF THE WORKSHOP

The notion of al-Andalus as a site of tolerance and exchange far expands the borders of the Iberian Peninsula. The idea of interfaith dialogue in Medieval Spain has become something of an ideological 'commodity', one that is traded for various social, cultural and political agendas around the world. While historical work has debunked the 'myth' of al-Andalus as a 'model of tolerance and coexistence' (Anidjar 2006: 235), the perverseness of al-Andalus as a trope for intercultural dialogue is apparent. Yet, while al-Andalus may be 'good to think' (Shannon 2015: 29), it has a chequered past given its intricate ties with European colonialism in North Africa (Calderwood 2018) and various nationalist projects around the Mediterranean.

Music plays an important role in bringing al-Andalus into dialogue with the present. The aim of this workshop is to examine the musical 'afterlives' of al-Andalus and how different interpretations of the period are presented through music for a range of social and political ends, in both colonial and postcolonial contexts. The workshop considers the complex ways in which music is harnessed by practitioners, audiences, institutions, governments and industries to put al-Andalus into dialogue with various social and political issues, such as colonial propaganda, intercultural dialogue, nationalism, cultural diplomacy and political protest.

The workshop brings together scholars from a range of disciplines, facilitating a comparative approach across a number of geographical contexts and musical genres. Existing research in the area has tended to focus on how the concept of al-Andalus is articulated musically in national contexts, especially across Southern Europe and the Maghreb. Besides from Jonathan Shannon's book *Performing al-Andalus: Music and Nostalgia across the Mediterranean* (2015) and Ruth Davis' edited volume *Musical Exodus: Al-Andalus and its Jewish Diaspora* (2015), there is no comprehensive book project that draws together different case studies from across various geographical and political contexts. As such, this workshop will lead towards the first collection (edited by Matthew Machin-Autenrieth and Charles Hirschkind) to examine the multiple, and sometimes contradictory, ways in which al-Andalus is envisioned through music.

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS, JONATHAN SHANNON

### 'THE FUTURES PAST OF AL- ANDALUS:

### REFLECTIONS, REFRAINS, RETURNS'



The Andalusí musical and poetic legacies continue to exercise our imaginations even into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Andalusí legacies and heritages reverberate across time and place and continue to inspire not only scholarship but also cultural productions around the world in a wide range of mediums: in music and poetry, of course, but also in theater, painting, architecture, cuisine, and other forms of popular culture. What can we learn not only about but *from* the story of al-Andalus as a “first-rate place” and “culture of tolerance” (Menocal), and as a global project in the face of intolerances – Islamophobia, what Fuchs calls “Mauophobia,” amidst rising populist politics? What lessons can we learn from reinventions of the Andalusí legacies, both historical and contemporary?

Drawing on scholars of the Andalusí literary and musical legacies – including the distinguished participants at this very conference – in this talk I explore what might be called “the staying power” of the Andalusí tropes in contemporary academic and popular discourses. I explore the powerful afterlives (Civantos) and futures past of the Andalusí legacy, focusing on three contexts: the Mediterranean, the Levant, and the Gulf. I have previously argued that al-Andalus remains popular because it is “good to think” (Levi-Strauss) and thus the *rhetoric* of al-Andalus remains relevant for wide audiences around the Arab world, the Mediterranean, and beyond. Yet, while ideas of a shared heritage are compelling, to what extent are they also misleading, possibly dangerous? What might be an Andalusí term for whitewashing history? I review recent works that compel us to move beyond the discourses of tolerance and influence toward a more nuanced (and politically engaged) understanding of the role of these legacies in the cultural politics of the current moment.

#### BIOGRAPHY

Jonathan H. Shannon is Professor of Anthropology, Hunter College and the Graduate Center, The City University of New York. He earned his B.A. in English Literature from Stanford University and the Ph.D. in Anthropology from the CUNY Graduate Center. His research and writing focus on culture in the Mediterranean and Arab world, with a special focus on Syria, Morocco, Spain, and Turkey. He is the author of numerous articles, two scholarly monographs (*Among the Jasmine Trees: Music and Modernity in Contemporary Syria*, 2006; *Performing al-Andalus: Music and Nostalgia across the Mediterranean*, 2015), and a novel (*A Wintry Day in Damascus: Syrian Stories*, 2012). Shannon is the recipient of many awards and fellowships, including from Fulbright and Guggenheim. He is currently working on two projects: a book on Syrian migrant musicians from Syria to Scandinavia, and a collection of essays on itineraries of sounds, spices, and poetry around the Mediterranean. In addition, he performs on the oud (Arabian lute). From 2018-2021 he was Visiting Professor of Anthropology, Head of the Music Program, and Associate Dean of Arts and Humanities at NYU Abu Dhabi.

# WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

All times are GMT+1

## **Thursday 9th September**

16:00–16:30: Introduction: Matthew Machin-Autenrieth

16:30–17:15: Steve Wilford (Response: Jonathan Glasser)

17:15–18:00: Matthew Machin-Autenrieth (Response: Charles Hirschkind)

18:00–19:00: Break

19:00–19:45: Maria Rijo Lopes da Cunha (Response: Jonathan Shannon)

19:45–20:30: Samuel Llano (Response: Eric Calderwood)

## **Friday 10th September**

15:30–17:00: Keynote Address: Jonathan Shannon

17:00–18:30: Break

18:30–19:15: Ruth Davis (Response: Maria Rijo Lopes da Cunha)

19:15–20:00: Eric Calderwood (Response: Matthew Machin-Autenrieth)

20:30–22:00: Social event

## **Saturday 11th September**

16:00–16:45: Vanessa Paloma Elbaz (Response: Dwight Reynolds)

16:45–17:30: Cristina Moreno Almeida (Response: Steve Wilford)

17:30–18:00: Break

18:00–18:45: Dwight Reynolds (Response: Samuel Llano)

18:45–19:30: Jonathan Glasser (Response: Vanessa Paloma Elbaz)

19:30–20:00: Closing Remarks

## ABSTRACTS

### ERIC CALDERWOOD

#### “AL-ANDALUS IS MY RACE!”

Friday, September 10, 19:15 GMT+1



#### ABSTRACT

My submission to the workshop is an excerpt from a longer chapter about the musical afterlives of al-Andalus. In the chapter, I explore how artists, from the early twentieth century through the present, have worked to perform, imagine, or embody the legacy of al-Andalus through music.

Building on recent work by Jonathan Shannon, Charles Hirschkind, Matthew Machin-Autenrieth, and others, my approach, in this chapter, has been to treat music as both an object of study and an analytic tool for thinking about how the legacy of al-Andalus operates in contemporary culture. Many of the examples that I discuss in the chapter are collaborations between Spanish and North African artists, especially ones working in flamenco, Andalusí music, and related genres. The excerpt that I've submitted to the workshop is the chapter's last section, where I explore how hip-hop artists have, in recent years, engaged with the memory and legacy of al-Andalus.

#### BIOGRAPHY

Eric Calderwood is an Associate Professor of Comparative Literature and Arabic at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he also holds faculty appointments in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, the Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, the Department of History, the Program in Medieval Studies, and the Program in Jewish Culture and Society. He is the author of *Colonial al-Andalus: Spain and the Making of Modern Moroccan Culture* (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2018), which won the 2019 L. Carl Brown AIMS Book Prize in North African Studies and received Honorable Mention for the 2019 Nikki Keddie Book Award from the Middle East Studies Association. The book has been translated into Spanish as *Al Ándalus en Marruecos* (Almuzara, 2019). In addition to his scholarly publications, Calderwood has contributed essays and commentary to such venues as NPR, the BBC, Foreign Policy, and McSweeney's Quarterly.



RUTH DAVIS

## CONVIVENCIA AND ITS MUSICAL AFTERLIVES:

## PERSPECTIVES FROM BRITISH-MANDATE AND CONTEMPORARY JERUSALEM

Friday, September 10, 18:30 GMT+1

### ABSTRACT

The myth of *convivencia* (coexistence) has been adopted to describe a variety of Mediterranean music projects that claim to inspire, promote, or embody harmonious relations between Jews, Christians and Muslims. Typically associated with projects that reference Al-Andalus and the western Mediterranean, the concept has been embraced by a wide range of productions referencing Jerusalem and the eastern Mediterranean, particularly in the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict.

My paper focuses on two related projects that took place in Jerusalem, some eight decades apart: The series of radio programs entitled "Oriental Music" by the German Jewish emigré ethnomusicologist Robert Lachmann, broadcast by the Palestine Broadcasting Service in its inaugural year (1936–37); and the film *A Magical Substance Flows Into Me* (2015) by the Palestinian artist Jumana Manna, in which she takes a selection of Lachmann's digitally restored recordings from my edition of his programs (Davis 2013) to communities descended from (or otherwise related to) those he recorded, and documents their reactions. I focus on the scene featuring the Israeli singer of Moroccan Jewish heritage, Neta Elkayam, in which she sings in Moroccan Arabic accompanied by her husband Amit Hai Cohen on the banjo. In an impassioned soliloquy she explores the richness and



complexities of her relationship with her North African Jewish-Arab-Berber heritage and the journey she took to reclaim it in the face of the deliberate erasure of Jewish diasporic cultures effected by the melting pot ideology of Israeli statehood.

Manna explains that her film "renders visible the complex interdependency of identities that were falsely made discrete from one another [. . .] between Arab-Jews or Eastern-Jews [. . .] and the Palestinians." Yet, as the case of Neta Elkayam suggests, the myth of peaceful co-existence, based on harmonious encounters around musical and other cultural commonalities, may obscure the complex, sometimes uneasy interplay of distinctive narratives adopted by individual communities to describe their own and each other's pasts.

### BIOGRAPHY

Ruth F. Davis is an ethnomusicologist specializing in music cultures of North Africa, the Middle East, and the wider Mediterranean. A Life Fellow of Corpus Christi College and Emeritus Reader in Ethnomusicology at the University of Cambridge, her publications include over 50 peer-reviewed articles, books, and book chapters, and she has presented numerous broadcasts for BBC radio and international radio and television stations. She chairs the International Council for Traditional Music's Mediterranean Music Study Group and is the Music Section editor of *Encyclopaedia of Islam* Three.

VANESSA PALOMA ELBAZ

THE RACIALISATION OF  
SOUND: POST AL-ANDALUS  
THEORETICAL STRUCTURES  
AS A TECHNOLOGY  
COUNTERING *PUREZA DE  
SANGRE*

Friday, September 11, 16:00 GMT+1

ABSTRACT

This essay explores the enduring influence of the ontological position of music and performance within larger structures of power, connection, and influence in the trans Gibraltar region, based on relationships between race, music and philosophy. Two parallel phenomena appear to intersect within music theoretical and philosophical texts that circulate in this region, seemingly impacting the associations musicians and audiences create between repertoire, genealogy, philosophy, and minority status. The first appears in foundational texts that establish music and sound as intrinsic to the loftiest levels of creation (ex. Boethius, al Farabi). The second, in 16th and 17th century texts on music's metaphysical connection to sonic and physical musical genealogies, developed in diasporic post Al-Andalus musical traditions (ex. Alemano, ibn Gabirol, al Harizi). Shortly after their departure from Spain, Jewish and Muslim theorists integrated the visual technology of the tree, using the arbor porphyryana, establishing a musico-philosophical nexus between music, *pureza de sangre* and genealogy. Contemporary uses of these visual musical trees point to a long history of shared conceptual thought established by schools of philosophy, logic, mathematics and music, which continue to be in use today.



BIOGRAPHY

Vanessa Paloma Elbaz is Research Associate at the University of Cambridge and Peterhouse. Dr. Elbaz' research focuses on Popular Jewish music in Morocco, Jewish-Muslim musical interactions, Sephardi women's musical repertoire, and the gendered aspect of music, minorities and transmission in the trans Gibraltar region. After a Senior Research Fulbright fellowship to Tangier and Tetuan (2007-2008) following a performance career, she pursued a PhD at the Centre Moyen Orient Méditerranée (CERMOM) at INALCO, Sorbonne Paris Cité. In 2012 she founded KHOYA: Jewish Morocco Sound Archive, as a repository for the sonic memory of Jewish Morocco. Her research has been supported by the American Institute for Maghrib Studies, Cambridge University Arts & Humanities Fund, MSCA H2020, Hadassah Brandeis Institute, American Sephardi Federation, Posen, Matanel, and Amado Foundations among others. Dr. Elbaz has published over twenty five articles, book chapters and essays in both the academic and popular press. Her work has been featured extensively in the press such as New York Times, France24, L'Express, BBC, Times of Israel, NPR and PBS. Her book *Chants des femmes juives du nord du Maroc: rôle vital d'un répertoire oublié* is forthcoming with Brill, 2022. She is currently writing a monograph as part of the MESH project tentatively entitled: *The Ears and Minds of the Heirs of al-Andalus: Deploying Jewish Music towards a Diverse Nationalism*.

# JONATHAN GLASSER

## BRANCHING, BLENDING, AND THE QUESTION OF SPANISH-MAGHRIBI MUSICAL RELATIONSHIP

Saturday, September 11, 18:45 GMT+1



### ABSTRACT

In Spain and in the Maghrib, there is a widespread belief that there is a link between Spanish music (particularly flamenco) and Maghribi music (including the nuba tradition) by way of al-Andalus. Yet this is an awkward fit, and fusion projects sometimes wind up drawing on Maghribi genres that are not in fact those that are usually said to have come from al-Andalus. Here I use two contrasting models of cultural evolution—the branching model and the blending model—to explore this problem as it presents itself in recent scholarly literature. I argue that the discourse of Spanish-Maghribi musical relationship is a classic example of a branching model rooted in vertical, phylogenetic patterns. However, the success of this discourse depends on highly selective listening. I attempt to specify what this listening tunes into and what it tunes out. Among the latter is a long modern history of Maghribi experimentation with Spanish genres. This history suggests a blending model of cultural evolution, rooted in horizontal patterns of diffusion. On the one hand, this blending model challenges the branching model. On the other hand, it also opens up possibilities for a more complex and more convincing branching model.

### BIOGRAPHY

Jonathan Glasser is Associate Professor of Anthropology at William & Mary, a university in Williamsburg, Virginia. His first book, *The Lost Paradise: Andalusí Music in Urban North Africa* (University of Chicago Press, 2016), received the Mahmoud Guettat International Prize in Musicology from the Tunisian Ministry of Cultural Affairs and the L. Carl Brown Book Prize from the American Institute for Maghrib Studies. His current book project focuses on Muslim-Jewish relationships around music in Algeria and its French diaspora.

SAMUEL LLANO

MUSIC, EMPIRE AND  
CULTURAL DIPLOMACY:  
SPAIN AT THE FEZ  
CONFERENCE ON  
MOROCCAN MUSIC  
(1939)

Thursday, September 9, 19:45 GMT+1

ABSTRACT

In May 1939 delegates from Morocco, France, Spain and the Arab World gathered at Fez to celebrate the first international conference on Moroccan music. The Conference developed over a background of intense rivalry between European powers to increase their political and economic influence in North Africa. Spain was anxious to extend its influence in Morocco by weakening French authority, and was willing to use cultural diplomacy events such as the Fez Conference to that end. Moreover, the Conference offered an opportunity for Spain to negotiate its conflicting relationship with "its" Muslim past, which Spanish intellectuals regarded ambivalently as a source of pride or embarrassment. Spain's participation at the Fez Conference was indeed caught up between the desire to invoke al-Andalus as a form of colonialist propaganda, and the sense that doing so would revive the ghosts of the black legend.

The following analysis of Spain's participation at the Fez Conference on Moroccan Music explores these and other tensions to raise questions pertaining to Spain's unique position in the debates about Andalusí music unfolding at the time of the Conference. To what extent was the discourse on Andalusí music emerging in the context of colonial rivalry suitable for Spain to rewrite the memory of "its" Muslim past? What could Spain's



unique perceived position as both as an insider and an outsider relative to notions of Europe reveal about western attitudes towards Andalusí music in a context of colonial rivalry? What strategies did Moroccan musicians put into effect in order to resist claims made by Spanish and European musicologists that only they possessed a critical, discerning ear, capable of showing Moroccans the way out of "the musical past"?

BIOGRAPHY

Samuel Llano is a Senior Lecturer in Spanish Cultural Studies at the University of Manchester. He specialises in the cultural history of music and sound in Spain and the western Mediterranean, with a focus on transnational exchange and urban studies. He is the author of *Whose Spain?: Negotiating "Spanish Music" in Paris (1908-1929)* (OUP, 2012); and *Discordant Notes: Marginality and Social Control in Madrid (1850-1930)*. He is currently writing a book titled *The Empire of the Ear: Music, Race and the Sonic Architecture of Colonial Morocco* for OUP. He is co-editor of "Spanish Sound Studies" (2019), a special issue of the *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies*; "Heroes of Wrongdoing" (2017), a special issue of the *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*; and the volume *Writing Wrongdoing in Spain* (Tamesis, 2017). He is currently co-editing (with Matthew Machin-Autenrieth and Salwa el-Shawan Castelo-Branco) *Music and the Making of Portugal and Spain since the Nineteenth Century* (Illinois UP, forthcoming).



## MATTHEW MACHIN-AUTENRIETH

### CARLOS CANO'S "MOROS Y CRISTIANOS": THE MUSICAL POLITICS OF CULTURAL MEMORY AT THE *DÍA DE LA TOMA*

Thursday, September 9, 17:15 GMT+1

#### ABSTRACT

The *Día de la Toma* [Conquest Day] is an annual festival held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> January that celebrates the Catholic reconquest of the Islamic Nasrid Kingdom of Granada in 1492, which resulted in the final collapse of Muslim rule in Spain, the expulsion of Jews and, later, the forced conversion of Muslims. In recent years, the festival has become politicised as a platform for both ultra-nationalist, anti-immigration groups and Andalusian protest movements that seek to convert the event into a 'festival of tolerance' through the exaltation of Andalusia's interfaith past. From Franco-era fascist anthems, to political chants, popular music and flamenco, music and sound are an integral feature of the festival and serve conflicting readings of the cultural memory of the *reconquista*. Drawing on fieldwork at the Toma in 2019, this research will culminate in a monograph chapter that examines the 'soundtrack' of the festival, both in terms of the structural functioning of the event and how music and sound are used by different groups to politicise cultural memory. For this paper, I analyse the politics of cultural memory at the Toma through the prism of popular music, specifically focusing on the song 'Moros y Cristianos' by the Granadan singer songwriter Carlos Cano. I argue that Cano's work offers a channel for analysing the diverse ways in which the andalusí legacy is interpreted and its intersection



with wider ideological currents such as Andalusian nationalism (*andalucismo*), Granadan localism and political protest.

#### BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Matthew Machin-Autenrieth is a Lecturer in Ethnomusicology at the Department of Music, University of Aberdeen and Principal Investigator for the European Research Council funded project 'Past and Present Musical Encounters across the Strait of Gibraltar' (2018–23). He is also a Visiting Research Fellow at the Faculty of Music, University of Cambridge (until 2023). Matthew completed his Masters and PhD in Ethnomusicology at Cardiff University. Following his studies, Matthew was appointed as a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at the University of Cambridge (2014–17) and then Senior Research Associate (2018–20). Matthew's research spans three main areas: the relationship between music and regional identity in nation states; heritage studies; and music, diaspora and postcolonial studies. He is the author of the monograph *Flamenco, Regionalism and Musical Heritage in Southern Spain* (Routledge, 2017), as well as a number of articles relating to flamenco, regional identity politics and Moroccan immigration.

**CRISTINA MORENO-  
ALMEIDA**

**DISMEMBERING AL-  
ANDALUS: THE MEMETIC  
AFTERLIVES OF THE  
ANDALUSI SONG "CHAMS  
AL ACHYA"**

Saturday, September 11, 16:45 GMT+1

**ABSTRACT**

As the most prominent tune in Moroccan Eid El Fitr, the andalusi song "Chams Al Achya" has been until now secluded within the walls of tradition and national festivities. In 2019, however, it was reborn as a meme. The now Moroccan classic Chams Al Achya meme situates andalusi music at the centre of a set of grotesque and amateurishly-made mashup videos showing failure situations such as violent runovers, smacks, or harmful falls. In becoming a meme, the song is displaced from its preferred habitat among the upper classes and harmoniously dressed music ensembles. In the process, the meme becomes a threat to the traditional role Andalusí music plays in remembering Al-Andalus. Reading the meme as the *gothification* of Al-Andalus, this paper looks at the ways in which meme culture — through its ability to create spheres of resonance through rapidly-made ugly aesthetics — may contribute to the dismembering of the memory of Al-Andalus formulated by the post-colonial nationalist political project. A postcolonial gothic perspective of the Chams meme, this paper argues, uncovers the monstrous, chaotic, and grotesque embedded within the memetic return of andalusi music. Repeating gothic themes in meme culture in general, and the Chams meme in particular, allows digital participants to



suggest youth's general scepticism towards the lingering national(ist) project.

**BIOGRAPHY**

Dr. Cristina Moreno-Almeida is a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Digital Humanities at King's College London. Her research is about popular culture in North Africa and the Middle East at the intersection of aesthetics, politics, and media. Her current work analyses memes and digital cultures in Morocco looking at the social, cultural and political ramifications of disseminating cultural production through digital platforms. She previously worked at the LSE Middle East Centre and the Department of Media and Communications on the project 'Personalised Media and Participatory Culture' (2015-2017) with the American University Sharjah researching young people's participatory culture, the internet and creative production. She has published extensively on Hip Hop, patriotism and resistance, memes and digital media, and participatory culture and creativity. Her first book is entitled *Rap Beyond Resistance: Staging Power in Contemporary Morocco* (Palgrave, 2017). Her second book *Memes, Monsters, and the Digital Grotesque* is forthcoming with Oxford University Press.

# DWIGHT REYNOLDS

## BEHIND ENEMY LINES: MUDÉJAR/MORISCO AND SEPHARDI/CONVERSO MUSICIANS IN CHRISTIAN REALMS

Saturday, September 11, 18:00 GMT+1

### ABSTRACT

For many people, including many academics, Andalusí music consists of only two very similar genres of song: the muwashshah and the zajal. This is, however, a very misleading simplification of the many different types of music that were performed in al-Andalus. Unfortunately, Arabic sources give only sparse accounts of any music-making outside the elite circles of the court. In this essay, I argue that as a counter-weight to the biases of the Arabic historical documentation, and with the goal of recuperating some of the diversity of musical life in al-Andalus, it is worthwhile examining Muslim (Mudejar and later Morisco) and Jewish (Sephardi and later Converso) musicians who lived and performed in Christian territories. The available sources for these musicians provide a remarkably varied and complex portrayal of a musical world where Muslims and Jews performed in Christian courts, in churches, processions, as salaried municipal musicians, at weddings, and in the short-lived independent kingdom (1568-71) of the Alpujarras, often alongside Christian musicians. If we seek to understand the musical 'afterlives' of al-Andalus, I hope that examining this far more complicated picture of musical life in medieval and early modern Iberia will prove useful.



### BIOGRAPHY

Dwight F. Reynolds is professor of Arabic Language & Literature at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He is author of *Medieval Arab Music and Musicians* (Brill, forthcoming 2021), *The Musical Heritage of al-Andalus* (2021), *Arab Folklore: A Handbook* (2007), and *Heroic Poets, Poetic Heroes* (1995), co-editor of *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music, Volume 6: The Middle East* (2002) with Virginia Danielson and Scott Marcus, as well as editor and co-author of *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition* (2001) and *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Arab Culture* (2015).



# MARIA RIJO LOPES DA CUNHA

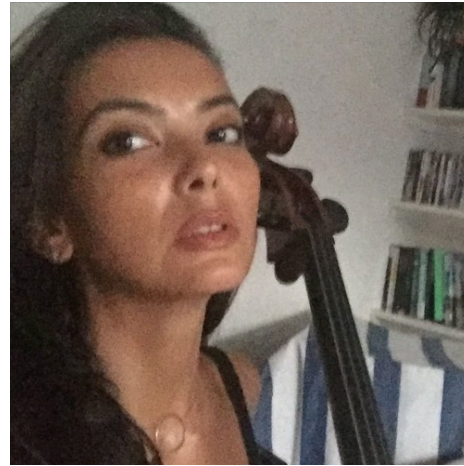
## ECHOES OF THE AL-ANDALUS IN THE ARAB LEVANT: MUSIC, MEMORY AND CULTURAL REPRESENTATION IN THE MUSIC OF MUSTAFA SAID'

Thursday, September 9, 19:00 GMT+1

### ABSTRACT

This chapter focuses on the work of Mustafa Said, the leader of the movement known as the *Tajdīd min al-Dakhil* ('Internal Renewal'). The *Tajdīd* is responsible for both the revival of the repertoire, aesthetics, and performance praxis of the music of the *Nahḍa*, or Arab Renaissance period (1885–1933), as well as for the creation of contemporary Arab music. In his most recent work, Said shifts his focus from the 'golden age' of the *Nahḍa* to that of al-Andalus by setting to music Sufi poetry of this period, such as Ibn 'Arabi. I ask, what main characteristics of al-Andalus render it a fertile locus for the contemporary postcolonial imagination? How does al-Andalus Sufi poetry impact the development of formal, rhythmic and timbral aesthetics of Said's contemporary Arabic music? What does the 'culture of nostalgia' expressed in the reimagination of al-Andalus add to the *Tajdīd* countering of the 'culture of *ṭarab*' that characterises traditional Arab music-making?

To address these questions I will draw on forthcoming fieldwork, as well as on the analysis of relevant ethnomusicological, anthropological, and historical literature on al-Andalus (Shannon 2003, 2006; Davis 2004; Calderwood 2014, 2018). I claim that Mustafa Said's work, aligned with precepts of the *Tajdīd*, attempts to disentangle Arab Levantine and Egyptian traditional urban



music from what is commonly designated as '*ṭarab* music', associated to a specific type of postcolonial bourgeois aesthetics commonly associated with Egyptian and Levantine ruling elites. Emotional and identarian transformations brought by such nostalgic backward glances allow Said, and the *Tajdīd*, to address an ongoing postcolonial malaise etched onto contemporary Egyptian and Levantine societies and culture, creating a locus for reconciliation between past, present, and future yearnings.

### BIOGRAPHY

Maria M. Rijo Lopes da Cunha is a Danish Institute in Damascus (D.I.D.) Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Centre for Arts and Cultural Studies of the University of Copenhagen (I.K.K.). She earned a Ph.D. in Ethnomusicology (2017) from SOAS, University of London. Her work examines the flows of musics, musicians, aesthetics and technologies between the Arab Levant and the Arab Gulf. She is preparing an edited volume entitled *Music, Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy in the Middle East: Geopolitical Reconfigurations for the 21 Century* (with Søren Møller Sørensen and Jonathan H. Shannon, 2022). She is also preparing a monograph provisionally entitled *Bending Traditions, Creating New Musics: Revival, Nostalgia and Innovation for the Tajdīd min Al-Dakhil*. Maria is an active musician, where she tours internationally with Mustafa Said's Asil Ensemble for Contemporary Arabic Music.



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PROBLEMATIC  
COEXISTENCE: MUSIC,  
POWER AND MEMORY IN  
POSTCOLONIAL ALGERIAN  
SOCIETIES

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ABSTRACT

Notions of identity, belonging, power and coexistence have shaped discourse on Algerian societies, in the *bled* and among the diaspora, before and after national independence in 1962. As the constraints and violence of French colonial rule were replaced with a homogenous, monocultural form of nationalism propagated by the Algerian authorities, the issue of who does and who does not belong in Algeria has produced both ideas of community and cohesion, and a sense of separation and loss. Many of these debates have been played out in, and reflected through, practices of musical performance and listening. In particular, *andalusi* music, and its associated traditions, have simultaneously been positioned as an emblem of national pride and a symbol of a lost Judeo-Islamic musical culture within Algeria.

In this article I take the notion of *Convivencia*, broadly understood, to interrogate how contemporary musical practices and recent histories of *andalusi* and *chaabi* underscore some of the problems of social and culture coexistence, both past and present. I focus upon three case studies: the 2012 film *El Gusto*; the views of Algerian musicians and listeners in contemporary London; and the practices of a UK-based *andalusi* association. Through exploration of these forms of musical practice and meaning, I focus attention upon how different forms of coexistence manifest within Algerian



societies, and the ways in which particular musics are understood and historicised in the twenty-first century.

BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Stephen Wilford is a Research Associate within the Faculty of Music at the University of Cambridge and a Junior Research Fellow of Wolfson College Cambridge. He is part of the team working on the European Research Council funded project 'Past and Present Musical Encounters across the Strait of Gibraltar'. He studied at the University of Aberdeen, Leeds College of Music, and Goldsmiths (University of London), before completing his AHRC-funded PhD at City (University of London), with a thesis focusing upon music-making among the Algerian diaspora community of London. He has taught at the University of Cambridge, City (University of London), the University of Southampton and Goldsmiths (University of London). Stephen's work focuses upon North African musics, particularly those of Algeria, and spans a range of traditional and contemporary styles, from the region's various *andalusi* traditions to the Franco-Algerian hip hop scene. He was formerly an Early Career Research Fellow of the Institute of Musical Research and is currently a member of both the Executive Committee of the British Forum for Ethnomusicology, and the Ethnomusicology-Ethnochoreology Committee of the Royal Anthropological Institute.