

**The Symbolic Significance of the *ghaita*  
as used in Moroccan Sufism**

presented by:

**Hilary Paterson PTRHIL003**

Supervisor:

**Sylvia Bruinders**

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Humanities in partial fulfilment of  
the requirements for the degree of Master of Music

University of Cape Town

January 2007

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## DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signed by candidate

Hilary Anne Paterson

05-06-07

Date

University of Cape Town

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks are due to all those who helped me produce this thesis, supporting and guiding me along the way. My supervisor, Sylvia Bruinders, nudged and encouraged me at all the right moments and kept my work moving when it might have stalled. I have learned a great deal from writing this thesis under her tutelage. Thanks to Dr. Anri Herbst for allowing me permission to play my final recitals before submitting my thesis. This considerably eased what could have become an uncomfortable situation!

I am grateful to those people with whom I was in email contact in my attempts to establish connections in Morocco. Scott Kugle and Tony Langlois were particularly enthusiastic and helpful, and Scott even met with me to discuss Sufism on his visit to the University of Cape Town. Neil van der Linden, Philip Schuyler, Reed Rickert and Khaled Amine's thoughts and references to texts and people were also useful. Thanks to Armelle Gaulier for translating into French the letter I sent to Moroccan contacts.

My parents, Torquil and Lynette Paterson, deserve huge thanks. Their continual support, acceptance and interest in my life sets a formidable parenting example, one which I will be terribly proud to emulate in even the smallest way. My father has played a huge role in the development of my career as an oboist; his generosity allows me the freedom to do what I love. His knowledge was useful to me on many occasions when it came to religious questions for the purpose of this thesis. Thanks to my mother for spending time reading over parts of this thesis with a fine tooth-comb. Without her counselling I feel I might be lost in life.

My brilliant sister inspires and supports me from afar.

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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND NOTE ON TRANSLITERATIONS

This is a list of frequently used terms that I have used in this thesis and which apply directly to the topic of music in Moroccan Sufism. It is not a list of translations from Arabic to English, but of the meanings of Arabic words peculiar to my topic. The list serves to remind the reader of the meaning of these salient terms without having to search the text for the definition each time they occur. Terms that are used only once or twice are defined in the text, immediately adjacent to the terms. In terms of Arabic words, my primary reasoning for the choice of transliterations was to use those that I have encountered most frequently in my research. I have only used those diacritical markings that do not interfere with the clarity of reading an English text. The words in brackets are those that I have encountered less frequently, and which I decided not to use in order to promote ease of reading.

This list is in alphabetical order, apart from the words that are used for types of oboes frequently referred to -- these are grouped together.

*aulos*: the ancient Greek precursor to the oboe

*ghaita* (*raita*, *ghraitha*): a North African oboe

*mizmar*: a Middle Eastern oboe

*baraka*: spiritual blessings or energy

*bātin*: the invisible, interior word of the spirit

*dhikr* (*zīkr*): the chanting of the names of Allah

*fanā*: the annihilation of the ego

*hadith*, plural: *ahadith*: the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad which came to be used as a reference for Muslim conduct.

The three branches of the religion of Islam:

*ihsan*: the perfection of the self in the depths of the heart

*iman*: the perfection of thought and understanding

*islam*: the perfection of human action

*jahiliya*: pre-Islamic days considered by Muslims as days of paganism and ignorance before the revelation of the Q'urān

*jinn* (plural: *jnun*): a minor but evil or malicious spirit that can enter the human body and cause a wide range of problems

*marabout*, plural: *maraboutin*: Arabic warrior-saints

*maraboutism*: the Moroccan cult of saint-worship

*samā'*: literally 'listening'. The ceremonial listening used in Sufism with the aim of spiritual progression.

*sheikh* (*sheikh*, *shaykh*): the spiritual leader of a Sufi order, ideally descended from a line of *sheikhs*

*wajd*: a state of spiritual ecstasy that is the ultimate goal of *samā'*

*zāhir*: the apparent, exterior world

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.1 Introduction

My choice of topic for my Masters thesis springs from two of my major life interests: the oboe, which I have played since the age of ten and the symbolisms of which have recently begun to intrigue me; and spirituality, our link with the divine and its role in our lives. The particular combination of these interests that I have chosen came about through a slow and continuing process of learning about world musics, and a serendipitous discovery of the Aïssawa Order of Morocco. This discovery led me to become interested in the music of Morocco and particularly the use of oboes by the people of that country. I had already heard recordings of the Master Musicians of Jajouka, another Moroccan group who uses oboes, but saw that this group is already very well documented, and hoped that a study of the Aïssawa would be more interesting because of their relative obscurity. They are a particularly interesting group because they are one of the few Sufi Orders that use the *ghaita* in their spiritual ceremonies (even though it is used widely as a secular ceremonial instrument), and this fact tempted me to explore the importance of the instrument to the group.

For these reasons, I initially went about my research with the intention of focusing my thesis on the Aïssawa. I found literature that dealt with Sufism in general and in Morocco, as well as the use of music in Sufism, but encountered a gap in the literature as far as my focal research question, the ritual use of the *ghaita* by the Aïssawa, was concerned. I attempted to establish email contacts with Moroccans and other international scholars, some of which were helpful and encouraging, but most of which were fruitless, perhaps owing to the lack of email, and in some cases even electricity, facilities in Morocco (see Appendix). The result is that my thesis does not focus on the use of the *ghaita* by the Aïssawa only, as I had hoped, but discusses its symbolic role in Moroccan Sufi music, with particular reference to the Aïssawa. I also refer to the use of the instrument by the Master Musicians of Jajouka, since the symbolisms and mythologies that come to bear on their

ceremonial music-making are closely related to those of the Aïssawa and therefore appropriate for inclusion in my study. To a certain extent I was disappointed to have to diversify the focus of my thesis, but the essence of my interest, the symbolisms of oboes, remains intact nonetheless.

My father suggested that I learn the oboe when, after learning the piano for a few years, I told him, "I want to blow something". The sound of the oboe must have held some power for him, something that set it apart from other orchestral woodwind instruments. I had no notion of the instrument's power over listeners, but on starting lessons it was immediately clear to me that this was the instrument I would play for the rest of my life. Soon I began distinguishing its plaintive sound from those of the other instruments on the orchestral recordings that my father and I listened to together, and later following the oboe line on the scores that we read together. I am grateful to my father for suggesting an instrument that at the time seemed so strange, and which now allows me to play some of the most beautiful melodies in the orchestral repertoire, those which have a particular effect on listeners not only because of the skill of the composer, but because of the unique timbre of the instrument. As my understanding of music broadened to include non-western music, and as I became educated in the history of my instrument I discovered that the power of the oboe is not limited to its role in the symphony orchestra or as a solo instrument, but that people of cultures other than my own experience the sound of the instrument in very varied, but no less powerful ways. In the same way that my ear had become attuned through my own musical education to associate the instrument with haunting or rustic melodies, so the sounds of the oboes of the world carry specific meanings for the people that play and appreciate them within their particular cultures.

The contexts in which people use musical instruments began to interest me when I started taking world music classes, and the use of instruments in the context of worship held a particular intrigue. This too I owe to my father, who sparked my interest in religion and its role in human life when he resigned from the Anglican

priesthood and embarked on a career in law. The notion of 'God', which for me had always been a given, was suddenly up for debate. For a while I followed the family trend of atheism, but on entering university I encountered some eccentric and deeply spiritual people who became my closest friends because of the eye-opening experiences we shared. Subsequently I discovered that spirituality is in fact an integral part of my life, not to be neglected. On discovering Sufism through the Aïssawa brotherhood and attending services at the Sufi Temple in Newlands, Cape Town, I found that Sufism's concept of the presence of the Divine within us all holds a particular resonance for me. This thesis combines my interests in the oboe and religion, and has given me the opportunity to learn about a foreign culture using the familiar vehicle of the oboe.

As I have mentioned, my initial choice of the Aïssawa Order as the medium for my exploration, which later extended to include other Moroccan groups, was coincidental. It was, however, the catalyst for this thesis. In September of 2005 I traveled to Germany to attend oboe masterclasses. The classes were held in the teacher's home town of Sachrang, a little village on the border of Germany and Austria. When the classes were over I had a few days to spare before traveling home, and I took the train to Salzburg to explore the city with two friends who had also taken part in the classes. They were searching amongst other things for CD's, so we wandered around the city and eventually came across a music shop at the top of a narrow cobbled street and began to browse. I headed for the world music section, which was impressively extensive, and one CD caught my eye: on the cover were three men sitting in front of an intricate mosaic wall, one playing a large frame drum, another singing and the third sitting with his head bowed. All three have their eyes closed in an attitude of reverence. The CD is titled *Conférie des Aïssawa*, The Aïssawa Confraternity. My interest was sparked by the pictures of these devotional men and the music they were making, and I opened up the box. Oboes filled the foreground of the photo on the inside cover and my heart leapt! I counted four oboe players receding into the background, where another musician was beating a drum with two thin sticks, also with his head bowed and eyes closed.

The same mosaic wall filled the background – “this must be part of the same ceremony as that shown on the front cover”, I thought. I skimmed through the text in the booklet and picked up a few words: ‘Instruments and Evolution’, ‘ritual’, ‘Morocco’, ‘*ghaita*’, before buying the CD, convinced that these men and their music would be the focus of my study.

## 1.2 The *ghaita* in Morocco

Back in Sachrang that evening I listened on my discman to the ritual recorded on the CD and read the disc notes by Christian Poché (2001), hearing and reading how the *ghaitas* are used by the men of the Aïssawa Order of Morocco to assist their spiritual journeys. The order’s spiritual practices descend from the ways set down by the Sufis. Music is an integral part of their ceremonies because Sufis believe that music is a powerful tool for communication with God. The musical practices of the Aïssawa are characterised by the use of the *ghaita*; this sets them apart from other North African brotherhoods, most of whom use only string and percussion instruments. The Aïssawa’s use of the *ghaita* stems from the particular methods of worship set down by the group’s founding saint, Sidi Mohamed Ben Aïssa Meknes (Poché, 2001:11). Orders associate with particular instruments because of the founder’s preference for them. This is characteristic of Moroccan Sufism, since it is identification with individual saints that sets Orders apart from each other. Ben Aïssa’s traditional spiritual techniques include the use of the *ghaita* because of its Moroccan associations with snakes, which are considered sacred to the Aïssawa. The *ghaita* plays a crucial role for the Aïssawa devotees in their search for God: its strident sound and, more importantly, the symbolisms attached to it by the group, make it a powerful tool in the achievement of their spiritual aims. For the Master Musicians of Jajouka, the *ghaita* represents a connection with the legends that recount the revelation of music to the village of Jajouka.

The symbolisms that give the *ghaita* its status hold a particular interest for me and form the crux of my thesis. My aim is to examine the role played by the *ghaita* in the spiritual processes of the Moroccan Sufis that use it, based on the symbolisms

attached to the instrument by Islam, in Morocco, and with specific reference to the Aïssawa and the Jajouka. This examination involves an investigation of the myths and legends attached to music and musical instruments in Islam and Sufism, and especially the *ghaita*. Since it is these myths and legends, which date from as far back as ancient Greek times and incorporate the myths of the Islamic world, that determine the status of musical instruments, they influence ceremonial players and participants, whether consciously or unconsciously.

### 1.3 Literature Review

My research interacts with literature in the fields of Sufism, general Islamic practices and specifically the use of music in Sufism. Since my thesis focuses on the symbolisms of the *ghaita*, an important area of my research has been the study of the myths and legends on which societies are based (Armstrong 2006, Bulfinch 2004). Karen Armstrong writes of the importance of myths in creating contact between human beings and the “invisible but more powerful reality, sometimes called the world of the gods” (2006:4). For the Sufis, music is a tool that facilitates this exchange. Jean During’s study, “The Symbolic Universe of Music in Islamic Societies” summarises the myths, legends and symbolisms that Islamic musical scholars cite when seeking to explain the “mystery and power” (2002:177) of music. These myths affirm the heavenly source of music and the idea that it reflects the beauty of the Divine realm. Hazrat Inayat Khan’s *The Mysticism of Sound and Music* (1996) confirms this. The book is an extensive mediation on the power of sound with the central theory that music is a microcosm of the universe.

Defenders of the use of music, like Khan, find its origins with God and the angels, but its detractors believe that it is the creation of Satan. Either way, music is considered an extremely powerful medium, and this power is the basis of the controversial status it holds in Islamic society. Since music is seen as having an influential power over the level of commitment a Muslim has to his/her faith, secular musics that are associated with licentious behaviours are categorised separately from religious sound-art such as Q’urānic recitation. Lois Ibsen Al

Faruqi highlights the resultant difficulty that scholars have encountered when referring to sound that is not considered by Muslims to be music because of its religious context. He resolves the issue with the term *handasah al sawt*, meaning 'artistic engineering of sound' and creates a table, or "hierarchy of *handasah al sawt* genres" (1985:8) to clarify the divide between legitimate, controversial and illegitimate musics. According to Al-Faruqi's hierarchy, *samā'* the technique of listening to music as used by the Sufis, is categorised in the controversial grey area. For Lewisohn, the controversy over *samā'* represents "the much wider debates and differences which had existed between Islamic puritanism and mysticism from the earliest days of Islam (1997:3).

In their discussions relating to *samā'*, both Khan and During highlight an event in Muslim sacred history known as the Primordial Covenant, when God vocally addressed Adam and his descendants with the question, "Am I not your Lord?" to which they all replied, "Yes, we witness that you are" (During, 2002:179). The Sufis consider this sound-based event as the origin of music and the first instance of *samā'*, and recollect it in their spiritual practice of listening to music in order to gain contact with God. Armstrong (2006:23) points out the importance of acting out myths so that their lessons can be brought to light:

A myth does not impart factual information, but is primarily a guide to behaviour. Its truth will only be revealed if it is put into practice – ritually or ethically. If it is perused as though it were a purely intellectual hypothesis, it becomes remote and incredible.

My interest is in the myths that are put into practice by groups like the Aïssawa through music, and particularly the use of the *ghaita*. My understanding of the rituals of the Aïssawa depended on a study of the general beliefs and practices of Sufis, since the Aïssawa are descended from classical Sufism. Chittick's *Sufism: A Short Introduction* was particularly useful to my understanding of the mystical perspective of Sufism, despite the author's statement that "specialists in the study

of Sufism have reached no consensus as to what they are studying” due to the “diverse theories of Sufism’s nature and origins proposed by modern scholars” (2000:19-20). Other scholarly accounts of the religion that were useful to my understanding were During 2002 and Annemarie Schimmel 1975. Schimmel’s work clarified for me the origin and development of Sufism, and provided some anecdotal impressions of the nature of Sufi spirituality. Khan 1996 provided me with a mystical account from the point of view of a Sufi.

Many accounts of music and Sufism focus on the debates surrounding the relevance of *samā’* (Lewisohn 1997, Crow 1984, Rouget 1985), as music is acknowledged amongst the Sufis to be a powerful tool that needs close supervision to have a full and positive effect. Lewisohn and Rouget have conflicting viewpoints as to the nature of the ecstatic states produced by *samā’*: while Lewisohn views these states from the Sufi perspective as a genuine “heightened egoless consciousness” (1997:22) in which the devotee departs temporarily from his/herself, Rouget considers them the purely physiological results of over-stimulation of the hearing. These contradictory viewpoints brought my attention to the contention surrounding the results of *samā’*, and to the necessity of seeing the practice from the point of view of Sufism. Lewisohn’s article was an important text for me in defining *samā’*, as it comprehensively explains the external guidelines that devotees are obliged to follow when participating in the practice, as well as the spiritual faculties that must be developed for *samā’* to have its full effect.

Lewisohn’s highlighting of the Sufi practice of “hearing with the ear of the heart” (1997:4) was essential to my understanding of the Sufi’s concentration on the invisible level of reality. During (2001:186) explains this concept as “hierarchy within the real, in which the levels commingle, opening passageways”. He uses the Sufi terms *zāhir* and *bātin* to define the exterior versus the interior, or apparent versus the hidden worlds. By concentrating on the interior, hidden aspects of reality the Sufis make contact with the Divine. According to Armstrong (2006:4) it

is this concentration on the invisible world that is the basis for the creation of mythologies in any society:

...all mythology speaks of another plane that exists alongside our own world, and that in some sense supports it. Belief in this invisible but more powerful reality, sometimes called the world of the gods, is a basic theme of mythology. It has been called the 'perennial philosophy' because it informed the mythology, ritual and social organization of all societies before the advent of our scientific modernity, and continues to influence more traditional societies today.

For Poché (2001) and Davis (1989) the *ghaita* is important in Moroccan Sufism for the creation of the mental state necessary for the broadening consciousness that incorporates the invisible world. While Poché goes into the possible historical reasons for the significance of the instrument to the Aïssawa, Davis only mentions that without the *ghaitas* a performance by the Aïssawa cannot really affect participants sufficiently to cause trance. My thesis delves into Armstrong's 'perennial philosophy' as it exists in Morocco in order to establish the importance of the instrument to the Aïssawa and those who participate in their ceremonies.

The first texts that I read on the use of music in Moroccan ritual, and which brought me closer to my focus on instrument symbolisms, were Grame (1970) and Schuyler (1985), and these lead me to Westermarck (1926) and later Crapanzano (1973). Grame deals with performances by musicians in Marrakech's central market-place, the Jma al-Fna, while Schuyler examines the position of traveling musicians in rural Southwestern Morocco in relation to the notable members of the villages in which they perform. Westermarck's study of "Ritual and Belief in Morocco" brought to my attention the significance of musicians at the weekly processions to the tombs of saints, to which *ghaita* players and drummers are considered essential. Crapanzano's study of the Hamadsha brotherhood was useful as many of the practices of the Hamadsha overlap with those of the Aïssawa. All of the above texts convey religious life in Morocco as festive, ritualistic and superstitious, with

music and religion having a symbiotic relationship. One of the focal points of my research is the origins of those beliefs and superstitions that inform ritualistic life in Morocco.

Through his portrayal of the traveling musicians (*rwais*) of Morocco, Schuyler emphasises the centrality of religion in rural Moroccan life and how status is dependent on either blood ties to a saint, or scholarly advancement. The notable figures of villages (considered notable because of their connection to a saint or their religious knowledge) take what Schuyler calls “a professional interest in religion”, as they are “assumed to have an edge on the rest of the community in matters of spiritual concern” (1985:114). They are regularly consulted by people experiencing troubles that can be solved by consultation with the spiritual world and the saints in particular. While Crapanzano, Grame and Westermarck all deal with the concept of *baraka*, it was Schuyler’s article that clarified for me its importance in Moroccan spirituality and the role musicians play in its proliferation. Moroccan spirituality is based around the worship of saints, who are considered to possess *baraka* in both life and death and are able to pass it on, in unlimited supply, to those who worship them. Gathering *baraka* is the main reason for worshipping the saints, as it is needed for the alleviation of all manner of day to day problems and it brings good luck. The importance of the traveling musicians (*rwais*) at social gatherings and religious festivals is due to their own possession of *baraka*, which they have obtained through mystical experiences. These experiences, often incorporating dreams in which the musician sees himself playing his instruments and thus knows that he has been called to be a musician, make “clear conceptual links between music, magic and religious knowledge (ibid., 120). Through these experiences the musician is said to gather *‘ilm l-kersh*, or “the inspiration that will permit him to improvise music and, particularly, poetry” (ibid., 122). This portrayal of the intermingling of music and magic, and the centrality of the notion of *baraka* to Moroccans, was an early inspiration for my own discussion of the relationship between music and spirituality.

Grame's mention of the *ghaita* and drum as the "Islamic ritual ensemble par excellence" (1970:84) sparked much of the interest for this thesis. Grame states that the ensemble is "used as an essential component of weddings and circumcisions from the Atlantic to Afghanistan" (ibid.) but does not go into any detail as to why this is so. He briefly overviews the possibly pre-Islamic origins of the ensemble's use in snake-charming and proposes that it is "connected somehow with Orphic traditions (ibid.). This was the first article in which I read of the links between Islamic and ancient Greek music, and others followed – Poché (2001), Doubleday (1999), Gross (2000), Palmer (1995) – to confirm my suspicion that the significance of the present day use of the *ghaita* harks back to ancient times.

The *ghaita* is associated with the Greek god Pan (Gross 2000, Palmer 1995), and the Master Musicians of Jajouka relive the myth of Bou Jeloud, a Pan-like creature who brought music to their family, in their musical ritual employing the use of the *ghaita*. According to Palmer, the musicians of Jajouka represent the Moroccan reworking of the Greek myth of Pan:

Transcending time, space and religion, traveling from ancient Egypt through numerous cultures wearing different names, he [Pan] survives in Jajouka not only as a myth, but as a reality – in the Master Musicians – the Pipes of Pan (1995:1).

Therefore the myth of Bou Jeloud, and an identification with the invisible world in which the myth originates, influences the lives of the inhabitants of Jajouka.

Poché (2001) and Doubleday (1999) connect the use of the *ghaita* with the processional rituals of the Dionysians of ancient Greece in which the *aulos* was played. Doubleday points out that the *aulos* was played largely by women, and that the Dionysians were mostly women. The playing of the *ghaita*, however, is reserved exclusively for men. My correspondences with Tony Langlois revealed that this is due to taboos surrounding women and music, and particularly wind

instruments. Langlois' (2005) study of the Aïssawa women in Oujda, Morocco, examines the role that their rituals of music-making have in the establishment and confirmation of gender and power relationships within their community, and as such parallels Doubleday's account of the use of the frame drum by women. Doubleday portrays the frame drum as an instrument associated with women, and Langlois also highlights the use of the instrument by the Aïssawa women of Oujda. These studies opened up for me the issue of music and gender in Islam and Moroccan Sufism, and brought to my attention the exclusive connections that instruments may have with either gender. The fact that the *ghaita* is played only by men underlines the exalted status of the instrument in Morocco, since activities forbidden for women are often those most encouraged for men (Davis, 1989:15).

Articles by Joseph (1996) and Kandiyoti (1991), both from the *Middle East Report* were helpful to my understanding of the role of women in Islamic society. Both examine the relationship between Islam and state policies, and particularly the extent of Islam's role in those policies that affect women. Joseph emphasises that Islamic fundamentalism is a reaction to increasing westernization, and that women's bodies are used as "sites for assertions of cultural authenticity, further inscribing women's symbolic and real importance in definitions of the nation" (1996:6). Joseph asserts that, since women are representations of a nation's values, they are subordinated to the preservation of traditional family values and codes of conduct. C.A. Helminski (2006) asserts that discriminatory attitudes towards women, as described by the above authors, were not the original intention of Islam. Her article refers to the Prophet Muhammad's original message to integrate the masculine and feminine aspects of the human character, and the vital role that early female mystics played in the development of Sufism.

While the above authors deal with the general attitudes towards women in Islamic societies, Davis (1989), Doubleday (1999) and Langlois (2005) concentrate on the position of women in relation to music-making. All three emphasise that while

women are active participants in musical activities, their participation is affected by the conduct that their communities expect them to maintain.

My thesis will contribute to the understanding of the role of the *ghaita* in Moroccan Sufism, and will perhaps inspire a subsequent student to attempt a study that involves fieldwork. The thesis as it stands should be interesting for other oboists interested in non-western oboes, or for those interested in the interaction of music, myth and religion.

This introductory chapter serves to acquaint the reader with some of the background issues that come into play when dealing with music in Islamic society. Islam is a multi-faceted religion. Because my study deals mainly with Sufism, an element of Islam that focuses on the love rather than the wrath of God, I shall examine the differences and disputes between the orthodox and the mystical aspects of the religion. Islamic mysticism is expressed in the Sufi tradition, which has been said to represent the heart of Islam:

In describing Islam to others, some Muslim scholars use the analogy of a walnut. The practical, ritual and legal dimensions of the Islamic faith are likened to the outer shell. Inside this shell one finds the animating spiritual core, also known as the Sufi path, which is signified by the inner kernel. The oil that permeates all parts of the walnut represents the all-encompassing nature of Ultimate Reality, or God (Shaikh, 2006).

The above explanation is useful for clarifying the position of Sufism within Islam, and for contrasting it with the legalistic aspects of the religion. The spiritual teachers who emerged in the ninth century and designated themselves as Sufis claimed to speak for the “heart and marrow of the Islamic tradition” (Chittick, 2000:3). Sufism is based on the basic principles of Islam and is therefore not a separate religion from Islam, but rather a different perspective on and interpretation of the Quran and traditional Islamic teachings. Sufism is one level of Islamic

thinking, and claims to capture the essence of the religion, without which it would be devoid of its animating heart.

An awareness of the unique perspective of Sufism is important for understanding the role of music and musicians in Sufi practices, and I clarify that perspective in this chapter. Despite its focus on love and communication with God and the comparatively liberal attitudes that result from this viewpoint, music is considered as powerful tool and treated with care by the Sufis. In orthodox Islam, music and musicians hold a contentious status, largely because of the contexts with which they are associated – contexts that place devotees at risk of being tempted from the path of piety.

I also explain the nature of Sufism in Morocco in this chapter, as it is within this context that the Aïssawa Order and the Jajouka Musicians function. Moroccan Sufism is based on the classical Sufi traditions, but coloured by the unique superstitions and saint-worshipping of the Moroccan people, and it is this situation that is explored below. In this introduction I also clarify the issue of gender in Islamic states, in Sufism and particularly in Morocco. Since there are taboos surrounding the use of wind instruments by Moroccan women, the *ghaita* is used exclusively by men (Langlois, 2006: personal correspondence), and my study is therefore centred on a male-dominated activity. However, women have been central to the development of Sufism since its beginnings, and are some of the most enthusiastic followers of the Moroccan saints. The following section deals with their role in order to provide a nuanced reading of the complexity of the subject of gender in Islamic society, and of the role that women play in music-making. I therefore refer particularly to women's relationships with music and musical instruments. This reveals the fact that the Islamic approach to musical instruments and those who play them are linked to the mythological associations that influence the society, and enhances my claim that the effectiveness of the *ghaita* is a result of its symbolic meanings.

#### 1.4 Gender Issues in Islam and Sufism

The position of women in Moroccan society is similar to that of women in other Islamic states, where citizens are recognised primarily as members of family units, religious sects, ethnic, tribal or other subnational groups rather than as individuals (Joseph, 1996:7). The impact of this type of citizenship is harsher for women than for men, as all the above-mentioned groups are patriarchal, limiting women to the role of accessories who cannot act without male support and approval (ibid.). This imbalance was not, however, the original intention of the teachings of the Q'urān, as C.A. Helminski (2006:1) asserts:

Muhammad brought a message of integration of spirit and matter, of essence and everyday life, of recognition of the feminine as well as the masculine. Though cultural manifestations have covered over some of the original purity of intention, the words of the Quran (sic) convey the equality of men and women before the eyes of God.

Sufism returns to this “original purity of intention” with regard to gender relationships. Many of the early Sufis were women, and Muhammad’s daughter Fatimah is often considered the first Sufi because it was she who recognised the “deeper mystical understanding of Islam” (C.A. Helminski, 2006:1). It was another female mystic, Rabi’a al-Adawiyya (717-801), who first developed the typically Sufic expression of God as Love by naming Him her ‘Beloved’.

The original intention of integration of masculine and feminine is manifested by the Sufis in Newlands, Cape Town, where the word ‘brotherhood’ is used to mean the whole of humanity in its relationship to God. The last stanza of their ‘Prayer for Peace’ reads “Send Thy Peace, O Lord, our Father and Mother, that we, Thy children on earth, may all unite in one Brotherhood.” It is in fact used as a term inclusive of both genders, and God too, in taking the role of mother and father, is both male and female. So a community that acknowledges the presence of God within each of us is a brotherhood, and there seems to be no distinction between men and women in practice – two of the leaders of the service that I attended were

women. Sufism in its essence does not distinguish between male and female. Rather, it is the “cultural manifestations” of which Helminski writes, in particular the pervasive context of exoteric Islam, that affect the extent to which the original intentions of Sufism, such as the equality of the genders, are lived out.

Islamic fundamentalism has in many states become characterised by a reaction to westernization and liberalization, which are seen as potentially corrupting forces. In this context, women’s clothes, actions and restriction of movement become a symbol for the authenticity of Islamic culture in the face of burgeoning western influence (Joseph, 1996:6). This is equally true in Morocco, where inhabitants of towns far removed from the larger cities and still attached to rural ways of life, scorn the westernised materialism and decadence found in the big cities of Casablanca and Tangiers and consider themselves strongholds of traditional values (Langlois, 2005:3). It is men, as the patriarchal heads of families and religious groups, who enforce these values and therefore control the extent of their impact on women’s lives. In general, while activities associated with western women, such as employment or taking initiative in finding a partner, are condemned, those same activities are pardoned, or even admired, in men (Davis, 1989:15). A woman’s future relies heavily on getting married, but “Young women...must exercise considerable ingenuity if they are to meet men without risking irredeemable damage to their reputation and their family’s honour” (ibid., 14).

The resultant limitations, such as unemployment or failure to find a suitable husband, that Moroccan women experience lead them to turn to the powerful magic of the saints whom they believe can provide relief from their problems (Langlois, 2005:1). From a western point of view the limitations of unemployment and dependence on a male for social acceptance would be seen as a frustration. While the same is indeed true for many Muslim women, others see the resultant social separation as liberating, perhaps because of the female solidarity that it can create. The social separation of men and women in Islamic states affects musical and spiritual activities. Women often find themselves in all-women spaces, settings that

strengthen female solidarity and provide the chief context for music-making by women (Doubleday, 1999:103). Worshipping the saints in all-women settings, as is done by the Aïssawa women of Oujda, Morocco,<sup>1</sup> provide an acceptable outlet for women because they are seen by their male counterparts as being superstitious and emotional by nature:

...although maraboutic practices [worshipping of Moroccan saints] were not considered correct forms of worship for male Muslims, they *were* nevertheless acceptable for women, as well as some socially marginalized men (ibid., 7, italics in original).

These women's ceremonies therefore take place on Friday afternoons when the men of the community are worshipping at the mosque (ibid., 3). They reflect the nature of Moroccan Sufism, which I introduce later in this chapter and explain more comprehensively in the second. The ceremonies consist of singing, chanting, clapping and playing the *bnader*, North African frame drums, lead by a woman called the *fqira*. A woman who wishes to appeal to the saints dances in time with the *bnader*, and reaches a state of "musically induced intoxication" (ibid., 5) that rids her of the evil spirits that are believed to be bringing her bad luck.

The use by the Aïssawa women of frame drums is typical of women's music making in the Middle East, and demonstrates how individual instruments are imbued with specific symbolisms and meanings in Middle Eastern music. This issue is explored in Chapter Four, which deals with instrument symbolisms, particularly those of the *ghaita*. Frame drums have strong associations with women and are most often used in all-women spaces (Doubleday, 1999:116-117). The almost exclusive association of the frame drum with women is interesting since large numbers of musical instruments are reserved for playing only by men (ibid., 102), and strong links exist between Satan and musical instruments. The taboos

<sup>1</sup> Langlois (2005:12) notes that this group of women calling themselves the Aïssawa "differ considerably in membership, practice and musical style from other Aïssawa brotherhoods, and I can only assume that either the name was adopted by the local community to authenticate local traditions or that these developed idiosyncratically from common historical origins."

surrounding wind instruments and women, as mentioned on page 12 in the introduction to this section, have to do with the links between Satan and sexuality: the Prophet Muhammad called the shawm *mizmar al-shaitan* (the devil's oboe) (Shiloah, 1997:147), and villagers in western Afghanistan sometimes call the shawm "the devil's penis" (Doubleday, 1999:104). Wind instruments such as the *ghaita* are considered to have powers that must be carefully guarded, as Hannah Davis (1989:16) relates in her report on a performance by the Aïssawa Order in the countryside surrounding Sidi Slimane in northwest Morocco. She tells of a young woman who had a dream that commanded that she host an Aïssawa evening. The group agreed to perform, but complained that the girl was impure and therefore did not bring the *ghaita* players.

Thus a young female, without a shred of honour and with no powerful male on her side, was able to generate sufficient resources to initiate an evening of holy activity. But there were limits to the amount of transcendence that she was able to manifest. For although the Aïssawa came to play, only the drummers were coming; the raitas (sic) would not come. And without the raitas, one cannot really enter into trance.

The above story shows how many of women's restrictions, such as hearing wind instruments and benefiting from their powers, are dependent on the extent to which the women in question are considered to conform to the traditional standards of their community. While the women may be active participants in the activities that surround music-making, the extent of their involvement is controlled. It is therefore community-regulated, which is to say male-regulated, standards that affect the role of women in Moroccan society, and by extension their relationship to music and musical instruments.

In the following section I elaborate on the notions of orthodox and mystical Islam so that the attitudes towards music by the two groups, sometimes contrasting and sometimes similar, can later be understood as stemming from the fundamental viewpoints of orthodoxy and mysticism.

### 1.5 Fundamental Viewpoints: Sufism and Orthodoxy

Sufism views music as having a sacred nature, one that, if used correctly, can bring the devotee closer to God. This perception corresponds with the basic ideals of Sufism, in that the Sufi should strive to bring him/herself closer to God with his/her every action, and to weave remembrance of God into his/her life. Sufis see themselves as those who focus on the message of the acknowledgment of God's presence in both the world and the human self (Chittick, 2000:19). Sufism is therefore not so much a departure from Islam, but a concentration on the spiritual essence of the teachings of the Q'urān and the Prophet Muhammad, and a minimised concern with religious rules. It is a focus on one of the three spiritual dimensions considered to constitute Islam, which are derived from a famous *hadith* (saying of the Prophet Muhammad), in which a conversation between the angel Gabriel and the Prophet illuminated the three branches of Islam: the perfection of human action (*islam*), perfection of thought and understanding (*iman*), and the perfection of the self in the depths of the heart (*ihsan*) (ibid., 20). It is the last of these three that carries the most weight for the Sufis, who believe that the devotee should be able to live his/her life perfectly if he/she acknowledges the presence of God in his/her own heart. Perfection is considered always doing what one feels in the depths of one's heart to be the right thing in any given moment, in acknowledgement of the fact that following that instinct is in fact following the wish of God. The other two dimensions, *islam* and *iman*, are the domains of the Islamic legalists and theologians respectively, but it is the view of the Sufis that they themselves "should be subordinate to the highest goal that is 'to worship God as if you see Him'" (ibid., 21). The focus by the Sufis on the heart shows their belief that this is where their true ability for spiritual understanding and realisation lies:

"Acknowledging with the heart' is to recognize the truth and reality of faith's objects in the deepest realm of human awareness. The 'heart' in Koranic terms is the center of life, consciousness, intelligence, and intentionality. The heart is aware and conscious before the mind articulates thought, just as it is alive before the body acts. Faith's innermost core is found only in the heart" (ibid.,6).

This central tenet of Sufism is important for the purpose of this thesis because it explains how the Sufis are set apart from orthodox Islam, and the level on which they are functioning in their spiritual practices. It explains why they are not overly concerned with the 'rules' of Islam, and how this affects their music-making within their worship.

While Muslim purists condemn secular music, the tradition of music in Sufism cultivated an appreciation of music that contributed to the development of the classical music traditions of the Muslim world (Crow, 1984:30). This development was centred on the Sufi tradition of a "ceremonial art of listening" (ibid.) known to them as *samā'*, which encouraged the appreciation of music because of its own reverence of musical sound. *Samā'* is in fact a spiritual technique of the Sufis, in which devotees who listen to music with correct intentions and the guidance of a *sheikh* can enter a spiritual frame of mind and thus communicate with God. Despite the meditative attitude required by the listeners, and the fact that music used in this context is considered by the Sufis to provide a link with God, *samā'* is viewed with suspicion by orthodox Muslims, who also acknowledge the power of music but fear that its use in inappropriate circumstances can discourage a Muslim's faith. For them, *samā'* lies on the cusp of the divide between religious, and therefore legitimate, and secular and therefore illegitimate music (Al Faruqi, 1985:8). Even within Sufism, music is used with great care: *sheikhs* ensure that their followers appreciate it with the correct spiritual intentions.

### 1.6 The Musical Continuum in Islam

The orthodox Islamic view of the role of music in society and spirituality differs from that of the Sufis because orthodoxy is concerned with *islam* and *iman* rather than *ihsan*, the inherent presence of God that can lead one to perfection. This is not to say that Sufism accepts the random use of music – music in spiritual ceremonies is treated with care, and the use of *samā'* is considered to require intense concentration rather than a "simple stimulation of emotions and sensations" (Crow, 1984:30) – but music, when used in the right context, is viewed as a powerful,

mystical spiritual tool. Secular music is considered reprehensible to orthodox Muslims, although the boundaries between religious and secular musics are often blurred, with genres such as the Sufis' *samā'* lying in a debatable grey area, as mentioned above. The categorisation of a genre as legitimate or illegitimate has a lot to do with the activities that accompany the music, and the two -- the music and the accompanying activity -- are judged together, blasphemous combinations are considered to have the power to either encourage a Muslim's faith or divert him/her from it.

A central text that has guided subsequent Arabic authors on the subject of the lawfulness of music is Ibn abi'l-Dunya's *Dhamm al-malahi* (Condemnation of the *malahi*) (Shiloah, 1997:146). The term *malahi* is applied by the author to "a whole gamut of forbidden and moral misbehaviours of which music and its practice are inseparable parts" (ibid.). Al-Dunya's treatise uses the *ahadith* as the basis for his arguments, and it is particularly noteworthy for my purposes that musical instruments are dealt with in the *ahadith* and therefore in the *Dhamm al-malahi*. Al-Dunya considers the *mizmar* as forbidden because of the *hadith*, mentioned above in the discussion on women and musical instruments, that relates to an occasion on which the Prophet Muhammad heard the instrument and plugged his ears, calling it the *mizmar al-shaitan* (the devil's *mizmar*) (Shiloah, 1997:147). The fact that groups such as the Aïssawa and the Master Musicians of Jajouka use *ghaitas* in their sacred ceremonies is therefore unusual in an Islamic context, and points to a departure by these groups from traditions and norms.

The words in the Arabic language that refer to musical genres show that the qualification of music in Islam is context-sensitive. Unlike the western term "music", Islam has no all-inclusive qualification for sound-art (Al-Faruqi, 1985:6). The term "music" is understood in Western culture to be inclusive of all types of aural aesthetic expression, and does not distinguish between the context or function of the performance. But in Arabic, the word *mūsīqā* applies only to secular musical genres of Muslim culture, and all of the terms applied to music are context specific

(ibid.). There are Arabic words that have sometimes been used as loosely all-inclusive, but they are unsuitable for the inclusion of religious genres. For example, *tatrib* literally means “the act of delighting or enrapturing through sound”, but its association with sensual enjoyment of poetry and music means that it cannot be used to describe religious music (Al-Faruqi, 1985:6). *Lahw*, or ‘entertainment’ is a word that applies to all types of amusement and in a musical sense can only be used to describe secular genres (ibid., 7). In order to compensate for the resultant difficulty involved in discussing musical genres in an Islamic context, Al-Faruqi (1985) uses the term *handasah al sawt* (artistic engineering of sound) as a substitute for “music”, as I mentioned on page five of my literature review. His table of legitimate, controversial and illegitimate sound-genres describes the hierarchy on which sound is organised in Islam. At the peak of the hierarchy is Q’urānic recitation, and the other genres are positioned according to their conformance with the standards of this form. Q’urānic recitation is a purely vocal form with solely religious intentions and contexts. Because of this it carries none of the negative associations of secular music, often linked with the use of musical instruments and associated activities. Q’urānic recitation is in fact considered non-*mūsīqā* – it lies apart from the secular genres and sets the standard for their categorisation as legitimate, controversial or illegitimate.

As one moves downwards on al-Faruqi's hierarchy to forms that have negative or controversial associations, one finds more involvement of musical instruments and less conformance to the standards of Q’urānic recitation. This is perhaps an indication that the human voice used in sacred contexts is considered innocent and sacred, while inclusion of musical instruments in musical occasions increases the controversy surrounding the performance. This could be a reason for the placing of the Sufis’ *samā’* in a controversial light – despite its solemnity within the Sufi tradition, it is viewed with disfavour by those Muslims who value *islam* and *iman* over *ihsan*.

So the most important element in categorising musical genres is how intensively it encourages a Muslim's faith and his/her concentration on correct action and thought. If an activity that accompanies musical performance is considered to lead a Muslim away from the performance of his/her religious duties or from the pious frame of mind that a Muslim aims for, then the music itself also falls into disrepute. This is because of the power that music is considered to have in either affirming and encouraging a Muslim's faith, or in diverting his/her attention from the performance of religious duties (ibid., 9). This pertains to the Muslim view that the life of the follower should be infused with religiosity, that every action, from the mundane to the sacred, should be performed with pious intentions.

### 1.7 Sufism in Morocco

Sufism in Morocco is characterised by the worshipping of saints, and the organisation of spiritual brotherhoods around the tombs of these spiritual figures. It derives its basic ways from classical Sufism, but with a more cultic streak. In referring to the Hamadsha, one of the major brotherhoods of Morocco, Vincent Crapanzano (1973:1) writes:

The Hamadsha have been classified by French scholars as an extreme example of the *confrérie populaire*, a sort of degenerate form of the Sufi brotherhoods of the Muslim high tradition, corrupted by the base imagination of *le peuple*, by survivals from the ancient religions of the circum-Mediterranean culture area, and by pagan influences from Sub-Saharan Africa.

According to Crapanzano then, Moroccan Sufism is coloured by the characteristics of Moroccan people; the ancient traditions that influenced the emergence of their culture, ancient religions that remain entrenched in their own, and the superstitions inherent in their culture. This explains the organisation of spiritual activity around saints and their descendents, and the belief that these outstanding figures and the brotherhoods that adhere to their practices can alleviate the problems of daily life, often caused by *jnun*. The practice of saint-worship is dependent on the concept of

*baraka*, which was introduced on page eight of this chapter and is explored in more detail in the next. The Aïssawa are one of the orders whose founding saint, and therefore members, can be called upon to heal the sick by finding a way to appease a disgruntled *jinn*.

The distinguishing characteristic of one order will be its adherence to the particular ways set down by the founding saint for spiritual advancement and the particular methods accepted for obtaining blessings or dispersing bad spirits. An order's use of music will also adhere to the saint's set methods, as is seen in the use of the *ghaita* by the Aïssawa. The rituals of the Aïssawa are based on the traditions established by Sidi Mohamed Ban Aïssawa, and the fact that the *ghaita* plays a central role in the climactic points of their ceremonies: the *dhikr* and the *hadra* (Poché, 2001:12), is an ideal opportunity for me to demonstrate the instrument's role in the fulfillment of the spiritual aims of the group.

### **1.8 Methodology**

The aim of my research is to discuss the particular myths and symbolisms that are attached to the *ghaita* and thus inform the ceremonies of the Aïssawa. I examine how these myths are acted out within musical ceremonies and the spiritual effect the performance has on players and listeners. As I have already explained, I have unfortunately been repeatedly disappointed by the documentation of this area of study. My searches in the library and on UCT's databases have not revealed any specific information on the symbolisms of shawms in Islamic society, let alone to the Aïssawa. Reference to the instrument are mostly made in passing and, while occasionally illuminating (Doubleday 1999, Lewisohn 1997, Shiloah, 1997), have been limited to its Satanic associations. This veiling of information pertaining to the *ghaita* is what has fascinated (and frustrated!) me most. This mysterious aspect is the challenge of my research, and its appeal has tempted me to try to discover the reasons for the obscurity of the instrument and perhaps dissolve some of the mist in which it is shrouded. A comprehensive study of this nature requires a trip to Morocco. Since this was not possible due to various constraints, I have relied on

email correspondences with international contacts (Amine, Kugle, Langlois, van der Linden, Rickert, Schuyler: see Appendix). These individuals have been consistently open and friendly with what information they could offer and, while underlining the importance of fieldwork, have encouraged my efforts. CD recordings of both the Aïssawa (Poché 2001) and the Master Musicians of Jajouka (Palmer 1995) have also been very helpful. These recordings of the *ghaita* have allowed me to hear the instrument in its ritual context, and the booklets' notes were particularly useful as catalysts for my study of how the instrument embodies the myths on which the respective groups base their practices.

The body of my thesis takes the form of three chapters. The chapter that follows (Chapter Two) deals with the concept of a brotherhood within Sufism. This clarifies the context in which the Aïssawa brotherhood functions and the traditions from which they are descended. I discuss the original ideals of Sufism and their development into the Sufism made known to the western world by Hazrat Inayat Khan, and explore the notion of spiritual hierarchies and the particular characteristics of North African and particularly Moroccan Sufism.

In Chapter Three I discuss the role of music in Sufism and its use as a spiritual tool. This involves analyses of the sound-based practices of *samā'* and *dhikr*, which originated with classical Sufism, and the ultimate goal of spiritual ecstasy, *wajd*, to which these practices lead. I include in this chapter the debates within Sufism over the use of musical instruments and the preconditions considered essential for the success of a ceremony. Moreover, I establish the degree to which the musical practices of the Aïssawa conform to those of the classical Sufis.

Chapter Four deals with the symbolisms of oboes in the Islamic world. These are largely tied up with myths and traditions, as well as the *ahadith* that refer specifically to the Prophet Muhammad's attitude towards music. The connection between music-making and myth is explored, as well as the particular symbolic significance of music in Islam. Most importantly, Chapter Four deals with how the

above myths and traditions, which go as far back as to connect with myths of ancient Greece, make the *ghaita* so important in Morocco and aid the spiritual processes of the Aïssawa and the Master Musicians of Jajouka. The *ghaita* is therefore shown to have a particular power, and it is this power that is of special interest to me as an oboist. Writing this thesis has given me some insight into that power in a tradition outside my own.

University of Cape Town

## CHAPTER TWO

### The Principles of Sufism

This chapter explores the notion of a Sufi brotherhood, in order to demonstrate the context in which the *ghaita* is used in many spiritual ceremonies in Morocco. The rituals of the Aïssawa are an appropriate and characteristic vehicle for the discussion of Moroccan Sufism, even though the group and others like it have unique characteristics that in many ways depart from classical Sufism. They are essentially based on Sufi practices: “Whatever the taxonomy of the ritual, its point of departure lies with the Sufi practice of inducing a state of mysticism, in an approach to and communion with God” (Poché, 2001:12). An understanding of the key concepts of Sufism will therefore help to clarify the symbolic importance of the *ghaita* in its ceremonial use. The most significant of these concepts is the dissolution of the self into ‘Unity of Being’, or oneness with God. Even the most everyday activities should be conducted with the intention of abandoning the ego and drawing closer to God, so that the follower may eventually be immersed in Divine Love. So it follows that the instruments in a musical ceremony should have a spiritual significance and power that can aid the participants in this spiritual goal.

#### 2.1 The basic ideals of Sufism

The deep identification by spiritual ascetics with the essence of Islam took shape as Sufism in the 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries (Barks, 2002:3) and developed in the modern world as a concept of the spiritual essence common to all religions. But Sufism is understood to have begun with the Prophet Muhammad, as it bases itself on his intense sense of spirituality and recognition of God’s presence within every person. The reverence of spiritual figures that characterises Sufism also began with the Prophet Muhammad. This is especially notable in Moroccan Sufism, as is explained later in this chapter, where the veneration of saints constitutes the basis for spiritual activity. It is not only in Morocco, however, that the tradition of Sufism is marked by prominent ascetics and philosophers whose theories and spiritual experiences have come to represent the characteristics of Sufism.

Muhammad's daughter Fatimah, for example, is often recognised as the first Muslim mystic because of her understanding of the mystical essence of Islam in the Quran and her father's teachings (C.A. Helminski, 2006:1). As mentioned earlier, Rabi'a al-Adawiyya (717-801) coined the typically Sufic expression of God as Love by referring to Him as her 'Beloved'. This became a characteristically Sufi way of expressing a love of God, and was used in the lyrics of sung poems in Baghdad when it was the capital of the Abbasid Islamic empire (Kugle, 2006:2). In these poems, the Sufis "adapted sung poems as a 'spiritual concert' with lyrics that were deliberately ambiguous, the erotic content of which might be interpreted allegorically to refer to a beloved, one's spiritual guide (*shaykh* or *pir*), the Prophet Muhammad or to God, on an ascending hierarchy of refinement" (ibid.) (sic). This shows that, as I explain in the next chapter in the section that deals with the preconditions for successful *samā'*, the intention of the participant is essential for a truly spiritual interpretation of music or poetry. But this characteristic displays another essential element of Sufism: the all-consuming love for humanity that ultimately allows the devotee to be dissolved into God, reaching a state where the ego is annihilated (*fanā*). Aslan (2006:212) describes this particularly well:

...the Sufi is often compared to the bride who sits on her marriage bed, "roses strewn on the cushions," yearning for the arrival of the Bridegroom, though she knows he may never come. And yet the bride waits; she will wait forever, "dying from love," aching for the beloved, crying out with every breath, "Come to me! Come to me!" until she ceases to exist as a separate entity and becomes nothing more than a lover loving the Beloved in perfect union.

Helminski (2006:1) writes of Rabi'a's yearning for unity with God through love:

Rabi'a's starting point was neither fear of hell nor desire for paradise, but only love. 'God is God,' she said, 'for this I love God...not because of his many gifts, but for Itself.' Her aim was to melt her being into God. According to her, one could find God by

turning within oneself. As Muhamad said, 'He who knows himself knows his Lord.' Ultimately it is through love that we are brought into the Unity of Being" (ibid.).

This concept of God as Love, and of His presence within us, takes Sufism beyond the confines of orthodox Islam, because Divine Love is considered more important than a "fear of hell" or "desire for paradise" that can otherwise govern human thought and action. It is central to Sufism because the spiritual practices of the movement, including those that use music, aim at meditating on the essential oneness of humanity.

The origin of the term "Sufi" is uncertain, but is thought to come either from the Greek root *sofia*, meaning wisdom, or from the Arabic term *tassawuf*, 'being a Sufi' (Kugle, 2006:1) which refers to the wool garments worn by the early Sufis to signify their ascetism (Aslan, 2006:198-199). If considered as a derivation of the root *sofia*, Sufism is the timeless, universal wisdom that each human carries inside him/herself and which belongs to humanity as a whole (*Initiation in the Sufi Movement*, pamphlet 'b'). In the modern Sufism brought to the west by Hazrat Inayat Khan, this deep-seated intuition (known as Sufism) is in fact a cross-religious concept that can be found at the heart of any religion: "Sufism in the real sense of the word has always existed since the birth of the human race on earth. Sometimes under the same name, and sometimes under different names" (*The Sufi Movement*, pamphlet 'a'). This idea comes from the Sufi notion that every religion is inspired by the same Source. This word 'Source' is used frequently by the Sufis to denote the divine essence from which humanity was born, and which is present in every human, regardless of religion. The use of this word emphasizes the Sufi belief that, regardless of our chosen religion, we are connected to One Source.

My visit to the Sufi Temple in Newlands helped me to understand this concept. The temple bases its services on the teachings of Hazrat Inayat Khan, the founder of the Sufi Order of the West, who spread Sufism in America and Europe from

1910 to 1926 (*Initiation in the Sufi Movement*, pamphlet 'b'). The Sufi Order of the West is descended from the Chishti order of Sufis who were influential in the formation of Sufism in South Asia (Kugle, interview 18 October, 2006). I attended a service of Universal Worship, which is open to the public. Khan is quoted in the pamphlet of Universal Worship as having written of the Sufi concept of Universal Worship:

"The Universal Worship is not another Church to be included among the variety of existing churches. It is a service which gives an opportunity to those belonging to different religions to worship together. Also it gives practice in paying respect to the Great Ones who have come from time to time to serve humanity. The different scriptures of those who have taught wisdom are read at the altar of the Universal Worship"

The altar in the temple carries the texts of six major religions, namely Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The Universal Worship service opened with a prayer to the God of each of the religions and then to the Universal Source:

"Towards the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony and Beauty, the Only Being, united with all the Illuminated Souls, who form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance".

To demonstrate that Sufism can be found in the essence of any religion, an extract from each of the scriptures was read during the service to convey the message of the day, which was 'solace'. Each scripture had a very similar message regarding the topic, showing that the Sufi concept of the Voice of the One Source speaks through all the scriptures. The ultimate message (the Sufi message underlying all those read from the different scriptures) as to where to find 'solace' was that we must look inside ourselves, to the Source within us, for comfort and relief from

worldly troubles. So regardless of our religion, culture or circumstances, we carry within us an intuitive knowledge that can help us through this life.

The modern Sufi movement therefore aims to dissolve the bias of faiths and beliefs and to emphasise the latent power and love within us all, regardless of our culture, background and religion. The aim is for this to ultimately lead to a universal 'brotherhood' based on mutual tolerance and respect in the knowledge that we all arise from the same Source that we recognise in ourselves and our neighbours.

The word 'brotherhood' is loaded with connotations relating to gender, but is often used to mean a group of Sufis organized around the worship of a particular saint and following his teachings. The words 'fraternity' and 'confraternity' are also used, and these too have connotations of maleness. In the section on gender issues in my introduction I explored the fact that the word 'brotherhood' is not intended to discriminate against women, but is used as a genderless term to refer to the whole of humanity. A 'brotherhood' is a spiritual community that acknowledges the above-mentioned wisdom within each of us. Sufism itself does not distinguish between male and female, but rather respects each person as a being on the spiritual path to ultimate integration with God:

"...whether we are female or male, the same work remains of polishing the mirror of the heart, of being in remembrance moment by moment, breath by breath. Each moment we reaffirm the inner marriage until there is no longer lover or Beloved but only Unity of Being. Little by little, we die to what we thought we were. We are dissolved into Love, and we become love, God willing" (C.A. Helminski, 2006:6).

Despite these genderless intentions, the word 'order' is perhaps more suitable when referring to a group of Sufis, as it pertains more to the spiritual construction of a group around a saint and the lineage maintained by its leaders (I explore this construction later in this chapter) than to the gender of its followers. I also

explained in my discussion on gender that the particular attitudes towards women that each nation may subscribe to, influence the position of women in Sufi 'brotherhoods' and the extent of their involvement. In Morocco there are strict rules concerning women's conduct and these affect the integration of women into the ceremonies conducted by Sufi brotherhoods, and their involvement in music-making (see pages 14-16).

One of the essential tools of the Sufis in conveying the message of the essence common to all religions is music. Because of its abstract nature, and therefore its freedom from prescribed associations, music is the perfect medium for the communication of Sufi ideals. Because it does not convey any specific image but rather speaks to our souls, music is considered by the Sufis to be an ideal path to God:

...in music alone we see God free from all thoughts and ideals. In every other art there is idolatry. Every thought, every word has its form. Every word of poetry forms a picture in our mind. Sound alone does not make any object appear before us (Khan, 1996:2).

Music, the word we use in our everyday language, is nothing less than the picture of our Beloved. It is because music is the picture of our Beloved that we love music. But the question is, what is our Beloved and where is our Beloved? Our Beloved is that which is our source and our goal; and what we see of our Beloved before our physical eyes is the beauty which is before us; and that part of our Beloved not manifest to our eyes is that inner form of beauty of which our Beloved speaks to us. If only we would listen to the voice of all the beauty that attracts us in any form, we would find that in every aspect it tells us that behind all manifestation is the perfect Spirit, the spirit of wisdom (Khan, *Music*, pamphlet 'd')

So the importance of music is its ability to communicate across the borders of earthly forms to the essence of humanity, and to assist humans in their attempts to

make contact with that essence. The particulars of the Sufi use of music are explained in Chapter Three.

## 2.2 Spiritual Hierarchies

The power structures of North African Sufi brotherhoods are built around saintly figures: each brotherhood has a central head who is connected with the founding saint by an uninterrupted chain of master-and-disciple relationships. The founding saint would have had developed spiritual methods particular to himself and his followers. These methods are repeated by the saint's followers through the generations because of their identification with that particular method of establishing contact with the divine. So the practices of the Aïssawa, including the use of the *ghaita*, reach back to their founding saint's original methods, and are symbolic of the followers' continuing remembrance of the founding saint.

For the devotee of any brotherhood, knowledge of the spiritual lineage of the leaders is an essential element of training. This entails learning the *silsila*: the line of spiritual leaders that reaches from the *sheikh* back through the generations to the Prophet (Schimmel, 1975:234). The *sheikh* is the leader of the devotees and should come from a line of venerated spiritual figures that ideally reaches back to a direct connection with the Prophet Muhammad. Thus the perfect *sheikh* is one who is able to lead his/her disciples "with a guidance granted directly by God" (Schimmel, 1975:237). He/she should be "endowed with knowledge of things that exist potentially in God's eternal knowledge" and able to "realise certain of these possibilities on the worldly plane" (ibid.). K. Heliminski (2006:1) writes of the connection between the *sheikh* and the devotee:

Our pledge, our obedience, our commitment is to Allah, and the sheikh is a link. Why should there be any intermediary at all? This is a very good question. Actually there is no intermediary if the sheikh is a real sheikh and if one's pledge is sincere. The sheikh actually is the evidence of God's mercy and generosity, making grace more tangible, more immediate.

So the *sheikh* is a figure who represents a path to God because of his/her understanding of spiritual concepts and their relevance to human life. Upon the death of the *sheikh*, a *khalifa* (successor) is appointed, and continues the spiritual lineage. The *khalifa* is selected because of his/her virtues as the most sincere follower of the *sheikh*.

In acknowledgement of the *sheikh's* access to the spiritual plane, devotees aim to abandon, or annihilate, themselves and attain a state of *fanā fi'sh-shaykh* ('annihilation in the master'). This leads to annihilation in the Prophet and ultimately annihilation in God, or the Source within, as was Rabi'a's aim in her search for oneness with her 'Beloved'. The technique of *tawajjuh*, or concentration on the *sheikh* is used with this aim in mind, and is considered by some orders, particularly the Naqshbandiyya as necessary for the successful performance of *dhikr*. The *sheikh* also uses the technique in order to "enter the door of the disciple's heart" (ibid.) to guide him/her in every moment of his/her meditations.

### **2.3 Sufism in Morocco: Maraboutism, Saint Worship and Baraka**

During his life, a Sufi Order's founding saint will have carried a defining spiritual spark and will have distinguished himself by causing miracles or unusual things to happen, or by being directly descended from the Prophet Muhammad (Geertz, 1968:45). These saintly figures were the warrior saints who brought Islam to Morocco from the Arab world (Crapanzano, 1973:1) Their force of character made them such dominating figures that Geertz describes Morocco as "a civilization whose spiritual force outlived its political capabilities" (ibid.,47). These saints are sometimes called *maraboutin* (plural for *marabout*), a word from the Arabic root *murābit* meaning to tie, bind or fasten, and also meaning a fortified sanctuary (ibid.,43). So the word *marabout* refers to the men's origin as warriors and to their holiness: they are men who are tied to God. Because of their holiness and their association with the glories of war, they carried enough influence amongst the people of Morocco to make them serious contenders in the social and political

fabric of the society, and their “sentimental authority” (ibid., 44) lingers on in Morocco.

The weight of these characters was outwardly recognisable by their possession of a spiritual spark, known as *baraka*. *Baraka* is still considered by Moroccans as a manifestation of the divine in the physical world, and a person in possession of this trait is considered saintly. The *baraka* that an individual is considered to possess is not, however, restricted to that individual, but is a blessing that can be passed from a saint, dead or alive, to a troubled believer whose worldly problems can benefit from the influence of that particular saint. Robert Palmer (1989:101) likens *baraka* to electricity:

In Morocco there are different kinds of electricity. This kind is called *baraka*, a kind of psychic current that certain holy places, sounds and people absorb and hold like storage batteries. The receptive can plug into these power sources...

His reference to holy places that store *baraka* is important in his description of the village of Jajouka, where the Master Musicians of Jajouka perform music in rituals that honour “the old gods and goddesses” (ibid., 105). The rituals of the Jajouka Musicians are important later in my discussion of music and myth, but for now it is interesting to note that the village of Jajouka is considered an exceptionally holy place in Morocco. Palmer describes it as “a hot spot in the world’s spiritual geography” and “one great storage cell for *baraka*” (ibid., 108).

Whole villages in Morocco may be structured around the tomb of a saint, with the life of its inhabitants being focused around religious activity and the gathering of *baraka*. Such a village is called a *zawia*, where the most important figures are local saints or charismatic figures (*igurram*, the most prominent citizens), and descendants of these saints or of the Prophet himself (*shorfa*), and scribes or low-level Q’urānic scholars (*tolba*) (Schuyler, 1985:114). The worship of saints is

considered to bring *baraka* direct from Allah, who has given the saints their healing powers (Crapanzano, 1973:4). Men, women and children visit the tombs of the saints to pray for blessings that will help them with their problems, or bring lucky occurrences like the birth of a male child (ibid, 2).

Small sanctuaries all over the Muslim world mark the places where holy people are buried. Since *baraka* is inexhaustible but must be renewed, people visit the shrines of saints according to the nature of their prayers in the belief that the unique *baraka* of the saint will assist them with their particular problems (Schimmel, 1975, 239). It is particularly during the saint's annual festival (*músem*) that members of brotherhoods and of the larger community visit the shrine of their saint, to renew the pact between the saint and the community and to guarantee the saint's protection for another year (Schuyler, 1985:115).

This concern with gathering *baraka* makes pilgrimages to the tombs of saints financially beneficial to the leaders of communities, since they are considered intermediaries with saints due to their spiritual knowledge, and gather donations from followers:

The pilgrimage to a saint's tomb, for whatever reason, is as much a commercial transaction as it is a religious experience...The *tolba*, for example, often provide the initial diagnosis of a petitioner's problems; for a fee they also prescribe a variety of cues, including the proper procedures for a pilgrimage. Similarly, the sacrifices to the saint are often accompanied or even replaced by donations to the *shorfa*, to persuade them to intercede with their ancestor. Some of the revenues are used to maintain the shrine, and lodge pilgrims, and aid the poor. These calculated acts of generosity make the *zawia* still more attractive to pilgrims, which in turn generates more income to be divided among the saintly lineages (ibid., 121).

The musicians who perform at the tombs are also considered influential figures in the communication with the saints and therefore the proliferation of *baraka*, perhaps because of the acknowledgment of the power of music in creating contact with God. They do not hesitate to take advantage of the community's view of them as such. They may stop their performances to appeal for donations and not begin playing again until they are satisfied with the take or the audience refuses to give more (ibid., 124). In Chapter Four I deal with the role of music in the enactment of the rituals that create contact with God as in the above example. In order to do this I explore the symbolic status attached to musical instruments by players and participants and how these symbolisms aid spiritual processes.

#### **2.4 Sufis in their Communities**

From the above description of Sufism in Morocco one can see that spiritual life is not reserved for formal members of orders, but that the Sufi characteristic of saint worship appeals to the larger community. This is as a result of the lay people of the communities seeing in these spiritual leaders a path to happiness and relief from daily troubles. This path to happiness is not reserved for the official followers of the saints and the *sheikhs* who are descended from them: some rituals and festivals are made available to the public – brotherhoods have large numbers of lay members who spend limited amounts of time in the convents for particular festivals or to participate in some exercises (ibid., 240). Members of Sufi orders are therefore useful in their communities: a person who is experiencing ceaseless problems is understood to be haunted by *jnun* that have entered their body. Sufi groups are acknowledged as having the necessary spiritual knowledge to act as intermediaries and to draw the spirits away, and are often consulted for musical or therapeutic treatment to dispel the bad spirits. The demand for the spiritual assistance of the groups means that they function outside of their monasteries, as well as performing their private devotions.

The 'brotherly' love that draws the Sufis to assist their community stems from the maxim that the faithful is the mirror of the faithful: *Al-mu'min mir'āt al-mu'min*.

Thus, the deeds of the Sufi's companion are reflected in his/her own thoughts and deeds, so that if he/she should see a fault in his neighbour it is this very limitation that he/she should correct within him/herself (Schimmel, 1975:228). A central rule for the Sufis is to "do good for one's brother's sake, prefer others to oneself and give up one's prestige for the sake of one's fellow beings: 'The Sufi must be careful about brushing away the flies from his face, as they might disturb others in the room'" (Jāmī, 1957, quoted in Schimmel, 1975:229). This social sensitivity has been a central element of correct behaviour in Islam throughout the centuries, and the manuals of Sufism stress the importance of correct behaviour in the presence of the *sheikh* and fellow devotees (Schimmel, 1975:230). Sufi communities were founded on this principle, and "practiced a kind of communism comparable to that of the first Christians" (ibid., 230). This attitude of fraternal love began within the fraternities and slowly extended to include humanity in general, and marked the Sufis out from the early ascetics who stressed individual salvation through ascetic practices and self-effacing works of piety (ibid., 228). The Sufis, especially those who followed the same master, felt that they had known each other since preeternity and constituted a spiritual family.

The spread of Sufism through the Muslim world and eventually the western world was a result of the social activity of the expanding Sufi groups, which based their work on the principle of spreading the notion of love for the community. This activity allowed the movement to transform from an elite religious sect into a mass movement, accessible to all cultures and social levels. The adaptability of the orders to all social levels and races also made them the ideal vehicle for the spread of Islamic teachings:

"It is a well-established fact that large parts of India, Indonesia and Black Africa were Islamicised by the untiring activity of Sufi preachers who manifested in their lives the basic obligations of Islam: simple love and trust in God, and love of the Prophet and their fellow creatures, without indulging in logical or juridical hairsplitting. These preachers also used the local languages instead

of the Arabic of the learned and are, thus, largely responsible for the early development of languages like Turkish, Urdu, Sindhi, and Panjabi as literary vehicles. They taught the veneration of the Prophet, and thanks to them the founder of Islam, surrounded by a veil of mystical and mythical tales, not as a historical person but as a transhistorical power, is deeply venerated from Indonesia to East and West Africa, as innumerable folk songs prove" (Schimmel, 1985:240).

The accessibility of Sufism satisfied a craving among large segments of the population for a more intimate relationship with God and the Prophet that was not available in orthodox Islam or other conventional spiritual paths. The extensive reach of the movement also meant that the "...high ambitions of the classical Sufis were considerably watered down", as "the corporate pursuit of the Way was easier for most people than the spiritual struggle of the mystical seeker; the common prayer meetings gave them strength and warmed their faith" (ibid., 239). Sufism has a trans-cultural power to provide members of any society with the strength to endure everyday troubles.

Sufism's aim of bringing the devotee closer to God and therefore enabling him/her to live a spiritually fulfilled life is affected, amongst other techniques, by the use of music. The musical techniques of the Sufi tradition on which the rituals of Moroccan Sufis are based, namely *samā'* and *dhikr*, are explored in the next chapter. The spiritual development that results from the use of these techniques focused the devotee on the sounds which Sufis believe to be a microcosm of the universe, and thus a symbol of God. My exploration of the sacred nature of these musical techniques, and their power in leading followers to experience God, will lead me in turn to the importance of the *ghaita*, the sound of which is integral to the effectiveness of the ceremonies of the Aïssawa and the Jajouka.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### *Samā'*, *Dhikr* and *Wajd*: The power of Musical Sound in Sufism

*Samā'* and *dhikr* are two of the sound-based spiritual techniques used in Sufism for the purpose of drawing near to God in order to experience the Divine Love for which they yearn. *Samā'* is a musical genre which is considered particular to Sufism because it is used with the intent of encountering God. *Dhikr* is the chanting of the names of God with the intent of infusing the spirit of the devotee with thoughts of God, thereby opening the way for experience of God. The ecstatic state known in Sufism as *wajd* (Lewisohn, 1997:22) is the goal of these practices and is achieved when devotees become carried away by the intensity of their spiritual experiences and their "overwhelming happiness at having found God" (Schimmel, 1975:178).

As explored in the previous chapter, closeness to God is a central aim of the Sufi, who favours the mercy and love of God over his vengefulness and wrath (Chittick, 2000). The Sufis aim to immerse themselves in God's love, accepting and reciprocating it. *Samā'* and *dhikr* open the pathway to a direct experience of God that can intensify this love-relationship. This chapter focuses on the fact that the practices are an extension of the Sufi aspiration to annihilate the self in God. The techniques draw their power from the Sufi belief that sound, particularly the human voice, has the power to affirm the human relationship with the Divine, and that musical sound is a microcosm of the universe:

The material sound of instruments, or of the voice produced by the human organs of sound, is really the outcome of the universal sound of the spheres which can only be heard by those in tune with it (Khan, 1996:10).

*Samā'* and *dhikr* train the Sufis to develop their spiritual faculties to a degree that allows them to become "in tune" with the "universal sound of the spheres", and thereby bring themselves closer to God.

As I explained at the beginning of the second chapter, Sufi traditions can be considered a basis for understanding the practices particular to Moroccan Sufis like the Aïssawa despite the fact that they are a group distinguished by “the spectacular and amazing nature of their exercises” (Rouget, 1985:273), which contrast with the sober, contemplative nature of classical *samāʿ*. The practices of the Aïssawa are descended from traditional Sufi ways. If performances by the Aïssawa should differ from those known to be traditional, it is still the aim of the ceremonies – contact with the divine – that remains constant. While the modern performance by the Aïssawa that I have heard (“The Aïssawa Confraternity,” Ocora Radio France: C 560140) seems closer to *dhikr* than *samāʿ* because it employs more chanting than melodic music or mystic poetry, the participants seek ecstatic states that require meditation on sound. This is typical of the ceremonial music in Moroccan Sufism, and for this reason I consider it to be a hybrid of the two Sufi practices and I am explaining them both in this chapter. Because of the descent of groups like the Aïssawa and the Jajouka from classical Sufism, classical Sufi theories and practices can shed light on their practices, particularly concerning the importance of music in Sufi worship and the nature of the ecstatic states to which the devotees aspire through the musical ceremonies.

### *Samāʿ*

Listening to music with the intention of drawing nearer to God is known in Sufism as *samāʿ*. *Samāʿ* ceremonies can include music, singing, dancing and recitation of poetry. The word *samāʿ* can be translated as simply ‘listening’, but the words ‘audition’, or even ‘clair-audition’ (Crow, 1984:30), are more inclusive of the spiritual nature of the listening entailed. ‘Clair-audition’ (ibid.) is perhaps the most appropriate because of its implication of perception beyond the normal range of the human senses, as in ‘clairvoyance’. In this thesis use of the word *samāʿ* should be taken to mean ‘listening’, but with a new understanding of the word in a Sufi sense: listening not only with the ears, but with “the ear of the heart” (Lewisohn, 1997:4). The expression “listening with the ear of the heart” is a good explanation of the fact that *samāʿ* is not a purely physiological process of registering sounds, but a spiritual

technique that can grant a devotee the experience with God for which every Sufi yearns. It is a meditation on sound using the spirit as well as the ears. It is this focus on the unseen world of the spirit that is important for my purposes, as this is the realm in which the power of music, and of the *ghaita*, can be harnessed.

*Samā'* is a controversial practice within Sufism, not to mention within orthodox Islam, which acknowledges the power of music on the human spirit. To the traditionalists, music has not only positive powers to acknowledge the connection between God and humans and to present the listener with a microcosm of that relationship, but sinister ones as well: to lure the weak off the religious path into transgressions. Advocates of the practice also advise against its liberal application because of the level of spiritual awareness that is necessary for its efficacy. Listeners who are not trained in the technique of spiritual listening are at risk of misunderstanding the music: they may fail to fulfill the aim of becoming immersed in recollection of God and experience the music in a simply sensual way. For this reason Sufi theorists debated whether *samā'* should be considered a practice for students at an intermediary stage of spiritual development or as the ultimate mystical experience reserved for spiritual masters (Crow, 1984:32).

Sufism teaches four principles that are central to an understanding of the notion of *samā'*, and these are explained below: i) the sacred nature of music as a reminder of the relationship between man and God, first affirmed at the event of the Primordial Covenant, ii) the constant recollection of God, iii) the acknowledgement and experience of realities other than the apparent and iv) that all that takes place within the creation of music, from the playing of instruments to the surrounding behaviours and rituals, is sacred. This fourth point is central to my exploration of the use of the *ghaita* in the ceremonies of the Aïssawa: the fact that the participants aim for the sacred to be present throughout must mean that the instrument has a symbolic meaning that contributes to the atmosphere of Divine contemplation. While Chapter Four deals with the specific symbolisms attached to the *ghaita* by

the Aïssawa, it is first necessary to explain the above concepts that give symbolic meanings their place in Sufism.

### **i) The Primordial Covenant**

The basis for the importance of sound in Sufism can be found in an event known in Muslim sacred history as the Primordial Covenant (During, 2002:179), which I have mentioned on page 5 of Chapter One. This is a cross-religious event parallel to the creation story in Genesis when God created man and said “Let it all be good” (T.J.M. Paterson, personal correspondence).<sup>2</sup> The Muslim myth recalls the divine voice asking the inhabitants of paradise: “Am I not your Lord?” to which they respond “Yes, we witness that you are” (Q’urān, 7:166-167). The myth has two important elements for my purpose of exploring the power of sound: that the Divine voice was overwhelmingly beautiful to those who heard it, and more importantly that the event was a dialogue in which Adam and his descendents respond to the Divine voice. The myth therefore recognises the right granted to humans to communicate with God, and their privileged relationship with Him because of this capability. Sound-based spiritual techniques are thus a reminder to devotees of this privilege. The same creation story appears in an Eastern myth that shows that God used the power of sound to lure the unwilling spirit into the confines of the physical body at the event of creation. This story is used by Hazrat Inayat Khan in his “The Mysticism of Sound and Music” to demonstrate the Sufi belief that sound can allow the soul a human experience:

...God made a statue of clay in His own image, and asked the soul to enter into it. But the soul refused to enter into this prison, for its nature is to fly about freely, and not to be limited and bound to any sort of captivity. The soul did not wish in the least to enter this prison. Then God asked the angels to play their music and, as the angels played, the soul was moved to ecstasy. Through that ecstasy –

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<sup>2</sup> My father holds a Doctorate in Theology, and his extensive knowledge has been very useful to my exploration of religious issues. As I mentioned in my Introduction, he is a very influential force in my life.

in order to make the music more clear to itself – it entered this body (Khan, 1996:11).

Khan takes the mystical standpoint even further by saying: “Before its incarnation the soul is sound. It is for this reason that we love sound” (Khan, 1996:21).

The meditation on sound in *samā'* is a commemoration of these myths and of the privilege of having been granted a voice with which to communicate with God. Because the practice of *samā'* reminds well-intentioned listeners of their relationship with God and the original, mutual acknowledgment between God and humankind, it is in fact a microcosm for that relationship and for the human experience.

## ii) Constant Recollection

The Sufi devotee aims to immerse him/herself in divine recollection by infusing all aspects of his/her life with the sacred. This is a basic Muslim principle, based on a verse from the Q'urān, Sura 7:205:

And think within thine own self on God, with lowliness and with fear and without loud spoken words, at even and at morn; and be not one of the heedless.

The Muslim is expected to keep God in mind at all times whether he/she is involved in sacred or secular activities. This concept of constant recollection underpins all Sufi rituals, particularly the *dhikr*, but the ultimate state is one of continuous recollection even outside the confines of prayer formulae. Because of this, every act within a Sufi ceremony, including the use of the *ghaita* by the Aïssawa, is conceived to ensure that an atmosphere appropriate for contemplation of the Divine is created and maintained.

### iii) Spiritual Senses

“Listening with the ear of the heart” is an acknowledgement of levels of reality other than the apparent. In their search to see the “wonderful realities” (Tūsī, 138, quoted in Lewisohn, 1997:10) of the spiritual plane, the Sufis delight in the multiple levels of realities within realities. The Arabic word *zāhir* is used in Sufism to denote the apparent world – our immediate, exterior reality. *Bātin* means the interior, hidden world of the spirit (During, 2002:186).

“Taking this principle to its furthest limit, mystics and sages discover subtle senses that redouble each physical sense. These can be called internal senses or, collectively, a spiritual intellect. Just as the natural intellect dominates the physical senses, this spiritual intellect is, in the hierarchy, the crown of the soul's senses. Thus it is possible to see with another eye and hear with another ear” (ibid., 187).

It is on the plane of spiritual awareness that a poem or a melody can “reveal impassioned meanings” (Lewisohn, 1997:10). This is what it means to “listen with the ear of the heart” instead of with the physical ear, and the level on which *samā'* is intended to function. According to al-Ghazālī, one of Sufism's foremost theorists, music acts on three levels: the physiological level, the level of understanding and the ultimate level on which the listener becomes “penetrated with love of God” (Rouget, 1985:268). On the purely physiological level no meaning is communicated, only beauty. The second level can allow for the experience of *wajd*, depending on the state of the listener and his/her level of spiritual intelligence and experience. Because *samā'* requires this advanced level of awareness, practicing it is a spiritual training exercise for the Sufi's: just as a muscle must be warmed and stretched to become supple, the spiritual senses must be trained to become open to another level of understanding. I explain in the next chapter that it is on this deeper level of understanding that the sound of the *ghaita* reveals myths and symbolisms that give the instrument its spiritual power.

#### iv) Sacred Space

From the earliest days of Sufism it was considered essential for the “proper spiritual conditions incumbent upon both performer and listener” (ibid., 7) to be observed in *samāʿ* so that the music might be correctly understood and appreciated and its therapeutic effects fully realized. These conditions are present on both the spiritual and the physical plane. While it is important that physical requirements such as stillness and correct behaviour be observed, it is more important that participants in a ceremony of *samāʿ* should be in an appropriate state of mind for Divine contemplation with open spiritual senses.

In terms of the physical requirements for *samāʿ* it is generally agreed amongst the Sufis that silence and stillness must be maintained throughout a ceremony, unless the follower is entirely unable to resist the urge to express his state of *wajd*. While *wajd* is considered the fruit of *samāʿ*, it is not considered necessary for ecstasy to be expressed in wild gestures, as *samāʿ* is not intended to disturb “the inward silence, self-control and contemplative sobriety of the Sufi” (Lewisohn, 1997:8).

Further requirements in both the physical and the spiritual realms are those of correct time, place and company. As these must be met on both levels, they can help to make clear the interrelatedness of music and the sacred in *samāʿ*. The requirements for right time and place are not only temporal and physical concepts, but also refer to the state of mind of the follower: while a ceremony might take place at a designated time and place, the correct spiritual time for *samāʿ* is when the mind is unconcerned with worldly matters and the inner being is therefore free to become genuinely absorbed in the music, hearing it on a deep level so that the spiritual experience can be truly fulfilling. The prerequisites of time and place are not only important for the success of the ritual for individual Sufis, but also for the collective atmosphere – Sufism teaches that interior illumination of individuals leads to mutual illumination. So the individual Sufi in fact carries a responsibility to ensure that his/her intentions are pure and his/her spirit is open on entering into the ritual, so that both the individual and the group may benefit fully.

During such a time when (the Sufis) assemble, the illumination which graces the hearts of certain of them is reflected onto the hearts of others, so by the gathering of the general light, revelation, clarity and cheer is increased (Tūsī, 1938:123, translation Lewisohn, quoted in Lewisohn, 1997:9).

The requirements for the right company for a ceremony is a natural extension of those for right time and place, since it is so important for the group that each participant should be in a suitably spiritual state of mind. As mentioned above, the potential power of *samā'* caused debates among Sufi theorists over whether the technique should be viewed as an intermediary stage on the path to perfection, or as the ultimate mystical experience when properly pursued. In this debate it was contested whether the practice should be made available to beginners or reserved for the spiritually advanced (Crow, 1984:32). The potentially overwhelming power of music is therefore acknowledged by the Sufis, who believe that devils can intervene in poorly run *samā'* ceremonies, and lead followers with incorrect intentions to a purely sensual understanding of the music. It is therefore the responsibility of the spiritual leaders to protect beginners from becoming lost in the sensual aspects of music or the simple physical impression of melodies and tones without any understanding. The participant should strive for the application of what he/she hears to "the states of his own soul in his transaction with God, and to the changing of his states" (ibid, 33, sic). As *samā'* is a remembrance of the Primordial Covenant – the original mutual acknowledgement between God and man -- the listener should strive to hear the music in relation to his/her self and the relationship of that self to God.

In order for this aim to be fulfilled it is important that every tool used in a ceremony has meaning, so that no instrument, poem or melody should distract a participant. According to Tūsī (quoted in Lewisohn, 1997:13), one of the foremost Sufi theorists and an advocate of *samā'*:

Each of the instruments used in the Sufi musical concert has a sacred connotation and archetypal meaning (*ma'nā*) which it incarnates and expresses. The large tambourine (*dāf*) refers to the cycle of all created beings...Even the jangling bells on the tambourine have spiritual significance...The flute refers to the human essence and the breath blown into the flute alludes to the 'divine light penetrating the seed of man's essence.

This reference to the flute hints at a possible symbolism of the *ghaita* but, more importantly for this chapter, it demonstrates the extent to which a Sufi imbues every element of his reality with a symbolism that reminds him/her of his/her relationship with God.

As During (2002:186) asserts:

Everything that takes place in the Sufi's consciousness is invested with meaning; these meanings and interpretations are the flowers of a tree of knowledge which the subject has carefully cultivated through spiritual practice and moral edification. Only at the cost of this patient cultivation can music and its effects truly contribute something.

This implies that the Sufi undergoes rigorous spiritual training in order to produce the fruit of spiritual understanding, and that only a devotee who is truly dedicated to seeking out Divine experience by opening his spiritual senses can receive the maximum benefits of *samā'*.

### ***Dhikr***

Just as *samā'* is a spiritual technique that trains the spiritual senses, so *dhikr* trains the devotee to remain concentrated on Divine recollection for long periods of time and, ultimately, throughout every moment of his/her life. *Samā'* is considered by the Sufis to be second only to *dhikr* (Crow, 1984:30), but in fact the two practices

go hand in hand: without concentration on the Divine (*dhikr*) the Sufi cannot attain the awareness necessary for *samā'*, and without that awareness he/she cannot recollect God to the extent that he/she draws nearer to Him.

Sound functions differently in *samā'* and *dhikr*. While *samā'* is a process of listening and searching for illumination in the sounds heard, *dhikr* is a technique of praying – a meditative act of uttering the names of God, founded on the Q'urānic orders “recollect God often” (Sūra 33:40) and “the recollection of God makes the heart calm” (Sūra 13:28 and Schimmel, 1975:167). The aim of *dhikr*, like the requirements for a successful *samā'* ceremony, is to infuse the mind and actions of the follower with remembrance of God. *Dhikr* is perhaps an even better reminder of the Primordial Covenant than *samā'* because it uses the human voice and is therefore a direct reference to the voice granted to Adam by God at the event of creation. The continual utterance of the names of God also aims to remind God of one's existence, thus attracting His blessing (Rouget, 1985:263).

In *dhikr* ceremonies, the concept of sacred infusion is an all-inclusive concept: while *dhikr* can be performed silent or aloud, the silent performance is considered superior to an officially staged, collective *dhikr* ceremony. It is believed that the follower should ultimately not need any ceremonial assistance to weave the continual remembrance of God into his/her existence. Solitary, silent *dhikr* is considered the *dhikr* of the privileged, or the spiritually advanced Sufi adepts (Rouget, 1985:263). It involves silent, inner repetition of the Divine name and an elaborate technique of breath control, and aims at the “total absorption of the self into God” (ibid). As Sufism developed into a movement with mass appeal, many of the original ascetic practices became diluted in order to be made more accessible to lay-people. The controlled mysticism of the *samā'* ceremony gradually gave way to the collective *dhikr* (Rouget, 1985:265), as *dhikr* made the mystical experience accessible to the lay-person in a shorter space of time than that of *samā'*. With this development, *dhikr* became associated with music and dance. While the style, repertoire and techniques of the musical instruments, singing and dance vary from

order to order, each having developed its own styles over time, the common characteristic remains the intoning of the names of God.

The *dhikr* ceremonies of some Sufi orders can involve elements of spectacle, with devotees demonstrating the invulnerability granted them by their identification with their patron saint. They perform such acts as piercing their flesh and walking on burning coals. The Rifa'iyya of Iraq and the Aïssawa are two groups famous for including such spectacles in their exercises (ibid., 273) during *dhikr* ceremonies when their meditations aim at an identification with their patron saint. Poché (1976) describes a ceremony of the Rifa'iyya in Aleppo whose *dhikr* ceremony involved the 'skewer ordeal', which novices of the brotherhood are required to undergo. The *sheikh* pierces the novices flank so that the point goes through the flesh and out the other side, but without drawing any blood. The ordeal is undergone in "an ambience of noisy effervescence", and the spiritual focus of the participants is maintained by "constant shouting, cries, invocations, and the ceaseless beating of drums" (Rouget, 1985:273). The essential element of the ceremony is that the novice should enter a trance that allows him/her to identify with Ahmad Rifā'i, the brotherhood's founder (ibid.). This description is a contrast with the notion of silent, self-controlled spiritual concentration, but the aim is the same: dissolution of the self into a state that brings the devotee closer to God.

The features of a *dhikr* ceremony vary from order to order, but should be transmitted via a chain of spiritual leaders that goes back to the Prophet himself (Schimmel, 1975:169). The correctness of the practice is ensured by the constant presence of the spiritual director, or *sheikh*, as only a properly directed ceremony can be maximally effective (ibid). The *sheikh* is also responsible for judging the spiritual level of the participants and adjusting the ceremony accordingly, as "The recollected is one, but the recollections are variable, and the places of the heart of those who recollect are different" (ad-Daylamī, quoted in Schimmel, 1975:169). *Dhikr* ceremonies do, however, have many constant features. They begin with a reading of the office of the order and other prayers such as sections of the Q'urān,

which may be interspersed with music and songs. This stage varies in length according to circumstances, and constitutes a preparation for the *dhikr* proper, aiming at a “state of contemplation and musical fervour” (Rouget, 1985:271). The *dhikr* proper is, in the case of the non-silent variety, accompanied throughout by music and song, which “involves an almost uninterrupted crescendo marked out by moments of paroxysm and ever-increasing intensity” (ibid). The *sheikh* controls the alternation of song and rhythmic recitation and regulates the rhythm and general acceleration of any physical movements, such as dance, that may occur (ibid, 272).

### **The Spiritual Goal: *Wajd***

It is clear that contemplation of God is the central aim of both *samāʿ* and *dhikr* practices and can lead to an even higher goal of *wajd* that devotees aim to attain when they draw close to experience of God. The spiritual goal of Sufism is the annihilation (*fanā*) of the self/ego and a descent to the Divine essence within the self. The ecstatic state associated with *samāʿ* is a result of the achievement of that aim, and manifests in a state of overwhelming happiness. In Sufism this ecstatic state is known as *wajd*, an Arabic word based on the tri-literal Arabic root *wajada*, with the meanings ‘ecstasy and ardour’, ‘finding’ and ‘being’ (Lewisohn, 1997:22). The highest state of ecstasy is called *wujūd*, or ‘existence itself’, in which the devotee experiences “an existence transcending the consciousness of the finite ego” (ibid, 23).

So the Sufis aim for an even more elaborate exploration of the notion of levels of reality (the *zāhir* and *bātin* pair mentioned above). The best explanation for this overwhelming spiral of meanings that I have found comes from During (2002), who likens the Sufi process of drawing closer to God by increased levels of awareness to a mandala: a spiritual or sacred space that is always circular, with a centre and surrounding areas (During, 2002:185), or any structure or pictorial design that builds itself around a circle. With this comparison, During shows how every level of a *dhikr* or *samāʿ* ceremony can be seen as organised in a circle around the sacred centre that is contemplation of God:

The center of the *mandala* is the essential place or point – the immobile force that activates all the others. A devotee, by contemplating this center, internalizes a harmonious image of the cosmos and thereby attains an interior state of perfect peace. This process can be seen as a descent to the essence itself. In practice, contemplation of the *mandala* is connected to a mantra – a repetition of an appropriate sacred formula...The preferred instrument for this kind of asceticism is repetition – musical, verbal, or both – of a single word in a formula, or *dhikr* (ibid, 185).

So the spiritual techniques of *dhikr* and *samāʿ* aim at penetrating the outer layers of the human experience to find the Divine part of the devotee and bring it into contact with God. In order to experience his/her own Divine centre and the Divine presence of God, the devotee must exit his/her human form and encounter his/her spiritual essence.

Clearly, that the transformation of mental states is a distinguishing characteristic of the Sufi approach, and can be achieved through the use of sound. In the next chapter I will explore the particular symbolisms of the *ghaita* as used by Sufi groups in Morocco such as the Aïssawa brotherhood and the Master Musicians of Jajouka, and how the sound of this instrument assists their altered states and allows them contact with their founding saint.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### *Ghaita* Symbolisms

In the previous chapter I dealt with the Sufi use of music, particularly in their *samā'* and *dhikr* practices, as a tool for the transformation of mental states that allows them contact with the Divine. The focus on music aids this transformation, which is characterised by a journeying to the Divine presence within each devotee, because of the power that the Sufis believe music has. I have explained the four principles that lie at the core of the Sufi use of music within their ceremonies: remembrance of the Primordial Covenant, constant recollection of God, the acknowledgment of invisible levels of reality and the infusion of the sacred in the ceremonies. These four principles are essential in this fourth chapter, which deals with the significance of the *ghaita* by exploring the symbolisms attributed to the instrument in Moroccan Sufism. In order to infuse each Sufi ceremony with recollection of God, every element involved in the ceremony must reflect God in some way. The symbolisms and significance of the *ghaita*, or the manners in which the instrument reflects the Sufi vision of God, are to be found on those invisible levels of reality that the devotees access in their states of mental and spiritual transformation.

The *ghaita* is a particularly interesting instrument in the Islamic context, as shawms are loaded with associations, many of them negative, in the Islamic world. These associations, often sexual, reach back to the *ahadith* (Shiloah, 1997:147), and even further to the myths of antiquity ([www.jajouka.com](http://www.jajouka.com), accessed 31 August 2006). Despite the negative associations that the *ghaita* carries it is considered an extremely powerful instrument in Morocco, used by the musicians of the Hamadsha and Aïssawa brotherhoods for spiritual catharsis, and by the Master Musicians of the Jajouka Mountains in Morocco for intense emotional effect on listeners. However, other shawms known in the Near East as *zurna* are “universally disdained...even rejected, unsolicited by any fraternity” (Poché, 2001:11). How then did the *ghaita*, an instrument with such loaded associations, achieve such an

exalted status in Morocco and the ceremonies of Sufi groups like the Jajouka and the Aïssawa? In this chapter I trace the symbolisms of the *ghaita* so as to uncover some of the mystery surrounding the instrument and to establish how the symbolisms attached to it by these groups allow them to employ the instrument's positive, rather than negative, associations. In order to do this I begin by exploring the many symbolisms attached to music in Islam, which are largely a result of the ancient myths and legends that infuse Islamic culture. This demonstrates the importance of symbolisms, positive and negative, in Islamic society and leads to my discussion on musical instruments in the Islamic world, and particularly the symbolisms attached to shawms and the *ghaita*.

As I mentioned on page 22 in the section on my methodology, my library, database and internet researches have yielded very little documented information on the symbolic significance of the *ghaita* itself. This chapter therefore relies on email correspondences with Moroccan musicians and people involved in musical festivals, in order to establish the reality of the situation in Morocco and particularly amongst the Aïssawa.

#### 4.1 Music and Myth

Myths and legends abound in Islamic society, and a harkening to this invisible world can be seen as the basis for many musical practices. Early Islamic scholars and philosophers searched for explanations as to music's power over listeners, and found that myths, invented or resurrected legends, and symbolic systems revealed a relationship between the spirit world and the origins of music (During, 2002:177).<sup>3</sup> Music enthusiasts believed that it originated with God, Gabriel and other angels, and referred to the Primordial Covenant and the revelation of the Q'urān to the Prophet Muhammad to substantiate their belief. On the occasion of the revelation of the Q'urān, Muhammad was urged by the angel who appeared to him to "Recite!" until he spoke the first words of the Q'urān:

<sup>3</sup> Some writers and scholars (such as Al-Fārābī, d. 950, Ibn Sīnā, 980-1037, and Marāghī, d.1435) were unconcerned with the symbolic dimension of music, dismissing myths and legends and preferring a scientific approach in their studies (During, 2002:177).

Recite in the name of thy Lord who created!

He created man from a clot of blood.

Recite: and thy Lord is the Most Bountiful

He who hath taught by the pen taught man what he knew not (Sura 96:1, quoted in Armstrong 2001:83).

As Chittick explains, the Q'urān itself is a representation of the importance of sound, since it is essentially an oral text whose message is most effectively and meaningfully portrayed through recitation:

Many Sufis spoke of three books in which God has written out the full range of His signs – the Koran itself, the cosmos, and the human soul. But the word “Koran” means literally “recitation.” Long before it was written down, the Koran was a heard and recited book. The Prophet heard it from Gabriel, and then he recited it to his Companions. So the signs of God are not only seen, they are also heard (Chittick, 2000:77).

Critics of the use of music believe that it originated with Satan. These detractors focus their debates around the power of music to tempt Muslims into sin, and particularly around musical instruments, which they believe are the invention of the devil. Detractors connect music with temptation and “pleasures and misbehaviours that are incompatible with the performance of religious duties, or moral conduct, that will bring perdition to their perpetrators” (Shiloah, 1997:146). Either way, music is recognised as having a power over human actions. It is my suggestion that this power can be attributed to the myths connected with music. These myths have an effect because they have some relevance, consciously or unconsciously, in the lives of listeners and participants, and thus hold significance in the present day.

Sufi practices in particular are characterised by an enactment of the acknowledgement of God as the Origin of all actions and things. Chittick uses this Sufi concept of a referral to Origin in his discussion on Sufi dancing:

In order to grasp the reality of dance – that is to say the divine archetype – we need to look back to the divine principles that give rise to joyous intoxication and rhythmic movement. In doing so, we can review basic Sufi teachings on the divine names, the image of God, and the path to human perfection (2000:75).

In performing certain rituals, Sufis are therefore living out the “divine archetypes” which form the basis of their faith, and which teach them how to live in this world. Armstrong also refers to the idea of “archetypes” in her explanation of the relationship between the invisible world and human life:

...every earthly reality is only a pale shadow of its archetype, the original pattern, of which it is simply an imperfect copy. It is only by participating in this divine life that human beings fulfil their potential. The myths gave explicit shape and form to a reality that people sensed intuitively. They told them how the gods behaved, not out of idle curiosity or because these tales were entertaining, but to enable men and women to imitate these powerful beings and experience divinity themselves (2006:5).

Armstrong further asserts that:

The myth was not simply an exercise in nostalgia, however. Its primary purpose was to show people how they could return to this archetypal world, not only in moments of visionary rapture but in the regular duties of their daily lives (ibid., 16).

In the transformative states that Sufi ceremonies aim for, Sufism teaches devotees how to live well in everyday life by acknowledging the constant presence of God. The remembrance and enactment of myths returns the devotee to the invisible, sacred world where God and the human essence are to be found. For Moroccan Sufis like the Aïssawa and the Jajouka, the *ghaita* provides a tangible link to that world.

#### 4.2 The Symbolic Significance of Music in Islam

To the mystics, music is considered a link between the macrocosm that is the universe and the microcosm that is the human being (During, 2002:177 and Khan, 1996:2). This corresponds with the Sufi belief that we all carry God within us. Every creature and event that occurs in the human world is a sign of God, since “each of them displays the traces of God’s names and attributes” (Chittick, 2000:77). For many Muslim theorists the idea of music as a microcosm was based on the relationship between music and numbers, as numbers control cosmic domains such as the stars (During, 2002:177), and from this belief arises the notion that each musical mode (*maqām*) has an individual influence on the human body. According to the *ahadith* each prophet sang in his own mode, which corresponded to the character of his mission (ibid., 181). In the thirteenth century the modes were organised in twelve categories according to the zodiac (ibid., 183).

The organisation of musical performances can also be attributed to the concept of the relationship between music and the cosmos. As During states, the dancing of the Mevlevi Sufis of Konya, best known for their whirling dancing and as the followers of the poet Jelaluddin Rumi (1207-73), symbolises the movement of the heavens (ibid., 184). This idea parallels with Chittick’s assertion, mentioned above, that the dancing of the Sufis facilitates the exchange between the temporal world and heaven because it acknowledges the Origin of human life. The Mevlevis and their practices were the centre of many debates between mystics and traditionalists, who took issue with their use of musical instruments (Shiloah, 1997). For the Mevlevis, however, “music and dance form an indivisible union, in which all details are formalised” (ibid.,151). The proceedings of their ceremonies, including the use of music, are therefore carefully considered. The Kurdish Sufis of the Qādirī order believe that while they play their sacred music there is a heavenly musical group playing at the same time, and that ideally the two groups should play

harmoniously.<sup>4</sup> This allows the heavenly and earthly energies to circulate and for the earthly worshippers to benefit from the blessings of heaven (ibid., 184).

Musical instruments are imbued with mostly positive symbolisms by the Sufis, since music is a vital tool that allows them to focus on God. Al-Tūsī's words on the archetypal meanings of instruments are useful again:

Each of the instruments used in the Sufi musical concert has a sacred connotation and archetypal meaning (*ma'nā*) which it incarnates and expresses. The large tambourine (*dāf*) refers to the cycle of all created beings...Even the jangling bells on the tambourine have spiritual significance...The flute refers to 'the human essences' and the breath blown into the flute alludes to the 'divine light penetrating the seed of man's essence' (al-Tūsī, 1938:98, quoted in Lewisohn, 1997:13).

Many of the symbolisms attached to wind instruments such as the *ney* (end-blown bamboo flute) can be applied to the *ghaita*, since it is the animating breath of the player that holds spiritual significance. The *ney* is used by the Mevlevi Sufis and featured in the opening of Rumi's epic poem the *Mathnawi*:

Hearken to the reed flute, how it complains, lamenting its banishment from its home: "Ever since they tore me from my osier bed, my plaintive notes have moved men and women to tears. I burst my breast, striving to give vent to sighs, and to express the pangs of my yearning for my home. He who abides far away from his home is ever longing for the day he shall return. My wailing is heard in every throng, in concert with them that rejoice and them that weep. Each interprets my notes in harmony with his own feelings, but not one

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<sup>4</sup> As explained in the section of chapter two that deals with the spiritual goal of audition, During (2002:185) likens the spiritual processes of the Sufis to the image of a mandala. With this comparison he highlights the centrality of contemplation of God within the spiritual techniques that make up the outer rings of the mandala, and the aim of penetrating these outer rings in order to encounter God.

fathoms the secrets of my heart. My secrets are not alien from my plaintive notes, yet they are not manifest to the sensual eye and ear. Body is not veiled from soul, neither soul from body, yet no man hath ever seen a soul." This plaint of the flute is fire, not mere air. Let him who lacks this fire be accounted dead! (Whinfield, 2006:1)

This poem implies that the *ney* takes on a life of its own when it is played, and has the ability to communicate the secrets of the heavenly world from which it comes to those who listen to its sounds. The "complaints" of the flute reflect the Sufi longing for a return to this world of Origin, and Rumi's statement that "This plaint of the flute is fire, not mere air" shows that he believed in the power of the instrument to aid in that spiritual return.

It is al-Tūsī's theory that each instrument has an "archetypal meaning", and it is this theory that is important for my thesis. These archetypal meanings are the result of various myths and legends that accumulate to create the "spiritual significance" of which al-Tūsī writes. For example, many instruments are thought to originate with a great man. One legend attributes the reed flute to Imam 'Alī:

When the Prophet had given 'Alī the divine secrets, 'Alī could not contain them. Leaning over a well, he spoke them to ease his soul. A drop of saliva fell to the bottom, and some time later a reed emerged. A passing shepherd cut the reed and made a flute whose sound filled the soul with spiritual longing (During, 2002:182).

Veronica Doubleday's (1999) study of the frame drum in Middle Eastern music highlights the instrument's role as a symbol of the gender and power relationships prevalent in the Middle East. The study traces the roots of the instrument's symbolisms to Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Biblical, Greek, Arabian and Persian sources and concludes that "a considerable degree of continuity across traditions and through time emerges" (Doubleday, 1999:110). It would therefore not be surprising to find that many ancient sources emerge as the basis for the symbolisms

attached to musical instruments up to the present day, and that a collective cultural unconscious has stored these symbolisms and affects the context in which they are used and the particular effect they have on listeners.

### 4.3 The Archetypal Symbolisms of Shawms

Shawms are instruments often cited as being associated with Satan, and yet the *ghaita* is a central device in the spiritual practices of the Aïssawa and the Jajouka, groups that utilise the positive, rather than the negative, symbolisms of music.

The mythologies connected with shawms reach back to the myths of ancient Greece. The culture of the Greeks and the Christian religion that sprung from it was pre-Islamic, and considered by traditional Muslims as idolatrous. They referred to these times as *jahiliya*, or “days of ignorance” (Shiloah, 1997:147). Armstrong (2001:86) describes the Muslim styling of pre-Islamic values as *jahiliya* as a rejection of Christian ideals that had lost their relevance for the Arab people:

They did not want the Christian idea of God, for example, which had become coloured with the rationalistic philosophy and ideals of ancient Greece. Muhammad had instinctively cut back into the Semitic religious experience of the great Hebrew prophets, which was better suited to the people of the Middle East. It is tempting to see the popularity of Islam among the people of Syria, Mesopotamia, Iran and North Africa as a rejection of the Greek-inspired idea of God which was alien to their needs and a return to a more Semitic vision.

This quote from Armstrong’s *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet* pinpointed for me a possible reason for the view of the *ghaita* as connected with evil: its use represents the unenlightened time before the revelation of the Q’urān to the Prophet Muhammad and the dawn of Islam. Links have been made (Doubleday, 1999) between the pre-Islamic circumambulation of the Ka’bah at Mecca and the ecstatic cults devoted to worship of Dionysus in the Greek Empire. In these cultic ceremonies, frame drums (*tympana*) and *aulos* were played by women who

“performed frenzied dances over mountains and woods, in the dead of winter” (ibid., 108). Currently the *ghaita* is an instrument exclusively reserved for playing by men (Langlois, 2006), perhaps because of the above connections between women and musical instruments. Perhaps they are restricted from playing the *ghaita* in order to protect them from the disrepute that such connections could cause.

The dancing that occurred at the Ka'bah were also performed by women, included the use of frame drums and were devoted to goddess worship (ibid., 109). The worship of gods other than Allah would have been reprehensible to the newly founded monotheistic religion of Islam, and traditionalists would have considered any practices related to these as being offensive. Rouget connects Sufi trance practices with the Greek ecstatic cults (1985:187-88), and for Poché the ceremonies of the Aïssawa hint at origins with the Dionysiacs because of the retention of processional characteristics (Poché, 2001:11). Yet it is clear that the Aïssawa and other brotherhoods that use the *ghaita* do so without concern for how this might cause them to be viewed by the traditionalists of Islam. For them it is an instrument with sacred power.

Despite the controversy that surrounds pre-Islamic days and the practices that hark back to those times, Middle Eastern musical theory was developed from that of the Greeks. It is therefore undeniable that many Greek legends survive in the symbolisms of Islamic culture.

Writers sought to understand music in terms known to them from ancient Greek theories of the harmony of the spheres, consonance and dissonance, and the relationship of music to nature and human moods (Danielson and Fisher, 2002:15).

The stories of the *aulos* and the legend of the Greek god Pan are especially relevant in my exploration of the symbolic meanings of the *ghaita*. The festivals of the

Master Musicians of Jajouka, which employ *ghaitas*, are said to have links with the ancient rites of Pan and the Roman fertility festival of Lupercalia, in which the pagan god of fertility and forests was honoured ([www.jajouka.com](http://www.jajouka.com)). The *aulos* was played with the accompaniment of frame drums in religious cults worshipping Dionysus (Doubleday, 1999:108), who was also known as Bacchus, the debauched god of wine.

Those theorists who argue that music is associated with licentiousness would have been influenced by accounts of, for example, female and male *aulos*-players appearing at Greek drinking parties and doubling as prostitutes (Kemp, 1966:217). The legend of Pan may also have inspired negative association with shawms. Pan, a god famous for his sexual prowess, fashioned his reed pipe from the reeds into which the nymph Syrinx was transformed when she escaped from Pan's pursuit (Bulfinch, 2004:155). Pan's music became known for its ability to arouse "inspiration, sexuality or panic, depending on his intentions" (ibid., 2). According to Bulfinch (2004:155):

Pan, like other gods who dwelt in forests, was dreaded by those whose occupations caused them to pass through the woods by night, for the gloom and loneliness of such scenes dispose the mind to superstitious fears. Hence sudden fright without any visible cause was ascribed to Pan, and called a Panic terror.

Pan's highly sexual nature is likely to be the inspiration for his connection with Satan, and the images of Satan as horned and having cloven hooves are markedly similar to those of Pan. The imagistic links between Pan and Satan, and Pan's association with reed instruments, leads to direct links being made between shawms and the devil: villagers in western Afghanistan call the *sorna* (shawm) the "devil's penis" (Baghban, 1977, quoted in Baily 1988, quoted in Doubeday, 1999:104).

Legends like that of Pan might have resulted in such diatribes against music as Ibn al-Jawzī's *Talbīs Iblīs* (The Devil's Delusion) and Ibn abī'l-Dunya's *Dhamm al-*

*malāhī*. Both authors consider music a diversion from piety and include direct references to shawms. The central theme of the *Talbīs Iblīs* is that music is the temptation of the devil:

His recitation is poetry, his call to prayer (*adhān*) dwells in the *mazāmīr* (oboe-like instruments), his traps are women and his drink is intoxicating liquor (Shiloah, 1997:154).

In the *Dhamm al-malāhī*, references to musical instruments, music and music-making are “interwoven with statements concerning other forbidden pleasures and misbehaviour that are incompatible with the performance of religious duties, or moral conduct, and that will bring perdition to their perpetrators” (ibid., 146). Music is thus directly associated with immoral behaviour. Ibn abī’l-Dunya’s reference to the permissibility of the shawm is based on the *hadith* in which the Prophet heard the instrument and called it *mizmār al-shaitān* (the shawm of Satan) (ibid., 147).

Ahmad al-Ghazālī, the brother of the Persian musical theorist Abū Hāmid Muhammad al-Ghāzālī, based his consideration of the use of musical instruments within *samā’* ceremonies on the *ahadith*. He deemed all instruments to be forbidden with the exception of the tambourine and the transverse flute, and also cited the Prophet’s aversion to the sound of the *mizmar* as a reason for regulating its use (Rouget, 1985:266).

#### **4.4 Musical Instruments in Sufism: Positive Associations**

Since Sufism functions not on the level of theoretical thought but through understanding of this world through the heart, as explained in the Chapter Two, it follows that the symbolisms attached to music by the Sufis corresponds to their attitude of embracing that which can lead them closer to God.

As mentioned in reference to Veronica Doubleday's 1999 study, the frame drum is a highly debated instrument. The tiny cymbals that are sometimes attached to it are usually unconditionally condemned by official Islam because the cymbals are "...too evocative of profane music. So much so that they have come to denote the borderline between sacred and profane music" (Poché, 2001:9). Regardless of this injunction, the Aïssawa of Morocco employ the variation of the instrument that includes the tiny cymbals (*boujnajenn*) because of its particularly vibrant sound, as Christian Poché (2001:9) describes:

At a strike of the hand, the cymbals are incredibly vibrant: their violent jingling, resonating noisily, is a particularly favourite timbre of this region, clearly heightening the exaltation, preparing and exhorting sacred dancing, creating a unique atmosphere with no apparent connection to what one is accustomed to meet and hear in other confraternities.

This would imply that the group chooses the instruments for their ceremonies based solely on the power of their sound and the resultant effect on the listeners, as would Jones' (2002) account of the sound of the *zurna* (shawm) enchanting listeners and enhancing the ceremonies of the Aïssawa of Tunisia. But Poché goes on to explain the development of the group's instruments of choice. The Aïssawa Order of Morocco was founded in the sixteenth century with "an impressive series of powerful instruments" (ibid., 10) being used. These were two-skinned horizontal drums (*tbel*), a pair of unequally shaped kettle-drums (*tabla*), *ghaitas* and horns (*nfir*). The latter two were involved in the military orchestras that spread through Islam, and by the nineteenth century were evolving into modern Western-influenced ensembles. In order for these ancient instruments to survive it became necessary to alter their status, and they became part of the Aïssawa's ceremonial ensembles:

It is conceivable that former military instrumentalists may have convinced the heads of the religious fraternity that these powerful

open-air instruments should be conserved in order to acclimatize them to changing times. And so, one function took over from another: from their use in parades as symbols of power, these instruments were put to the service of divine greatness, of his prophet and saints. From instruments of military music, they were transformed into instruments of ritual (ibid.).

*Ghaitas* are considered essential in many festivals in the Arab world (Qassim, 2002:415). The demand for the instrument throughout Morocco leads *ghaita* players to leave their Sufi communities (*zawia*) and travel to the city where they perform in festivals. More and more frequently they are no longer members of the Aïssawa, but independent and paid on each occasion for which they are employed (ibid., 11). This means that the Aïssawa are not only using a controversial instrument for their ceremonies, but disregard the orthodox Islamic suspicion of professional musicians. Despite the controversy surrounding the instrument, the *ghaitas* are in fact given such a dignified status that they enter the proceedings of a ceremony when the consciousness of the participants is significantly altering. To many participants the *ghaitas* are essential to the trance process, and without them a ceremony is considered inadequate (Davis, 1989:16).

The choice of instrumentation in the ceremonies of Moroccan Sufi brotherhoods is often symbolic of the nature of Divine contact that the devotees seek: identification with their founding saints. Examples of this are the use of frame drums by the Rifā'iyya of Aleppo, and of the *ghaita* by the Aïssawa of Morocco. In the case of the Rifā'iyya, the drums, called *mizhar*, meaning 'he who makes appear', beat in double time in the 'skewer ordeal', during which the skin of adherents is pierced by the *sheikh* without drawing any blood (Rouget, 1985:266). The presence of the drums is considered essential in assisting the novice to attain a state that allows him to contact the spirit of the saint so that he can endure the ceremony (ibid.).

The *ghaita* has significance for the Aïssawa in connecting them with their founding saint, Sidi Mohamed Ben Aïssa. Like other Moroccan saints, Ben Aïssawa was

endowed with *baraka* (spiritual blessings), but his characteristic miracle was that he was immune to the bites of snakes and scorpions, and was able to obtain the same immunity for his followers (Poché, 2001:11). Perhaps the typical Moroccan entertainment of snake charming, which uses the *ghaita* and frame drums (Grame, 1970:83), was another reason for the inclusion of the *ghaita* in the rituals of the Aïssawa. This connection would therefore allow the participants a strong connection with Ben Aïssa, and thus a more effective trance.

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, contact with a member of the Aïssawa or someone closely affiliated with them would have enabled me to ascertain the particular symbolisms of the *ghaita* to the group, both for those who play it and those who use its sound for the purposes of their trance. I do however believe that I have been able to ascertain on a theoretical level what the instrument's role might be, and hope to one day travel to Morocco to determine what truth there is in my hypotheses.

Aside from researching and learning more about the specifics of my research, and the deeper understanding of my instrument that this has given me, writing this thesis has enriched me in many ways. I have been challenged to expand my world view, but more importantly I have been stretched on a personal level to complete an academic task unfamiliar to my usual routine of practicing oboe. I now listen to music differently -- with a new understanding of its powers -- and especially find myself more drawn to and appreciative of Middle Eastern musics. Much of the literature that I used for my research purposes is still of interest to me. William C. Chittick's *Sufism: A Short Introduction*, for example is a source that I still enjoy reading -- in the development of my own spirituality and in learning more about Sufism.

Since beginning my research into the symbolisms of the *ghaita* I play the oboe with an enhanced sense of its place in the wide musical world. I now see the classical genre in which I work as one element in my newly expanded awareness of the

oboe's use and power in cultures other than my own. Just as the myth and legends attached to the *ghaita* by groups like the Aïssawa and the Jajouka give the instrument its status on a conscious and unconscious level, so my research has entered my subconscious to influence the way in which I play the oboe.

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University of Cape Town

**APPENDIX:**

**Contacts and Pamphlets**

University of Cape Town

Dear Mr Naji

I am a Masters student at the University of Cape Town, and was advised by Khaled Amine to get in touch with you for ideas about my research. I'm studying the use of music in Sufism, and particularly by the A'issawa brotherhood of Morocco. I am an oboist myself and, out of an interest in the symbolisms of shawms, am focusing on the use of the *ghraita* by the group. So far I've been concentrating on researching the nature of Sufism in general and in Morocco in particular, and the importance of music to the Sufis.

Some questions:

1. Why is the *ghraita* important in the spiritual practices of the A'issawa? The one cd that I have heard of a ceremony by the group (Poché, 2001) has the instruments entering the proceedings at a point where the trance is getting quite intense, so I am trying to establish the reasons for the use of this particular instrument and the symbolisms attached to it that make it sacred to the group.

2. What are the symbolisms of the *ghraita* to the group? I have read about the Jajouka myth of Bou Jeloud... is it similar for the A'issawa? How do these symbolisms assist them in their search for spiritual contact with their founding saint and Allah? To do this I'm researching the general symbolisms of shawms in the Islamic world, instrument symbolisms within classical *samā'* ceremonies and the focus will hopefully be the symbolisms of the *ghraita* to the A'issawa.

I would be grateful for any ideas that you think might be useful to me. I know I really should be doing this research in Morocco but am not able to for reasons of finance and time constraints. If I could establish an email contact with a member of the A'issawa that would be ideal. Do you have any idea how I would go about doing that?

Thank you,

Hilary Paterson

Le Cape, le 20 septembre 2006

Cher Monsieur Naji,

Je suis étudiante en Master dans l'université de la ville du Cape (UCT University of Cape Town), Afrique du Sud. Monsieur Khaled Amine m'a conseillé de vous contacter à propos de différents points concernant ma recherche. J'étudie l'utilisation de la musique au sein du Soufisme et en particulier dans la confrérie des A'issawa du Maroc. Je suis moi-même hautboïste et, outre mon intérêt pour les différents symbolismes des instruments à anches, ma recherche est centrée sur l'utilisation de la *ghraita* par le groupe.

Ma problématique est la suivante : en quoi la *ghraita* est-elle essentielle dans les pratiques spirituelles des A'issawa. Sur le cd, d'une des cérémonies du groupe (Poché, 2001) que j'ai écouté, l'instrument entre dans la musique au moment où la transe devient assez intense. C'est pourquoi j'essaye d'établir quelles sont les raisons pour l'utilisation de cet instrument, ainsi que les symboles auxquels il est rattaché et qui le rend sacré pour le groupe. Jusqu'à maintenant, j'ai concentré ma recherche sur la nature du Soufisme en générale, en particulier au Maroc, et l'importance de la musique pour les soufis. A présent, je me concentre plus précisément sur l'objet de mon mémoire, à savoir les symbolismes de la *ghraita* pour le groupe et comment l'instrument les aide dans leur quête d'un contact spirituel avec leur saint fondateur et Allah. Pour cela, je recherche les différents symboles aux hautbois dans le monde islamique et les différents symboles des instruments dans les cérémonies classique du samā', sachant que le point fondamentale de ma recherche sera les symboles de la *ghraita* pour les A'issawa (qui seront certainement en lien avec les sujets étudiés ci-dessus).

Peut-être avez-vous quelques idées, générales ou spécifiques, qui pourront m'être utiles. Je sais, je devrais faire cette recherche au Maroc, mais malheureusement cela m'est impossible pour des raisons temporelles et financières. L'idéal serait pour moi d'établir un contact email avec un membre des A'issawa. De cette façon, je pourrai avoir différentes perspectives de recherche concernant les différents symboles de la *ghraita*. Savez-vous si cela est possible ?

En espérant que ma lettre suscitera votre intérêt, je vous prie Monsieur d'accepter mes sincères salutations.

Hilary Paterson.

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hilaryanne\_76@hotmail.com

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From : A Langlois <t.langlois@ulster.ac.uk> Inbox  
Sent : 08 May 2006 09:30:56 AM  
To : hilaryanne\_76@hotmail.com  
Subject : Re: cape town student



Hello Hilary, glad to hear from you. Unfortunately the A'issawa groups that I was involved with in Oujda did not have much in common with those elsewhere in the country. They were overwhelmingly female, which meant that they used bendir drums only (there are taboos in the poorer classes about women playing wind instruments). So no ghraita here I'm afraid. However I found that in Fez the A'issawa tradition was much more traditional - more of a sufi brotherhood based around the shrines of saintly figures and less ecstatic trance states. I came across this music in passing reeally, so don't have many contacts as yet, but know that oboes were used and that CD's of the music are available. I have a couple myself which I could copy for you. I'm not clear which angle you are taking on this topic so it's hard to point you in quite the right direction- also much of the literature is in french and I'm not sure if this is useful to you. If you are looking at the instrument primarily you might want to consider the famous musicians of the village of Jajouka (Rif Mountains) too, and I've recently found a lot of material using Ghraitas in the Malouf (Andalus) tradition of Constantine in Algeria. I'll be happy to e-mail you Mp3's of samples to see if it's any use. If you are into the religious or social side of the A'issawa you'll need another kind of literature, which I can point you in the direction of.

Do let me know your main intersts and i'll do my best to advise.  
Tony  
Tony Langlois  
School of Media and Performing Arts  
University of Ulster  
Coleraine  
Northern Ireland  
(0044) 028 7032 3035

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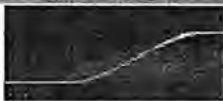
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From : Philip Schuyler <pds2@u.washington.edu> Inbox  
Sent : 22 November 2005 06:02:28 PM  
To : Hilary Paterson <hilaryanne\_76@hotmail.com>  
Subject : Re: cape town student

Dear Ms. Paterson,

You might try the following sources:

Boncourt, Andr #233;

1980 Rituel et musique des A #239;ssaoua citadins du Maroc.  
Th #232;se  
de doctorat de 3 #232;me cycle, Institut d'Anthropologie et  
d'Ethnologie de Strasbourg.

Brunel, Ren #233;

1926 Essai sur la confr #233;rie religieuse des A #239;ssaoua au  
Maroc.  
Paris: Paul Geuthner.

Crapanzano, Vincent

1973 The Hamadsha: A Study in Moroccan Ethnopsychiatry.  
Berkeley: The University of California Press.

Boncourt would be your most complete source on the music of the Aissawa, but it would be very difficult to find. Brunel is out of date methodologically, but would still provide good information on ritual. Crapanzano focuses on the Hamadsha, but has some information on the Aissawa since the two groups overlap in terms of both ritual and music.

It might also be helpful if you could get hold of a film by Izza Jenini called "Louanges" (or "Hymns of Praise" in the English version). The film depicts a pilgrimage to the shrine of Moulay Idris I. There's not a lot of specific information, but it would give you a good idea of what a performance looks like.

It would really be best if you could go to Morocco and do the research yourself. I hope that someday you'll get the chance to do just that.

Good luck.

All the best,

Philip Schuyler

On Fri, 18 Nov 2005, Hilary Paterson wrote:

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Dear Mr Schuyler

I am a Masters student at the University of Cape Town writing a thesis on the use of the ghaita in the Aissawa ceremonies of Morocco.

I have been advised by my supervisor, Sylvia Bruinders, to seek your help in finding specific information concerning the confaternity. Please find attached a more detailed letter.

Many thanks  
Hilary Paterson

---

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\*\*\*\*\*  
Philip D. Schuyler  
Division of Ethnomusicology  
School of Music, Box 353450  
University of Washington  
Seattle, Washington 98195  
(206) 543-9878  
<pds2@u.washington.edu>  
\*\*\*\*\*



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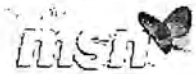
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From : scott kugle <skugle@gmail.com>

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Sent : 17 August 2006 09:14:46 PM

To : "Hilary Paterson" <hilaryanne\_76@hotmail.com>

Subject : Re: cape town student

Attachment : Encyc.South.Asian.Dance.doc (0.07 MB)

Dear Hilary,

Nice to hear from you and to know of your research on music and sufism. Fascinating topic! Close to my heart, though I'm not an oboist! In fact, I tried to play the ney, the reed flute that is featured in so many Sufi traditions, but I could not get it to make

any sound at all. Very sad.

I have read your letter, and though I've done research on Sufism in

Morocco, it did not focus at all on music. So on the specifics of your

research, on the ghaita or ghraita, I cannot give you the specific information you are looking for. I also don't know anyone specifically in the Aissawa brotherhood, though I heard them sometimes

in Sufi gatherings or public occasions in Fes. I will inquire with a

friend of mine here in Holland who knows more about Sufi musicians and

is a consultant for the organizers of the Fes Sacred Music festival,

which each year involves Aissawa and other groups. He may know of someone. Can you correspond in French, by the way? That might come in

handy if he can refer you to someone in Morocco...if not then English

will just have to do.

Now on music in Islam in general, there is much literature for you to

use, and I'm sure you have been pouring through it. As I mentioned

above, the ney (or nay) is the reed flute that is so important in many

Sufi traditions, from Egypt through Turkey and Persia (though it doesn't seem to feature much in North African music, Sufi or classical). It is a wind instrument, so philosophically and symbolically is very similar to the ghaita, in terms of being like an

empty body blown through by the active breath of life. But it has an

open mouth, rather than a vibrating reed, so musically it is differnt. Anyway, in the Sufi poetry of Rumi and many others you can

find intriguing reference to the ney. Take a look at the opening

18

Who  
needs a  
knight  
in  
shining  
armour



lines of the Rumi's massive poem, the Masnavi (or Allegorical Ode) which has been translated from Persian to English by Reynold Nicholson, and later by many others. The opening passage is all about the symbolism of the reed flute. You will love it. It might help you concentrate your general study of music in sufism onto the instrument of your choice.

There is also a book in English on the Hamadsha brotherhood, by a psychological anthropologist. That is a sufi brotherhood very close to the Aissawa in their techniques and rituals. I don't know if it talks in detail about the musical aspect of their rituals.

You might also be interested to listen to the recordings of the musician Bachir Attar, a moroccan ghaita player (who came to fame with the "Jajouka Musicians" who were picked up by the Beat generation hippies and made famous in the 60s). I'm not sure what Sufi tradition in particular he belongs to, as the recording industry tends to muddy these things up. There is one recording of his called "the next dream" on cmp records. it is a pop appropriation of Moroccan Sufi trance music...blah blah blah. But interesting to listen to.

I am attaching to this mesage the draft of an article I wrote for the encyclopedia of south asian dance, on music and movement in Sufism with a focus, of course, on south asia. Sounds far from your topic, but in it is a brief discussion of the reed flute, and the importance of sound in meditation techniques. There are many references in the article that you might be already familiar with, but some also might be new to you. I hope it helps, even just a little!

I will be at CTU from Sept 20 for six weeks. I hope we can meet then and talk this over at leisure. Until then, take care!

Scott

On 8/17/06, Hilary Paterson <hilaryanne\_76@hotmail.com> wrote:

Dear Mr Kugle

I am a Masters student at the University of Cape Town, with the focus of my thesis on the use of music in Sufism, particularr yby the A'issawa brotherhood of Morocco. I was advised by S'adiyyah Sheikh in the religious studies department to contact you for ideas on my research, and hope you don't mind reading the more detailed letter attached.

Many thanks  
Hilary Paterson

---

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From : scott kugle <skugle@gmail.com>

| | | Inbox

Sent : 21 August 2006 03:18:13 PM

To : "Hilary Paterson" <hilaryanne\_76@hotmail.com>

Subject : Re: cape town student

Dear Hilary,

I just heard back from my friend Neil, here in Amsterdam. He's not an academic specialist, but is very very active in the field of musicology in the Arab and wider Islamic world. I forwarded to him your letter, and he is offering to help put you in contact with others who might know more, including some in Morocco. Please contact him directly!

I'm pasting his message back to me below, for you to read.

Best of luck!

Scott

-----  
"Neil van der Linden" <nvd1@xs4all.nl>

Hello Scott, I am very familiar with Aissaoua. But as the Moroccan Middle and Upper classes tend to look down upon such 'popular' forms of Sufism and Islam, there is not much thorough information gathered. And what I have found until now in Morocco is not analytical and systematical. There is a clear gap in this respect. I am very close

to Fouraq Abbas who however is rather an expert on Berber more secular ritual music. Khaled Amine of the University of Tanger might be able to help, and what is helpful too is that he speaks English.

You dont mention whether your friend speaks French well, let alone Arabic. In France there is a more systematically organised material. But of

course in French. And even there I notice that the knowlegde is fragmentary.

Lots of musicologists and anthropolists in these fields only know one pet topic. Even some very renowned musicologist in Egyptian music I

know knows nothing about Iraqi and Moroccan music. One would think his parents sent him to university to study musicology of Egypt (which is quite improbable) and he had no passion do do anything else just for the sheer joy of music.

There are several separate articles, and some CD editions of the music published in French are quite accomplished. But I think the comprehensive study including a view on the role of the music as

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as the spiritual contents has yet to be conceived. I can help your friend at least with recordings and pictures and names of the main groups in Fes and Meknes, cities that host the most active brotherhoods.

Neil

On 8/17/06, Hilary Paterson <hilaryanne\_76@hotmail.com> wrote:

Dear Mr Kugle

I am a Masters student at the University of Cape Town, with the focus of my thesis on the use of music in Sufism, particularl yby the A'issawa brotherhood of Morocco. I was advised by S'adiyyah Sheikh in the religious studies department to contact you for ideas on my research, and hope you don't mind reading the more detailed letter attached.

Many thanks  
Hilary Paterson

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From : Neil van der Linden <nvd1@xs4all.nl> | | | | | | | |

Sent : 28 August 2006 04:00:16 PM

To : "Hilary Paterson" <hilaryanne\_76@hotmail.com>

CC : scott kugle <scott\_kugle@yahoo.com>, Khalil <Fouraqk@yahoo.fr>, Khalil <fouraqk@yahoo.fr>, Tanger Khaled Amine <khamine@hotmail.com>

Subject : Re: cape town student

Nice to hear from you, Hilary.

In fact in the case of Khalid Amine you can approach him in English, he teaches at the English faculty of Tanger and Tetouan. Fouraq Abbas reads English, but it would be more helpful to communicate with him in French.

Let me know what you would like to do regarding the recordings and pictures. They are too big and too many to send by email.

Neil

Op 28-aug-2006, om 16:08 heeft Hilary Paterson het volgende geschreven:

Dear MR van der Linden

Thanks so much for your suggestions as to contacts for my research, via Scott Kugle. Its very encouraging to know there are people out there who are able and willing to help! I'm having my letter about my research translated into French to send to Fouraq Abbas and Khaled Amine. You mentioned that you may be able to help with recordings and pictures of the main groups in Fes and Meknes -- I would really appreciate that! I'll let you know how the contacts go with the men you mentioned, thanks again for that lead!

All the best  
Hilary Paterson.

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hilaryanne\_76@hotmail.com

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From: KHALID AMINE <khamine@hotmail.com>
Sent: 31 August 2006 02:22:04 PM
To: hilaryanne\_76@hotmail.com
Subject: RE: cape town student

Dear Hilary,

Thanks for your email. Neil is a good friend of mine. I am actually now in NY on a fulbright grant. But, as I undertood, you need to establish contact via email; that is difficult. The kind of research you are doing needs field work. I suggest, though, that you read the extremely important works done on Issaoua by Vincent Cripansano. Also, the work done by a Moroccan, yet in Arabic, Nouredine Zahi. However, if your interest is in Ghaita and its connection to Sufi trance, then you really need to attend some lilas yourself. However, if you are familiar with the Master Musicians of Jakouka in the north of Morocco (they have nothing to do with Issaoua). They use a lot of pipes, their music is magical. It brought Brian Jones of the Roling Stone up to Morocco to work with them. Try to find their CDs in Cape, go to "Brian Jones Introduces the Master Musicians of Jajouka". They played with the Roling Stone many times. Steven Davis wrote a book on them: Jajouka RolingStone: A Fable of Gods and Heros.

Maybe my friend who is a theater scholar located in Fes can help you establish contact with the Issaoua of Fes. His name is Said Naji; snaji4@yahoo.fr

thanks

khalid

From: "Hilary Paterson" <hilaryanne\_76@hotmail.com>
To: khamine@hotmail.com
Subject: cape town student
Date: Thu, 31 Aug 2006 12:47:02 +0000

>Dear Mr Amine

>

>I have been advised to contact you by Mr Neil van der Linden,
>regarding my Masters research at the University of Cape Town. I am
>researching the music of Sufism, particularly in Morocco and by the
>Aissoua brotherhood. The focus of my thesis is the symbolisms of
>the ghaita to the Aissoau (since I am an oboeist myself). I'm
>struggling to find information on this specific issue and am
>searching for ideas! I have attached a more detailed letter, and
>would be very appreciative if you would read it and give me any
>pointers that might come to mind!

>

>Many thanks
>Hilary Paterson

>

>

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











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nilaryanne\_76@hotmail.com

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From : said ennaji <snaji04@yahoo.fr>  |  |  |  Inbox  
 Sent : 18 November 2006 12:10:21 PM  
 To : Hilary Paterson <nilaryanne\_76@hotmail.com>  
 Subject : letter

dear H. Paterson  
 i received your mail. I don't use english well. i will send you a letter in french including my thinking about ghrata and aisawa. I will also search a group of aisawa and make you contacting them. I hope find a groupe which can ansewr your questions sincerely

**Said Naji**  
 B.P2446, principal, Fès, Maroc  
 Tel +21268949386 fax +21255655069  
 snaji04@yahoo.fr www.naji.imaroc.com  
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## PRAYER FOR PEACE

Send Thy Peace, O Lord, which is perfect and everlasting,  
that our souls may radiate Peace.

Send Thy Peace, O Lord, that we may think, act and speak harmoniously.

Send Thy Peace, O Lord, that we may be contented and thankful  
for Thy bountiful gifts.

Send Thy Peace, O Lord, that amidst our worldly strife  
we may enjoy Thy Bliss.

Send Thy Peace, O Lord, that we may endure all, tolerate all  
in the thought of Thy Grace and Mercy.

Send Thy Peace, O Lord, that our lives may become a divine vision,  
and in Thy Light all darkness may vanish.

Send Thy Peace, O Lord, our Father and Mother,  
that we, Thy children on earth, may all unite in one Brotherhood.

AMEN

by INAYAT KHAN, Founder of the Sufi Movement



## THE SUFI MOVEMENT

The Sufi Message was brought to the Western world by Inayat Khan, who left his native India for America in 1910. In response to the world-demand of the time he moulded Sufism into a universal form, thus giving body to the soul of wisdom which had been conceived for centuries in the heart of the inner cult of the ancient Sufis.

The term "Sufi" is thought to have been derived from the word *Sophia*, which means wisdom. This root has the same meaning in the Oriental as well as in the Occidental tradition. Others say that the word "Sufi" comes from *Sáfa*, meaning purity, while again others trace it to the Persian *Suf*, which means wool, as the Sufis used to wear woollen garments.

Sufis have mainly been known by this name in the world of Islam, and Sufism was interpreted to the followers of Islam in Muslim terminology. By diving deep into the heart of Islam what they found was the pearl of Sufism; but Sufism, like water under the earth, can be found in the depth of every religion. Its tradition can be traced as far back as the time of Abraham, the father of three great religions, who was initiated in the most ancient cult of Egypt. Sufism in the real sense of the word has always existed since the birth of the human race on earth. Sometimes under the same name, and sometimes under different names.

## SUFI THOUGHTS

1. There is one God, the Eternal, the only Being; None exists save He.
2. There is one Master, the Guiding Spirit of all souls, who constantly leads his followers towards the light.
3. There is one Holy Book, the sacred manuscript of nature, the only scripture which can enlighten the reader.
4. There is one Religion, the unswerving progress in the right direction towards the ideal, which fulfils the life's purpose of every soul.
5. There is one Law, the law of reciprocity, which can be observed by a selfless conscience together with a sense of awakened justice.
6. There is one Brotherhood, the human brotherhood, which unites the children of the earth indiscriminately in the fatherhood of God.
7. There is one Moral, the love which springs forth from self-denial and blooms in deeds of beneficence.
8. There is one Object of Praise, the beauty which uplifts the heart of its worshipper through all aspects from the seen to the unseen.
9. There is one Truth, the true knowledge of our being, within and without, which is the essence of all wisdom.
10. There is one Path, the annihilation of the false ego in the Real, which raises the mortal to immortality, in which resides all perfection.

## THE OBJECTS OF THE SUFI MOVEMENT

1. To realize and spread the knowledge of Unity, the religion of love and wisdom, so that the bias of faiths and beliefs may of itself fall away, the human heart may overflow with love, and all hatred caused by distinctions and differences may be rooted out.
2. To discover the light and power latent in man, the secret of all religion, the power of mysticism, and the essence of philosophy, without interfering with customs or belief.
3. To help to bring the world's two opposite poles, East and West, close together by the interchange of thought and ideas; that the universal brotherhood may form of itself, and people may meet one another beyond the narrow national and racial boundaries.

The purpose of the Sufi Movement is to work towards unity. Its main object is to bring humanity, divided as it is into so many different sections, closer together in the understanding of the deeper knowledge of life.

There are three principal activities of the Sufi Movement:

### The Universal Worship

The devotional activity of the Sufi Movement is to recognize the one and the same source, the divine Spirit of Guidance, in order to help humanity at different periods in various lands in their time of need.

Not only do we acknowledge this ideal by a worshipful feeling when entering any of the many mansions of the Lord, by looking with veneration on the inspired teachers of the world, and by studying the different scriptures in reverence, but we also acknowledge this ideal by placing on God's altar the scriptures of six living religions and lighting the candles in the name of all the illuminated, known and unknown to the world, thus making our service a Universal Worship.

This devotional aspect of the Movement is not for any particular sect of religion; it is a Church of All, and in order to follow it no one need give up his or her own way of worship, for in this one will find one's own faith in addition to the beliefs of others. The one in whose life there is need of a belief will find it in this Universal Worship, while maintaining his wider outlook on the question of religion.

### The Sufi Order

The Sufi Order, the esoteric activity of the Sufi Movement, is a school of individual training in the pursuit of truth. The initiation into this Order and the subsequent training are given for the physical, intellectual, mental, moral, and spiritual development towards the unfoldment of the personality.

Reciprocal confidence between the teacher and the pupil is needed which stands as a sacred bond. Initiation is the trust given by the candidate and the confidence returned by the teacher. In the Sufi Order there are no particular restrictions or disciplines and no vows or pledges to be taken except those regarding faithfulness and secrecy. Nevertheless, it is preferable for a candidate to keep nothing back, for a willing response from the pupil and the least possible demand on the part of the teacher are desirable.

No one who thinks that he or she is ripe for initiation can be really so; it is the seeker who is shown the path. The one who has already found need not trouble to seek. A ripened fruit need not be kept in the straw. It is to the thirsty that water may be given, it is the hungry who may obtain food. After entering the Order the one who is inquisitive will go out through the same door by which he came in, with eyes covered by the veil of curiosity. Neither is the person who has the habit of going from one thing to another ready for initiation, for his mind is not yet still. The one who wishes to find out some secret by entering the Order will lock automatically, by his own attitude, the door to its secret; for there is only one key to the secret of life, and that is sincerity.

To tread the path with devotion alone, or to follow it only with the intellect is like walking on one foot. For both are as two feet with which to tread the path of truth.

Neither for the love of phenomena nor for the sake of amusement should one undertake the journey on this path. For the one who is light-minded will have no strength to stand firm on this steep hill; instead of climbing to the summit he may slip and fall into the abyss.

### **The World Brotherhood**

The work of this activity is to throw the inner light upon the different aspects of life, such as art, music, poetry, drama, education, history, social reform, and comparative religion; that thereby, through whatever walk of life, we may make our way to life's destination, creating that sympathetic attitude towards one another which may result in mutual harmony, culminating in world peace.

As the Movement which Inayat Khan had started grew to become world-wide, the need of an organization became more and more apparent, and this resulted in the establishment and incorporation of the International Headquarters of the Sufi Movement at Geneva, Switzerland. Its offices are situated in that city at 11, rue John Rehfous. Inquiries concerning the Movement in South Africa may be sent to: Sufi Movement, 183 Campground Road, Newlands, 7700.

#### Telephone:

Cape Town	(021) <del>642718</del> 6718807
Durban	(031) 86 2738
Johannesburg	(011) 672 1241
Pretoria	(012) 46 2049

# INITIATION IN THE SUFI MOVEMENT

## SUFISM

The name Sufi comes from the Greek root sofia meaning wisdom, that wisdom which is timeless and universal. It is timeless because man has always possessed this wisdom in the depth of his being and universal because it belongs to humanity as a whole. It can be likened to the inner perfume which is at the core of all religion.

## HISTORICAL

The wisdom of Sufism was spread in America and Europe from 1910 to 1926 by the most gentle yet most profound mystic, Hazrat Inayat Khan. It was brought to South Africa in the early 1950's and today there are branches in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town.

## TEACHINGS

The Sufi teachings have touched and illuminated practically all aspects of life, from education to mysticism, from sex to everyday life and from music to the purpose of the whole existence, to name but a few. This profound knowledge can help to console, to encourage and to find the answers to life's every question, without and within.

Kindly consult the list of publications available.

## INITIATION INTO THE SUFI ORDER.

In the Sufi Order one receives individual guidance for the personal development of one's spiritual life. The following extracts from the words of Hazrat Inayat Khan, give some details about the purpose of entering the Sufi Order.

( From Volume 1, THE WAY OF ILLUMINATION )

The objects one should have in taking initiation are : to realise the self within and without; to know and communicate with God, whom alone the world worships; to kindle the fire of divine love, which alone has any value; to be able to read nature's manuscript and to be able to see into the world unseen; to learn how to control oneself; to light the torch of the soul and to kindle the fire of the heart; and to journey through this positive existence and arrive in this life at the goal at which every soul is bound in the end to arrive.

For further information you are welcome to contact any of the following people

Frances Schwarting	021 671 8807
Catherine van Alphen	021 713 1318
Magda Alberts	021 780 1638
Waldo van Essen	021 671 7490

NATURE MEDITATIONS OF THE SUFI MESSAGE.

1) Trees with branches hanging down  
I SEE THY HAND BLESSING ME

2) Trees with branches going upwards  
PRAYING FOR ME WITH HANDS RAISED UPWARDS

3) Flowers  
FLOWERS TELL ME HOW BEAUTIFUL THOU ART

4) Landscape  
I FEEL THY PRESENCE IN THIS LANDSCAPE, WHICH DRAWS MY HEART  
SO CLOSE TO THEE.

5) Space  
I BEHOLD THROUGH THE SPACE THY LIMITLESS PRESENCE

6) Sunshine  
LET THE SUN OF THY GLORY SHINE IN MY HEART

7) Human Beings  
IN MAN I SEE MY BELOVED LORD THINE OWN IMAGE

University of Cape Town

# THE SUFI MOVEMENT



## UNIVERSAL WORSHIP

The founder of the Sufi Movement in the West and of this form of worship, Hazrat Inayat Khan, writes of it as follows:—

“The Universal Worship is not another Church to be included among the variety of existing churches. It is a service which gives an opportunity to those belonging to different religions to worship together. Also it gives practice in paying respect to the Great Ones who have come from time to time to serve humanity. The different scriptures of those who have taught wisdom are read at the altar of the Universal Worship.”

The object of the service therefore is to demonstrate the fundamental unity of the great world religions. Whilst each sounds its own note conditioned by the needs of the time in which it arose, they are all derived from one Source and all aspire to the same Ideal.

The religions symbolised on the altar by six candles and six sacred books are the Hindu, Buddhist, Zoroastrian, Hebrew, Christian, and Islamic.

The highest candle centrally placed represents the Light from which all others are lit — the Godlight. The second highest candle standing below the first symbolises the Light of Truth held aloft by the Messengers of God of all ages, known and unknown to the world.

Incense is used with its usual significance, that “no prayer reaches God unless it arises from a glowing heart”.

The significance of the emblem on the altar cloth — a winged heart with a five pointed star and a crescent moon — has been rendered in the following words:

“Verily the heart responsive to the Light of God is liberated.”

The particular subject of each service is illustrated by reading passages from the scriptures of the six living world religions and from the Gayan, Vadan or Nirtan — aphorisms, poems and prayers by

Hazrat Inayat Khan. The basic similarity, even to the wording, is to be found in these sacred writings in which One Voice can be recognised as speaking through all, that of the Spirit of Guidance, Alpha and Omega.

The understanding of this "Unity in Diversity" will create an atmosphere of mutual tolerance and goodwill with the ideal of realising "one single brotherhood in the Fatherhood of God" among people of all religions, races and nations.

### INVOCATION AND PRAYERS SAID AT THE SERVICE

*"TOWARDS the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony and Beauty, the Only Being, united with all the Illuminated Souls, who form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance."*

### SAUM

PRAISE be to Thee, Most Supreme God,  
Omnipotent, Omnipresent, All-pervading,  
The Only Being.  
Take us in Thy Parental Arms,  
Raise us from the denseness of the earth.  
Thy Beauty do we worship,  
To Thee do we give willing surrender.  
Most Merciful and Compassionate God,  
The Idealised Lord of the whole humanity,  
Thee only do we worship — and towards Thee alone we aspire.  
Open our hearts towards Thy Beauty,  
Illuminate our souls with Divine Light,  
O Thou, the Perfection of Love, Harmony and Beauty!  
All-powerful Creator, Sustainer, Judge and Forgiver of our shortcomings,  
Lord God of the East and of the West, of the worlds above and below,  
And of the seen and unseen beings,  
Pour upon us Thy Love and Thy Light,  
Give sustenance to our bodies, hearts and souls.  
Use us for the purpose that Thy Wisdom chooseth,  
And guide us on the path of Thine Own Goodness.  
Draw us closer to Thee every moment of our life,  
Until in us be reflected Thy Grace, Thy Glory, Thy Wisdom,  
Thy Joy and Thy Peace.

Amen

### SALAT

MOST GRACIOUS Lord, Master, Messiah, and Saviour of humanity,  
We greet Thee with all humility.  
Thou art the First Cause and the Last Effect,  
The Divine Light and the Spirit of Guidance, Alpha and Omega.  
Thy Light is in all forms, Thy Love in all beings:  
in a loving mother, in a kind father, in an innocent child, in a helpful friend, in an inspiring teacher.  
Allow us to recognise Thee in all Thy holy names and forms; as Rama, as Krishna, as Shiva, as Buddha.  
Let us know Thee as Abraham, as Solomon, as Zarathushtra, as Moses, as Jesus, as Mohammed, and in many other names and forms, known and unknown to the world.  
We adore Thy past; Thy presence deeply enlightens our being, and we look for Thy blessing in the future.  
O Messenger, Christ, Nabi, the Rassul of God!  
Thou Whose heart constantly reacheth upward, Thou comest on earth with a message, as a dove from above when Dharma decayeth, and speakest the Word that is put into Thy mouth, as the light filleth the crescent moon.  
Let the star of the Divine Light shining in Thy heart be reflected in the hearts of Thy devotees.  
May the message of God reach far and wide, illuminating and making the whole humanity as one single Brotherhood in the Fatherhood of God.

Amen

### KHATUM

O THOU, Who art the Perfection of Love, Harmony and Beauty,  
The Lord of heaven and earth,  
Open our hearts, that we may hear Thy Voice, which constantly cometh from within.  
Disclose to us Thy Divine Light, which is hidden in our souls, that we may know and understand life better.  
Most Merciful and Compassionate God, give us Thy great Goodness;  
Teach us Thy Loving Forgiveness;  
Raise us above the distinctions and differences which divide men;  
Send us the Peace of Thy Divine Spirit,  
And unite us all in Thy Perfect Being.

University of Cape Town

14 July 81

Open Evening

### THE PURPOSE OF THE SUFI MOVEMENT

"The purpose of the Sufi Movement is to work towards unity. Its main object is to bring humanity, divided as it is into so many different sections, closer together in the deeper understanding of life. It is a preparation for a world service, chiefly in three ways. One way is the philosophical understanding of life; another is to bring about brotherhood among races, nations and creeds; and the third way is the meeting of the world's greatest need, which is the religion of the day. Its work is to bring to the world that natural religion which has always been the religion of humanity: to respect one another's belief, scripture and teacher. The Sufi message is the echo of the same divine message which has always come, and will always come, to enlighten humanity. It is not a new religion; it is the same message which is being given to humanity. It is the continuation of the same ancient religion which has always existed and will always exist, a religion which belongs to all teachers and all scriptures. It is the continuation of all the great religions which have come at various times; and it is a unification of them all, which was the desire of all prophets."

*From "THE UNITY OF RELIGIOUS IDEALS", Volume IX  
THE SUFI MESSAGE OF HAZRAT INAYAT KHAN.*

# *MUSIC*

*Inayat Khan*

MUSIC, the word we use in our everyday language, is nothing less than the picture of our Beloved. It is because music is the picture of our Beloved that we love music. But the question is, what is our Beloved and where is our Beloved? Our Beloved is that which is our source and our goal; and what we see of our Beloved before our physical eyes is the beauty which is before us; and that part of our Beloved not manifest to our eyes is that inner form of beauty of which our Beloved speaks to us. If only we would listen to the voice of all the beauty that attracts us in any form, we would find that in every aspect it tells us that behind all manifestation is the perfect Spirit, the spirit of wisdom.

What do we see as the principal expression of life in the beauty visible before us? It is movement. In line, in colour, in the changes of the seasons, in the rising and falling of the waves, in the wind, in the storm, in all the beauty of nature there is constant movement. It is movement which has caused day and night, and the changing of the seasons; and this movement has given us the comprehension of what we call time. Otherwise there would be no time, for actually there is only eternity; and this teaches us that all we love and admire, observe and comprehend, is the life hidden behind it and this life is our being.

It is owing to our limitation that we cannot see the whole being of God; but all that we love in colour, line, form or personality belongs to the real beauty, the Beloved of all. And when we trace what attracts us in this beauty which we see in all forms, we shall find that it is the movement of beauty; in other words the music. All forms of nature, for instance the flowers, are perfectly formed and coloured; the planets and stars, the earth, all give the idea of harmony, of music. The whole of nature is breathing; not only living creatures but all nature; and it is only our tendency to compare that which seems living with what to us is not so living which makes us forget that all things and beings are living one perfect life. And the sign of life given by this living beauty is music.

What makes the soul of the poet dance? Music. What makes the painter paint beautiful picture, the musician sing beautiful songs? It is the inspiration that beauty gives. Therefore the Sufi has called this beauty Saki, the divine Giver who give the wine of life to all. What is the wine of the Sufi? Beauty in form,

in line, in colour, in imagination, in sentiment, in manner; in all this he sees the one beauty. all these different forms are part of the spirit of beauty which is the life behind them, a continual blessing.

As to what we call music in everyday language, to me architecture is music, gardening is music, farming is music, painting is music, poetry is music. In all the occupations of life where beauty has been the inspiration, where the divine wine has been poured out, there is music. But among all the different arts, the art of music has been specially considered divine, because it is the exact miniature of the law working through the whole universe. For instance, if we study ourselves we shall find that the beats of the pulse and the heart, the inhaling and exhaling of the breath, are all the work of rhythm. Life depends upon the rhythmic working of the whole mechanism of the body. Breath manifests as voice, as word, as sound; and the soul is continually audible, the sound without and the sound within ourselves. That is music; it shows that there is music both outside and within ourselves.

Music inspires not only the soul of the great musician, but every infant which, the instant it comes into the world, begins to move its little arms and legs with the rhythm of music. Therefore, it is no exaggeration to say that music is the language of beauty; of the One whom every living soul has loved. And when one realizes this and recognizes the perfection of all beauty as God, our Beloved, one understands why the music we experience in art and in the whole universe should be called the Divine Art.

Many in the world take music as a source of amusement, a pastime, and to many music is an art and a musician an entertainer. Yet no one has lived in this world and has thought and felt, who has not considered music as the most sacred of all arts, for the fact is that what the art of painting cannot clearly suggest, poetry explains in words; but that which even a poet finds difficult to express in poetry is expressed in music. By this I do not only say that music is superior to art and poetry, but in point of fact music excels religion; for music raises the soul of man even higher than the so-called external forms of religion.

By this it must not be understood that music can take the place of religion; for every soul is not necessarily tuned to that pitch where it can really benefit by music, nor is every music necessarily so high that it will exalt a person who

hears it more than religion will do. However, for those who follow the path of the inner cult, music is essential for their spiritual development. The reason is that the soul who is seeking for that is in search of the formless God. Art no doubt is most elevating, but at the same time it contains form; poetry has words, names, suggestive of form; it is only music which has beauty, power, charm and at the same time can raise the soul beyond form.

That is why in ancient times the greatest of the prophets were great musicians. For instance, among the Hindu prophets one finds Narada, the prophet who was a musician at the same time, and Shiva, a God-like prophet, who was the inventor of the sacred Vina. Krishna is always pictured with a flute.

There is also a well-known legend of the life of Moses, which says that Moses heard a divine command on Mount Sinai in the words: *Muse Ke*, Moses hark; and the revelation that thus came to him was of tone and rhythm, and he called it by the same name, Musik; and the words such as *Music* and *Musike* have come from that word. David's song and verse have been known for ages; his message was given in the form of music. Orpheus of the Greek legends, the knower of the mystery of tone and rhythm, had by this knowledge power over the hidden forces of nature. The Hindu goddess of beauty, of knowledge, whose name is Sarasvati, is always pictured with the Vina. And what does it suggest? It suggest that all harmony has its essence in music. And besides the natural charm music possesses, it has also a magic charm that can be experienced even now. It seems that the human race has lost a great deal of the ancient science of magic, but if there remains any magic it is music.

Music, besides power, is intoxication. When it intoxicates those who hear, how much more must it intoxicate those who play or sing themselves! And how much more must it intoxicate those who have touched the perfection of music and have meditated upon it for years and years! It gives them an even greater joy and exaltation than a king feels sitting on his throne.

According to the thinkers of the East there are five different intoxications: the intoxication of beauty, youth and strength; then the intoxication of wealth; the third is of power, command, the power of ruling; and there is the fourth intoxication, which is the intoxication of learning, of knowledge. But all these four intoxications fade away just like stars before the sun in the presence of the intoxication of music. The reason is that it touches the deepest part of man's

being. Music reaches farther than any other impression from the external world can reach. And the beauty of music is that it is both the source of creation and the means of absorbing it. In other words, by music the world was created, and by music it is withdrawn again into the source which has created it.

In this scientific and material world we see a similar example. Before a machine or mechanism will run, it must first make a noise. It first becomes audible and then shows its life. We can see this in a ship, in an aeroplane, in an automobile. This idea belongs to the mysticism of sound. Before an infant is capable of admiring a colour or form, it enjoys sound. If there is any art that can most please the aged it is music. If there is any art which can charge youth with life and enthusiasm, emotion and passion, it is music. If there is any art in which a person can fully express his feeling, his emotion, it is music. At the same time it is something that gives man that force and that power of activity which make the soldiers march with the beat of the drum and the sound of the trumpet. In the traditions of the past it was said that on the Last Day there will be the sound of trumpets before the end of the world comes. This shows that music is connected with the beginning of the creation, with its continuity, and with its end.

The mystics of all ages have loved music most. In almost all the circles of the inner cult, in whatever part of the world, music seems to be the centre of the cult or the ceremony. And those who attain to that perfect peace which is called Nirvana, or in the language of the Hindus Samadhi, do this more easily through music. Therefore Sufis, especially those of the Chishtia school of ancient times, have taken music as a source of their meditation; and by meditating thus they derive much more benefit from it than those who meditate without the help of music. The effect that they experience is the unfoldment of the soul, the opening of the intuitive faculties; and their heart, so to speak, opens to all the beauty which is within and without, uplifting them, and at the same time bringing them that perfection for which every soul yearns.

*For further information please telephone  
Mrs. Zohra Van Essen at (021) 61-8807*