

24B

Recorded by Paul Bowles.

At Taza, Morocco.

September 20, 1959.

Festival Music of Taza.

Performers: Allal ben Mohammed Kaaoui and Ensemble.

These people were loath to take the time out to make a recording for us, because they were on their way to play at a wedding. The prospect of extra money, however, won them over. There were twelve men in the group, eight of whom, curiously enough, were present for the sole purpose of firing off rounds of ammunition from their rifles. When I inquired beforehand what the composition of the ensemble was to be, the katib of the Governor informed me that the groups here consisted of rhaitas, tbola and rifles, so that it can be said that the rifles form an integral part of the band, which would not be considered complete without them. Thus we had: two rhaitas, two tbola and eight rifles. While they were playing the music recorded here, a spokesman for them informed us that the rifles would not be playing along with the other instruments; this was a hint that the remuneration agreed upon earlier should be increased if we desired the entire complement of performers. When we did not react to his information, the riflemen performed anyway, three times during the piece.

The music is a medley of popular Moroccan tunes, the first of which is Mili Mchiti Sidi, a song composed at the time of the Sultan's <sup>return</sup> from exile in Madagascar. (Mohammed Fouitah, composer)

26A

Recorded by Paul Bowles

At Taza, Morocco.

September 21, 1959.

A Reading of the Koran.

By Mehdi Driss, Adel of the Nidara in the Habous of Taza.

I had mentioned to the katib of the Governor of the Province of Taza that I should like to have a chanted reading from the Koran. Accordingly, he arranged with the Habous (the organization dealing with all religious property of Islam) to provide me with their best reader. There are various musical traditions for such readings; this one is in the Andaluz tradition, and while it is not expert, it is a good example of the kind of improvised prosody which is common in Morocco. Again in Fez, subsequently, I made the same request for another such reading, and was categorically refused, on the grounds that it was not becoming for the words of the sacred book to be recorded for unbelievers to listen to.