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# DIRECTORY OF WORLD MUSIC

A guide to performers  
and their music



with contributions from  
Peter Gabriel

Andy Kershaw / Gilberto Gil / Manu Dibango

by **PHILIP SWEENEY**

d Music

**The Virgin Directory of  
WORLD MUSIC**

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藏书章

**This book is dedicated to Lizzie for her support and inspiration of every possible kind, not least in putting up continually with Mahlathini when she'd have preferred to be listening to Mahler.**

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## INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 1987, a series of meetings took place in an upstairs room of a North London pub, the Empress of Russia. Present were about 25 representatives of independent record companies, concert promoters, broadcasters and other individuals active in the propagation in Britain of music from around the world. The objective was to discuss details of a modest promotional campaign for the autumn, and to boost sales of the increasing numbers of records being issued, as the boom in interest in African music continued and extended to other parts of the world. One of the obstacles to persuading record shops to stock much of the new international product was reported to be the lack of an identifying category to describe it, record shop managers didn't know whether to call it 'ethnic', 'folk', 'international', or some other equivalent, and were inclined in the absence of an appropriate niche in their racks simply to reject it. It was decided, as part of a month-long promotion that October, to create such a tag and attempt to spread its use via one or two music press adverts, a cassette compilation of music on the various labels involved in the campaign, and the distribution to record shops of 'browser cards' bearing the new appellation, to be placed in the sections it was hoped they would now create in their racks. After a good deal of discussion the term chosen was 'World Music', other contenders such as 'Tropical Music' being judged too narrow of scope. I remember thinking, in view of the modest funding of the campaign and fairly laid-back nature of its participants, that nothing would come of it all, which shows how good my commercial judgement is. Within months the term was cropping up in the British press, within a year it had crossed the Channel and was rivalling the existing French phrase 'sono mondiale', coined three years earlier by the fashionable Paris glossy *Actuel* and its broadcasting subsidiary Radio Nova, and within three years it was in regular mainstream music industry use in Britain, the United States and northern Europe. This may be regrettable for those people, including myself, who dislike the term for its combination of a meaninglessly wide literal field of reference, with a capricious and subjective actual application, but it is also understandable. No better short phrase has yet been proposed, and thus the term World Music has taken on a quite sturdy life of its own, which is one of the reasons it forms the title of this book. The clinching reason is its nearest rival. The Virgin Directory of World Popular & Roots Music From Outside The Anglo-American Mainstream is somewhat lacking in *élan*. It is also still lacking in precision. The fact is that the music described in these pages is only approximately categorisable, and numerous deviations and extensions have occurred in the drawing of a boundary line. Broadly speaking, I have focused on music which is popular in the sense that it is not art or classical music, is in regular use by ordinary people to dance to, is listened to via radio or cassette, is perhaps performed, and is not artificially preserved folklore. (Already the definition is problematic: some genres, for

example the Arab 'central domain' music, as it has been called by Professor Ali Jihad Racey, of the great Egyptian stars such as Oum Kalthoum and Mohamed Abdel Wahab, simply do not fall neatly to one side of a line between 'art' and 'popular' music.) My geographical/genre exclusion zone is also to a degree arbitrary: I have attempted to remove the great body of music belonging to the Anglo-American dominated pop and rock mainstream, and the music of those local artistes worldwide who simply re-create this style, and to describe what is left. But of course the boundary is again unclear: most local pop/rock artistes blend mainstream and indigenous styles to some extent, and the definition of what is mainstream in any event shifts continuously. I have taken note of the music becoming implicitly part of the 'World Music' domain by virtue of festival programming, public and media interest, etc., to the extent of including certain artistes, such as the Bulgarian traditional choirs so acclaimed lately, which do not strictly fit my criteria. The other area often associated with 'World Music', that of consciously experimental hybrid musics created by Western jazz and rock musicians with African or oriental counterparts, is not the subject of this book. My final, and most severe, limitation has been imposed by space. A truly comprehensive account of the world's popular and roots musics would require several million words. In deciding which nations, genres and artistes to include, I have taken as criteria not only the general importance and distinctiveness of the music in question, but also the interests of a hypothetical northern European or American reader. Thus, for example, North American, Scandinavian or British roots musics are afforded relatively less space, because to have done otherwise would have meant skimping on coverage elsewhere, and the probable readers of this book have much greater access to information on these areas than they do, for example, to information on the music of the Arab world. In the case of North America, I have not included accounts of undeniably 'roots' genres such as country and blues, on similar grounds: they are abundantly covered already. The principle of treating the subject matter geographically, which is also of course arbitrary (national borders do not necessarily represent musical borders), works very well in my opinion, though frequent recourse to the index to cross reference styles co-existing in different areas, etc., is to be recommended.

Philip Sweeney

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# AFRICA



## The North and West

### INTRODUCTION

Around 1976/77, a number of things began to build up my interest in African music. Some were pure chance – about that time, for instance, **BBC Radio 4**, which was my regular morning diet, moved frequency and one day while I was trying in a zombielike state to find it on the dial, I ended up on a Dutch station which was playing some fascinating music. It was from the soundtrack of a Stanley Baker film – it wasn't a particularly great piece of music but it had some really nice elements. There was a traditional African choral piece called 'Sho Sholoza' – a beautiful song, sung straight from the heart. It took me about a month to track it down at the specialist movie soundtrack shop in Soho. That started me listening to other things.

At around the same time, my interest in drumming, which had never been far from the surface, really took off. The main impetus was the invention of the programmable drum machine. This was an incredibly liberating tool, because for the first time when writing music you could take your hands off the keyboard, rest a moment and then come back with another idea . . . Also, you could experiment with focusing on different rhythms without the necessity of the cooperation of a drummer.

The first music that really enthused me was South African. I still think the black South African national anthem, 'Nkosi Sikeleli Afrika', is probably the best of any national anthem I know. It was the choir that I was drawn to initially – by Ladysmith Black Mambazo and others with their close kinship to gospel and their blend of sensuality and spirituality at the same time. Later, when I visited Zimbabwe on the Amnesty International tour, I saw another side of Southern African music – political, dance oriented, more social. I liked Zimbabwe enormously; it's so positive and optimistic, and rich in excellent music, from **Thomas Mapfumo** to the dozens of less famous bands who put out so many good singles. But for me the spirituality of South African music appealed especially. Even more than in South Africa I find this quality in West African music, and in West Africa the country I know best is Senegal.

Senegal was the first African country I visited in the early 1980s. I went there with George Acogny, the jazz guitarist and record producer, to visit his sister Germaine, who at that time was running a school of dance in Dakar. Germaine Acogny had set up the school, the *Mudra d'Afrique*, with the Belgian choreographer Maurice Béjart, with the aim of collecting and preserving traditional African dance and interpreting it with modern dance. I had met Germaine in Paris, she had introduced me to George, and he had told me I had to come to Senegal with him. It turned out to be a wonderful introduction to the country, one of my best travel experiences. The people were so alive and friendly and there were those tall, beautiful women with their remarkable, elegant posture.

Germaine Acogny is a remarkable woman, with a character of great power. At that time she was working with the Senegalese master drummer Doudou N'Diaye Rose and she was one of the few people who have ever told Doudou what to do. Doudou is quite a character himself – a real showman, a man of the world, much-travelled, but Germaine Acogny had a wonderful non-sense relationship with him. She was boss.

We had taken some recording equipment and Doudou was one of the people we wanted to record – he has an important place in Senegalese music as a collector of traditional rhythms. It turned out to be quite a saga, getting the equipment into Dakar. We had an eight-track machine and an F1, an early piece of digital equipment, and I remember nearly losing them at Customs at Dakar airport. As soon as the gear had been checked hands started reaching through the wire separating the Customs area off, all trying to earn a little money carrying our stuff, and the cases were getting pulled off the tables and crashing to the floor . . . When the equipment was eventually set up we had problems with the heat affecting the amplifiers.

Locating Doudou wasn't that easy either. For one thing, he might or might not turn up to an appointment he'd made. Also, as a Muslim he has his full complement of wives and if you visit one house asking for him, the wife in question might be a little sensitive about admitting he wasn't there but at another house. Eventually we did some recording at the open-air music school in Dakar.

One of the most striking things about West African percussion is the fluidity

of the rhythms. This is partly due to the actual equipment used. The little drumsticks that Senegalese drummers like Doudou N'Diaye Rose use are often freshly cut from the tree, so they're much more flexible than Western drumsticks. They're also much shorter. The result is a more liquid tone, somewhere between a hand and a Western drumstick in sound. You hear this very clearly in the wonderful tama (talking drum) playing of remarkable musicians like Youssou N'Dour's or Baba Maal's tama players – Baba Maal in particular does a duet with his tama player, who follows and copies his voice.

The other outstanding characteristic of Senegalese and West African Islamic music, of course, is the singing, that extraordinarily powerful sound that many people outside Africa are now familiar with, thanks to Youssou N'Dour. I first saw Youssou play at his nightclub on my first visit to Dakar and I danced myself crazy.

The reason why Senegalese music is so powerful has a lot to do with the way the singing, which has for me an intensely spiritual feeling, is combined with the rhythms. I think that singing is more able to release the spirit and rhythm the body – that's not to say there's a total separation: both singing and rhythm act to a certain extent on both spirit and body, but you might say they are king and queen of their respective provinces. Incidentally, I believe there's a great deal for me to learn in terms of the psychological and physiological responses to sound and rhythm, and African music is in many ways closer to an understanding of some of these responses than other more 'sophisticated' regions.

Although Senegalese music is lyrically very rich – the griots' role in transmitting history and so on – it doesn't matter to me that I don't understand all the words of a song. The voice is such a powerful means of communication, and it's so direct, it can transmit a feeling without having recourse to words.

PETER GABRIEL

## LIBYA

Libya's influence on Arab popular music was quite substantial from the eighties onwards, though most of this influence took effect outside the country.

Like all of North Africa, Libya has a variety of folk musics of mixed Berber, Arab and black Southern stock. Main instruments are flutes, assorted percussion and lutes.

In addition, Libya in the 1950s and 1960s had its share of singers in the pan-Arab style – main names were **Sayed Abou-Madian**, **Ali Al Sha'alia**, **Mohamed Sidiki** and **Salam Kadri**. Another classic singer, **Ibrahim Fahmi**, continues to be an important composer.

Two successive wavelets of Libyan musical creativity attracted the attention of a wider audience. The first was that of the two 'godfathers of Arab new-

wave music', as some commentators refer to them, **Ahmed Fakroun** and **Nasser Al Mizdawi**.

Nasser Al Mizdawi was born in 1950 in Mizda, near Tripoli, and began singing and playing guitar as a student in the early 1970s. His first cassette (called 'Songs of Exile' although he was not yet in exile at that time) achieved considerable sales. His second, 'Libyan Melodies Around the World', sold even more. His guitar-playing prowess was much admired by young Libyans (**Hameed Al Shaary** – see below – named his first band **Al Mizdawia** after Al Mizdawi and his style). By the mid-1980s he was in more-or-less permanent exile and spent several years without recording in Jordan, before making a comeback record, again called 'Exile', in the USA in 1990.

Ahmed Fakroun, slightly younger than Al Mizdawi, was born in Benghazi, an Eastern city with a tradition both of artistic creativity and rebellion (the great anticolonialist leader Omar El Muktar came from Benghazi). The city's university population is regarded with great suspicion by Qadafy, whose regime publicly hanged three students there in 1977, at the beginning of a ten-year period of extreme harshness. The same year Fakroun, who had been playing electric guitar in rock groups in Benghazi hotel lounges, left for Italy, where he made a couple of Euroballad-style singles. Passing through London, he made his first rock record, 'Wadni' ('Promise Me'). In 1981 he arrived in Paris, and became part of a vague movement of musicians and alternative artistes beginning to incorporate North African Arab feeling into an assortment of fringe rock records and design projects. (**Jean-Paul Goude** was shortly to join this tendency.) The video clip for his 1984 record, 'Soleil Soleil', was directed by **Jean-Baptiste Mondino**, who went on to achieve major success, and designed by the **Musulmans Fumants** ('Smoking Muslims') group. A prime ingredient of Fakroun's music was (and is) the mirzkawi rhythm, a black style from the area south of Benghazi, and therefore an equivalent to the equally influential Moroccan gnaoui rhythm. From 1988 onwards, Fakroun's performance declined somewhat.

The second 'wavelet' of Libyan pop creativity took place in Egypt, and was again due to an action of the Qadafy regime. In 1985, it was decided to eliminate ex-colonialist influence from the country's music, and a symbolic bonfire of guitars and pianos was made in Tripoli's Green Square to launch an anti-Western music campaign. Another young Benghazi resident, Hameed Al Shaary, who had already travelled to England to train as a pilot, and to Cairo to study music, was at this time building a considerable reputation as a composer and performer, like Fakroun incorporating the hot black rhythms from the southern region around Mirzik. Al Shaary settled in Cairo, where he was joined by his brothers, Magdy and Mohsen. Within a short time he had almost single-handedly launched a new pop style which rapidly dominated the listening of Cairo's youth under the name 'New Wave', and later 'Al Jeel' music. See **Egypt** section for further details.

Inside Libya, Qadafy's late 1980s authoritarian thaw has slightly alleviated conditions for the youth. A young reggae-influenced singer currently rising fast in Tripoli is **Mohsen Beit Al Mal**.

A curious footnote to the Qadafy regime's effect on pop music is its creation, through the use of Western groups, of a genre of hilarious revolutionary pop songs, combining lyrics in praise of the Green Book or the lack of poverty in the country with a variety of hack Anglo-American rock melodies.

## TUNISIA

The traditional musics of Tunisia overlap to the east with that of the Fezzan and Tripolitania regions of Libya and to the west with that of Algeria.

Earlier this century, Tunisian malouf music was of considerable influence on its neighbours. Malouf, which is also found in Algeria in the region surrounding the city of Constantine and the border with Tunisia, is a compound of the semi-classical Andalous style found in variations across the Maghreb and local folk styles. The father of modern Tunisian malouf was **Khmeyes Tarnan**, who died in 1964 after a long career as composer and director of the Tunis Radio Orchestra.

In addition to the noubas of the refined malouf style, peasant musics such as fondo and the all-conquering Egyptian light classical style of **Oum Kalthoum** contribute to Tunisian popular music. The outstanding singers of the 1940s and 1950s were **Hedi Jouini**, **Mohamed Jamoussi** and **Ali Riahi**. Riahi in particular achieved major fame throughout the Maghreb with his polished blend of Egyptian and Bedouin styles and the then fashionable tangos and rumbas.

Tunisian popular music, per se, has not produced anything in the 1980s to compare with the youth styles of Morocco or Algeria. The singer **Hedi Hebbouba** became very popular throughout the first half of the decade with an updated folkloric style using the flutes and percussion of the traditional rural mezwed music in combination with song texts adapted to a new urban youth audience. Now and again, a singer appears on the scene (one example is **Mohsen Rais**) who adds Arabic words to what is essentially Western pop.

Outside the country, the glamorous Tunis-born singer **Latifa Arfaoui** has achieved considerable fame in Cairo, where she studied at the Institute of Music, as did Oulaya, another Tunisian chanteuse to make a career in Egypt in the 1970s. Yet another glamorous Tunisienne to embark on a musical career outside her country is the Paris-based singer **Amina Annabi** whose 1990 debut album 'Yalil', produced by her friend, the pioneer Euro-Worldbeat practitioner **Martin Meissonnier**, mixed a standard Worldbeat-programmed synthetic backing with part-Arabic vocals and oriental instrument adornments including accordion, ney (flute) and qanun (zither). Amina was born to a musical family in Carthage, Tunisia; her grandmother was a classical singer and lutenist, her mother organised musical festivals and also wrote a number of the songs on Amina's debut LP. Amina came to Paris at the age of thirteen to study classical singing and dance and became part of the young Arab popular arts scene then experimenting with Arab rap and other ideas. Her first single, 'Sheherazade',

was a minor hit in Japan. Amina's exotic good looks also secured her a small role in Bernardo Bertolucci's 1990 film of the Paul Bowles novel *The Sheltering Sky*.

Meanwhile, in Vienna, the younger singer **Walid Rouissi** has created a modern hybrid style based on his classically-trained lute playing and the input of a multinational group of musicians, including his Austrian pianist wife.

If Tunisian popular artistes are conspicuous by their absence in general, now and again a Tunisian song achieves sudden success outside the country. The big hit 'Ma Baker' by the group Boney M. was based on one, 'Sidi Mansouria'. Another, 'Jari Ya Hamaida', has been taken up by Joan Baez.

### **Tunisia: Discography**

**Various** Tunisie Chants et Rythmes (Club du Disque Arabe AAA 001)

**Hedi Hebbouba** Untitled (Horizon ESP 7201)

**Amina** Yalil (Phonogram 838 609)

**Walid Rouissi** El Omr Hikaya (INT AMLP 1002)

## **ALGERIA**

In the 1970s and 1980s, two Algerian popular genres achieved a certain breakthrough outside their own country. The later, chronologically, was the famous *rai* youth music of the western region around Oran, the product, more or less, of the Arab strand of the country's musical tradition. Much less *fêted* internationally, but equally important among Algerian immigrant communities in France in the 1970s, was the modernised form of Berber music originating in Kabylia, the most important of the five Berber regions of Algeria.

Historically, several Berber musical figures stand out in the twentieth century. A Berber singer-composer, **Aïssa Djarmoussi**, was the first Maghrebin artiste to give a major public concert in Europe when he played the Olympia in Paris in 1917. The Berber facility for the intellectual pursuits – commerce, politics, conversation – extends into music and poetry, and Kabyle songwriting flourished after World War II, in spite of periodic persecution by the Algerian government.

One of the first to suffer from unofficial but effective censorship after independence was the singer-poet **Slimane Azem** who, ironically, had already attracted the attention of the French police earlier with his 1956 song 'The Locusts' which metaphorically describes the colonialists as locusts ravaging the country, represented by a lovingly tended garden, and who continued to sing of the injustices perpetrated by the new authoritarian regime.

In the 1970s a new wave of Kabyle singer-songwriters appeared, and to the extent that they identified themselves with a movement to reassert Kabyle identity, they too suffered government persecution. **Aït-Menguellet**, the most

popular artiste of this movement, who has spent a period of eight months in prison, is sometimes referred to as the Kabyle Dylan and his songs owe much in inspiration to the acoustic folk-protest movement of which Bob Dylan was figurehead.

Other prominent members of the 1970s Kabyle modern song movement are the male singers **Idir**, **Brahim Izri**, the male group **Imazighen** and the all-female group **Djurdjura**.

In the 1980s, a number of younger Kabyle artistes have maintained the impetus. Two of these have had French-released albums licensed to the Anglophone markets by the British record label Globestyle. **Ahcene Adjroud**, a poet-singer in his thirties, scored a considerable success in 1981 with his first album '*Ammis Boumjahed*', a collection of songs on personal and political themes. The female singer **Ouardia** writes about the problems of women rather than about national politics, and thus has greater access to Algerian radio. Finally, the young male singer **Tak Farounass** sprang to popularity with a slightly harder-edged sound and a strong line in enigmatic lyrics. The instrumental accompaniment to modern Kabyle music has tended to be mainly acoustic: lutes, mandolins, percussion, including the *derbouka*, occasionally guitars. The vocal lines are melodically simple, minor keys often imparting a melancholy tone, less dramatic and less long-drawn-out and ornamental than Arab song.

Another Berber people to have maintained a musical profile are the Chaoui. In addition to the male song tradition of which Aïssa Djarmoussi, mentioned above, was an exponent, Chaoui musicmakers included a sorority of 'free women', the '*azriate*', who entertained at marriages and were permitted much greater licence in terms of references to love than ordinary women would have been. One modern interpreter of the tradition now operates out of Paris, where she works as a teacher of sociology, and tours internationally. **Houria Aïchi** learnt the kernel of her repertoire of Chaoui songs as a child in Algeria and now performs these shrill, ancient-sounding airs accompanied by the sinuous rosewood flute (*gasba*) playing of **Saïd Nissia**.

The Arabic musical background of Algeria includes a number of basic strands. Played primarily on lutes, mandolins, violins and assorted percussion (mainly *derbouka*), and lyrically concerned either with religious or secular subjects, the quasi-classical Andalous music created stars of major stature, and overlapped into the cafés and cabarets of the pre-war years. Thus performers such as **Dahmane Ben Achour**, who died in 1977, provided a direct link between the medieval Arab court of Córdoba and the late twentieth-century recording studio.

An important Jewish body of musicians shared responsibility for the strength of Andalous music, particularly in Algeria and Tunisia; one prime exponent continued to perform through to the 1980s, when a new young European audience discovered her during the boom in interest in Arab music. **Reinette l'Oranaise** was born Sultana Daoud in Tiaret, Algeria, in the early 1920s. Blind from the age of two, she was sent by her mother to study music with the Jewish master **Saoud Medioni**, '**Saoud l'Oranais**', in whose Oran café in the Derb Jewish quarter she started performing. From 1961, Reinette worked mainly

in France, where she was well known among the large Jewish-Maghrebin population but not outside it. Until, that is, her deep, still powerful, voice, guttural lute playing and eye-catching presence – pink, sequined gown, vases of gladioli on stage – caught the imagination of numbers of young Parisians. Reinette l'Oranaise gave major concerts at the Albert Hall in London in 1989 and at the Paris Olympia the following year. Her recent work has been much aided by the unusual and elegant piano accompaniment, Satie-like in feel, of the Algiers master **Mustapha Skandrani**.

Combined with regional folk styles, Andalous music in Algeria also transmuted into a series of derivatives – malouf, as in Tunisia, in the Eastern region around Constantine; chaabi in the central Algiers region – which produced twentieth-century performers of great popularity. **El Hadj Mohamed El Anka**, who died in 1978, was perhaps the greatest star to emerge from this background.

In addition there was the *chi'r el melhoun*, a Bedouin tradition of lyric poetry, dealing with a vocabulary, rapidly becoming outmoded and irrelevant by the 1930s, of deserts, stars and stallions. This poetry was chanted to the accompaniment of gasba flutes by the *chioukh* (the plural of *cheikh*), learned and usually venerable Islamic masters.

While the *chioukh* were male, sedate, virtuous and formal, the female entertainers known as *cheikhate* were exactly the opposite. Rough and bawdy, these women, of whom the most famous, **Cheikha Rimitti El Ghilizania**, is still performing today, animated not only private parties but also the *cafés*, hashish dens and cabarets that began to proliferate in cities such as Oran and Algiers. Although the *cheikhate* started to make records at an early stage, in the 1930s, their discs were frequently confiscated and certainly would never have been played in a family home. The *cheikhate* were, in effect, the earliest *rai* singers, with their libertine lyrics and lifestyles, and their tradition is very much alive today. The aged but sprightly Cheikha Rimitti El Ghilizania (her name is composed of a corruption of the French '*remettez*', meaning 'fill them up' or 'the same again' – she acquired the tag performing in a bar) is experiencing an upsurge in demand in the Algerian *cafés* of Paris and Lyon, and her songs are continually covered by the new young *rai* singers. Rimitti's traditional subject matter – the quest for love and pleasure in a strait-laced society, the escape afforded by alcohol, the joys and sorrows of ordinary people – is thoroughly appropriate to modern *rai*: thirty years before the new young pop-*rai* artistes were struggling free of the Islamic moral straitjacket, Rimitti was singing on the subject of the all-important female virginity, 'Rip it, tear it, Rimitti will mend it!' Another younger *cheikha*, **Djenia**, has actually taken on the pop-*rai* world at its own game, recording duets in 1988 with a number of the new young Oran singers. **Cheb Abdelhak** was the first, with the 1987 cassette hit '*Rah Igaber*' ('He's Looking For a Woman') in which the young singer's strong male voice was easily matched by the coarse masculine tones of Cheikha Djenia. Djenia, by occupying the same stages as the new young *chebs* in nightclubs like the famous Biarritz of Oran, and by alternating freely



between traditional flute and percussion, acts as a bridge between the worlds of old raï of the cheikhate and new raï of the young chebs.

The term 'raï' probably dates to the same period as the original cheikhate. The Bedouin male singers, and later the cheikhate, began to pepper their verses with the phrase 'Ha-er raï' or 'Ya raï', meaning something like 'it's my opinion' or 'that's what I think', which soon assumed the function of an all-purpose filler and adornment, rather like 'Oh yeah' in Anglo-Saxon pop.

It was in the western city of Oran that raï grew up, nurtured by the particular conditions of the port and its hinterland. By the 1940s a number of influences, including jazz, pop, flamenco and the black North African rhythmic gnaoui music, were combining to form the style known as 'Oran modern'. Gasba and ghaita flutes, guellal and derbouka drums and karkabou iron castanets were augmented or supplanted by trumpets, saxophones, accordions and violins. Stars of this period included **Blaoui El Houari** and **Ahmed Saber**; the latter in particular forming an important link with modern raï. Saber worked through into the sixties, during which time rock and roll, the twist craze and all the other European pop phenomena made their mark on the Oran music scene. Saber's lyrics retained the sardonic, bawdy spirit of the cheikhate, and his outspokenness concerning his country's new ruling establishment ensured him several spells in jail. By the time Saber died in 1967, the cabarets and new discothèques of the Oran seafront were hosting a crop of Algerian pop and rock groups with names such as the **Red Stars**, **The Drifters**, **The Vultures** and **The Students**. Oran's traditional role as a port, a pleasure beach and a centre for general laissez faire and recreation blossomed until the early 1970s, when President Boumedienne's puritanical anti-immorality campaign 'Operation Anti-Dragueur' began to suppress the nightclubs and the musicians.

Two further artistes must be mentioned as links to the eventual 1970s and 1980s explosion of modern pop-raï. The young singer **Bouteldja Belkacem**'s string of hits through the 1960s and early 1970s leaned lyrically much more towards the popular street feeling of the cheikhate than any attempt at a cosmopolitan, Euro-rock veneer. Songs such as 'Zizya' and 'Serbi li Baoui' ('Give Me a BAO' — a brand of bottled beer) also featured traditional instruments such as the ghaita flute beloved of the cheikhate. In 1975, **Belkacem** recorded a song called 'Ya Rayi'; the bandleader he worked with then was **Messaoud Bellemou**, frequently described later as the 'father of raï'. Bellemou was born in 1947 in the town of Ain Temouchent and began his professional career in the municipal brass band. He rapidly began to put together an instrumental line-up of considerable force, combining traditional instruments (derbouka, guellal, karkabou and the big bass drum t'bar) with new ones — electric guitar and bass and, above all, the silvery quarter-tone trumpet that became his trademark. Bellemou's singers, notably **Boutaïba Seghir**, managed to get away with a certain degree of mild suggestiveness in the strait-laced 1970s and his tutelage was a major factor in the later success of several of the new, young raï singers.

Among them was a young actress and singer, **Fadela Zalmat**, who had achieved notoriety in the 1976 television film *Djalti*, in which she appeared as