

49A

Recorded by Paul Bowles

At Ouarzazat, Morocco.

November 25, 1959.

Music of the Ait Ouaouzguite Tribe.

(Maalem Hma M'barek, leader)

Ahouache dial Taourirt

Permission to record in Ouarzazat had been granted, withdrawn, and the counter~~order~~ superceded suddenly, so that the musicians began to arrive before I was set up. It was an intensely cold night, and the women were only lightly clad in white cotton robes. I had asked for six drummers and a dozen or so singers. (The drummers are ~~men~~, the singers women.) By the time I began to ~~record~~, there were twenty-six women and twenty-four men. As usual, the drums predominated. The women placed themselves in a long, slightly curved line and the ~~men~~ crouched at a distance of perhaps forty feet from them. The microphone faced the women. This set-up saw me through the first two pieces; then I changed the position of the microphone, wanting to get more of the vocal line.

49B

Recorded by Paul Bowles

At Ouarzazat, Morocco.

November 25, 1959.

Music of the Ait Ouaouzguite Tribe

Maalem Hma M'barek, leader.

Amtelti

In Ouarzazat all the performers were Negroes. This kind of music is really the music of an entire village; not only the actual performers take part, but the onlookers as well, if they feel so inclined, add their screams of encouragement. By the same token, the women in the line-up take the affair casually, and talk to one another as much as they like during the performance. It is the job of the drummers to "work them up", as it were, so that they will become interested in the music and give it their undivided attention.

50A

Recorded by Paul Bowles

At Ouarzazat, Morocco.

November 25, 1959.

Music of the Ait Ouaouzguite Tribe

Maalem Hma M'barek, leader)

Tahouacht

By this time the personnel had swelled to thirty-two women and twenty-six men; there were also two or three hundred onlookers. I decided to move the microphone back a hundred feet or so from the crowd. The result was still not what I wanted. In actuality, the volume of the drums does outweigh the sound of the voices, and to a considerable degree, but the vocal line is always just audible. For some reason, however, in recording it was always difficult to get the voices even as loud as they really sound.

50B

Recorded by Paul Bowles

At Ouarzazat, Morocco.

November 25, 1959.

Music of the Ait Ouaouzguite Tribe

Maalem Hma M'barek, leader.

1. Tahouacht

2. Aferdi

Here the microphone was still at a good distance from the performers, but at the side, near the spectators. I was still dissatisfied with the sound.

It is inexact to call these people members of the Ait Ouaouzguite Tribe, since by definition a tribe in Morocco designates a group of Berbers. However, the inhabitants of Ouarzazat, although they are Negroes and descendants of slaves, live a life which is in all respects indistinguishable from that lived by the Berbers of the region. In regions inhabited jointly by Negroes and Berbers there is inter-influence between the two musical cultures, but since both are purely African, the amalgam is never shocking, and it is generally the Negro influence which predominates.

51A

Recorded by Paul Bowles

At Ouarzazat, Morocco.

November 25, 1959.

Music of the Ait Ouazouguite Tribe

Maalem Hma M'barek, leader

1. Tahouacht Nourjdal

2. Tahouacht Adrar

In number one of this reel I had the women form a semi-circle and placed the microphone inside it. In number two I closed the circle; the drums were then less audible.

51B

Recorded by Paul Bowles

At Ouarzazat, Morocco.

November 25, 1959.

Music of the Ait Ouaouzguite Tribe

Maalem Hma M'barek, leader

Tahouacht Degqa

Here the set-up was identical to that in 51A2, save that the solo drummer was introduced inside the closed circle of women, giving the music somewhat greater rhythmic and sonorous variety. Between 51A2 and 51B the women threw themselves on the ground to rest. I was concerned lest they all catch pneumonia, but they seemed not to feel the cold, or if they did, they made no protest. However, I asked the Maalem if he was cold, and the answer being in the affirmative, I suggested that we call a halt to the session, but that before we stopped it would be a good idea to perform something that would warm up the musicians. He agreed, and the company went into the Tahouacht Degqa.