Questioning Safeguarding: Heritage and Capabilities at the Jemaa el Fnaa

DISSERTATION

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By

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Abstract

Is one of the most common approaches to intervention in the realm of culture in recent years – the safeguarding of tradition – the right path to take? In this dissertation, I argue that it is not, and that a different formulation of goals and methods is necessary. Using a case study of Jemaa el Fnaa Square in Marrakech, Morocco, I discuss the flawed concepts contained within the idea of safeguarding, outline their consequences, and put forth an alternative possibility for how things might be done differently.

As a focus for criticism of the safeguarding approach, I will discuss UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage program, arguably the most internationally powerful institutional voice in the area of the conserving cultural practices. Since the Declarations of Masterpieces in 2001, 2003, and 2005 and the highly successful 2003 ICH Convention, the UNESCO paradigms of Intangible Cultural Heritage and "safeguarding" have become influential concepts in international, national, and local cultural policy. However, this concept of safeguarding attempts to impose onto the flow of human activity a way of thinking better suited to physical sites: culture as a static edifice with clear boundaries that is under threat of erosion, with safeguarding as a process of "shoring up." This results in an awkward fit of both theory and practice that leads to projects with unattainable goals, poorly-directed resources, and limited benefits for their intended recipients.
As an alternative framework for intervention, I will discuss the Capability Approach, initially developed by economist Amartya Sen. The capabilities approach seeks ways of enhancing the possible range of choices and abilities of individuals and communities, privileging it over the prescribing of particular activities as a goal and evaluative space. This approach is well-suited to projects relating to culture, which is a fluid and dynamic process resistant to static, prescriptive notions. I will discuss ways in which using the idea of capabilities as a starting point could better lead to interventions that address the real needs of those they concern, rather than the constructed needs of "heritage."

To provide a case study to further explore this topic, I will focus on the performers at a particular place: Jemaa el Fnaa Square in Marrakech, Morocco, which was in many ways the site of the genesis of UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage project. The experience of the performers and others who work there serves as an example with which to discuss the effects of safeguarding on a community of performers, as well as ways in which the Capability Approach would lead to more effective evaluation and action. The discussion of the Jemaa el Fnaa is based on fieldwork conducted over the course of a year during 2010-11, an eventful year for the Square, Morocco, and North Africa as a whole.
Dedication

To the brilliant and kind ḥlayqiya of the Jemaa el Fnaa,
and to Jenny, who was always there
Acknowledgments

In Morocco, first and foremost I would like to thank the performers of the Jemaa el Fnaa for their generosity, kindness, patience, and trust. Chukran bzaaf kif dima, ashaabi: the Ammra family, Hassan Hanitja, Abdelhakim Khabzaoui, Bel‘aid Farouz, Mustafa Sema, Mustafa Musta'id, Mohammed Erguini, and many others. Dominique Benbrahim at the US Embassy in Rabat helped a great deal in obtaining research permission. I would like to thank Ahmed Skounti for his help and time throughout my fieldwork. And finally I would like to thank akhi Soufiane Lamiri, who helped in so many ways both in terms of the research but also in keeping happy and sane throughout.

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A note on transcription and pronunciation of words

Rendering the dialect of Arabic spoken in Morocco intelligible in Latin characters to both non-Arabic-speakers and speakers of Modern Standard Arabic is not a simple task. Moroccan Arabic both contains sounds (like the ḥa and the 'ayn) not found in English, while also containing a great many words (mostly adopted from Berber dialects, but also French, Spanish, and English) and even some sounds (such as 'gaf’/ڭ/ڭ) not found in other dialects of Arabic. For those who are more familiar with Modern Standard Arabic, I have included the MSA spelling of terms in Arabic script alongside the romanized spelling as they occur for the first time within a chapter, as well as in the glossary.

For rendering into Latin script, I have used for the most part the system described by Deborah Kapchan in her book *Traveling Spirit Masters* (Kapchan 2007), itself mostly derived from the system used in the International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies. There is the exception of the "sh" sound (ش) as in "shine," which I transcribe with a "ch" rather than a š. This conforms to a typical Moroccan usage, and would help in circumstances when a reader might look up something like North African cha‘abi music on a site like YouTube, where a Moroccan poster will always spell the word with a "ch" (and many others with the same sound) in the French manner.

The consonants one will see in this dissertation that either do not exist in English or are pronounced differently are as follows:

H/h: (ح) an emphatic, raspy "h" sound, which deepens the sound of the vowel that follows it.

gh: (خ) pronounced like the French "r"

‘: (ع) the letter ‘ayn, a sound non-existent in English, sort of like an "a" said while tensing the throat
′: (۰) a glottal stop

kh: (ﺥ) spoken like the last consonant sound in "Bach"

ṣ, ṭ: (ص، ط) emphatic consonants pronounced deeper in the throat than their un-emphatic counterparts. Their most common noticeable effect is to deepen the sound of the vowel that follows – for example, ำ (as in "bad") becomes aː (as in "father")

q: (ﻕ) "qaf", pronounced like a "k" sound, but with the tongue touching at the very back of the throat

As plurals in Arabic often look very different than the singular, I have almost always indicated them in the romanized version with an "s" added to the singular – thus the plural of "halqa," for example, is written as "halqas" rather than the more correct "ḥlayqa". In a few cases ("ḥlayqiya" and "rwaīs") I have used the Arabic form of the plural. Finally, while "Jemaa el Fnaa" would be more accurately rendered as Jemʻa el Fnaa in this system, the spelling used in this dissertation is one more commonly used.
Introduction

Too often, ethnomusicologists acknowledge and analyze the issues faced by the people they work with, yet downplay a responsibility to help them. It's like studying the interesting sounds made by drowning mosquitoes. As ethnomusicologists, we could document those sounds all we want and even get them heard more widely. But these efforts would do little to change the mosquitoes' predicament. In the end, they are still drowning. – Ricardo Alviso, "Applied Ethnomusicology and the Impulse to Make a Difference" (Alviso 2003)

Like many others who choose to study ethnomusicology, I entered (and later, re-entered) graduate school with some notions of doing applied work. I wanted to study, learn, and think about music and culture, yes, but I also wanted to do something, to somehow act to make the world a better place. I suspect that a great many (if not most) of those who study to become ethnomusicologists have similar impulses, as it is a discipline where one becomes closely involved with groups of people – we live with them, play music with them, and in the increasingly common case of the native-perspective ethnographer, are them. We cultivate reciprocal bonds of trust and caring between ourselves and those we study, and work hard to build an understanding of the world they live in and why they do things they do. The desire to advocate is a natural outgrowth of this process, which along with allowing us to learn about musical lives often exposes injustices and deprivations. It is also a result of the position in which we often find ourselves in the field, one of gross inequalities of resources between ourselves and those we study. If we come from a more affluent country to study the music of those less so we are seen as representatives of that affluence, possessing access to funds and influence
they do not. And whether we like it or not, our presence often introduces hopes of positive change, and the bonds of mutual care we foster in our fieldwork raise expectations that we will use our resources (real or imagined) to change things for the better.

But the question remains as to what to do, and what should be the guiding rationale for our actions. This dissertation explores that question, and challenges one of its most common answers: the preservation of heritage. As a newly-minted ethnomusicology student, my standard answer to questions about the purpose of my future degree was very often something like to help people keep their traditions from disappearing – a response usually met by an approving nod. This impulse to help people preserve their performance practices is a common one, and appears as the motivation for intervention in a great deal of writing on applied ethnomusicology and related work, such as the "appeal to cultural equity" of Alan Lomax (1977), the "sustainable ethnomusicology" of Jeff Todd Titon (2009), and the "meddling" of Beth Lomax Hawes (1992).

There are, of course, a number of ethnomusicologists that have discussed and/or conducted applied ethnomusicology along lines other than that of preservation, such as Daniel Avorgbedor's discussion of ways to aid music-making in the face of depleted human resources (1992), Anthony Seeger's work in helping the Suya record their music and negotiate land disputes (2008), Gregory Barz and Judah Cohen's work with HIV in Africa (Barz and Cohen 2011), and Svanibor Pettan's work with music and conflict resolution (2008). As Rebecca Dirksen discusses in her survey of applied ethnomusicology, ethnomusicologists embrace many aims other than directions than
preservation: disaster relief, conflict resolution, human rights, medicine and healing, and others (Dirksen, 2012). But in our conferences, round tables, listservs – and, of course, writings – the narrative of preserving tradition still appears and re-appears, if perhaps toned down to less-grandiose terms of support, enabling, or empowerment.

My task in this dissertation will be to interrogate and critique this impulse to conserve practices, arguing that at its core it contains flawed concepts that make it an unsuitable basis and framework for intervention. As a focus for this critique and proxy for the overall spectrum of cultural heritage preservation efforts, I will discuss UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) program. UNESCO's program is the most powerful institutional voice worldwide in the discourses on heritage preservation, and a great deal of intervention in matters of culture has happened under its banner that provide real-world case studies of the ideas of cultural preservation in action.

**UNESCO and Intangible Cultural Heritage Safeguarding**

Previous to the 1990s, UNESCO's working concept of heritage was mostly limited to the tangible and permanent, as expressed in the 1972 World Heritage Convention: architectural and natural sites deemed to have lasting value as the heritage of humanity (Hafstein 2004). The definition of heritage in the 1972 Convention overwhelmingly favored the kinds of construction found in Europe, however, by placing emphasis on lasting structures (cathedrals, churches, and other stone construction) with a large proportion of original materials. But beginning in the 1990s, UNESCO began to move away from a "materialist" conception of heritage, as part of an effort to include parts of the world largely left out of the World Cultural Heritage program. It expanded its definition of heritage to include "intangible" heritage, cultural practices in the domains of
oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, and traditional craftsmanship. This expansion drew inspiration from a variety of sources, including the "Living Human Treasures" programs of Japan and a number of other east Asian states (Hafstein 2004).

The turn towards the intangible culminated in a number of activities. Three groups of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity were declared in 2001, 2003, and 2005. These declarations celebrated a mix of practices, events, and cultural sites all over the world nominated by Member States, such as the music of the Chinese Guqin zither, Cambodian royal ballet, and the Cultural Space of Jemaa el Fnaa Square in Marrakech Morocco. The program of Declarations was in turn replaced by the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) in 2003, which took effect in 2006 and has been signed by 158 UN member states as of 2013.1 Among other things, the 2003 Convention works in a similar fashion to the 1972 World Heritage Convention, by creating lists of ICH items that are nominated by the member states in which they occur. These nominations require that the submitting state outline a plan for safeguarding the ICH in question. The signatories to the convention are also expected to adopt policies aimed at promoting and preserving intangible heritage, and to fund both preservation efforts and the study of practices and the making of inventories of the ICH within their territories.

The UNESCO ICH paradigm has not generally been well received by ethnomusicologists, and has been criticized on a variety of grounds. Bell Yung, for

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1 The declared Masterpieces were rolled into the Representative Lists created by the 2003 Convention.
example, discusses the declaration of the music of the Chinese *guqin* zither as a Masterpiece of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2003, asserting that the UNESCO declaration unwittingly accelerated the rate of change in the tradition. Yung argues that the declaration changed more than it preserved, hastening the shift away the ascetic "literati" practice of the instrument towards the virtuosic "artists" *qin* (Yung 2009). Jeff Todd Titon objects to the UNESCO safeguarding regime's failure to see the practices that it addresses in its list and declarations as elements in a larger, interconnected ecosystem (Titon 2009). Like Yung, Titon discusses ways UNESCO failed to foresee the consequences of intervention in the political-cultural "habitats" they existed in, causing more problems than they solved. He call for a more holistic approach to intervention, supporting the greater ecosystem in which a practice exists rather than trying to preserve a particular limited description of it.

In the end, however, many objections to the ICH model still circle around to the idea of preservation. They may state that the particular approach UNESCO takes is ineffective – or even harmful – but in these writings the safeguarding of practices remains a valid goal. The fault seems to lie not in the idea that practices can be preserved but rather in the unenlightened methods that UNESCO uses to achieve this goal. Interventions to aid the continuation of tradition, in this view, might work if only better methods and a more holistic orientation were found.

It will be my argument in this dissertation, however, that the preservation of practices is not the right goal to pursue in our applied work, however defined or executed. The problems lie not merely in the approaches UNESCO uses in its safeguarding efforts,

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2 To be clear, this is including Titon's arguments but not Yung's, who does not make particular arguments for preservation.
but in the idea of preserving particular practices in general. Thus while I will use UNESCO's ICH safeguarding as a focal point for my criticism, my discussion is also aimed at the broader idea of the preservation of culture. As I will discuss, preservation is a deeply flawed basis for action for a great many reasons, and no re-formulation of this approach will avoid the inherent problems it introduces. The practices that appear to be bounded wholes within an ethnography, a UNESCO inventory, or any other sort of description are actually emergent outcomes of the actions and decisions of many participants. The clear borders and integrated practices that preservation demands do not exist in the real world, and as discussed in case studies by Dorothy Noyes working in Catalonia (2006), Philip Scher in Trinidad (2002), and Nathan Hesselink in South Korea (2004), attempts to safeguard heritage as described will invariably exclude practices and practitioners who lie outside its borders. Labeling a practice as heritage also casts it as a "survival" from an earlier time – as anthropologist Jean-Loup Amselle points out, that while the rhetoric of heritage may portray practices labeled as such as continuations of long-established traditions, such activities are in fact shaped as much by the present-day worlds of their practitioners as any that might be labeled "modern"(Amselle 2004). And finally, any description made for the purposes of preserving a practice necessarily bears the stamps of those who created it – their own motivations, nostalgia, prejudices, and blind spots. Creating such a description often requires skills and levels of access not possessed by the actual people who engage in the practices described, and the existence of these descriptions raises worrisome questions about disempowerment and the perpetuation of unequal power relationships.
The Capability Approach

In light of these and other problems with the ideas of heritage and safeguarding, I will argue that the better focus for choosing interventions is the goal of enhancing the real abilities of people to shape their practices – to keep, discard, borrow, and adapt as they choose, rather than as we or others might deem appropriate for them based on ascribed heritage. As an alternative to heritage preservation as a framework and starting point for our actions – whether they are projects we undertake ourselves or ones in which we choose to participate – I propose the Capability Approach, initially developed by economist Amartya Sen as an alternative approach in welfare economics. In the Capability Approach, a person's well-being is judged not by their total or marginal satisfaction, or by their quantified access to a defined set of goods or monetary income, but rather by the substantive freedoms, or capabilities, to choose a life that the person has reason to value (Amartya Sen 1999). This life is conceived of as a set of beings and doings, called functionings, which are the resolution of a larger set of real possibilities, called capabilities. Sen emphasizes these capabilities, these freedoms to choose which functionings in which to engage (or not to engage), as the principal point of focus, stating that the proper goal of development is the expansion of human freedoms to live the lives they choose to live.

What makes this framework potentially effective as an alternative framework is this emphasis on personal freedoms. To explain, I refer back to the way I defined "practices" earlier – as emergent outcomes of the decisions and interactions of many individuals. If one accepts this description, this focus on enhancing capabilities, rather than on ensuring particular outcomes makes sense as a goal. Rather than encourage
people to accept the importance of a practice (a particular functioning) that we deem appropriate to them based on ascribed cultural identity, we should seek ways to expand their freedoms to take full part in this process of emergence – to choose for themselves how to participate in and shape their lives, musical or otherwise. The purpose of applied research then becomes the investigation of factors that support or detract from the capability to choose what kind of performance practices to engage in and in what manner to do so, and the finding of ways to support the factors that help.

The Jemaa el Fnaa

As a case study with which to both critique the idea of cultural preservation ICH regime and to investigate the Capability Approach as an evaluative tool and framework for intervention, I wanted to choose a site or practice that had been involved in the UNESCO ICH program. Among several possible choices, I chose to do fieldwork at Jemaa el-Fnaa Square (الساحة جامع الفناء), a large plaza in Marrakech, Morocco. The Square is the performance space for a large population of ḥlayqiya (الحليقية, plural of the word ḥalaqi, حلقى): street performers in a wide variety of genres – musicians, comedians, magicians storytellers, and others – who work in the ḥalqa (الحلقة), a circle made up of the audience. This site is the heart of the Marrakech tourist trade, and is visited by thousands of local and foreign visitors throughout the year. The Square is a complex place, and represents a diverse range of things to different participants: It is heritage site that has been imagined and re-imagined as such since the days of French colonial occupation, a live diorama display of "authentic" Morocco (Borghi 2005; Claudio Minca and Borghi 3)

3 The events that occurred during my research period and later confirmed that Morocco was a good choice from a safety and convenience standpoint, compared to the other options of Egypt and Yemen.
2009). It is a place of learning and exchange, often described as an open-air madrasa (مدرسة, school) of performance by those who work there. And perhaps least discussed in the extant writings about it, it is a workplace for the ḥlayqiya and others that allows them to earn a living by performing that is usually meager but lacking many of the rigors and challenges of life on the road.

Jemaa el Fnaa Square was declared a UNESCO Masterpiece of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2001, and in many ways it was one of the sites of the current UNESCO ICH program's genesis. Spanish author and long-time Marrakech resident Juan Goytisolo's efforts to protect the Square from encroaching development (and its performers from obsolescence) brought the Square to the attention of UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor (Schmitt 2008). As I will discuss, Goytisolo's appeal to have the Square recognized by UNESCO as an important item of oral heritage served as a catalyst for the formation of a larger program of oral heritage recognition, arriving as it did in the midst of UNESCO's shift towards the intangible.

Following the Declaration, a scattered assortment of safeguarding activities took place at the Square. Many of the activities focused on the storytellers, who (to judge from talks with those involved in the project and the storytellers' prominence in the literature generated by it) were deemed by those who initiated the heritage project to be the most important and endangered aspect of the heritage at Jemaa el-Fnaa. A youth awareness program brought them into schools, and many of their stories were recorded for a website. A booklet in French and Arabic describing the heritage present at the Square (with special emphasis on to the storytellers), was printed and distributed to schools throughout Morocco. Various heritage concert festivals have also taken place at the
Square, organized by the local government and heritage associations. The declaration was made in 2001, and many of these activities occurred from 2003 to 2006. By the time I arrived at the Square in October of 2010, it was apparent that this complex of activities had not only not accomplished any of the stated safeguarding goals but had also failed to contribute significantly to the lasting well-being of the performers.

Methodology

In my fieldwork I used both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The bulk of my time at the Jemaa el Fnaa was spent on participant-observation and informal interviews. I conducted interviews with many people connected to the Square – the ḥlayqiya, of course, but also vendors, boutique workers, restaurant employees, academics, writers, tourists, and others whose lives intersected there. For such a relatively small place a lot goes on, and I conducted note-taking walkthroughs most nights during my time in Marrakech just to get a sense of what went on there, who did it, and when they did it.

For the most part, interviews were conducted without a translator. When preparing for the project, I decided to work towards mastering Arabic well enough to interview without an interpreter. I began by studying Modern Standard Arabic, which allowed me to read and gave some foundation in the language. As anyone who tries to use MSA in Morocco discovers, however, the varieties of Arabic spoken in Morocco (often simply referred to as darija) differ from the standard form widely enough that one
often might as well treat it as a separate language.\(^4\) Darija differs in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation: words are borrowed from Tamazight (Berber), French, Spanish, and English, verbs are conjugated differently and case endings are often abandoned, and short vowels are often dropped. I spent two summers at the Qalam wa Lawh language institute in Rabat studying darija, and worked with a tutor while in the United States. In the end, this allowed me to conduct interviews haltingly, helped along by the patience of the interviewees and the linguistic abilities of Moroccans accustomed to puzzling out variations in the dialects of others. Usually this was sufficient, especially when a recording was made allowing me to transcribe and clarify responses later on. On a few occasions, however, I enlisted my friend Soufiane Lamiri to assist in conversations with interviewees who had very complex or philosophical things to say that were beyond what my limited vocabulary could handle.

I also spent a lot of time learning and playing music with the ḥlayqiya, both in formal lessons and general leisurely music-making. I took lessons on the mandolina, an 8-string, flat backed Moroccan variant on the bouzouki (with extra frets to allow playing in a few different Arabic modes) and the hajhuj (also called the gimbri or sintir) a 3-stringed long necked lute used by the Gnawa religious-musical order. While I remain a mediocre performer on the instruments I studied, the lessons and informal jamming taught me a great deal about repertoire, transmission, daily musical life, and the performers' own concepts of heritage, change, authenticity, and preservation. I also worked as a musician with local rock bands, and supplemented my experience and

\(^4\) The word darija (DAR-ee-ja, الدارجة) refers generally to any dialect of a language, but usually refers more specifically to the dialects spoken in the Maghreb (Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Libya, Western Sahara, and Mauritania).
income as a solo singer/guitarist in cafes and bars in the ville nouvelle. Playing these gigs allowed a wider view of the musical habitat and economic climate in Marrakech. It also gave me some credibility with the ḥlayqiya as a fellow performer, and even permitted me to connect them with musical work outside the Square on occasion.

On the recommendation of Dr. David Kraybill, an agricultural economist who provided a great deal of advice during the early stages of the project, I also conducted a small quantitative survey among the ḥlayqiya. This survey (the methodology of which is discussed in Appendix A) addressed questions such as income, expenses, and access to medical care and education. The survey provided some empirical data with which to discuss the ḥlayqiya's capabilities, while the administration of the survey served as a structured interview that uncovered still more qualitative detail about these performers' lives.

**Organization of the dissertation**

This dissertation is organized in three larger sections, each containing two smaller chapters. Part I, 'A Portrait of Jemaa el Fnaa Square, 2010-2011,' is a long-form description of the Square as it was during my main research period. The two chapters of Part I are intended as a resource for the following two sections, as well as addressing the current lack of a detailed ethnography of the life of the Square in a European language. The first chapter in the section introduces the reader to the place and its inhabitants through a narration of a typical summer's evening, a composite depiction of a great many such walkthroughs conducted during my research period. In the second chapter in Part I, I discuss the Square in a more analytic fashion: the genres of performance found there,
their repertoire and performance practices, and the ways that time, space, and soundscape are organized there.

Part II of the dissertation, 'Intangible Heritage, its Problems, and the Square,' explores the flaws in the idea of heritage safeguarding, both in theory and as practiced at the Jemaa el Fnaa. Chapter 3 gives a brief history of heritage safeguarding at the Square, both as it was practiced by UNESCO as well as by the French colonial administration of Maréchal Hubert Lyautey decades earlier. Chapter 4 discusses these inherent flaws in the idea of heritage and its safeguarding: the imposition of borders on practices previously defined in a more permeable and fluid manner, its tendency to objectify and dis-empower practitioners and disregard their modern-day lives and needs, and its replacement of "race" with "culture" as a descriptor of essence.

Part III, 'The Capability Approach ', articulates my application of Sen's (and others') ideas about capabilities to interventions in the area of culture. Chapter 5 outlines some basic aspects of the Capability Approach, and ways that it can be used to discuss the sorts of practices often discussed by ethnomusicologists and ICH safeguarding advocates alike (referred to here as "performance practices"). A case study of the difficulties faced by a particular ḥalaqi, the cha'abi ( الموسيقى شعبية, popular/folk music) singer Abdelhakim Khabzaou is given as an illustration of how the CA can be used as a lens to view the circumstances in which music occurs, and the limitations and deprivations that may affect the ability to perform it. Chapter 6 discusses ways in which the capability to engage in performance practices (to play music, to tell stories, to dance, and so on) is an emergent property of other capabilities. The latter portion of the chapter uses six fundamental capabilities (to live a healthy life, to freely associate with others, to
be safe, to make a livelihood, to be educated, and to be politically empowered) to discuss the ḥlayqiya's capabilities to perform.

Finally, in the concluding chapter I discuss the limitations of the study and suggest further research. I also make tentative suggestions for interventions, based on the capabilities analysis of the previous chapter.
Chapter 1: A Walkthrough of the Jemaa el Fnaa

Introduction

My first time at the Jemaa el Fnaa as a researcher in the summer of 2010 was both a terrifying and wonderful experience. Although I had visited Marrakech the Jemaa el Fnaa once before during a summer of Arabic study in Rabat, Morocco’s capital city, this was the first time I had come to the Square with the goal of not merely enjoying the place, but actually making sense of what I was seeing. In the first visit a year earlier, it seemed like a complex place with many layers of goings on, but still a place that could be figured out, described in a way that made sense. Now it looked daunting, impossible, and I had a sinking realization of how arrogant I had been in thinking that such a tangled mass of people with so many different origins and goals could be described in any meaningful way.

I remember standing near the Café des Etoiles, watching thousands of people walking by and trying to make them separate subjects in my head, rather than an undifferentiated mass of people: what was the significance of one woman’s odd cut of jellaba?5 Where was this group of tourists from? Was the guy walking around with the

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5 A long, hooded robe worn by both men and women.
violin a ḥalaqi, or just a guy with a violin? It was Ramadan, and in the late afternoon no one seemed to be holding still or making a halqa other than the snake charmers and braving the heat to work the wave of summer foreign tourists.6 ‘How am I going to do this?’ I thought to myself, ‘my Arabic is still awful, and I have no idea what anyone is doing or why they’re doing it!’

From reading all I could on the Square and talking with a great many other visitors, this reaction is a common one. Much of the writing one sees on the Jemaa el Fnaa, at least in Western languages, conveys this "throwing-up-of hands" in exasperation at the confusing tumult of happenings there, and the Place and its people are presented in a colorful blur, such as this excerpts from Juan Goytisolo:

...strolling slowly along, without the slavery of a time schedule, following the wayward inspiration of the crowd: a traveler in a constantly moving, vagabond world: attuned now to the rhythm of all the others: in graceful and fruitful nomadism: a slender needle in the middle of the middle of the haystack: lost in a maremagnum of odors, sensations, images, multiple acoustic vibrations: the dazzling court of a kingdom of madmen and charlatans: a poverty-stricken utopia of absolute equality and freedom: migrating from group to group, as though wandering from one pasture to another: in the neutral space of chaotic, delirious stereophonic sound: tambourines guitars drums rebecs cries of street vendors suras screams… ‘A reading of the Space in Xemaa el-Fna, from Makbara (Goytisolo 1981)

And from a 2011 article in Huffington Post:

It is the convention hall, wide umbrellas delineating booths, for small merchants, fortune tellers, musicians, water sellers (in signature jangling wide hats), snake charmers, monkey masters and mad men, both those who excel in the art of selling, and those who have lost their minds, and in either case I think I qualify for all-access-badge status. We pass orange juice barrows, henna tattoo makers, places where we can eat grilled meat, spikes and snails. – Richard Bangs, ‘Why Would Anyone Bomb Jemaa El F’na Square in Marrakesh?’, Huffington Post (Bangs 2011)

In many ways this kind of description is difficult to avoid, in that it is simply too
difficult for a newcomer like Bangs to figure out what is going on and why – or,

6 A halaqi (حلاقي, pl. ḥlayqiya, ḥlayqiyā) is an open-air performer that typically works in the halqa (الحلقة), a circle made up of the audience.
conversely, for a writer like Goytisolo who is intimately familiar with the Jemaa el Fnaa, more artistically desirable to present the Square in this manner. Even to observers for whom the language barrier is not as much a factor, such as in the case of my friend and research helper Soufiane Lamiri (who not only speaks darija (the Moroccan dialect of colloquial Arabic) as a native but is skilled at understanding the endless variants of the dialect) the meanings of a ḥalaqi’s pitch or a loud verbal exchange is often not immediately clear. Thus I found myself experiencing the Square this way myself that day: as a colorful, undifferentiated blur of activity that looked like an impossible task to describe. Hence, likely, the dazed expression that attracted the attention of someone sitting near me:

“Hey, man, you looking for something?” asked a voice from behind me, speaking English with a Moroccan accent. I groaned silently, as I was hot, thirsty (it’s no fun drinking water in public during Ramadan, obvious foreigner or not), and had been asked that question in French and English all day by various enterprising people. Though the city government has cracked down in recent years on faux guides, there are still plenty who want to help you find hotels, souvenirs, restaurants or hashish in exchange for a hefty tip from you and a kickback from the vendor.

“La chukran a-khuya, ma-khssni-ch ay-haja.” No thanks, brother, I don’t need anything. Answering in Arabic usually seemed to work in getting rid of hustlers while staying friendly, and often led to a nice chat and more language practice. The man speaking looked pleasant enough – a handsome man with silver hair, glasses, and a ruddy complexion, he was sitting at a café table with nothing in front of him, like many other Moroccan men there.
“Ha! Ma-ykhss-ch walü. The white guy is speaking Arabic. Siddown, sahbi, you’re looking a little bit tired.” I did, and made my first friend in Marrakech.

Muhammad Ali ("Just like the boxer") works as a carpet salesman in the medina, and speaks 3 or 4 languages in a given day in the course of his job. ⁷ He came to Marrakech from Fes in the early 1990s, looking for a change of scene and attracted by the work possibilities in the big tourist city for someone who was multilingual. Like many of those who work in the medina, he depends on the waves of visitors to the city for his livelihood, and over the months to come spent sitting and talking with him I learned a great deal about the economic and interpersonal in-and-outs of life in Marrakech and working with tourists. Possessing a sharp mind and twenty years spent working in the medina, Muhammad has a keen understanding of people in general and of the inhabitants and visitors of Marrakech in particular, and I often went to him throughout my research stay (and in the visits since) with questions about interactions I had had or things that I had seen. Muhammad was also, like other non-Marrakechi I met during my stay, a big fan and constant visitor of the Jemaa el Fnaa.

“It’s like a big TV show, like the biggest show in the world. You watch it, you get addicted, you can’t stop. So many things happen at the same time, always something happening.” After talking a while and watching the sunset, Muhammad and I had an iftar (إفطار, fast-breaking meal) of harira (حريرة, soup), eggs, and dates at the small stand at the edge of the open-air tourist restaurants. Over coffee at the Café Glacier, I started to learn from Muhammad something about how the Square was organized, and who some of its inhabitants were: "The Berbers have their place over there, and the cha’abi (شعابي, folk

⁷ Medina is the term designating the old, walled city, as opposed to la ville nouvelle, the new city largely initially built by the French.
musician) guys are around them…The monkeys are always there, but the charmeurs des serpents go home at night…Those are police, and that guy is undercover police…That guy there is a pickpocket, and stay away from that other guy, he’s sniffing glue.” I began to get a sense of a place with layers and layers of interaction and organization, some of it improvised and ad-hoc and some of it solidified over decades. The Square seemed like a great turning clockwork made of people, and while it did not seem at the time like something one could adequately describe in words (nor does it still), it at least seemed like there was an underlying structure to it all.

A narrative snapshot of the Jemaa el-Fnaa, July 2011

In this chapter, I give an overview of the nightly activities and rhythms of the Square on a summer evening, when the crowds are largest and the largest portion of the performer, vendor, and audience population is there. This is intended to introduce in prose narrative the various topics that I will cover later in the chapter, to briefly discuss some occupations at the Square (such as henna women, fqihs scribes, policemen, or prostitutes), and finally, to aid future studies and research about life and change at the Square. It is, admittedly, a composite picture of a good few such walks; I made approximately sixty such evening walks during my 2010-2011 main research period, often noting on a photocopied map the positions, activities, and schedule of performers. It is also based on regular sessions at the Café Glacier balcony, where I took bird’s-eye photos of the Square (see fig. 1).
A note on seasonality: as I will discuss again at the end of this chapter, the schedule and cast of characters I discuss below changes somewhat throughout the year, though the general outline remains pretty much the same. The main change would be the times that things occur; the schedule of the Jemaa el-Fnaa, like the rest of Morocco, is hung on the framework of the prayer times, which are in turn based on the position of the sun. Abdelhakim Khabzaoui, for example, who performs from about a half an hour before the sunset call to prayer to about 2½-3 hours after, would perform from about 8:00-10:30pm in July, but from about 5:00-8:00pm in January. In addition, part of the draw of the Square and life in the halqa in general is the ability to set one’s own working hours, so a slower crowd would likely be responded to with either more or less working hours, depending on the livelihood strategy of the performer or group. The times given below are based on an average of observed performance times; repeated walkthroughs
should either give similar averages or indicate that something has changed since my series of walkthroughs.

Figure 2: Large walkthrough map of the Jemaa el Fnaa
Figure 3: Detail walkthrough map of Jemaa el Fnaa's main performing area
Figure 4: Map of approximate performer spaces and times of day they are found, as demarcated by prayer times
A Walkthrough

It is an early July evening, around 7:15 pm, and the sun is about an hour from setting. I approach the Square from the southwest, past the huge tourist buses and throngs of apprehensive-looking tourists and the city bus stops. I cross over from the much more sedate and family-friendly open space in from of the Koutoubiya mosque, where Moroccan parents, children, and teenagers (and somewhat less worried-looking tourists) gather.

[#1, 7:15pm] My first impression is the eye-watering stink of the caleches, or horse carriages, that line the right-hand side of the wide pathway that leads to the Square (see fig. 5). The horses look skinny and miserable, and their drivers beckon to the tourists walking by. I, as a solo walker, am left alone. Past them on the right is the Arset el-Bilk, a small tree-lined triangular park. If one enters through there, there is a gauntlet of shoe shine men and small peddlers to walk through—a year earlier (in my visits in 2009), after dark there would have also been male prostitutes and hash dealers, though lately there is less and less of that. Competing with the caleche drivers for the foreign tourists’ attention are vrai guides, licensed tour guides that wear fezzes, white or tan jellabas and their licenses clearly displayed on chains around their necks. 8 They cycle quickly through languages in their sales pitches—‘Mes amis! Mi Amigos! My Friends!’—which is a common refrain all over the tourist areas of Morocco. 9

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8 As opposed to faux guides, unlicensed ad-hoc guides.
9 But never ‘Meine Freunde!’ despite the large number or German tourists. As numerous friends who worked as hawkers or at boutiques told me, Germans are notoriously unreceptive. A shout of ‘Ney Danke!’ is thus an amazingly effective way to get rid of a persistent salesman.
Once past the Arset el-Bilk, the path opens into the vastness of the Square (fig.4). To my left are the administrative buildings, the arrondissement containing the local Qaid’s (administrator’s) offices and the Gendarmes’ station. To my far right is the post office, in front of which gather a crowd of mostly Moroccans: young men waiting on scooters for dates, seated women resting their feet, and people who might be male prostitutes leaning against the building in the shadows. In front of me is a seemingly undifferentiated throng of people—thousands of them, churning, milling about, with a few performers visible. The sound of drums gets suddenly louder at this point, and I am always struck with the same anticipatory feeling I get when passing through the gates of a

Figure 5: Caleches at the southwest entrance to the Square
music festival in progress. The sight of this crowd is awesome, framed by the cafés, orange juice stands and recently-lit lanterns of the open air restaurants in the back. There is always a ragged line of both foreign and Moroccan tourists stopping to take a photo of this sight, and thus also a handful of *grraba* (ڭڕاﺀا, colorfully dressed traditional water-sellers) looking to make money off of them. [#2] The water-sellers either offer to pose for a photo in their red caftans and tall peaked hats, or shake down photographers who include them in photos of the larger Square.

I move forward, careful to avoid speeding mopeds. The huge crowd is roughly wedge-shaped, hemmed in by the motor vehicle traffic that roughly follows faded white lines painted onto the pavement tiles – mopeds-only to the left, cars, mopeds and caleches off to the right. At the vanguard of the wedge is a clump of henna women and green-painted monkey cages. One of the monkey handlers is in front, and his unhappy looking charge—a Barbary ape from the nearby mountains, clad in a diaper and a baby’s dress—is doing somersaults over her neck chain. The Square is not a happy place for most animals. The henna women have a couple of clients, young women (who, to judge from their harem pants and dreadlocks are likely Spanish tourists) getting designs in black henna on the backs of their hands.

[#3, 7:30] I pass between the monkey cages and a small circle of men standing around a fortune-teller, who between telling fortunes is also selling liniment that he claims will cure everything including weakness in the male parts. The crowd at this close distance separates into individuals, who at this early hour are very diverse, if biased somewhat towards the Moroccan and male: Families, young couples, Moroccan women in pairs and
groups (in jellaba and hijab, Western dress, and various combinations of the two), old and young. During the daylight there are far more foreign tourists in this part of the Square; while it is crowded and seemingly chaotic it does not appear too menacing, even to the totally uninitiated. After final call to prayer it looks very different, and the tourists mostly stay away.

Figure 6: Berber Rwaïs (From left, Unknown raïs, Abderrahim M., Unknown raïs, Ahmed Biiga)

In the area where I am standing there is a preponderance of Berber musicians, often in Moroccan dress of white, cream, or striped jellaba (fig.6). One group about ten meters ahead of me (that I cannot see due to their large crowd, but can hear) has a large
complement of instruments: *agwaal*, *naquus*, *jembe*, banjo, and *rebab*. There are also jellaba-clad Berbers playing rebab and singing in singles, twos and threes, usually with a very small crowd, if any at all. Other performers are just now setting up, moving benches into place or sitting on upturned drums talking and drinking tea—they will play after the final call to prayer. Off to the left the southernmost group of snake-charmers has switched over to the more active approach, playing music and attracting a crowd instead of passively waiting for customers to walk by. Their *buscaat* (بسكات, black Egyptian cobras, *Naja haje elapidae*) have been put away, while their normally-sleepy *vipers* (*Puff adders, Bitis arietans*) are starting to wake up (fig.7).

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Figure 7: Aissawa snake charmer (Zakariya H.) with cobra. Vipers are coiled up in the background

[5] Heading further north past the Berbers, there is a big crowd around a group of comedians. One man sits on another’s shoulders, and shouts happy insults at the crowd in between blasts of a yellow vuvuzela trumpet. To their east, the benches and gear are being set out for the ḥalqa of these comedians’ cousins, the Ammra family, and a couple of men are sitting on the benches and smoking plain cigarettes—hash-laced cigarettes and sbsil (سبسل, marijuana pipes) are rare on the Square. Past them is a crowd around another pair of comedians, Hsen and Mohammed, who trade off wearing a pair of old sandals on their heads like donkey’s ears, and exhort the crowd in alternating Arabic and Berber to
donate some money. The group of snake charmers just to their south has attracted a couple of Moroccan visitors, one of whom takes a cellphone picture of the other with a harmless egg snake around his neck. The financial transaction that follows this is a quick pressing of a coin—probably ten dirham (1.25 USD, .90 EUR)—into the snake charmer's palm, a much simpler (and less lucrative) exchange than the haggling that would follow if the tourists were foreign.

![Mustafa ‘Musta’id’, magician and storyteller, starting his show](image)

Figure 8: Mustafa ‘Musta’id’, magician and storyteller, starting his show

[6, 7:30pm] Heading a few meters north, the street magician Mustafa Musta’id has a crowd with more children and women than the others (fig. 8). He has two laughing boys tied up—one wrist to the other’s ankle, and vice versa—and is challenging them to untangle themselves, while using a third boy as a magician’s assistant while he produces
bottles of soda and biscuits from his magic box. He breaks off from time to time to solicit baraka or sell five-dirham magic charms to the adults in the crowd.

It is important at this point to emphasize that all of this—Mustafa, both comedians' groups, the snake charmers, as well as the trade of a cigarette vendor and another group of henna women—is all occurring in a corner of the Jemaa el Fnaa with an area of less than twenty-five by twenty meters. Each performer's area abuts the other, and seen from directly above the small area just to the southwest of the open-air restaurants and orange juice stands might look a little like a collection of small Berber country farming plots, with the audience's bodies demarcating the edges of territory instead of prickly-pear cactus fences. As I will discuss in the next chapter in detail, a few factors contribute greatly to this co-existence: 1) a loose agreement by the regular workers at the Square on the appropriate division of performance space; 2) the restlessness and taste for variety among the audience, so that each attraction has a chance to win audience members; and 3) the natural visual and aural insulation provided by the ḥalqa, or circle, of audience members. As a result, while other performers might be audible, even solo acts like Mustafa can ghowt (speak-shout) loud enough to be heard by their audience. There is also a ban enforced by the administration on loudspeakers for amplifying the voice although this rule is bent in a few cases found after dark.

I head directly south, through the center of the main performance area. This area in the absolute center of the triangle is seemingly empty compared to the northern corner. A few ṣḥiq, (scribe) hunker down here and there on mats under large green umbrellas. When they have customers, they close these umbrellas over themselves and the customer
for privacy. These days the fqih’s trade is largely manufacturing charms, called *jidwal* (جدول, literally, 'chart') by writing appropriate Qur’an verses on paper. My one experience as a customer involved the fqih both making a charm and drawing a bad jinn from me that might have been drawing strength from my manly parts. (Like anywhere else in the world, there is a healthy trade here in curing manly weakness.) This was followed by an intense demand for a huge sum of money (200 dirham, about 25 USD), which caused me to avoid the fqih ever since. On occasions that grew increasingly rare even over the course of my ten months at the Square, there are male and female fortune-tellers that cater mostly to their respective genders of Moroccan clients. This central area also sometimes host the *Awlaad Sidi Hmad ou Musa* (الاولاد سيدي حماد و موسة, Sons of Sidi Hmad ou Musa, a Berber saint), acrobats whose bright costumes and huge human pyramids are some of the most commonly seen photographic indices of the Jemaa el Fnaa. This has become fairly rare—in my 2010-11 research I saw it maybe once or twice a month—but when it happens it takes up the entire center of the performance area.

An unchanging feature of this area sometime after late afternoon call to prayer is the soda fishing game, which consists of a ring of full soda bottles in a three-meter circle. Players pay a couple of dirhams for a chance to catch a soda bottle with a long wooden fishing pole that has a rope and a small ring at the end. This is one of several carnival games, in addition to the test-your-strength game at the west side and the roaming three-card Monty games that appear spontaneously nearby the soda game.
Figure 9: The author’s fiancée being a good sport with some roaming Gnawa. The man in the yellow is the only ‘in costume only’ Gnawa I ever met at the Square. Note the look of disdain given by Hamid, the Gnawa in the black, a lifelong and very devout Gnawa himself.

This is also the area of the roaming Gnawa, who are unmoored to a particular performance space and whose regular territory stretches from the center to the main area to the easternmost corner. They are, along with the snake-charmers and henna women, the tourist experience I heard about most often from foreign visitors. The Gnawa (ڭنا) with their bright costumes, tasseled hats, and iron qraqeb (قراقب) castanets, aggressively approach visitors seeking donations (1-9). Like the snake-charmers and the Grraba, what is being sold is a photo: once the tourist stops moving, the Gnawa removes his hat, places it on the tourist’s head and suggests that a photo should be taken. Usually once one Gnawa has a potential customer, one or two other Gnawa will swoop in to aid in the sales
pitch, provide backup to the haggling process, and split the proceeds. The common refrain heard from Marrakechis (including other Square performers) is that these Gnawa are not "real" in that they are not practicing members of the Gnawa musical-religious order and are only beggars dressed in Gnawa costume. While I did see this happen elsewhere, with only one or two exceptions all the Gnawa I knew at the Square regularly performed at Gnawa *lila* (ليلى, lit. 'night') rituals, knew the ceremonial repertoire, and self-identified as Gnawa. In fact, most of the roaming Gnawa I knew I also personally saw performing *lila* in Marrakech, Tamesloht, or Moulay Brahim with *ma‘alem* (معلم, 'master' or 'teacher') Abdelkabir Marchane.

Figure 10: Chleuḥ Gnawa
[7:50pm] I reach the southern edge of the performance area triangle. Just to the east of the large group of snake-charmers who earlier switched to active performing is a different group of Gnawa, the Gnawa Chleuḥ, or Chleuḥ (شلهح, a subgroup of Amazigh/Berber) Berber Gnawa, who perform most early evenings for a couple of hours. They are mostly older, dark complexioned men dressed in all-white caftans who perform in a line perpendicular to the triangle’s border (fig.10). While they have a similar photo-op based money-making strategy, they are far less aggressive than the roaming Gnawa, counting on customers to be drawn in by the visual display. The sing and play iron qraqeb castanets, with one Gnawa playing a tbel (تبل), a large cylindrical double-sided drum. If there is a younger member present, there is lively dancing, with the move that is common to the Chleuḥ Gnawa’s performance and to painted depictions of the Gnawa in general: a vertical leap into the air, with hands and qraqeb thrust downwards while the straightened legs fly upwards in an improbable v shape.

It is about 8:00pm – time for a coffee. I head northeast to the Jemaa el-Fnaa l-sghīr (السغير, the ‘small’ Jemaa el-Fnaa), the smaller wing of the Square that sees a bit less traffic that the main l-kbiir (الكبير, big) Jemaa el-Fnaa. I work to avoid the monkey handlers clustered on this end, who are the most aggressive on the Square—although I eventually made friends with a couple of them, I learned not to say hello and shake hands with ones I did not know, a mistake which often results in a monkey hoisted onto one’s arm. (I am not a squeamish person, but I doubt that many people really like the feel of monkey bottom on one’s bare arm.)
[#9, 8:05pm] Just beyond the far eastern corner of the performance area triangle is yet another Gnawa group, the group of maʿalem Koyo. They are Abdellaoui Gnawa, the kind most common to the Marrakech area. They stand in a line with qraqeb and big drum like the Gnawa Chleuḥ, but there are visible differences: they wear bright colors, the drum is noticeably bigger, and the dance seems a bit more sedate. They are also all somewhat younger, and—for some reason I never learned—faire-complexioned than the group of Chleuḥ.

[#10] I head into the middle or the Place l-sghiir. Most things of interest are in the northern end; the southern end of the l-sghiir is mostly populated with people going someplace else, a place with no place to stop moving without being run over by a caleche, a moped, a taxi, or a tour group. Heading north, the area becomes much more crowded. Like the main area of the square, there are orange juice and dried fruit stands, with a group of snake-charmers and one cluster of monkey-handlers between them. The northernmost half is split down the middle: the east half continues the thoroughfare into the Medina and the Rue des Banques; the west half is full of vendors. This side is bordered by tourist boutiques, facing which are several rows of traditional medicine-sellers and assorted ad-hoc vendors of clothing, tourist trinkets, and more henna women. I walk around the back of this crowd to the northernmost point of the space, where there is a small cluster of performer/vendors: a woman who sells herbal cures in a nonstop shout, the mul ḥmaam (pigeon handler), and Ali the Magician.

[#11, 8:10pm] I walk up to the outside of Ali’s crowd. Inside the circle, I see something very familiar from only a few minutes ago – two boys tied together, another patiently serving as magician’s assistant, and a magical box that has produced biscuits and soda
pop. Ali, a very pleasant man in his early 60s, is currently doing the coup de grace of his act, what is referred to in the US as the "blockhead" trick: he inserts a 10-centimeter nail all the way into his nose, seeming to pound it into his skull. The crowd winces and gasps, while Ali explains that the magic contained in the charms he sells (also jidwal diagrams on paper dipped in wax) allows him to perform the feat. Mustafa also does this trick, though when speaking to both magicians separately they claim different origins for it. I watch Ali finish up his act, which trails off into a flurry of charms sales and the untying of the unfortunate small boys (who are given the biscuits anyway), then we exchange pleasant chat for a few minutes before Ali heads off to stow his gear and go back to his home.

The mul hmaam is a regular sight on this end of the Square. He has a large carpet set up, with a set of cages at one end. Pigeons, with their tail feathers clipped and arranged like peacock’s fans, wander around the carpet. The act is fairly straightforward: children are invited to come and pet the pigeons, while their parents pay the handler for the children’s privilege. There are a couple of other such acts who set up on the edges of the main performance space, and occasionally also feature other petting-zoo-worthy creatures like tame ground squirrels and tortoises. Animal companions are a large overall part of the attractions at the Jemaa el-Fnaa: There are, of course, the snakes, the monkeys, and the pigeons, but there are also the lizards used by the Şaḥrawi medicine sellers as props and the trained rooster used by one of the Berber music acts. In the past there was also a trained donkey act and the famed Docteur des Insectes (Skounti, Tebbaa, and

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11 This is made possible by the fact that the nasal cavity actually extends straight back into the head, rather than the curving path that we tend to assume it takes. The trick is thus learning not to sneeze and gag when the nail is ‘pounded’ in.
Nadim 2005). One could also include the caleche horses, as horses (as opposed to donkeys) are a fairly rare sight elsewhere.

[12] Also at the north end of the Place l-sghiir is the Café de France, a qahwa (قهوة, coffeeshop) frequented by both tourists and locals. It has a wide ground-level patio that serves reasonably-priced coffee as well as a more-expensive upper balcony with a view (fig.11). This evening, like most evenings, Spanish author and founder of the UNESCO project Juan Goytisolo is having coffee, surrounded by friends and admirers—a few older Moroccans, a few younger Moroccans, and a very well-dressed Spanish couple. I take a seat in the far North corner, and watched the crowd go by: Moroccan and foreign tourists, Moroccans passing through from the Arset el-Bilk bus stop (some of the men wearing caftans for evening prayer), young men passing out flyers for hotels, women selling inflated balloons.
Also among this crowd is a disturbing but very common sight—young children (as young as four or five) selling biscuits or packets of Tempo tissues. This is a heart-breaking sight in itself, but it overlies an even darker issue: while I never observed a client approach them in the same way I would occasionally see them approach the male and female prostitutes who conduct business in the Place l-kbiir, it is generally understood that these children are often victims of child prostitution. The ville nouvelle is a fairly open playground for sexual tourism, with scantily-clad female prostitutes filling many hotel and casino bars and visible on the streets after dark. In the medina it seems more hush-hush, and my knowledge of such things comes secondhand from talks with people who work at the Square.
After about ten minutes of sipping my coffee I see a bright flash of color go by: a troupe of acrobats, getting in a last quick show before sunset. There are four of them, (mostly young) men dressed in blue, pink and green satin outfits. They perform along the length of the café patio for about five minutes, executing flips, somersaults, and a small human pyramid. After they finish, Rachid, the leader of this particular group, walks through the crowd seated on the patio, knit cap held out for donations. Many foreign tourists and more than a few Moroccans put in a few dirhams, and by the time he reaches my end and I throw in a 10-dirham piece he appears to have gathered about seventy-five to a hundred dirhams (€7-9 or $10-12). This is the main performance activity I observed the acrobats engaging in at the Square, although they also work hotels, *mwassem* (festivals), public spectacles, and foreign circuses. I saw this same troupe at most of the patio cafes along the Square, and they typically work up and down the Square during peak meal and tea times such as these when they are not traveling.

The evening call to prayer comes soon after the acrobats leave. The caftan-wearing traffic north towards the mosque increases a bit, and a few of the patrons pay up and leave. When Ramadan begins in a couple of weeks, huge crowds will gather in the courtyard of the Koutoubia, with the local traffic along the Rue Fatima Zahra blocked off and the imam announcing prayers via a huge sound system. At present any mosque will do for most, and there are three around the Square. The Place has lit up: electric lights for the cafés, orange juice vendors, and open-air restaurants, *butagaz* (butane) lanterns for performers and vendors. I pay a tuxedo-clad waiter for my coffee, wind my way through the patrons, and head back out.
The pigeon handler has cleared out, but now there are still several crowds of people watching performers in the Jemaa l-sghiir. [HEX, 8:50pm] Across from the line of tourist boutiques is the regular performance space of Abdelhakim Khabzaoui, who is a revered performer at the Square and who claims to have been working this same patch of the Jemaa el-Fnaa since the late 1960s.\footnote{Sadly, Abdelhakim died in October of 2012. The rest of his group still occupies the space, however.} He wears sunglasses even at night (he is missing one eye), and the rough-hewn jellaba, leather \textit{chkara} (شکارة, bag) and small cap worn by a lot of old cha'abi musicians. He plays with a small group of older men on banjo, darbuka, tarija, and plays a small tambourine himself (fig.12). The audience forms a ring around the group, with a bench defining the edge closest to the boutiques that is currently filled with old men and women. The group plays a mix of folk/pop tunes from different
regions and eras, songs by the famous group Nass el Ghiwane, and original songs that
Abdelhakim has written. Abdelhakim is standing at the eastern edge of the performance
space facing the bench and singing *Qu’elle est Jolie?*, the signature song for the group, a
bawdy city-by-city description of Moroccan women. The song is a crowd favorite, and
the group and Abdelhakim himself are often referred to by the song’s title.

![Figure 13: The front row of Ṣaḥarawi medicine sellers](image)

Abdelhakim’s space is in the middle of the main row of Ṣaḥarawi medicine
sellers. This row, which is along the main route of pedestrian traffic between the
restaurant stalls and the tourist market to the north of the Square, sees the most traffic and
thus the most business (fig.13). The Ṣaḥarawi who work here are the ones who have been
working at the Square the longest, and this front row was originally the only group of
sellers, with the sellers farther east being the latest to settle at the Square. Immediately
next to Abdelhakim’s performance area is a group circled around the vending area of Sa'id and Abdelaziz, two brothers who sell the typical inventory of the Ṣaḥarawi. Laid out in a square in front of Abdelaziz, who is seated on the ground, is a large assortment of products: incenses, scents, oils, packaged home remedies, and cosmetic products. But the heart of the Ṣaḥarawi’s business is the containers of herbs and powders closest to him, herbal medicines sent from family farms near the Sahara and gathered from elsewhere in Morocco. Customers come singly to Sa'id and Abdelaziz throughout the day for various medicines, but at the moment Abdelaziz has gathered a crowd around him. He holds a very large and patient lizard (another animal prop) on its back, and explains how medicines are made from various lizard parts (fig.14). (This impressive half-meter-long lizard is a pet and a working prop, but there is a small container of dried lizards in front of him.) He speaks in middle-brow Arabic, peppering his Moroccan Arabic patter with Standard Arabic medical terms that give it a greater air of authority. Although the cures they sell address a wide variety of ailments, the current mix that is being described and sold also treats male weakness. When the sales pitch ends, it sells very well.
I walk southwest through a gauntlet of aggressive boutique salesmen, back to the Jemaa el-Fnaa l-kbiir. [14] I turn the corner, and as I am both hungry and have a little while to wait until the final shift of performers at the main performance area gets into full swing, I stop for *poulet rôti* and *frites* at one of the brick-and-mortar restaurants that face the block of open-air stalls. The other patrons are all Moroccan, and I am further reminded of the disjunction between the idea of the Square as a "Disney-fied" tourist trap for foreigners (as Thomas Schmitt discusses in Schmitt, 2005) and its reality as a place of great utility for Moroccans. Both are real, in a way: it has been dressed up to an extent (such as the redesign of the orange juice carts) in an attempt to suit the imaginations of foreign tourists. But at the same time the Jemaa is a leisure space for Marrakechis: a cheap dinner and night out for middle class families, a meeting place for teenagers, a

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**Figure 14: Abdelaziiz B. making a sales pitch in the ḥalqa, holding an enormous but patient lizard**
place to kill time away from the family for Moroccan men, and a hundred other uses both licit (usually) and illicit (for a few). The irony lies in the fact that those who might complain about the Square's "inauthenticity" are actually seeing plenty of real, "authentic" Marrakechi life going on all around them at the Jemaa el Fnaa – but it simply does not look the way they expect it to.

In some areas like this restaurant, the two populations are separate: the Moroccans claim the roti restaurants, the harira soup stands, and much of the night-time main performance area, while the foreign tourists populate the more expensive restaurants, the Café Glacier, and — formerly — the Café Argana. The two crowds meet in the restaurant stalls (fig.15), though there is still some divide: the restaurants that serve the tamer mechoui, tajines, and fried fish feature more foreign faces at the tables, while the tanjia and sheep’s head sellers in the center of the area and the harira and dates at the northernmost edge sell entirely to Moroccans. The barriers here are simple: the foreigners have no idea what harira or tanjia are and are unlikely to opt for a meal of sheep’s head, and the Moroccans are less likely to pay 60-70 dirhams for mechoui that would cost 15 elsewhere. In this manner, most of the Jemaa el-Fnaa — spaces, interactions, attractions — is closed to the non-Arabic-speaking tourists, who are cordoned-off into a few designated areas that exchange a language — and culture-translated experience for higher prices.
Figure 15: An open-air restaurant

Figure 16: The Cafe Argana in June 2011
After finishing my chicken, I head along the row of boutiques at the northern border of the Place l-sghiir. At the end of this row is a huge white awning, installed just before the folklore festival in May, that covers the façade of the bombed Café Argana (fig. 16). Large abstract paintings are hung on the awning, and a small, fenced-in shrine is in front, with pictures, Qur’an verses, and cards. There is no longer a crowd gathered here, as there was even a few weeks before, and it is amazing the way the Square returned to business as usual soon after the bombing. Many evenings and late afternoons, though not this one, the bombing site has become an extension of the Marrakech political sphere. Groups with varied goals—anything from teachers’ unions and tourist and hotel associations to students from the still-banned fundamentalist religious school—march from the Koutoubiya mosque to the Argana ruins to make speeches and wave placards, always with the addendum "against terrorism" included somewhere in the sign or speech (fig. 17). After the initial mass demonstration a few days after the bombing, however, most of these groups are usually fairly tame; demonstrations from the still-controversial 20 February and Al Adl Wa Al Ihssane (العدل و احسان, Justice and Charity) movements are mostly absent.
Figure 17: Demonstration of Hotel Owner’s Association (against terrorism) on the way to the endpoint in front of the Argana

Passing between the orange juice stands and the western edge of the restaurant stalls, the roar of the performing area re-asserts itself, though much louder than before. At this hour (roughly 45 minutes after the sunset call to prayer in the summer, a bit sooner in the winter) the evening shift of performers is in place, and most of these groups involve drums. Next to the brightly-lit food stalls the performing area looks a bit dark, and to unaccustomed eyes a bit forbidding. The only lights in the area are butane lanterns and the overspill from the restaurants and orange juice carts. Over the darkened area continually fly the toy du jour: small paper-and-plastic helicopters with blue and red LED lights on them. They are flung skywards via rubber bands by the young boys who sell them for a few dirhams. Despite the annoyance of being periodically hit on the head by
falling helicopters the total effect of them is enchanting in the darkness, a combination of fireflies and fireworks.

[16, 9:30] The first performing groups I encounter are the adjacent ḥalqas of what I call the two ‘old-time’ chaʿabi (شعتي, meaning both popular and folk) groups, due to their traditional dress and repertoire and long-time connection to the Square: the Awlaad Hmmri (الأولاد الحمري), Sons of the Hmmr, who play music from the Hmmr region that includes greater Marrakech) and the Awlaad Haouzi (اولاد الحوزيال, sons of the Haouz) who play music from the Haouz region south of Marrakech). The two groups appear at first glance to be identical; both are very large (9-10 member) groups that each take up a large performance space and feature a combination of music, dance, and slapstick comedy. They also both feature female impersonators, slender young men in full veil that are a sight utterly unique to the Jemaa el-Fnaa, and are left behind when the groups travel to play in their home regions. The differences between them are musical: Hmmriya music features high-pitched tense-voice singing and the ghaita (الغايتة) double-reed shawm, whereas Haouziya music sounds a bit more similar to other chaʿabi styles like Marrakechi or Casablanca, with more relaxed singing accompanied by the fiddle. The dancers and comedians tease the audience members during and in between musical numbers, while a group member ranges the circle of audience members with an upturned drum for donations. A pale face like mine instantly attracts his attention and at the Haouzi ḥalqa the donations-seeker makes a beeline for me. I drop a ten dirham coin into his drum and move on.
Figure 18: Two pictures of the Ammra family ḥalqa. Abderzak (top), Mustafa (bottom left), Abderrahim (bottom right)

[17, 9:40] The ḥalqa of comedians is still going, but the crowded little area has changed somewhat. The Aissawa have gathered up their snakes and parasols and headed home,
and the Awlaad Haouz have spilled into the area that Mustafa the Magician has since vacated. Just south of the Haouzi is a smaller but very dense crowd—two or three people deep—around a group of musicians. This is the space of the Ammra family, one of the best-known groups on the Square (fig. 18). The Ammras—Abderzak on banjo, Sa’id on high vocals, Abderrahim on vocals, bendir frame drum and darbuka goblet drum, along with non-family group members Mustafa on vocals and percussion and Abdelhadi (Bladi) on mandolina—perform a mixture of Moroccan pop from the 70s: Larsade, Jil Jilala, Lemchaeb, and the obligatory Nass al Ghiwane. The audience sings and claps along loudly with most of the songs. The group is a Moroccan cover band, performing songs the crowd knows and loves. The crowd is mixed: older and younger men, young couples, and what appears to be an entire football team stand in the circle, while older women, a few women with small children, and a few chaperoned teenage girls sit on the benches inside the circle. Also inside the circle is a pair of ponytailed young foreign men. The Ammras often draw a few more foreigners than the other night performers, possibly a result of their proximity to the restaurants and Bladi’s very rock ‘n’ roll-sounding distorted amplified mandolina. This feature was what initially drew me to them, and this was the group I spent perhaps the most time with. At the moment, however, I hide behind the other members of the crowd slightly so as to be able to take a quick peek and move on without being noticed and giving offense by not stopping in and watching. (This is much the same as sneaking past a neighbor’s house or vending stall when there wasn’t time for a visit—I will talk more about the ‘home-like’ aspect of the ḥalqa later in the next chapter.)

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13 A long-necked mandola, tuned in courses E Bb Ee aa, with a ¼ tone fret in between the 1st and 2nd and 3rd and 4th frets. The groups Larsade and Lemchaeb used this instrument often.
I continue clockwise around the performance area, edging closer to the restaurant stalls to say hello to a friend that works as one of the barkers for the southernmost stalls. These workers are young, multilingual men who patrol the area between the stalls and the small row of sweets and tea carts that border the performance area, standing and occasionally aggressively drawing in the groups of tourists who tend to stay close to the well-lit restaurants. They are often good-looking and fairly well-educated, and use their command of English, French, and Spanish to draw in customers with jokes and charm. I generally try to have a new American or British English slang phrase ready for my friend, who trades me the new material for gossip and insights into the workings of the restaurants and vendors.

At the eastern corner of the performance triangle is yet another group of Gnawa, the ensemble of ma‘alem ("Master Gnawa") Tayyib, another Abdellawi Gnawa. The large tbel drum and qraqeb castanet ensembles are not found after dark, and it was explained to me by a number of Gnawa that the sound of the drum carries too far, and is thus forbidden after dark. This ensemble is of the sort found at a lila ceremony, with the ma‘alem seated on a mat with a ḥajḥuj lute and his band members seated to either side. The ma‘alem sings a verse and the band members sing a responsorial refrain, while one Gnawa dances in front and another scouts the crowd for donors. The setup does not arrange performers and audience into a ḥalqa circle as do the other entertainers; the ensemble re-creates the lila setup that places the performers in a row with their backs against a wall in this case by making a virtual "wall" of motorcycles and bicycles behind them. The display is again close to the well-lit restaurants and orange juice stands, and

A ḥajḥuj (حاجهوج) is a three-stringed bass lute with a boat-shaped wooden back and a skin resonator. Also called a gimbri or sintir, it is originally a Gnawa instrument but has become a national folk/pop instrument.
thus seems to attract far more foreign tourist attention than the other performers. This is also possible due to the more familiar one-direction performer-audience format, which allows foreigners to walk up and face the musicians, rather than standing on the outskirts of or forcing their way into a ḫalqa, which is more than a little intimidating for the unaccustomed.

Figure 19: The soda fishing game

[#20] I head southwest, roughly facing the soda fishing game which is now brightly lit with lanterns (fig. 19). To my right is a crowd surrounding a boxing match, where contestants pay to don oversized gloves and have a go at each other. To my left is a circle of cha‘abi musicians in white lawn chairs. This group plays a more "modern" style of cha‘abi that one might hear at a Marrakech wedding or a Casablanca cabaret: a bendir/darbuka/tarija percussion section and an amplified fiddle that plays repetitive
highly-ornamented figures in a call-and-response with the voice. The musicians also
dress in black suits rather than jellabas and caps, and are on average much younger than
the Haouzi, Hmmri, or Abdelhakim’s cha‘abi group. They tend to be among the last men
standing at the Square, and at this hour they are just getting going, playing a little, then
going back to talking and drinking tea. As I pass them, they suddenly fall silent, as does
the rest of the performing area: it is the final call to prayer and the Square's musicians go
quiet, taking a quick break for the call to echo from the Koutoubiya to the smaller
mosques surrounding the Square.

[#21, 10:15pm] Passing the soda game, I visit another, smaller row of Gnawa, also seated in
front of a virtual wall of motorcycles. This is a pit stop for the roaming Gnawa who, at
this hour, work a narrow strip of the performing area between here and the southern row
of tea and sweet stalls. The trolling for tourists is exhausting work, and the small mat-
carpeted space is a place mostly for drinking tea and resting. The Gnawa sitting here do
perform a bit, and one is usually holding a hajhuj lute in his lap. They are performing at
the moment—playing the ubiquitous Lalla Aicha tune (which is perhaps the most well-
known item of the repertoire, also made into a pop hit by the hip-hop group Fnaire a year
or so before) while a pair of young Moroccans in rasta dreadlocks play qraqeb and sing
along. I wait for the song to finish, and say hello to a couple of the Gnawa I know. The
half on/half off nature of the performances at this little island makes it much more
approachable by people interested in Gnawa, and it was one of my first entry points to
getting to know the Jemaa el-Fnaa Gnawa.

[#22] Behind the Gnawa’s motorcycle-wall is an area that seems to be fairly free, and the
occupants change often. It is also the area that sees the least passing-through traffic, and
is likely thus the least desirable. It tends to be occupied by circles of musicians with a banjo, oud, or mandolina player as the focus (with repertoires much like that of the Ammra group) or a violin-based cha‘abi group, but other nights it has been additional groups of comedians or Berber musicians. On one notable occasion the area was taken up by a young Moroccan who had learned the fire-baton juggling common to European festivals, which drew a huge audience. The juggler seemed unsure of how to conduct himself and properly ask the crowd for donations, and he never repeated the performance. Tonight, the space is taken up by Zakariya, a singer and multi-instrumentalist who floats in and out of the Jemaa el-Fnaa, only playing at the Square when the wedding or hotel business is poor. He puts together an ad-hoc group of other musicians and rents a set of benches from another group for the night. Throughout the course of about fifteen minutes he switches instruments three times—banjo for a song by the group Nass al-Ghiwane, mandolina for a song by the local group Larsade, and violin for a cha‘abi number. Despite his impressive playing the crowd is sparse, and by the end of my stay on his bench he is already looking discouraged and ready to move on.

[#23, 10:30pm] Further southwest along the edge of the performing area—in approximately the same spot as the Berber Gnawa and the large group of Aissawa snake charmers were a few hours before—is Abdellah Lagram’s performing space. Abdellah performs with his son and wife, who is one of the only women who perform at the square. Lagram does a mix of music and comedy, with his wife as the straight side-woman. The act is pretty funny, with Abdellah making gentle insult-comedy jokes at the audience’s expense. He also does a Laurel and Hardy-esque routine with his wife, who reacts to his statements about male/female relationships with comically dour glares and acid retorts. Abdellah’s
audience is always large, and he is one of the few who gets away with flouting the rule against amplified voices after dark using an adapted minaret speaker powered by a car battery.

Finally I return to where I started: the Berber area. Except for one straggler, the Berbers playing more "traditional"-style repertoire (without percussion) have gone home, leaving the large groups with banjo and full percussion section. These are split between ones that perform in full raïs kit—white jellaba, square-ish cloth wrapped around the head, and leather slippers—and those that wear more Western-style dress. The distinction tends to be drawn across age lines, with the musicians under about 35 opting for the jeans and t-shirt. (There are also often large differences in repertoire and biography between the two groups, but this will be discussed later in this chapter.) After dark there is a fair amount of flow between groups, and they are often composed of a mix of young and old, jeans and jellabas.

I pass by the first Berber group, a pick-up group whose membership and presence comes and goes, but tends to be made up of younger musicians. I continue past the other groups, and briefly stop by the bouheli, an old man seated on a mat, with a big white beard, thick glasses, and the multi-colored jellaba that identifies him as a follower of the saint Sidi Bouheil. He has a small bird-of-prey tethered to the top of a box set in front of him, which sits and blinks placidly. The bouheli, speaking through a battery-powered car radio attached to a small loudspeaker, delivers advice on proper Muslim living, proverbs, and attestations of his own wisdom and history at the Square. I had at

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15 Raïs is the singular term for this variety of Berber musician, rwaïs is the plural. Raïs is not to be confused with the homonym in Arabic that means 'president,' although there is occasional word-play on this.
16 The bouheli, like a few other ḥlayqiya, was never interested in talking to me outside of the performance context, hence I never learned his name and am stuck with referring to him by his occupation/affiliation.
first taken him for a storyteller, as he had the large photocopied sheet with pictures of saints and Biblical and Quranic figures that storytellers often used as props. I also heard him making claims of being a storyteller, but I never once heard him telling a story, nor was he regularly counted among the surviving storytellers. At the moment he has gathered a small crowd, and is giving a pitch somewhat similar to the end of Mustafa or Ali’s acts: he touts the power and uses of small charms that he has made, in this case small gold-foil-wrapped squares of paper.

Figure 20: Hassan Hanitja and son Charaf, with the Raïs perched on his hat (Baker, 2010)
I wander back to the Berbers, and sit down on a bench in the ḥalqa of Hassan Hanitja, also commonly referred to as *l-Mul Furuuj* (the Rooster Man) on account of the rooster he uses in his act. Hassan is a handsome, slightly-built man in his mid-forties, who dresses in an immaculate jellaba and gold headdress. Hassan sings and plays banjo, fronting a group made up of the same drums and idiophone combination as the earlier group. Hassan’s special attraction is the "Raïs," a trained rooster that leaps onto a specially made hat that Hassan wears, riding patiently for several minutes at a time—the name is a bit of wordplay on the Berber/Arabic homonym that both refers to the rooster as a fellow Berber performer and also implies that the chicken is the actual leader of the group (fig.20). The other attraction is the musicianship: Hassan has a broad repertoire acquired over years of travel, and his son Charaf, a 10-year-old prodigy who was the most impressive drummer I saw on the Square (and perhaps anywhere else in Morocco) during my time there. The blare of the drums drowns out Hassan’s unamplified banjo, but his piercing tenor voice paired with Charaf’s alto make the words audible, and I often see the crowd singing the words along with the performers. What possibly testifies to Hassan’s breadth of repertoire is the way one can see different groups of the audience singing along with different songs—according to Hassan, he varies the night’s set list by region in order to keep audiences from different Berber areas engaged.

I stay for a while soaking up Hassan’s ḥalqa’s intense good cheer and then move on. The interstitial space in this half of the Square is never really empty; what space not traversed by visitors is taken up by cigarette-sellers, henna women, boys selling flying toys, and men selling peanut and sesame cakes. (There is still the occasional whisper of *hash, amigo, you want hash?*, but this has dropped drastically since my first visit in
2009.) What is also interesting about this in-between area is the sound: within a ḥalqa, you can only barely hear the other performing groups due to the insulation of the bodies that make up the circle, once outside one is battered from all directions by a confusing popcorn-popping of drumbeats, a haystack of voices, and the occasional tooting of a vuvuzela. The aural overstimulation combined with the crowds and darkness make the Square a challenge even for Moroccans unfazed by a crowded souq (سوق, a large outdoor market), and it is entirely understandable why relatively few foreigners venture into the performance area after dark, and fewer still stay for more than a brief look-see.

[#27, 11:25pm] Finally I visit the ḥalqa of the Group Argaan, a group of young (twenties to mid-thirties) Berber men who play at the southernmost edge of the Berber area. The group is distinguished from the others by being the only one with products for sale. In the center of the circle of benches is a neat pile of posters and CDs featuring pictures of the group, which sells for 10 dirham (.90€ or $1.25). The leader, Brahim, stalks around the edges of the circle with his banjo, while the band plays with a good deal more energy than most others at the Square. They do a fatha (فتحة, a break where prayers are said and donations solicited) soon after I arrive. I sit at a bench close to the row of percussionists and exchange handshakes and hellos with the band. They start up again, and before long a group of smiling young men dance into the middle of the circle. They dance in a way I have seen both at the Square and in the mountains around Marrakech: facing the same direction shoulder-to-shoulder, feet moving left-left-right-right with the 1-2 of music’s duple feel and shoulders shrugging rapidly along with the 1-2-3-4-5-6 of the triple. I saw this kind of crowd participation almost exclusively in the Berber ḥalqas, even though the cha‘abi music played nearby was also originally for dancing. It seems very welcome
here, and Brahim edges off to one side to give the dancers room. Finally the dancers leave, smiling and sweaty, after dropping some dirham coins onto the pile of posters. I stay for awhile, and Brahim hands the banjo off to Hisham, another band member and sits with me awhile, telling me about his upcoming recording he is doing in Agadir (where he and several of the band members are from).

Wandering through this part of the Square are women in hijab, heavy eye make-up, and plain jellabas who mill back and forth solo between the edges of the Argaan ḥalqa, the post office, and the open area in front of the police station. Many, if perhaps not all of these women are prostitutes, whose trade are the Moroccan men who come to the Square for varied forms of excitement. They have a rough and weary look about them, and sometimes sit on the Argaan’s benches for a brief rest before heading back into the dark. The band members expressed disapproval of these women at times when I asked about them, but the live-and-let-live attitude about such matters at the Square (among the performers, if not always the administration) prevails, and they are allowed to sit and are treated respectfully by the musicians, who occasionally trade jokes and banter with them while keeping a slight distance to maintain their own respectability.

After a chat and a few more songs, I beg off and say goodnight to the band, finally heading back to the bus stop. I pass through the smelly corridor now empty of caleches, buy some candy-coated peanuts to munch on the way back, and hop in a taxi to home, field note writing, and bed.
Chapter 2: The Organization of the Square – Space, Sound, Genre, and Time

This chapter is a long-form discussion of organizational structure at the Jemaa el Fnaa – its divisions, it different forms, and the way these are all negotiated between those who make claims on it. The Square, although it may appear chaotic, has a number of overlapping levels of organization, from its smallest (the ḥalqa) to much larger areas, such as the Berber area, the roaming territory of the Gnawa, and the two main sections of the Jemaa el Fnaa el kbiir and el sghiir. Based on talks with ḥlayqiya, these divisions have become more stable over the last several decades with the increasingly sedentary population there, and are maintained through constant negotiation and re-negotiation rather than an official map.

Next follows a discussion of several of the performance genres at the Square: the Berber (Amazighi) rwaïs, the Aissawa, the Gnawa, the various stripes of cha‘abi musician, and the storytellers. This is far from being an all-inclusive list of the performers and vendors who work there, but these groups are both some of the most common and/or, as in the case of the storytellers, some of the most discussed in various written sources and the UNESCO recognition of the Square as a Masterpiece of ICH. These are also the groups that I had to most opportunity to get to know and to gather information about
during my research stays in Marrakech, a list that I hope to greatly expand in future research visits to the Jemaa el Fnaa.

Finally, I discuss the different divisions of the typical day at the Square, sections often (but not always) demarcated by the prayer times. While there is, like the spatial divisions, no hard-and-fast set of rules as to who works when, there is a schedule that has emerged as a result of tradition, the daily rhythms of the audience, and noise and other practical considerations. I will also give a short discussion of the Square’s seasonal cycle, which is much less fixed than the daily one but still has some regular features.

**Raisons d’être**

This chapter is intended as a resource for the following chapter, in which I will use the Square as a case study to discuss the merits and disadvantages of heritage safeguarding as a goal. To this end, I pay a lot of attention to mundane specifics – who is actually there, what they do, and when and where they do it. As I will discuss, one of the hallmarks of writing done for the purposes of putting forth a heritage safeguarding argument (see Skounti, Tebbaa, and Nadim 2005; Hamilton and Rogerson 2011 for examples) is a soft-focus description of the object of safeguarding. This approach positions the object of discussion as an anachronous island of authenticity that has magically (but just barely) survived into current day against the onslaught of globalized mass culture. I will put forth the argument throughout this dissertation that all of these phenomena are themselves current day practices that – while they may have predecessors that stretch back into the Square’s history – are practices that have been shaped utterly by the context in which they appear. This context is a Marrakech that has satellite televisions in practically every home, public schools, millions of foreign visitors, cafés with high-
speed internet, cell phones, and a great deal of migration to and from other parts of the country (Observatoire du Tourisme, 2012). Thus at the Jemaa el Fnaa in the 2010s, the storytellers learn from books, the Aissawa snake charmers limit their numbers in the face of a limited amount of valuable space, the Berbers learn a pan-Amazigh repertoire and have their own Facebook pages, and the Gnawa have become full-time professionals who play at the Square in between gigs in hotels, the airport, and Western Europe. A description of what these people actually do at their principal work and social space will provide a counterpoint to depictions of their activities as static, threatened heritage and position these performers and vendors as people who, just like the rest of us, act on a 21st-century stage.

These two chapters are also intended as a resource for chapters 5 and 6, in which I will discuss the Capabilities Approach, an development philosophy and ethical framework, as an alternative to heritage safeguarding. To that end, there is less emphasis on finer details of repertoire and performance practice and more emphasis on prosaic questions like *how do they get paid?*, *how do they demarcate their working space?* and *how does everyone get along with the other performers, with the local administration, and their audience?*

This chapter also exists because there is simply no long description of the performers and vendors in the Jemaa el Fnaa in a Western language. In Arabic, there are a number of descriptions of the place, such as Abderrahim Mlhuni’s *Thakra Murakuch* (ذاكرة مرحاس, Memory of Marrakech), which focuses (unsurprisingly, given the author’s profession as *malhun* singer) on a number of performers of malhun and other types of local popular song in the Square’s history, or Mohamed Siqilli’s *As-Saha*, which is closer
to a synchronous description of the Square and its inhabitants in the early 2000s (Al-Malhuni 2009; Ṣiqillī 2006). But for those (like myself) for whom written Arabic is less than easily accessible, very little exists in the way of an in-depth description of the Square’s activity, either recent or in the past. Philip Schuyler has written several articles that concern the Square at least in part, concerning the Berber musicians (1984) and music in the ḥalqa (1993). Theodore Grame (1970) also gives a short overview of some of the performances in the Square, focusing on the Gnawa, Aissawa, and Amazigh musicians. Abdellah Hanai’s 1989 dissertation does provide some overview of the Square in the midst of its discussion of the Square as a product of social exclusion (Hanai 1989).

Both Thomas Schmidt’s 2005 article and Lisa Citron’s 2006 dissertation provide maps of the Square – a mapping of the main performing area in Schmitt’s case (as one would expect from a geographer) and a timetable of the daily schedule in Citron’s. But each of these sources covers only a few corners of the Square. This chapter remedies this lack of a general overview, serves as a seed for more in-depth studies in the future, and to serve as a resource for the discussions of lives, capabilities, and change at the Jemaa el Fnaa.

Finally, in this chapter (and the dissertation as a whole) I hope to represent the ḥlayqiya and others who make their livelihoods in and around the Square in a manner that I feel is sorely lacking in much writing on the place – in the Delacroix-esque, colorful blur favored by the many writers, tourists pamphlets, segments on travel shows, and UNESCO’s or other heritage-focused descriptions. These people are not madmen, they are not irrational children, they are not craven beggars, they are not merely lively, colorful backdrops to our holiday. Nor are they are not helpless, defenseless automatons

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¹⁷ *Malhun* is a mid-brow style of Moroccan music that borrows from both high Andalusian and more popular styles.
acting out the pre-programmed dictates of their "intangible heritage." They are rational people (at least, as much of any of us are) who work within a structure they create and re-negotiate with their neighbors, coworkers, and local administration in order to achieve and maximize the sorts of outcomes we can all recognize: a livelihood, some security, a bit of personal freedom, a pleasantly-spent workday, and a certain amount of harmony with those around them.

**Mapping the Square**

The initially chaotic appearance of the Square is deceptive, and the seeming mess quickly resolves into order on a closer look. For all its apparent dynamism, the Jemaa el Fnaa is in many ways a very ordered, predictable place. There is a fairly consistent, predictable organizational logic and schedule, which allows patrons and performers to know the whens, wheres, and whats to expect. The Square is divided spatially at various overlapping (but often not hierarchical) levels: from the individual ḥalqa and vending/performance areas, to larger, roughly defined neighborhood-like sections (the Berber area and the northeastern corner, for two examples) to the largest division of Place l-sghīr and l-kbiir (large and small). The Square is also divided into often overlapping "shifts" or participants, with divisions roughly determined by the prayer times. In the writing that follows, I will talk about these inhabitants, the various levels of organization.

This is by no means the first attempt to map out and describe the activities of the Square. In his 2005 article in The Arab World Geographer, Thomas Schmitt included a map of the Square in the morning, that showed the positions and times of the performers and vendors from 10:30 to 11am (Schmitt 2005, 177). And in her 2006 dissertation on the informal economy of Marrakech, Lisa Citron included a schedule of the Square’s
inhabitants, divided by rough divisions of morning, afternoon, and evening (Citron 2004, 148–9). Though these depictions were not terribly detailed, they still give enough information to portray a schedule and layout of the place that is somewhat different from my own. For example, both show musicians arriving at the Square in 2004-5 much earlier than I ever observed in 2010, and the Awlad Haouzi and Hmmri (along with their transvestite dancers) performing as early as 11am. Schmitt’s map also showed the old locations of the orange juice carts, which were moved between 2006 and 2008.

However, possibly the most useful and detailed Western-language descriptions of the musical life of the Square come from Philip Schuyler, who describes the Square circa the late 1970s in some detail. Schuyler’s view of the Jemaa el Fnaa is especially interesting, as it is the Square as it was before large recent changes like the moving of the transit stops, permanent construction of the boutiques and vendors, and formalization of the food and orange juice stands. Schuyler also gives a detailed description of the Berber performances at the Square, which I will address in the following sections on divisions of space and time.

It might seem a bit tedious to obsess over details like the placement of orange juice stands. However, the performers adapt to changes in their work environment, and (although whim is always a factor) they make rational decisions about performance times and spaces in order to garner the best crowd and maximize their earnings. Large changes in either space or time are likely a response to changes in other factors, like audience behavior, traffic patterns, or construction projects. And large changes in the environment can have dramatic effects on how the performers go about their business. This dynamic ebb and flow of the Square’s participants in terms of their composition and behavior, in
response to various changing conditions, presents a challenge to the portrayal of Jemaa el Fnaa as a place of stable heritage. If the life of the human practice is constantly evolving to meet the needs of its participants, is it sensible (or even possible) to draw a line between desirable innovation and the "degradation" of a heritage practice?

Management of space – between emergent and imposed order

To someone who gets to know the place, these sections and schedule are so consistent from day to day that it is a common misconception—even among vendors who work near the Square—that they are regulated by the local Qaid (the head representative of city and regional government at the Square), who has a map posted somewhere in his office. Indeed, the restaurants are run this way, with numbered lots that are individually owned and plotted out to the centimeter. But talks with the Qaid and the ḥlayqiya revealed no such map for the performers. Instead, the map of the Square is written in a distributed fashion in the collective mind of the performers and audience: each performer knows the borders of his area, as well as generally about the location and times of other activities. This, and some other points, were illustrated in a chat I had with Mustapha Sema, a Gnawa who works much of the year as one of the bwahdi, or solo Gnawa, who circulate throughout the western half of the main performing area but have a regular space of their own as well near its southwestern edge:

TBB: How do you know which space belongs to which person?

Mustapha S.: Everyone knows his place. [gestures toward imaginary spaces] This is my space, this is his place, this is his place over here…The [Nass al Ghiwane singers] are around here, the Aissawa are there. My place, I know it. Like a house. [moves the salt and pepper shakers and teacups around to make a makeshift map] Here’s the Poste, and I’m directly across from it. We face in this direction, here. [points in the direction where the pharmacy would be] The cigarette seller is just here [slightly north].
TBB: What if someone new comes and wants to work?

Mustapha S.: They have to talk with the people in the space and ask them.

TBB: And what if they don’t ask? What if someone takes your space – you arrive and someone is sitting there?

Mustafa: We tell him that this is our place. He is welcome, but he needs to find a different place.

TBB: What if he has a problem with this – What if, maybe, he doesn’t want to go and there is an argument?

Mustafa: That is when we go to talk with the Qaid. We don’t beat him or anything. The Qaid hears those problems.

Mustapha’s description illustrates what I found to be the way space is reckoned at the Square. Performers have a very clear idea of the position of their performance space in relation to the buildings at the Square, their immediate neighbors, as well as the time at which it occurs. They are less definite when talking about matters of space outside their immediate area, or at a time far removed from their own. The map, schedule, and information about the ownership and proper use of space at the Square is not contained in any one place, such as a map on the Qaid’s office wall or in the mind of a single performer. Rather it is an emergent map formed out of the cumulative knowledge of all the participants. As such, this "map" is a dynamic, ever-changing thing formed through the interaction of its many parts. There is, of course, some stability—in talk with one of the Berber Gnawa he asserted that his group had been performing in the same spot at the same time of day for over fifty years; a picture in Theodore Grame’s (1970) article on the Square supports this. But there is no single normative instrument that enforces this; you have your place because you and your neighbors agree that you have it.

The bit of play afforded by this governance by one’s neighbors allows a certain amount of improvisation within the rules, and allows performers to adapt their activities
to suit changes in the routine and take advantage of favorable conditions. I heard statements about the Square’s spoken and unspoken rules (like Mustapha’s) preceded time and time again by assertions of the Square as free space—s-saha hurriya—and only afterwards described as a place of rules and boundaries. What I believe was meant by these assertion of the free-ness of the Square was this ability improvise within the Square’s structure, as long as one does not infringe too gravely upon the conduct of another established performer’s business. I saw some examples of this: Ali the magician, for example, would sometimes set up in Mustafa Musta’id’s space if Mustafa wasn’t there. And during the school holidays many of the evening performers took advantage of the larger daytime crowds and performed a day shift, finding places unoccupied by the Aissawa, and later shifting back to their usual spots as dusk fell. And as I will discuss a bit later in this section, there are spaces that are freer than others, such as the center and northern edge of the main performance space.

What this quote from Mustapha the Gnawa also illustrates—something confirmed by a number of other chats with performers—is that spaces at Jemaa el Fnaa are policed by the performers themselves. The Qaid could perhaps at one time have had a role in assigning and policing spaces, but his role at present seems largely to be administering the gendarmes, overseeing anti-crime efforts, and arbitrating disputes between workers. He also liaises between the Wilaya (city administration, akin to a mayor’s office) and the performers. Most reported interactions between Qaid and performer were circumstances where the Qaid had sent one of his muqaddem (a semi-formal representative and
informant) out into the Square to inform the performers that there would be an important visitor the next day, and that they should dress nicely.\textsuperscript{18}

The only other interactions were the settling of the disputes that Mustapha spoke of, where a conflict over space could not be otherwise resolved, or a performer was behaving so unpleasantly that they needed to be ejected by the police. The circumstances I observed: On my first visit to the Qaid’s office, I waited with my research permission request in hand while the Qaid resolved a dispute between two henna women who were arguing loudly about who had strayed into the other’s territory.\textsuperscript{19} The Qaid calmed both parties down and warned both women that they would be ejected if they did not both end their argument and stay close to their respective work sites.\textsuperscript{20} In another circumstance, a pair of slapstick comedians who took to working a small empty patch on the southern tip of the main performing area were often visibly, wildly drunk while working. (I quickly learned to avoid them after receiving sloppy, \textit{mahiyya} moonshine-scented kisses on the cheeks after giving them a few dirhams.) I saw a few of the ḡlayqiya who worked nearby scold them for their conduct over the course of a few weeks. Many ḡlayqiya complained to the Qaid (through the gendarmes and muqaddem) and the performers were soon absent.

\textsuperscript{18} Muqaddemiin (in this sense of the word, it has other meanings elsewhere) are a common fixture of Moroccan urban life. They are semi-formal representatives of government, operating in a given territory as the eyes and ears of an administrator, such as the Square’s Qaid. My interactions with the muqaddemiin both at the Square and in my neighborhood in Rouidate were a bit unsettling, in that they involved talking to someone I had never met that had gathered through his daily routine of intelligence-gathering a great deal of information about me, my movements and associations.

\textsuperscript{19} It is only as I write this that I realize that I had never actually learned the Qaid’s name. I was only ever able to speak briefly with him, and I was never able to get a long sit-down interview (hence no IRB form with his name on it) nor did he ever sign any document for me. It is also a recurrent feature I observed of Moroccan administration that the more important the person, the less likely they are to give you their name or post it on their door, allowing you to refer to them by their title- or simply never saying who they are.

\textsuperscript{20} The henna women’s tendency to roam from their established perches in pursuit of foreign clients often led to these arguments, as one woman strayed into the territory of another chasing a group of tourists. It was by far the most common argument I saw of any kind at the Square.
from the Square, told to go elsewhere (according to reports from other performers) by the gendarmes.21

Entering work at the Square involves this same negotiation with and acceptance by the other performers. None of the ḥlayqiya I spoke with had simply arrived with a few other musicians, found an empty spot, and set up a ḥalqa. For ensemble performers like the newer-style Berber musicians, cha‘abi players, and comedians, entrance into regular work at the Square (at least in the last twenty years or so) involves working at first with an established ḥalqa or two, and making oneself known (Hanitja 2011). For solo and duo performers, the process is one of finding space in the cracks between other performers’ spaces, and getting to know the neighborhood well enough to be allowed to work at better spots and to eventually claim a space as one’s own. There is something of the "newcomer to a small town" phenomena in this process – I recall being told that a particular performer was jdiid (new), and his information about the Square’s workings might be unformed and less-than-accurate, as he had only been at the Square since 2002.

Thus the most important administrative body for the performers, in terms of their daily lives at the Square (including deciding matters of territory, working hours, and comportment) are the other performers. The map, the book of rules and the ultimate authority exists in the minds and interactions of those who work there, rather than in the Qaid’s office. Indeed, although the Qaid is ostensibly the man in charge, in practice the Qaid represents more of an ultimate enforcer of the ḥlayqiya’s wishes, a relationship that seems to grow from the mutual best interests and limited resources of the parties

21 These fellows had returned when I came back to Marrakech in December 2012, but they seemed much better behaved- perhaps testimony to the selective permeability of the Square (they changed their ways somewhat and were allowed back in).
involved: both ḥlayqiya and Qaid need the Square to be the safest, most pleasant place possible for the audience. The ḥlayqiya often lack the authority and strength to resolve some major disputes peacefully, and the Qaid and gendarmes provide this when needed. The Qaid, in turn, lacks the time and manpower to oversee every negotiation or to be informed of every potential conflict, and relies on the performers to do most of their own management and to inform him of significant problems. In my time at the Square, this arrangement seems to work fairly well, and performers spoke very well of the Qaid.

This has implications for possible interventions in the life of the Square, as I will discuss in more detail in chapter 6. Whether it is for the general purpose of "protecting the heritage" of the Square, or for the more specific mission of bringing social benefits to the performers, formalization of any sort will necessarily change this relationship between the ḥlayqiya and formal authority. Measures such as a census, membership cards, and administrative barriers erected to the inflow of new participants were common suggestions; this formalization would necessitate the formation of a body to administer it. This would in turn change the way matters like territory and new membership are decided, moving the authority from the informal coalition of those directly involved in the matter to this new bureaucratic body. This is not necessarily a recipe for disaster, but case studies such as those done by Noyes (2006) and Scher (2002) that chronicle the changes wrought to an existing system by heritage preservation efforts would suggest that interventions should be handled with caution. At the moment, much of the power over the space seems to rest with those who use it to make their livelihoods, and any actions that might shift this power to other hands seem difficult to justify.
From travelers to residents

This relatively stable system of territories depends on a regular population of people who work at the Square, who know the boundaries and each other well enough for things to remain fairly consistent. This in turn points out another interesting feature of the Square: although the entertainments, goods and services found there are normally provided by itinerant performers and vendors, the majority of the population that makes their living there remains most of the year. Thus boundaries that may in other places (or in other moments of the Square’s existence) have been staked out and negotiated from day to day have become quasi-permanent.

The change in balance from a majority of itinerant performers to a majority of static ones seems to have taken place since the 1980s, with many of the performers who currently work there full-time having settled there between the early 80s and mid-90s. According to the accounts of the older ḥlayqiya, there was always a population that worked full-time at the Square and a handful of the well-established Square performers (such as the some of the Ammra family and Abdelhakim Khabzaoui the singer/comedian) have never spend a lot of time away. But from many I heard a similar story of transformation from an itinerant life to a sedentary one, such as in this interview with Saïd, a Ṣaḥarawi herb seller who works at a prime spot in the Jemaa el Fnaa l-sghir along with his brother:

Saïd: I used to travel a lot – souqs, mostly, and sometimes moussems [festivals]. Me and my brother. We would get up very early, get on the bus, and go to another market, carrying all of our things.

TBB: All this? [I gesture towards his spread of goods: incense, large amber beads, soaps, and most importantly, his stock of powdered medicines in plastic and glass containers.] Really heavy, no?
Saïd: Well, we had a cart. And we were younger. Even for a while, we had a car! We made good money then. So, we would wake up at four or five in the morning and go to the next souq. We had to get there early to find a good place. We sold our things until the afternoon, then we went to find a funduq [فندق, a traditional merchant's hotel] to sleep in for the night, and we would have our lunch there. Later, we would return and sell until late evening. We sleep for a few hours, then do it again.

TBB: Gah! You had a difficult life! You did this every day?

Saïd: It was good money. We made a lot.

TBB: So when did you start working here?

Saïd: In the eighties. We always came back here…The money was not as good as the souqs, but there was always money.

TBB: But you are here all the time now?


TBB: Even though the money is not as good as on the road?

Saïd: But my life is here. My wife is here, my children are here. I’m not young now, Abdelaziiz [his brother] is not young, so this life is better.

I heard a similar narrative from a great many performers, including Berber rwaïs, cha’abi musicians, acrobats: I used to live most of the time on the road, but then I started staying here longer and longer periods (usually sometime between the early `80s and early `90s) because of the better life found staying in one place, despite the fact that I make less money here. This suggests that this sophisticated system of borders and territories is fairly new, an adaptation in response to a space that became more crowded when more of its occupants stayed around long enough to feel a claim to a piece of it, and to organize themselves into smaller "neighborhoods" within the larger area of the Square. However, ebb and flow still goes on, and the performers have the freedom to pick up stakes and go

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22 In another chat, Saïd discussed how working at Jemaa el Fnaa made owning a car redundant, in that it both made it unusable (due to parking restrictions at the Square) and unnecessary.

23 This translates to "hotel" in modern standard Arabic, but what Saïd is referring to is a specific building that has long catered to merchants and transients- small rentable rooms for sleeping that line a central courtyard that in the past would house a travelling merchant’s camels and goods. Many fnaadq (plural) have been converted into workshops or hotels, but there were still plenty in Marrakech, where some of the poorer single male vendors and performers stayed.
work elsewhere – a souq, a moussem, a hotel in Agadir, or a festival in France – if an opportunity for better income presents itself, or simply if the mood strikes them.

The most fundamental unit of space: the ḥalqa

The ḥalqa is the most fundamental element of space at the Square, a word which both refers to the ring of audience members that surround a performer as well as the performance space that the ring encloses.\(^{24}\) In this section, I discuss practical aspects of the ḥalqa – what exactly they are and how they are made, used, and maintained, as well as a beginning of the discussion of their place in Square performer’s livelihood strategies.

For many (though certainly not all) of the performers and vendors at Jemaa el Fnaa, the ḥalqa is the principal site of work and performance. Translating to "ring", or "link" (as in a chain), the ḥalqa is a space defined by the audience that cannot exist without them – as Mustafa Musta’id the magician put it, “Without a ḥalqa, you’re just standing there and yelling.” Different styles and different performers each have their own approach to ḥalqas, depending on genre convention, personal preference, and livelihood strategy. Like any combination of audience and performance space, each ḥalqa is unique, crafted by the performer’s actions, the make-up of the audience, the contextual factors of weather, nearby performers, and time (of day and year).

Though it is the most common approach, the ḥalqa is not a universal performance and livelihood structure at the Square. Many performers and vendor opt for a variety of other strategies, and for a variety of reasons. The Gnawa, for example, use a couple of other approaches in addition to the ḥalqa: in solo performance/income seeking, they roam

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\(^{24}\) In a somewhat different definition, Kapchan defines the ḥalqa as “the section of the suq reserved for performance,” a definition that resonates with the way some of the performers I spoke to that had worked heavily in souqs used the term (Kapchan 1996, p. 38; Musta’id 2011).
within a given territory. In group performance, they line up facing a single direction rather than facing in various directions (as is often done by musicians who work in the ḥalqa). This practice both emulates what they do in performances outside the Square (both the solo roaming and performing in a line) as well as serves as an effective means of making money. In another example, some Ṣaḥarawi herb vendors at the Square put on a very performative sales pitch for which they form and cultivate a ḥalqa, but many do not, opting for a more subdued, passive sales approach. Most performers do form ḥalqas when they perform, however, and the ḥalqa has become emblematic of the life of the Jemaa el Fnaa and of street performance in general. I have heard Moroccans frequently refer to all performers at the Square (and again, most street performers) as a ḥalaqi, (حاقي, pl. حايقيا, ḥlayqiya), someone who works in the ḥalqa) and I have heard the performers do the same when collectively referring to themselves.

In this section I explore what the ḥalqa "is", adding observations already made by Deborah Kapchan, Philip Schuyler, Thomas Schmitt, Khalid Amine, and (through film) Thomas Ladenberger (Kapchan 1996; Schuyler 1993; T. Schmitt 2005; Amine 2001; Ladenburger 2010). In its basic shape and practice, the ḥalqa does not seem unique: it is a circle made by the audience, formed by interaction and negotiation between performers and audience. One can see circles of audience members around street performers most anywhere in the world. However, there are things that make the ḥalqa more than a mere circle of people watching an event, things that both connect to the topic of artistic livelihoods and contest the notion of the Square as either a static heritage site or a hollow ‘Disney-fied’ version of its former self. Among other things, the ḥalqa is both a performance space and a combination of second home and workplace.
The ḥalqa has a two-way relationship to performance: it is created by actions and approaches to speech that announce a performance is taking place. At the same time, the presence of a ḥalqa serves to key a performance, to lead an audience to expect a display of verbal or musical (or acrobatic, or ‘magical’) competence (Bauman 1975, 293). In other words, one must both do performative things to make a ḥalqa and, once one is created, perform in line with a set of expectations held by the audience.

As regards to the initial keying of a performance, the Jemaa el Fnaa as a known performance site has a particularly low "threshold" for attracting an audience; as Mohammed Erguini the storyteller once told me in an interview, "You could just take off your pants and people will make a ḥalqa around you!" That most who come to the Square and wander into the main performance area are expecting a show makes it fairly easy to gain an audience. Indeed, I recall one occasion of accidental ḥalqa-making while I was talking at the Square with Mustafa (Casawiy) Musta’id, a magician and storyteller. I always found Mustafa a pleasure to talk to, and for some reason my language skills worked better with him allowing us to develop more of a two-sided rapport than I had managed with a lot of other ḥlayqiya. We were having an animated conversation in Arabic (about what, I don’t recall), and I noticed first one, then several, and finally a good dozen spectators had gathered around us. The spectacle of a well-known ḥalaqi and a gangly foreigner chatting in local dialect was enough to first gather a ‘seed’ crowd of two or three, which attracted further spectators who quickly spread out in a proper circle.
I joked to Mustafa that we should try to earn a bit of money, which he seemed to consider seriously for a moment before having a laugh about it.  

But even with the priming that the Square gives to audiences, the audience still typically needs to be drawn in, and the circle they create maintained and kept at a useful size. With larger groups of musicians, creation seemed to be a simple matter of starting to play, especially with groups that featured amplified instruments like Abdellah Lagram’s and the Ammra family’s—drums are a common sound at the Square, but the screech of an amplified mandolina or lotar has a unique grab on the attention. For the solo performer, there is more to what Deborah Kapchan refers to as the "seduction" of the audience, which took different forms from performer to performer (Kapchan 1996). Magicians like Mustafa and Ali, for example, would use a combination of tactics: a set of interesting-looking toys and props spread around the staked-out performance area would often draw an interested child or two (and their parents) which would serve as a ‘seed’ crowd. The magician would begin to address these children, gradually ratcheting up in volume and intensity as more audience gathered. Mustafa would sometimes pause briefly to move audience members around to even out the circle—*Stand over here, brother, God bless your parents*—or to get the front row of children to sit down allowing the ḥalqa to get even more densely packed. Other performers might actively beckon passersby—*Come friends, I have something to say to you*—while others might simply start their

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25 Interestingly, on most occasions my presence seemed to inhibit the ḥalqa forming, perhaps because it looked like the ḥalaqi was conducting some kind of business with a foreigner and had not yet begun to perform, or perhaps it was merely the alien-ness of a foreigner sitting or standing in a place they did not normally occupy— not on the outer ring of a ḥalqa peering in, but sitting or standing right next to the performer. With solo acts like the magicians Mustafa and Ali, I took to saying hello then taking a quick walk around the part of the Square to give a halqa time to form.

26 This tending has also been noted by Schuyler in his writing on the Square, and documented on film in Thomas Landenberger’s *Al Halqa* (Schuyler 1993: 277; Ladenburger 2010).
story, sales pitch, or song and let the excited, performative quality of their presentation attract the audience.

Once the ḥalqa is formed, it serves as its own performance frame: any utterance or action becomes performance, and all those who stand inside the circle are "on." This was visible in the way performers would interact; for example, the common discussion of *what should we play next?* In a setting like a rock or jazz performance, this is typically conducted off-microphone, and is clearly kept out of the performance frame. By contrast, in the ḥalqa this discussion is at the very least conducted in broad gestures and theatrical stage-voice. Often it is incorporated into the fatha (the combination blessing/money pitch) and made into a sub-performance itself, either as a auction—*should we play a Larsade song? Which one—Ifriqiya? Well, friends, we will need baraka! 100 dirhams, God bless you!*—or as a mock argument involving and feigned indignation and slapstick violence.

Likely due to the fact everything that occurs in the ḥalqa is open to the audience’s judgment of competence, any topics not fit for the audience’s ears are carried on outside the ḥalqa. Although I was loath to disturb a ḥalaqi while working, I found that his ḥalqa was the easiest place to find and talk to a him. I quickly noticed, however, that it was necessary to step a good several meters outside when talking business or setting appointments in order to avoid the discussion becoming part of the night’s entertainment. The audience was primed to regard anything said in the ḥalqa as entertainment, and would eagerly listen in on any discussions, reacting as if all words spoken were an intentional part of the show. Nearly without exception in any ḥalqa, discussions and
disputes about money, other kinds of group business, and more general social ‘hanging out’ occurred before or after the ḥalqa was formed or on breaks taken outside the ḥalqa.

Nor did the display of performing competence cease when the song, magic trick, or story ended. Most performers who work in the ḥalqa—and many who don’t, such as Gnawa in ensemble performance—perform a fatha (فتحة, pronounced "fot-ha," literally meaning "opening") in which the performance shifts primarily to calls for baraka, and the majority of the performer’s income is collected. The fatha I observed could be anywhere from ten to fifteen minutes long, although Schuyler describes some exhausting fatḥas he saw among Berber rwaïs that stretched over an hour (Schuyler 1984). There are blessings spoken for the audience, and additional blessings spoken for the contributors of baraka, as well as, frequently, the contributor’s parents. Contrary to what the name implies, the fatha is a much a part of the performance as any music or comedy routine, and performers usually transitioned seamlessly from song to fatha and back again; often the transition was so smooth that it was difficult to tell where one stopped and the other began.²⁷ Knowing how to do a fatha was integral not only to making a living, but to winning and maintaining an audience, and to ultimately being able to stay and work at the Square. I recall a conversation with Abderrahim Ammra, who often leads the fatḥas in his family’s ḥalqa:

Me: Can anyone come to Jemaa el Fnaa and play music?

Abderrahim: Yeah, they have the freedom. It’s a free place.

Me: So I could play? Could someone from France come, or some Marrakechi kids from university? I don’t see them there.

²⁷ One notable exception was when performers were clearly trying to thin out the crowd. The fatha in these cases would be much more abrupt, and would contain more ‘dead-air’ moments of silence or non-performative (i.e. quieter, non-exaggerated) speech.
Abderrahim: But they don’t know how to do a fatha. They don’t know how to ask for money. They wouldn’t remain there. Maybe you could. You watch me, learn from me. (said with a smile and raised eyebrow)

At the time, I took this to be a statement more specifically about making a living at the Square – that foreigners would simply not have much luck in trying to make any money there as they lack the language. But the fatha is not merely a money pitch. If it were, one likely would see audience members uninterested in contributing or unable to do so fidget, lose attention, or wander off entirely. Instead, audiences remain engaged throughout the fatha, and often participate actively in the jokes, prayers, and audience blessings whether they intend to give money or not.\(^28\) The fatha—in addition to being the point in which sacred elements are injected, which I will discuss a bit later—is part of the performance, and is part of what the audiences are expecting to see performed, and performed well. I even observed Berber performers who specialized in the slapstick portion of the fatha (called machkara by Berber performers, and simply nukat — بكات "jokes") by others) and who floated nightly from ḥalqa to ḥalqa, sometimes playing drums during the music but mostly doing comedy.

Different performers seemed to need different types of ḥalqas. For example, the densest, closest possible ḥalqa makes sense for Mustafa, a solo performer whose 45-60 minute act has a linear form that culminates in a moneymaking finale where he sells magic tokens.\(^29\) The more audience there is by the end, the more tokens can be sold. He is by himself and unamplified, so the audience needs to be close in order to hear him, and for him to be able to interact with individual audience members during the performance.

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\(^{28}\)The typical fatha at Jemaa el Fnaa is under ten minutes, whereas Schuyler (1984) describes rwaïs fathas that go on for forty minutes or more.

\(^{29}\) For Mustafa and Ali, the tokens consist of Quran verses and magical symbols, printed on a sheet of paper which is folded then dipped in wax.
He also seeks to keep them engaged for as long as possible, and preferably until the end of his act, which is when he sells his tokens. This strategy also makes sense for the Śaḥarawi medicine sellers and others with a tangible product to sell. Some performers whose main commodity is the performance, however, do not always seek to maintain the densest, most long-lasting and multi-layered ḥalqa. An audience member is unlikely to give baraka twice in one visit. Some ḥalqas, especially the musical groups, would thin their audience out by drawing out some fathā such that much of the audience might get bored and wander off. This allows new audience members to enter the more inner layers of the circle—and, of course, to be in closer range. As the fathā itself is often performative and interesting to watch, one occasionally sees performers suddenly trail off into doing nothing much in particular beyond talking amongst themselves or tending to their money or instruments, encouraging the ḥalqa to disperse like so many dandelion seeds. Some ḥlayqiya expressed a low opinion of this tactic on the grounds that it was bad treatment of the audience, and contributed to the opinion that ḥlayqiya were lazy and only doing the bare minimum of work necessary. As I will discuss in the next section, the cultivation of a neighborly feeling of welcome and mutual respect between ḥalaqi and audience is a common (if perhaps not ubiquitous) part of life in the ḥalqa.

*The ḥalqa as second home*

The Jemaa el Fnaa ḥalaqi owns the space in the center of the ḥalqa; he lives there, in the sense that that he takes responsibility for the spectators’ comfort and well-being.
and is confident in scolding and/or removing unruly audience members. The ḥalaqi sees to it that, when possible, women, foreign, and elderly visitors are seated on benches or stools if available, and tea is often passed around the inner ring of a ḥalqa. The ḥalaqi will often remark if he sees an un-minded bag, protruding wallet, or other vulnerable item that the audience member should protect. This, in and of itself, is not particularly remarkable – Marrakechis are quite often neighborly folks who take an interest in a foreigner’s well-being. But the way that the audience cedes all authority and responsibility to the ḥalaqi in this and other respects is noticeable. When first encountering this hosting directed at myself, I misinterpreted it as merely reflecting the fact that as an obvious foreigner, I would likely put in much more money than a Moroccan, thus it made economic sense to be especially friendly and to make sure I was comfortable. But I later saw these behaviors as economic in the original sense of the word (referring to the management of one’s household), of which the exchange of money is only one part. The hosting – the minding of the ḥalqa’s well-being and comfort – extends to nearly all who enter the ḥalqa, including those who appear to have little to offer monetarily. After visiting many of these performers at their homes, the similarity between the ḥalaqi at home in his ḥalqa and at home in his living room was unmistakable: visitors are cared for and treated kindly, albeit within the limited resources of the ḥlayqiya to do so within the ḥalqa.

This possibly has much to do with the increasingly (and now almost completely) sedentary nature of most of Jemaa el Fnaa’s ḥlayqiya. As sedentary performers, their intangible working capital is not only the intellectual capital of their skills, but also the

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30 I am referring to ḥlayqiya in this generic fashion because I found these behaviors to be more or less universal, even among ḥlayqiya that were alone in their ḥalqa and had little time or attention to spare from their performance.
social capital contained within their relationships with the audience. Put differently, the
Square’s ḥlayqiya must not only be excellent performers but also well-liked and
respected performers, with a fan-base. This is not to say that itinerant performers and
vendors did not worry about being *mʿarouf* (معروف, well-known) or being known to have
*kllma* (كلمة, lit. ‘word’, honesty and trustworthiness), but the circumstance is different
when a ḥalaqi may be patronized by the same audience member several times a week. In
a talk with Hassan Hanitja (a Berber singer who works a rooster into his act) he spoke of
the importance of cultivating not only respect and repeat business with local visitors, but
with Moroccans from other towns and regions who visit Marrakech and the Square
several times a year:

Hassan: The people that come from Agadir or Casa to the Square, they know me.
They know Hassan *Mul-Furuuj*, (owner of the rooster). They know I play good
music, they know I know many songs. And they know that I am a good man, that
I have my word. I don’t drink, or follow women.

Me: But if they live far away, how do they know you?

Hassan: Because they return a lot. They return to Marrakech, they return to
Jemaa el Fnaa. They look for me when they return.

Several other ḥlayqiya spoke to me about the importance of not only being hospitable and
likable, but also of being perceived as being of good character—partly explaining the
absence of alcohol and kif in the ḥalqa, even among ḥlayqiya I knew to be regular
drinkers or smokers elsewhere.

This combination of behaviors seen within the ḥalqa—the hosting, the
maintenance of good reputation—can be seen as a strategy of investment in social capital
(Bourdieu 2008: 287). As I will discuss in Chapter 6, this social capital is exchanged for
economic capital in the form of higher earnings in the ḥalqa, and serves as a contribution
to an "insurance policy" of mutual aid that can help to cushion shocks like illness, injury,
or loss of physical capital. Again, this seemed much the same thing as the hosting behavior I saw when visiting ḥlayqiya in their homes: they are kind, generous, and hospitable with nearly all visitors, which builds a network of good feeling that helps in the quotidian and may be called upon in times of crisis. If nothing else, this well-tended bond of neighborliness makes it difficult to pass by a ḥalqa without entering and paying a visit – and perhaps staying long enough to leave a bit of baraka.

**Larger divisions of space**

I have already spoken about the most fundamental unit of space at the Jemaa el Fnaa—the ḥalqa. But above this basic level of organization there are larger sections of the Square, zones where certain kinds of performers or activities are more likely found. Each of these areas has some unique qualities, like types of performers, clientele, and level of sameness from day to day. They may also change or not exist during some times of day.

In some of these areas, performers offering very similar entertainments or vendors selling nearly identical selections of goods cluster together. This includes the areas used by the Berbers, the area of cha‘abi groups that work with female impersonators, and the long rows of Ṣaḥarawi herb sellers. This has been going on at least as long as the 1970s (and likely much, much longer), as Schuyler notes:

> Here, in a relatively small space, two to five ḥlaqi of rwaïs gather along with other tashlhit-speaking performers…the Ishlhin always crowd into this space even on slow afternoons when there is space elsewhere. (Schuyler 1984, 98)

This practice seems strange to the non-Moroccan (such as myself) who, when at home, rarely sees stores selling the same kind of good next to each other in a Sunday market or shopping mall. But this grouping of merchants is common in Moroccan streets and
markets—for example, the tent sellers on Rue Fatima Zahra just west of the Square are side-by-side for a good fifty meters, and all seem to offer the exact same selection of goods. This would seem to be a bad idea, in that one is in direct and constant competition with others in the same line of business. And the ḥlayqiya I spoke with on the topic had not much to say themselves, typically responding with a shrug and something on the order of _that’s the way it developed, that’s the way it’s done_. But on observing the ḥlayqiya work for a while, this close grouping appeared to be desirable (or at least not undesirable) for a number of reasons.

First, the consumer knows exactly where to find you. In Marrakech, word-of-mouth and personal observation are how one finds most businesses, rather than a paper or internet directory. An individual vendor is harder to find than a group of vendors, and by locating your business (or ḥalqa) next to others who are selling the same thing, you guarantee that your customers can find you. In the case of the Berbers, for example, the patrons not only know where to look for a night’s entertainment, but also where to look for musicians to hire for weddings, circumcisions, and other festivities. A ḥalqa of Berber rwaïs could set up somewhere else on the Square—or even in an entirely different part of town—and not be in direct competition with other Berbers for patronage, but in doing this they would miss out on the flow of a population of customers already interested in watching and hiring Berber musicians.

Second, the people in the same business are the ones in the best position to help, and working close together allows vendors to enjoy a social network of people well-positioned to give aid in moments of need. I often saw one Ṣaḥarawi send customers to an adjacent Ṣaḥarawi (or borrow some product) if he was out of a particular remedy, as I
saw Berber musicians send customers to another group if they were unavailable for an evening that the customer wanted to hire them. Ḩlayqiya will often collect money from a tourist that they spot photographing another ḫalqa, and pass the money on to the one that was photographed. In the end, this clustering fosters an environment that makes social capital easier to cultivate – the people next to you are like you, and thus likely to be more sympathetic to your problems, speak your language, and to trust and be trustworthy.

In these clusters, no direct attempt is made to affect the customer’s choice and decisions as to what ḫalqa to frequent or herb seller to buy from are left up to the customer. In my entire time at the Square or in Marrakech in general, I never heard a vendor or performer try to lure a customer away from another vendor or ḫalqa (as in *Come here, don’t go there, I have a better product/play better music than him*). All of the musicians and vendors worked to give good value and encourage repeat custom once a customer entered the ḫalqa but the initial choice was left to *rzuk*, or destiny, in that each ḫalqa gets the business that God intended it to receive. This is not pure, happen-what-may fatalism—one must still make the conditions right for *rzuk* to work by making the best performance or product possible. But it helps explain the homogeneity of many of these areas, and many ḫalqas do not go to great lengths to differentiate themselves from their immediate neighbors. In her discussion of the Marrakechi informal economy, Lisa Citron discusses the above issues as well as this concept of *rzuk*, citing a Moroccan proverb: *huant msarfa, wa rzuk mqtalfa*–ḥanoots (small grocery shops that all stock roughly the same goods) all in a row, but their *rzuk* is different.’ (Citron 2004, 103,158–9)
The Jemaa l-kbiir and the Jemaa l-sghiir

One the largest scale, the Jemaa el Fnaa is divided into two sections, the Jemaa el Fnaa l-kbiir (the large Square) and the Jemaa el Fnaa l-sghiir (the small Square). The divisions between the two are not marked anywhere; rather they are informal areas one uses in order to place something else: He’s the one who always makes a ḥalqa in the Place l-sghiir, the other guy does his ḥalqa in the l-kbiir, or that café faces the Jemaa el Fnaa l-kbiir. The border between the two is roughly drawn by the rows of orange juice and dried fruit stands, a border that was re-drawn in 2007-8 when the row of carts were moved by the Wilaya to allow better flow of human and wheeled traffic through the Square.

The Jemaa el Fnaa l-kbiir is where most of the activity written about in this dissertation happens. It includes the open-air restaurants, the main performing area, and is surrounded by the administrative centers and the path from the Arset el-Bilk that is the Square’s main entry point. It is a blaringly loud place for the latter half of the day, and still sees a fair amount of two – and four-wheeled traffic, despite the restrictions placed on motor vehicles in the last few years.

Also over the last few years, the Jemaa el Fnaa l-kbiir has become a space used for other purposes than the things that make up the "normal" business of Jemaa el Fnaa, such as ḥalqas and the restaurants. It has a big expanse of empty space in front of the arrondissement that the Wilaya (the city and regional government) uses for public concerts (much to the ḥlayqiya’s dismay) and events like the Marrakech film festival. This is a paradoxical state of affairs: these events occur at the Square because Jemaa el Fnaa is the most famous space in the city and a natural place to hold events that might
appeal to foreign and domestic tourists as well as the general local population. The irony lies in the fact that these large events bring noise and crowds that directly interfere in the character and processes of the Square that brings these people there, an irony that did not seem to be lost on anyone – ḥalaqi, tourist, or local – except perhaps those at the Wilaya. These events are typically held in front of the administration building, about forty meters east of the main performing area, and involve large sound systems that drown out all but the loudest of the performing area’s attractions. On nights when these events occur, the static performers make almost no money. This can have a sizable impact on income, as events like the Marrakech film festival go on for over a week, and other events occur 4-5 times a month during the summer.

Following the April 28th, 2011 terrorist bombing of the Café Argana, the Jemaa el Fnaa l-kbiir (especially the area immediately in front of the Argana) became a public forum where various demonstrations would begin or end. After the huge mass demonstrations the day or two after the bombing that took up the entirety of the Jemaa el Fnaa l-kbiir, demonstrations would regularly (tapering from daily to once a week or so by August) make a path between the center of Guéliz or the space in front of the Koutoubiya mosque to the ad hoc shrine set up in front of the Argana. They would pool there for a half hour or so before dispersing (see fig.17). While the demonstrations would always be nominally "against terrorism," the actual purpose generally seemed to be to increase visibility for the cause of the demonstrators. These causes ranged fairly widely, from the hotel owner’s association, to the henna women’s association, to the local chapter of the Moroccan Tae Kwon Do Association. Notably absent – other than the first chaotic day of

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31 The less static performers like the Gnawa fare a bit better, as they rely more on passive traffic rather than patrons actively seeking them out.
mass demonstrations – were movements that had protest against the Moroccan state, such as the February 20\textsuperscript{th} movement or the students and imams from the banned Salafist madrasa.\textsuperscript{32} Demonstrations of any sort in Morocco are usually a complicated affair: permission to demonstrate must be applied for at the Wilaya, fees must be paid, and the content must be approved. The Jemaa el Fnaa l-kbiir seemed to be a space where "demonstrations" to improve the visibility of one’s cause could be done without the administrative hassle, as long as it was under the tacitly approved "_______ are demonstrating against terrorism" banner. This perhaps worked for the groups that would have been viewed as relatively benign by the state, whereas less-welcome groups would still have been accosted by the police.

The Jemaa el Fnaa l-kbiir is the portion with the most iconic weight, and the most common views of the Square (and practically all of Morocco) one sees in tourism ads of the Jemaa el Fnaa are taken of this portion: the restaurant stalls at night, pairs of water-sellers, performers and animal handlers, and the common portrait taken from the balcony of the Café Glacier (see fig.1). Although Adel Othmani, the convicted bomber made no statements to this effect, I feel that the iconicity of this last view possibly explains in part why the Argana was chosen as a target over other sites that would have been more crowded with tourists and may have yielded a higher body count; the bombing left a difficult-to-erase mark on one of the central images of the Moroccan tourist trade.

Though the powers-that-be covered the wreckage up with tarpaulins and large paintings,

\textsuperscript{32} As for the February 20\textsuperscript{th} movement, I have little idea why this was as I saw plenty of other demonstrations at other tourist sites, like the Essaouira medina and Bab Boujloud in Fes. The absence of the salafist students is perhaps less of a mystery. They were visibly present the first day, clearly there to make it obvious to all that they too disapproved of the attack. But as the (albeit very loose) al-Qaeda connections with the bomber were disseminated in the press, the salafists were likely much less welcome at the Argana site. The fact that the salafiya in question are a fairly benign bunch with no terrorist leanings did not seem to be of much help to them.
the Argana remains (at least until renovations are completed) a grim presence in most possible photos of the Square.

The Jemaa el Fnaa l-sghiir is a much quieter place, and includes the rows of Şāhārawi medicine-sellers, additional vendors of traditional medicines, sellers of tourist knick-knacks. In the weeks leading up to the Achura holiday, much of the space is also given over to rows of stands selling the percussion instruments that are given as gifts to children. There remain a small handful of performers: one ḥalqa of snake charmers on the southern end, Abdelhakim Khabzaoui and his group next to the boutiques, and intermittently Ali the magician and the mul hmaam (the pigeon wrangler) in the north end. The small number of remaining ḥlayqiya is interesting, as pictures from early in the 20th century show the Jemaa el Fnaa l-sghiir as far more crammed with ḥalqas than the other parts of the Square.

The Jemaa el Fnaa l-sghiir seemed to be the last stand of the storytellers. It was the only place that I ever witnessed any of them trying to tell stories on the Square, and the area used by storytellers in the BBC features done by Richard Hamilton (Hamilton 2009). According to interviews with storytellers El Layachi and Mohammed Erguini, in days past (before the mid-1980s) the area was the ideal spot for setting up ḥalqa: in the afternoons there was regular traffic south from the derb Dabachi and the tanneries, and all day long the CTM coach station provided fresh waves of potential audience members. In present day, however, the traffic patterns are very different, and with no CTM station and the taxi rank relocated toward the Sidi Mimoun area to the south there is much less passive traffic.
The restaurants

The restaurants, corralled into a large rectangle just north of where the performers work, take up some of the possible performance space – about 1800 square meters, versus the performing area’s roughly 3000. There is always grumbling, both written (such as in Skounti, Tebbaa, and Nadim 2005) and spoken aloud about the cafes and boutiques being a distraction that takes away space (both physical and aural) from the performers. Despite the fact that the Square has always had vendors of food, herbs, and assorted other goods, the restaurants have not been written into the heritage of the Square, and are seen by many ḥlayqiya, heritage workers, and some visitors as a necessary evil whose encroachment must be guarded against. In reality, the actual physical space taken up by the restaurants has shrunk slightly in the last ten years, and the paving-over and adding of gas and electricity lines to the restaurants’ area has eliminated the need for generators, dramatically decreasing the amount of noise that they make.33 In addition, the restaurants are required to pack up entirely and stow themselves elsewhere from close of business until the early evening. This leaves the restaurants’ concrete pad open for use by the ḥlayqiya, though not many make much use of the barren, greasy rectangle during the day save for a few Gnawa.

The main performing area

Most ḥalqas are found in the large, roughly triangular area between the restaurants and the Arset el-Bilk. The restaurants form the northern border, and the other two sides of the triangle are formed by auto, motorcycle and caléche traffic. Based on the descriptions of

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33 In fact, as is visible in pictures from various points in the 20th century, the restaurant’s and vendor’s stalls at times took up most of the usable space on the Square.
Theodore Grame (1970) and Schuyler (1979) this area has been the principal site of musical performances since at least the 1970s, though pictures from the 1920s show performers much more dispersed throughout the whole Square.

As I discussed in the walkthrough, the apparent chaos of this area hides fairly stable patterns of activity. After the first few weeks, daily and nightly surveys of the Square seldom provided much in the way of novelty. Repeated visits demonstrated that ḥlāyqiya hold stable places, and within the forest of ḥalqas and vendors in this area are loosely bordered areas in which certain types of performers are concentrated. While not all parts of the main performance area seem to have a particular "theme," some portions are developed towards a particular type of performer of performance. Earlier on, I mentioned the way in which activities at the Square are a collective improvisation; to take the metaphor further, these dedicated areas are additional layers of structure that shape this improvisation. Thus in addition to the basic considerations of available space, there is the question of whether or not a given activity is appropriate to an area.\(^{34}\)

The most clearly defined of these areas is the one in which the Berber musicians perform. From near the southernmost tip of the main performing area to two-thirds of the way to the southern end of the orange juice stands, all of the musicians perform one sort or another of Berber music. There are the occasional solo vendors who find places in this area during the early evening (such as the liniment vendor/fortune teller described in the walkthrough) but the rest of the area is devoted exclusively to Berber musicians. The

\(^{34}\) These structures are things that were noticed through observation, rather than mentioned independently by ḥlāyqiya. When asked about whether a given activity would be appropriate in a different area, such as Gnawa roaming in the Berber area or magic performance or magic in the center, the responses ran along the lines of “that isn’t our space’ (Mustafa S. on Gnawas in the Berber area) or ”the audience wouldn’t look for me there” (Mustafa M. on magic in the southern egse of the performance area).
Berber area is one of the few places at the Jemaa el Fnaa – indeed in Marrakech as a whole – where I heard Berber spoken. While the Berber ḫalqas seemed to have a bit of a mix of Berber and Arabic-speaking clientele, the bread and butter of the Berber ḫalqas seemed to be Berber clientele.35 Fatḥas were still delivered largely in Arabic, but with a healthy number of asides in Tachelheit Berber, and the comedic interludes (called *machkhara*) are often in Tachelheit as well.

The northern edge of the performing area is a much freer area than the rest, and is occupied by a shifting group of vendors, solo performers, and entertainments. The northwest corner of this area was particularly interesting: during the day, it was a café of sorts for ḫlayqiya. From noon until the area filled up with ḫalqas, performers and vendors would gather around one of the cigarette vendors for a smoke, mint tea, and chat. The conversations I overheard often concerned business of the ḫlayqiya *jam‘ayat* (جمعيات, associations), including planned demonstrations. I sat in this spot one day and heard ḫlayqiya planning a peaceful demonstration and strike over the increased use of the Square by the Wilaya without compensating the performers – a strike that never took place as it was planned for the afternoon of April 28th, the day of the bombing. In the late afternoon, the tea-klatch breaks up, and the members go to work. The makeup of this area seems to shift not because there are continuously new ḫlayqiya, but because these solo vendors tend to be a bit more freewheeling than the others. They are often single men, with the freedom to work (or not work) as their expenses demand. They are still known by the ḫlayqiya that work around them, and have earned the spaces that they use by

35 There are three main Berber dialects in Morocco - Tachelheit, Tamazight (Central Atlas), and Tarift. These dialects are often mutually unintelligible to each other, although a lot of the Rwaïs claimed to have learned all three in their travels.
accumulating social capital (i.e., getting to know and befriending the other performers, working less desirable margins of the square.) In the case of some vendors in this area, they were originally another type of performer, but were unable to continue – These include medicine sellers such as Mohamed Jumu, a former acrobat now too old for the rigorous physical demands of acrobatics, or Saadiq, a former solo singer who had found that his performing brought in too meager a living. Both men currently sell various liniments and ointments.

Slightly to the south, in the center of the performing area is a patch of ground that is used in much the same fashion, but is taken up by musical groups that work sporadically. In the cases of the musicians I got to know, the Square was a source of income (albeit a meager one) that could be counted on when the better-paying weddings, circumcision gatherings, and nightclub gigs were not available. On increasingly rare occasions, the acrobats of the Awlad Sidi Hmad ou Moussa still make a ḥalqa in this area a bit farther over towards the Berber area. However, I was told by several acrobats that better money is usually to be found working in hotels or in front of tourist cafes, hence the dwindling frequency of performances at the Square for this performance genre that is so iconic in photographic and prose depictions of the Jemaa el Fnaa.

Just west of the restaurants is an area entirely given over to the two longest present (according to their descriptions and those of other ḥlayqiya) cha‘abi groups, the Hmmri and Haouzi. Aside from the occasional beggar, the area remains empty other than these two groups, which form two huge ḥalqas at night that fill most of this space. During the afternoon these performers sit in groups for their own café-like gathering – most of the members of the groups (save for the young men who work with them as female
impersonators) are older men for whom the group is as much a social club as a livelihood. This area has (as far back as anyone remembers) always been the domain of these cha‘abi groups. However, their numbers have dwindled and what was once an area shared by several of such groups is now home to one representative group of each regional type. In the past, much like the Berbers each ḥalqa would have to stake out its own territory in order to ensure a place for that afternoon’s performance. In recent times, however, staking out is unnecessary, and the afternoon’s sitting and laying out of instruments is more of a social occasion than a practical matter.

**Soundscape**

Finally, there is another aspect of space at the Square worth mentioning: the sound space occupied by the performers and vendors within the larger soundscape of the Jemaa el Fnaa. In some cases a performer or group’s sound space corresponds roughly to the space they occupy on the ground, but in some circumstances it can be much larger. Like the physical space at Jemaa el Fnaa, the soundscape is extremely crowded, and people who work there must find and maintain their own place in it while respecting the places of others. And like the other aspects of territory, there are a variety of strategies that performers and vendors use to do this.

I want to add one more item to the earlier discussion of the ḥalqa: the ḥalqa is a device for claiming and maintaining sound space, for carving out a small niche of one’s own in the larger soundscape.\(^{36}\) In that inter-ḥalqa space the sounds of one ḥalqa were

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\(^{36}\)This first occurred to me when my advisor Udo Will visited me during my research. Some of Udo’s recent work focuses on entrainment – the tendency of things moving rhythmically (like clocks, or people playing music) to cause other things that are also moving rhythmically to synchronize with them (Clayton, Sager, and Will 2004). During their visit, I took him and his wife Janet through the Square, first during ‘heritage hour’ and later during the even louder nighttime period dominated by Berber and cha‘abi drums.
difficult to tell from another, while at the same time so loud that Dr. Will's question had to be shouted. In that sound space filled with drumbeats, it seemed difficult to imagine that the musicians would not be able to hear each other and thus sync up either consciously or unconsciously. Martin Clayton of the Open University addressed this very topic in a paper written with Glaura Lucas and Laura Leante in the context of marching Afro-Brazilian Congado groups who engage in a rhythmic battle of wills while attempting to cross paths without entraining to each other (Lucas, Clayton, and Leante 2011). With a meticulous examination of the drum pattern of the individual players through sound and video recording, they showed that in several cases the players were unable to completely avoid at least a temporary entrainment despite the conscious effort to avoid doing so. The success in avoiding entrainment varied with physical proximity, closeness of tempo, visual contact, and intent to remain un-entrained.

I did make some attempts to test this out using the equipment I had available: on one occasion I stood between two ḥalqas with a stereo mic set to a 180 degree field; on another occasion I had a friend hold one recorder in one ḥalqa while I held another in the ḥalqa next door, then later synced the recordings up on my computer. Although it was more a quick-and-dirty satisfying of curiosity than a proper scientific study like Clayton’s, the two ḥalqas seemed in no way to be entrained, either in the rhythms of their music or the larger rhythms of their songs and fatḥas. However, this question really does beg a proper study, and is definitely on the shortlist of future research questions concerning the Jemaa el Fnaa. The other ḥalqas can still be perceived – however faintly – and without a more detailed look at the rhythms played à la Clayton, there does remain the strong possibility that the musicians are entraining on a level not audible to the unaided ear.

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We were walking through the densest and loudest area, between the Ammra ḥalqa and the cluster of Berber ḥalqas, when Udo asked “So do they entrain with each other?”

37 However, this question really does beg a proper study, and is definitely on the shortlist of future research questions concerning the Jemaa el Fnaa. The other ḥalqas can still be perceived – however faintly – and without a more detailed look at the rhythms played à la Clayton, there does remain the strong possibility that the musicians are entraining on a level not audible to the unaided ear.
groups playing similar styles of music less than fifteen meters apart. The neighboring ḥalqa could only be heard faintly at best, and the recordings were lined up only with the help of the sound of them being clicked against each other at the beginning of the recording.

The means of this division of sound space is the ḥalqa, a structure beautifully suited to allow the performer(s) at the center to shut out the outside world and own the space within. The phenomenon of being in a full ḥalqa – either with the performing group, in the inner rings, or one of the lucky few with a bench seat – is one of being in a structure made of people: the bodies of the audience both block outside sounds and dully reflect the sounds made inside. A full audience also shuts out the view of everything outside the ḥalqa, leaving only a circle of sky above. The result is a feeling of enclosure and acoustic intimacy more reminiscent of sitting in enclosed space than on a huge cacophonous square, an intimacy created by hearing sounds reflected off surfaces (bodies) only a few meters away rather than off of buildings very far off. This intimacy is a key element of the ‘second home’ aspect of many ḥalqas: the visitor is not only welcomed by the ḥlayqīya (greeted, and sometimes offered tea and a place to sit) but his/her eyes and ears tell them that they are in a smallish, open-ceilinged room.

The avoidance of entrainment and maintenance of musical independence makes sense when one refers to Lucas, Clayton, and Leant’s findings, which concluded that several types of interaction and closeness decrease the entrainment threshold – visual (being able to see each other), physical, and tempo. The physical and visual barrier of the ḥalqa reduces or eliminates these interactions, raising this threshold to a point where musicians can act independently. In addition, with the question of tempo proximity, the
repertoire of almost all the musicians in the ḡalqa is highly varied in order to appeal to a broad audience. Two adjacent Berber groups, for example, are likely to be playing in different meters or tempi from each other, as well as different meter and tempo from the nearby cha'abi group.

The tolerance of the use of battery-powered speakers by many ḡalqas in spite of the official interdiction against public-address systems makes even more sense when one looks at the ḡalqa as a sound-fence. The small car-battery-powered amplifiers placed on the ground are only a handful of watts, and as such do not extend the sound much further than the borders of the ḡalqa. Thus they do not violate the sound-space of the other ḡalqas. On the other hand, the one circumstance in which I heard ḡlayqiya complain about the use of speakers was that of a blind fiddler who used a karaoke speaker to amplify both his voice and his fiddle. He both put his speaker up on a chair and did not regularly form a ḡalqa (relying instead on passers-by to donate without stopping for a long time, much like many street musicians in the United States or Western Europe. Thus the sound of his voice and fiddle broadcast over some distance, and could be heard clearly inside nearby ḡalqas. This was mitigated by the rarity of his Square appearances and his placement at the north end of the main performing area, facing towards the restaurants. This division of sound-space also highlights why the concerts and other spectacles have such a perturbing effect on the ḡlayqiya’s workspace, despite the fact that they are many meters away. While the huge sound systems of the events are still not enough to drown out the ḡlayqiya’s performances, they are sufficient to penetrate the intimacy of the ḡalqa and keep audiences reminded of the world outside. We need think only of the disproportionate feeling of irritation we feel at hearing a neighbor’s stereo in
an apartment building or hotel room and how distracted and invaded we feel even if the sound is relatively low in volume. A distracted audience is one that does not stay as long, put in as much baraka, or engage fully in a performance that necessarily feeds off of audience participation.

And just as the archetypal small, tightly-enclosed ḥalqa is but one strategy for performing and making a living at the Square, it is also one of several ways of managing sound-space. The Aissawa, for example, do not typically make ḥalqas (with the exception of the one early evening ḥalqa). Instead of making the appealing little bowl of sound and spectacle as found in a Berber’s, magician’s, or Ṣaḥarawi ḥalqa, the Aissawa spread the sound of their drums and shawms as far as possible to attract onlookers. The sound is less like water kept in a bowl than that sprayed by a fountain, spreading throughout the Jemaa el Fnaa in an attempt to draw customers in. For these performers, the sound itself is what draws the clientele rather than the attraction and curiosity inspired by a dense ḥalqa. The roaming Gnawa work much the same way, and indeed the groups of Aissawa and wandering Gnawa often seem like tourist-activated noise machines, going off when likely customers are in view. In another strategy, the fqih (scribes), who engage with clientele one-on-one, pull their large parasols down over themselves and the client when making a charm. This give the client – who may be addressing a problem they would like to keep to themselves – a bit of privacy, as well as shutting out the Square’s din enough to allow the fqih a bit of performance space for his cure and sales pitch.

38 A fountain-spray of sound that goes on mostly during the day, when few ḥalqas are found on the Square.
Genres of performance

In my time spent with these performers I learned that those who work at the Square are a fascinating and diverse group of people, often drawn to the life of a ḥlayqīya because of the freedom and self-determination it offers. While the quantitative research I will discuss in Chapter 6 did reveal some definite common characteristics, my ethnographic interviews turned up no end of interesting biographies. Despite this diversity at the individual level the actual performances and performing personae of the ḥlayqīya at the Square tend to fall into one of a number of categories: Gnawa, Berber, Cha‘abi, Aissawa, Şaḥarawi, comedian, and so on. Each category has a repertoire, a costume, and often (as we have just seen) a given area and time of day, and often a particular approach to obtaining baraka and gaining a livelihood. There is some leeway within these categories – such as a number of approaches to Berber or cha‘abi music – but I met almost no performers who seemed entirely idiosyncratic, categories unto themselves. As far as actual performance genres go, the Jemaa el Fnaa of 2011 seemed to be a quite conservative place in which newcomers needed to fit into a pre-existing category in order to gain entry. This is a bit surprising in light of the eagerness of the audience to form a ḥalqa and be entertained – recall Mustafa Musta‘id’s joke about the removal of one’s trousers being sufficient entertainment. This contrasts sharply with what I saw at Bab Boujloud in Fes, where every performer not only was a solitary example of his genre but was often also a genre of performance I had not seen at Jemaa el Fnaa or anywhere else.

39 While these interesting personal stories will be poorly represented in this dissertation, I hope to incorporate some of them into future work.
However, this conservative nature makes sense in light of a number of factors. The first is the extremely densely crowded performing area, where a new performer will need to negotiate with a number of people. If the performer fits into a given category, he then has a place, a ready-made set of future co-performers, and an established path to entry and acceptance. By contrast, a new performer attempting to enter the Square will need to carve out a space that is not already occupied, without the ‘budding off’ that could take place if they had begun as part of another group with allies and accumulated social capital. If the Square were less crowded this social capital would be less essential in the securing of space and livelihood – it is the audience, after all, who brings the baraka. Furthermore, the physical limitations brought on by the crowding of the space limit the possible genres that could be performed – a solo singer, for example, would have a hard time being heard. Thus the genres that survive are often the loudest, and the baseline volume level has likely increased from the days when malhuni and storytellers were common.

The other obvious factor affecting this fitting into genres is the ongoing heritagization of the Square. While the listing of genres in UNESCO documents – like the pamphlet on the Jemaa el Fnaa written by Tebbaa and Skounti – is the most tangible example of this phenomenon, this creation and reinforcement through repetition of a list of performers that belong at the Square goes on in many threads of the discourse about the place and its heritage. Few discussions of the Square – including travel writing, the program of the yearly heritage concert festival, scholarly depictions of the Square, or personal conversations with performers and visitors – occur without a list of performers and the use of these categories (Gnawa, berber, cha‘abi, Nass al Ghiwane, etc.) as
shorthand when discussing those who work and belong there. These utterances are (unintentionally) performative, in that they help create and shape the reality that they are intended merely to describe. The end result of all these utterances is a composite picture, much like the "map" of the Square, with the list of appropriate performance genres not coming from a single thread of the discourse but rather emerging out of the clamor of voices. No one is meeting new performers at the gates and checking their performance against a list of accepted genres, but there is a commonly-held idea of who belongs that may discourage those who don’t fit, and may make the Square less profitable to work at (by drawing a smaller or less generous audience) if they do not.

While I did not have any particular experiences with performers who were barred or actively discouraged from entering the Jemaa el Fnaa because they did not fit in, a few pieces of evidence back up the idea of a standardization of genres. The first is the lack of the idiosyncratic performers described to me by those who knew the Square ten or twenty years ago. These performers who (from descriptions and recordings, at least) seemed to defy classification into genre. Performers like the *tib dyal hacharat* (The Insect Doctor) or Cherkaoui, the *mul hmaam* (pigeon handler) blended elements of animal handling, sleight of hand, poetry, music, and storytelling in a way that would not fit easily into a genre (Goytisolo and Bush 2003). This idiosyncratic performer was almost nowhere to be found in my trips to the Square in 2010 through 2012, and I think it unlikely that one would find them at any point in the near future. The performers that I did observe, however, fit into a number of relatively definable categories.
**Berber Musicians**

In his accounts of the Square in the 1970s, Schuyler remarks on the homogeneity and close clustering of the area in which the Berber musicians worked. The Berber area of Schuyler’s day seemed to have a more diverse range of Berber-language entertainments, including not only musicians but also storytellers, preachers, and fortune tellers. During my observations, the few non-musical performers in this area (fortunetellers, the occasional medicine or liniment seller, and the preacher/charm seller) spoke to their audiences largely or entirely in Arabic. Still, the Berber visitors seem to be getting something special out of the performers in this area. On several occasions, I was told by audience members that they came to that part of the Square to hear the music that they missed from their home towns and villages. Berber musicians I spoke with also mentioned this function of these ḥalqas, as places where some of the musical comforts of home could be found for Berber immigrants to Marrakech. These immigrants are not a homogeneous group, however, and all of the Berber ḥlayqiya I spoke with mentioned the importance of having a broad repertoire in order to appeal to a wide variety of patrons, and the necessity of varying one’s set of songs so that the whole crowd remains engaged. Indeed when watching a particularly successful ḥalqa perform, I would notice different portions of the crowd become more or less engaged with different songs.

This bringing the musical comforts of home to Marrakech is an interesting re-orientation of Berber professional musical practice. Most of the Berber performers who work at the Square identify themselves as *rwaïs*, professional Berber musicians who traditionally travelled from village to village and souq to souq. While this nomadic lifestyle (like that of many of the other ḥlayqiya) was a matter of economic necessity, it
was and still is a badge of honor and mark of accomplishment and musical sophistication – one cannot call oneself a raïs (singular of rwaïs) without having travelled (Schuyler 1984). Almost all of the rwaïs I interviewed with at the Square independently brought up a story of their own travel and apprenticeship. Thus there is an interesting reversal – from the traveling musician who brings news and songs from outside to the one who brings the sounds of home to an increasingly mobile population. The ways that these rwaïs have adapted their skills and repertoire to their new stationary lifestyle are interesting questions that deserve further study. Also interesting to observe will be the new ways that Berber musicians learn their art and trade in these new settings, and whether or not travel will remain a necessary part of that training.

The Berber musicians who performed at the Square seemed to fall into three categories: older (50+) musicians who identified as rwaïs and played amarg narrative/poetic songs alone or in duos, middle aged rwaïs who performed a variety of music in ḫalqas in large ensembles, and younger Berber men (who didn’t always identify as rwaïs) who played a mix of older songs, well-known pan-Moroccan pop (mostly Nass al-Ghiwane) and their own newly composed songs.

During my research period, there were regularly about four ḫalqas of Berber ensembles – two of the older variety and two of the younger. According to talks with Berber ḫlayqiya (and mentioned in Schmitt 2005), these ḫalqas began as a single group, Imzwagen, in the early 1980s, which played in the now-common throughout Morocco banjo-rebab-drums-naquus format. As musicians broke from the group, they formed their own ḫalqas that stayed at the Square. As these ḫalqas budded off from each other, they gradually filled up and defined the section of the performing area. Philip Schuyler’s
account of the Berber portion of the Square in the late 1970’s paints a slightly different picture than the one I observed. According to his description (in Schuyler 1984) while the location of the Berber area was much the same, the population and performing spaces were far less static than they are in present day. In former years, performing spaces needed to be staked out earlier in the day, accomplished by leaving piles of instruments and rucksacks in the performance space. What the "budding" story describes is the spread of this habit of stasis, where one group of musicians began to stay at the Square full-time, a group that accumulated members to the point where it broke off into smaller groups.

*The Gnawa*

The Gnawa are a syncretic performing/religious order that fuses elements of ritual and music more commonly associated with sub-Saharan African practices with those thought of as more locally Moroccan. Originally an ethnic identification, membership in the Gnawa is now as much a calling as it is a reflecting of genetic heritage, and while most Gnawa I knew learned the practices from their older family members, I also knew a good many that identified as Berber or Arab that had chosen to become a Gnawa—even citing a "calling" or possession by one of the *mluk*, or spirit masters. Being a Gnawa can also be seen as a trade worthy of apprenticeship: I got to know a young Gnawa, Zakariya, whose father had sent him to be apprenticed as a way of providing him with a livelihood and future. He worked the Square during the day and accompanied the other Gnawa to ceremonies at night, learning the various facets of Gnawa life and liturgy.40

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40 Interestingly, Zakariya’s brother was sent to apprentice with the Awlad Sidi Hmad ou Musa, the acrobats who work at the Square and elsewhere.
Once a religious/musical/ethnic group on the margins of mainstream Moroccan society, the Gnawa have become a large part of the public face that Morocco shows to the world (Kapchan 2007; Witulski 2009). The Gnawa are ubiquitous in the 21st-century Morocco tourist experience: they greet arrivals at the airport, they play at hotels and restaurants, they are reflected in material culture on sale in the form of Gnawa-themed souvenirs like qraqeb, statues, hats and CDs, they appear smiling in vacation photos, and they play for you as you wait to board your plane home. Gnawa music also forms a large part of Morocco’s cultural export, both in the form of recorded music and the musicians themselves, who can be found on tour throughout the world, especially in Western Europe.

The daily work and spiritual life of the Gnawa whom I came to know included activities at various points on the sacred/secular continuum, a continuum they seemed comfortable to move about on as circumstance and livelihood demanded. At the core of Gnawa practice is the *lila derdeba* (ليلة دردبة, a ‘night’ of the derdeba, often simply referred to as a *lila*, plural *lilat*), an all-night possession ceremony usually held in a private home. During the lila, a group of castanet-playing Gnawa are led by a *ma‘alem* (a master Gnawa) who plays the ḥajjūj, a large 3-stringed bass spike lute.41 Throughout the night, the group musically summons a series of *mluk* (ملك, literally "owners"), spirits who inhabit participating members of the audience. In addition, particularly at *mwassem* (مواسم, saint’s festivals), the lila is often preceded by a procession—with the ma‘alem switching to the *tbel*, a large bass drum—where the group marches through the streets

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41 Also known as the gimbri, guenbri, or sintir. This description, as well as this overall description of the Gnawa is admittedly very brief. There is no shortage of writing on the Gnawa, however— see Schuyler 1981; Pâques 1991 and Chlyeh 1999 for more about the Gnawa.
seeking baraka from the public, occasionally stopping to form a ḥalqa. Outside of the lila derdeba, lone Gnawa can be seen wandering through neighborhoods throughout Morocco seeking baraka, or occasionally sat by the side of a street in the medina playing a ḥajḥuj.

In more clearly secular contexts, the Jemaa el Fnaa is certainly not the only tourist site where one sees Gnawa, and sites like the Chella ruins in Rabat often feature a complement of Gnawa playing qraqeb and tbel and dancing (see Kapchan 2007, 123–4). The lounge and souvenir shop at Menara International Airport even features a regular complement of Gnawa, who perform in a mock-up of the Jemaa al Fnaa, complete with carts. Many hotels and restaurants feature ensembles of Gnawa, as well as Aissawa and Rwais as lobby music or evening entertainment.

There are around forty Gnawa coming from a couple of different backgrounds who work at the Square, employing a variety of performance and money-making strategies. It is a commonly repeated misconception that many, or even most of the Gnawa found at the Square are not "real," in that their participation in the Gnawa complex of musical and religious practices is limited to donning the costume and playing for the tourists, and does not extend to participation in lilat or some measure of belief in the mluk. I found this claim to be untrue, as all of the Gnawa I got to know at the Square participated in lilat, had a good knowledge of the repertoire, and were either members of a family that had strong connections to the Gnawa or described being ‘called’ to join the Gnawa by the mluk. In fact, the population of Gnawa working at the Jemaa el Fnaa seemed to represent a pool of musicians from which a number of ma‘alems, such as Abdelkabir Marchane, drew from when playing lilat around Marrakech and nearby towns like Moulay Brahim, Tamesloht, and Taroudant. In my time at Jemaa el Fnaa I only
observed one "in costume only" Gnawa, who was clearly disliked by the other Gnawa and was only seen at the Square once in a while (see Fig. 9, p. 33).

In fact, the image of the Square as a madrasa (school), a place where one learns about one’s craft and one’s self – an image that recurred frequently when speaking to performers in other genres like magic, cha’abi music, and Rwais – popped up in talks with Gnawa as well. I heard this sentiment, for example, in a talk with Ayman, a young Gnawa who had come to Marrakech from Essaouira six months previously and had only been a Gnawa for a few years:

You come to Jemaa and you study. Jemaa el Fnaa is a madrasa. You come here and you meet someone, and he tells you – spend time with me, and I’ll teach you things: how to play the qraqeb well, how to do other things [referring to the Gnawa repertoire]. Jemaa el Fnaa is a madrasa, a good place. At the same time you make your living, you stay alive.

I work here, and then when the ma’alemiin come looking for group members, they come here. I work a lot of lilat in Cha’ban [the month before Ramadan, when the Gnawa do a lot of lilat derdeba]. I’ve done lilat with Ma’alem [Abdelkabir] Marchane in Moulay Ibrahim. Sometimes, though, it’s easiest just to work here, because I make a lot more money. The ma’alemiin only do 3-4 lilat in a month.42

The Gnawa employ a variety of performance strategies at the Square, all of which are secular, tourist-adapted versions of the kind of baraka-seeking activities they engage in elsewhere.

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42 The Gnawa who play qraqeb usually receive about 200 dirhams for a lila, which can be (for a roaming Gnawa) a good bit less than they would make at the Square in the summer. The lila is a taxing all-night affair even for a non-ma’alem, which precludes doing work at the Square the next day. They are also often on-the-road affairs without a chance of traveling home in between lilat; a week with two or three lilat would mean a lot of downtime, with the expenses of feeding oneself and little opportunity to make additional money.
Roaming Gnawa

The solo Gnawas are often what the first-time visitor often remembers from the Square, along with the henna women and Aissawa, the other performers and vendors that most aggressively market themselves to tourists. These Gnawa roam solo along an area that at night over a patch of ground that stretches from the southern tip of the performing area to the southern edge of the food court, and expands somewhat during the day — most of the performing area outside of the Berber section that is not taken up by another ḡalqa. This territory serves as an excellent net that catches visitors in their usual path from the bus entrance to the south to the restaurants and souvenir souq to the north.

The roaming Gnawa typically work alone, wandering through this area in full costume and a pair of qraqeb castanets—much as they do in urban neighborhoods all over Morocco, but without the sacred elements of singing and blessing of potential donors. When a potential customer or group is spotted, the roaming Gnawa approaches them, smiling and clacking his qraqeb. The goal, like the water-sellers or the snake-charmers, is to get the tourists to take a photo of themselves with the Gnawa. Once the customer decides to take a photo, other Gnawa often swoop in from nearby to get in on the photo—and to help in the negotiation over the price of the photo. The additional Gnawa increase the sales pressure on the tourist, in a team effort seen in many (if not most) negotiable transactions that take place between tourists and locals in the Marrakech medina (old city). The sometimes aggressive nature of the money demands and the teaming-up of the roaming Gnawa can make this a truly unpleasant process for the
hapless tourist.\textsuperscript{43} It is a very effective strategy, however, and one that results in the roaming Gnawa earning significantly more than most other performers and vendors at the Square who rely on less active methods.

From talks with solo Gnawa (such as Ayman), I have learned that most new Gnawa typically enter the Jemaa el Fnaa. Often Gnawa may meet others who work at the Square while working elsewhere (such as at a moussem) and be invited to work at the Square. Alternately, a Gnawa could simply show up, beginning by introducing themselves to the other Gnawa. By being a good person to work with – having \textit{klma} (being trustworthy) – and demonstrating \textit{tagnawit} (literally ‘gnawaness’, a knowledge of the repertoire and possessing a sincere commitment to the beliefs and brotherhood of gnawas – a Gnawa can both earn the full cooperation of the other Gnawa, and possibly find opportunities for outside work with a maalem.

One of the notable distinctions between this practice and the holy begging found elsewhere is the addition of what I came to think of as a "hook," in this case the placing of the Gnawa’s shell-decorated and tasseled \textit{tarbouch} cap on the tourist’s head (see fig. 9). It both increases the appeal of a photo (what looks jaunty and slick on a Gnawa’s head looks photogenically silly on a non-Gnawa) and makes a material link between Gnawa and tourist: in order to get out of the situation, the tourist is going to have to remove the tarbouch and give it back to the Gnawa, a delay that gives the Gnawa additional time for his pitch. This is different from what solo Gnawa do elsewhere when wandering solo – they may follow a potential donor and sing to him or her, but will not (in my experience, at least) invade their personal space – and will certainly never, ever enter the personal

\textsuperscript{43} It was often difficult to reconcile this sight with the Gnawa I knew personally to be kind, generous, gentle-spirited men.
space of or directly touch a woman, which occurs frequently in Gnawa/tourist encounters at the Square.

_Gnawa ensembles_

There are several different ensembles of Gnawa that work at Jemaa el Fnaa, in a few different varieties and configurations. The Gnawa Chleuḥa are the ones perhaps most often seen in photographs of the Square, perhaps due to the picturesque contrast of their red caps against the snow white of their outfits. They are from a different Gnawa lineage than the Abdellawi Gnawa who make up the rest of the Gnawa population at the Square, speaking Tachelheit as well as Arabic and claiming descent from slaves held by Berbers outside the large imperial cities (see Chlyeh 1999). They align themselves with the other Berbers at the Square in administrative matters like mutual-aid societies and festival participation. They are typically older men, all very dark-complexioned, with an occasional son or nephew recruited to do the particularly acrobatic dancing associated with the Gnawa Chleuḥa. They accompany the dancing with the processional music of qraqeb and large drum – the latter called the _ganga_, (also a term sometimes used by others to designate the Gnawa Chleuḥa) distinguished from the _tbel_ by its smaller size. Chlyeh (1998) states that Gnawa Chleuḥa do not in fact play the ḥajḥuj at all – a statement I heard from others about them – though the ones I spoke with about this claimed to know how to play the ḥajḥuj.

There are two regularly performing ensembles of Abdellawi Gnawa, the variety local to Marrakech. They are much younger groups on average than the Gnawa Chleuḥa, and have a much more fluid lineup – Gnawa in these groups circulate between working with the group and roaming, while the Gnawa Chleuḥa only work in the group. Just
outside of the eastern edge of the main performing area, at about the same time as the Gnawa Chleuḥ, the ensemble led by Ma‘alem Koyo play in the processional configuration as well. Their much larger *tbel* booms across the Square, and I was told by them and other Gnawa that they were forbidden to play *tbel* after sunset call to prayer due to complaints to the Wilaya about noise.

The group led by Ma‘alem Tayib, a youngish (mid-thirties, young for a ma‘alem) Gnawa who wears the multicolored caftan of a devotee of Sidi Bouheil, usually performs after dark. The group is interesting in that it performs in a modified version of the lila assembly: Ma‘alem Tayib seated in the center with his ḥajḥuj, with the other members of the group sit with their qraqeb to either side. A dancer, usually a young Gnawa, performs out front. The group, like most groups that play secular gigs for tourists, usually plays selections from the *ftuh*, the opening portion of the lila, such as *Youbati*, *Bangara Bangara*, or *Foulani*. Songs from this section often recount parts of the Gnawa’s history, but do not contain words or melodies that would summon the mluk. This is also the same repertoire that one hears most often played in Gnawa fusion music, like that of Hamid el Khasri, Gnawa Diffusion, or l’Orchestre National de Barbes. There is an interesting exception to this – the song that summons Lalla Aicha, perhaps one of the most powerful and unpredictable of the mluk. The general notoriety of Aicha and the catchiness of the tune made it a song that was previously well-known, but was made a hit outside the lila in part because of its inclusion in a song by the popular Moroccan hip-hop group Fnaire. I was a bit surprised to hear the song played casually at the Square, after having seen the dramatic and powerful effect it has in the context of a lila – Lalla Aicha is not a gentle spirit, and the song often brings on violent dancing, shouting, and trance. I mentioned this
to my friend Mustafa, a Gnawa who both performs at the Square and at many lilat as a muqaddem, a helper and intermediary between the ma’alem and the participants.

Mustafa, an -nth-generation Gnawa who took his duties and faith very seriously, simply shrugged and said, “Lalla Aicha knows the difference between things. When we play to call her, she knows. When we play just to hear the song, she isn’t interested.”

As I said a bit earlier, for the Gnawa I got to know well, these Gnawa seemed to move fairly effortlessly along a continuum of sacred-secular: playing at the Square, playing stages like the Essaouira Gnawa Festival, making trips to France or Belgium to play in cultural centers, and calling – or becoming possessed by – Sidi Mimoun at a lila. The secular activities did not seem to raise questions of the inauthenticity of their faith, or the dilution of their music’s power to call the mluk and heal. Nor did it seem to create problems for those who might hire the Gnawa to play a lila for healing purposes – I saw these very same Gnawa work in the Square for tourist’s tips one night, then play a lila the next night that quite clearly accomplished the goals of summoning mluk and inducing healing trance.

The Aissawa and Snake Charming

At the Square, the terms Aissawa and charmants des serpents are synonymous and often interchangeable, and it is hard to imagine finding a snake charmer in Morocco who is not a member of the Aissawa brotherhood. The Aissawa, with their snakes and ghaita shawms, are another one of the iconic elements of the Jemaa el Fnaa, and like the Gnawa they aggressively seek out foreign visitors. According to some of the older Aissawa I spoke with, their numbers at the Square have swelled from a handful in the 1970s to over eighty at present day. The Aissawa are members of a Sufi tariq (path, or
sect) founded in 15th-century Meknes by the saint Mohammed ben Aissa (Nabti 2007). Aissawa are found throughout Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, and although practices differ from one region to another, they all make pilgrimage to the ben Aissa’s zawiya (shrine) in Meknes. Like the Gnawa (and other Sufi orders, like the Hamduchiyya), the Aissawa also conduct all-night lilat, which contain elements of trance and possession.44 In Moroccan public life they are most often seen at weddings, where they are an indispensable part of urban wedding feasts.

While it is not a sacred element of Aissawa practice, snake charming does have echoes in Aissawa doctrine and practice. Founder Muhammad Ben Aissa, the Chaykh el Kamil (Perfect Master) was said to have mastered and driven the wild beasts from Meknes, including serpents and scorpions. Snakes are also a form inhabited by the mluk (possessing spirits) – yet another aspect of belief in common with Gnawa – over which the Aissawa demonstrate mastery though summoning and banishing during the middle portion of the Aissawa lila.45 The idea of interaction with (and possession by) animals and animal spirits also appeared in the now-defunct rural Aissawa practice of frissa, a portion of the lilat where animals would be sacrificed (barehanded) by Aissawa possessed by animal spirits (Nabti 2007). According to Nabti, snake handling and eating is also still a part of Algerian Aissawa practices. When talking with Aissawa at the Square, they made it clear that snake charming was for them a purely money-making pastime, and did

44 Although the Aissawa and Gnawa are not historically related, there is a fair amount of crossover between the two groups – the Aissawa lila ‘borrows’ many of the Gnawa mluk, they can be seen attending each other’s lilat, and I have met Aissawa who do double duty as Gnawa musicians. They also tend to mingle at the Square.

45 The Mluk are an ambivalent issue with the Aissawa – it is an aspect borrowed from the Jilala, Hamduchiya, and Gnawa brotherhoods, and was spoken of with disdain when I asked the Aissawa I knew about it (Nabti 2007) In Aissawa practice there are both aspects of exorcism (ridding of demons) and communing with and inviting possession by spirits, as in Gnawa lilat.
not closely connect with religious practices. In support of this assertion I noticed a lack of religious rhetoric surrounding the practice of snake charming, which was spoken of largely in terms of skill and attentiveness, rather than in terms of spiritual devotion. As I was told by Bel‘aid Farouz:

You have to watch the snake, you have to keep him busy, like this [moves the edge of his drum back and forth, keeping his black cobra engaged]. If you talk to other people, if you look away, if you get drunk, chik!, he will bite you! [Shows me a fresh bite scar on his thumb, which obliterates half the thumbnail]. See this? I talked to someone for a short time, looked away, and chik! I had to go to the hospital.

Rather than being discussed in terms of spiritual devotion or accumulated baraka, the ability to charm and handle snakes was always discussed in these terms; it is a learned skill rather than a divinely-given one. Bel‘aid spoke of learning snake-wrangling and charming from his father and grandfather at a young age, and raised his own sons to know how to handle snakes (while at the same time forbidding them to take up the frequently deadly practice as a livelihood). It remains (at the Square at least, and in every other circumstance I saw) the exclusive province of Aissawa, who pass the skills from father to son and are otherwise protective of the details of the craft.

Unlike the Gnawa, who perform at the Square in a variety in a number of configurations, the Aissawa perform only in ḥalqas of 4-5 men each, scattered throughout the Square. The members of the ḥalqa split the duties of performing music, minding the animals (especially the cobras) and hooking patrons. Each ḥalqa has an assortment of creatures: one or two black cobras, several sleeping vipers, several harmless snakes for the tourists to pose with, and the occasional nervous ground squirrel. The creatures are the main show, though music is used an added attraction to draw in spectators, and one
larger ḥalqa usually puts the animals away for a short while at sunset to form a music-based ḥalqa.

Minding the snakes involves several aspects: First, the snakes especially the cobras, are both delicate creatures and valuable working capital. Each complement of snakes only works one day a week at most, and often only once every two weeks. While the impressive-looking but nocturnal vipers are allowed to sleep, the cobras are kept aroused – fangs bared and hoods flexed – for hours. This is exhausting, and a cobra can easily die of exhaustion from overwork or exposure from working too long in cold weather. Usually several cobras are traded out through the day and put in wooden boxes with a cool damp cloth to sleep when not working (or simply covered up with a bendir frame drum for shorter periods). When at home, they are kept in carefully controlled conditions to maintain their health, and handled regularly from an early age to keep them accustomed to humans and less likely to strike. The other snakes are both more durable and less valuable, and are subjected to rougher treatment, such as the regular hanging of the docile egg-snakes around tourists’ necks.

The other task is more obvious but less actually central to the Aissawa’s job: protecting themselves and the public from the snakes. Despite the fierce look of the cobras, they are actually fairly used to people by the time they are used for snake charming and not as close to striking as they appear. (It takes six months to a year to sufficiently acclimate a baby cobra to handling and performing.) Cobras do not strike indiscriminately; a defensive strike by a snake in the wild uses poison that is needed to hunt food. The Aissawa’s cobras are kept as happy and well-fed as possible (they sleep for a good few days or so just after a meal) and are kept constantly focused on the
attending Aissawa, who usually gently waves a small bendir in front of them. Still, they
do strike when they feel threatened or surprised, and the Aissawa minding the cobras
keeps an eye on the area around the snakes’ immediate area. Tourists are allowed to sit
next to the cobra tender – ironically the safest area, as the snakes see the tourist coming
and are not surprised.

It is a common misconception that the cobras are de-fanged. “Ugh!” Bel‘aid
shuddered when I suggested the idea, “That would be very bad. How would it eat? It
would die very quickly.” Although Bel‘aid did not mention the cruelty this would also
entail, his clear revulsion at the idea and the tenderness and care he showed his animals
suggested that this is also part of his objection. It is also a common misconception that
the animals are drained of poison which is in turn sold to clinics for making antivenin:

Bel‘aid: The pharmacies have all they need. They don’t pay for it often. And if
we empty the snakes’ teeth, they would just sleep.

Me: You are telling me that they have poison? On the Square? Like these snakes
in front of us now? (Fangs bared, currently staring at us and waving back and
forth.)

Bel‘aid: Yep.

Charming snakes is a dangerous job regardless of one’s level of expertise, as evidenced
by Bel‘aid’s bite mark. Bel‘aid has a high status at the Square due to his descent from one
of the original handful of Aissawa families that charmed snakes at the Square, and due to
his expertise in snake catching. His father and grandfather, both snake charmers at Jemaa
el Fnaa, died of snake bites they received while working.

My grandfather, God bless him, dead from a bite. My father, God bless him, dead
from a bite. Right there, at the Jemaa el Fnaa. Me, incha’allah, for me there is
medicine at the hospital now, and I will live. But I don’t want my sons to do this.
It is too hard. They go to school and I want that they do other work.
I heard apocryphal-sounding tales several times of a tourist that also died at the Square when a drunken Aissawa mistakenly hung a cobra instead of an egg-snake around his neck, or allowed him to foolishly step on a cobra. While there is likely an actual incident they were based on, I was never able to get a date, or names of Aissawa who might have been there. They were always told without much detail, as part of a discussion on the evils of drinking on the job. As Zakariya, an Aissawa who spoke very good English after several years at Disney World in Orlando, told me:

You gotta look at the person, see if they are afraid of the snake. If they are afraid, they gonna jump and scream, and the snake’s gonna bite them. Even the green snakes, they bite if they are scared. It won’t kill anybody, but it will hurt. That’s why we can’t drink, if you’re drunk you can’t read the person. And that’s why our jam'aya [جمعية, association] say not to put a snake on somebody who don’t want it.46

The members of the ḥalqa rotate tasks: minding the cobras, playing the ghaita and tbel, and hooking tourists – often literally, with snakes – into photo opportunities. The photogenic nature of the Aissawa attracts casual photo-taking, and the floating Aissawa are always very quick to either lure the customer in for a more interesting photo or to demand money for a photo. If the photographer objects, the same crowd-and-conquer approach prevails as with the Gnawa and Grraba: other Aissawa join into the fray and wear down the hapless picture-taker until they give up some dirhams. The money is split equally among the members of the ḥalqa, minus the day’s contribution to the Aissawa's association. The owner(s) of the snakes are given an additional share for the snakes, and there is a clear divide in status and income between the Aissawa who own one or more sets of snakes and those who do not.

46 I did occasionally see a tipsy Aissawa at the Square, though always someone who was playing the tbel or ghaita, and never someone dealing with the public or the cobras.
Unlike the informal comings and goings of the other varieties of performer at the Jemaa el Fnaa, the Aissawa are subject to a much more established set of procedures and rules. Their conduct is overseen by two jam‘ayat (pl. associations), one large jam‘aya and one much smaller jam‘aya of younger Aissawa that split off several years previous. The jam‘ayat act as administrative bodies that resolve disputes, liaison with the Qaid, and act as a hiring agency for weddings and hotels. These jam‘ayat also act as mutual aid societies, and most of the membership dues go into a fund that is available for small loans or emergency medical care. Between these two jam‘ayat, there are 84 Aissawa who work at the Square – no more, no fewer – and another Aissawa may not enter work at the Square until another one leaves. At any given daylight hour there are about half of this number working at the Square, split into five ḥalqas at fixed spots whose members shift throughout the day.

This much more structured practice is unsurprising in the Aissawa, whose Moroccan manifestation of the Brotherhood is a hierarchical organization with a Head (mezwar) and Council based at the Al-Aissa zawiya (shrine) in Meknes, which is in turn under the authority of the Moroccan Ministry of Islamic Affairs. While membership can be attained by outsiders in some circumstances, it tends to be much more hereditary that other groups like the Gnawa.

*Cha‘abi/Nass al Ghiwane*

There are a variety of performers and groups at the Jemaa el Fnaa that would fall under the term cha‘abi (شعبى), word which has a number of possible meanings. The word cha‘abi is used in Morocco to refer to things that belong to the realm of the lower socio-economic brackets: a cha‘abi neighborhood is a poor one, a kar cha‘aba is a low-

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cost coach without frills like air-conditioning or fixed schedules. In my experience, however, the word often has a positive connotation, carrying along other semiotic passengers that would correspond with words in English like "folksy," "honey," "wholesome," something like a Moroccan analogue of the imagery in a Norman Rockwell painting. Describing a neighborhood as cha’abia may imply that it is poor, but one is also likely implying that is comfortable and full of good folks who work hard, take care of their parents and go to mosque. When applied to music, the term can mean several things, ranging from the general to the very specific: it can refer to all Moroccan music lying outside of Andalusian or Mashriqiya art music, and encompass everything from the Rwais to Moroccan hip-hop. More specifically, it can refer to popular music styles that originate in Morocco, including things like the art-pop-folk music of groups like Nass al Ghiwane or Larsade and popular regional styles like tkitkate (تكتكات) leaving out styles with more apparent foreign elements, like Moroccan rock, hip-hop, or fusion. Finally and most specifically, it can refer to the pop/folk music often seen at weddings, music that most often features kamanjeh (violin), bendir, tarija, darbuka, and electronic keyboard. It also often features chikhat, female singers who lead the group, act as MC, and exhort the crowd to dance – though one does not see this at the Square.

What one does see are female impersonators. Two cha’abi groups work with female impersonators: the Awlad Haouzi, who play music from the al-Haouz region south of Marrakech, and the Awlad Hmmri, from the countryside immediately surrounding Marrakech. Female impersonators are exclusively younger men, who wear

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47 This is a decided contrast with how I am told the term is used in Egypt, for example, where it has a much more negative connotation. Despite their similarity in sound and occasional use, there is no etymological link between the terms cha'abi and 'shabby.’
48 For more on wedding music and chikhat, see Kapchan 1994)
their hair long and dress in the typical chikha (شیخة, a female singer) costume, with the addition of a black veil over the face. Several female impersonators work throughout the night with the two large ḥalqas, and are part of the assortment of comedic attractions that the huge circles feature: the dancers, short musical comedy skits with other characters in costume, and sometimes feats of strength or daring (like drinking boiling water).

While these groups perform cha’abi from their home regions, it is among the other cha‘abi groups that one can hear enduring influence of the group Nass al Ghiwane (‘People of Songs’ – ghiwane is an archaic plural of the word oghniya, [اغنيية ‘song’]) on the Moroccan pop repertoire. Formed in Casablanca’s Hay Mohammedi neighborhood, the group developed a syncretic repertoire based on malhun poetry, Berber parables, cha‘abi music, Gnawa music, and other elements of Moroccan popular poetry and song. Their music is ubiquitous in Morocco in a way that is difficult to imagine elsewhere, and one would be hard-pressed to find many Moroccans who are not familiar with at least a few Nass el Ghiwane songs.

The fact that Nass el Ghiwane songs appear in the repertoire of nearly every cha‘abi group on the Square (and many of the Berber groups, and occasionally by some of the Gnawa) is thus unsurprising. The songs are well-known, catchy, and written and recorded in a group unison or call-and-response vocal style that lend themselves to the permeable performer/audience relationship in the ḥalqa. The recorded versions sound far more like field recordings of street musicians than polished studio works and indeed Omar Sayed, a founding member and songwriter of the group mentions the "spicy" (‘atriya) Arabic of the ḥlayqiya of Hay Mohammedi as a source of inspiration (Muhanna 2003).
While most groups play a few Nass al Ghiwane tunes, there are a couple of groups with repertoires that focus on the songs of Nass el Ghiwane and their cohort of popular 70s – and 80s-era art-cha’abi groups (Larsade, Lem Cha’eb, Jil Jilala). The ḥalqa of these groups, especially on Saturday and Sunday nights, takes on the character of a group sing-along, with the musicians serving more as facilitators of a communal sing-along. Both feature the common cha‘abi percussion ensemble of tarija, darbuka, and bendir, with the addition of 4- or 6-string banjo for the Nass el Ghiwane repertoire and mandolina (an octave mandolin with additional frets between frets 2-3 and 3-4 to allow for quarter tones) for the other songs. The stringed instruments are made louder with electric pickups and small battery-powered loudspeakers, which seem to be permitted at the Square even though amplifying the voice is not.

The most successful and well-known of these groups (whom were mentioned earlier in the walkthrough) is the ḥalqa of the Ammra family. Siblings Said, Abderrahim, Abderzak and group members Mustafa, Bladi and a rotating cast of other members have worked the Square since the late 1970s, after starting work at the Square with other groups: Saïd and Abderzak began in the mid-1970s in the ḥalqa led by Mikhi, a famous ḥalqya whose group was the training ground for a good number of the older music ḥlayqiya, as well as some singers that went on to national popularity.

The Ammra ḥalqa seems to be particularly popular. During the summer months the audience is two or three layers deep from not long after evening call to prayer until well after midnight. At the May 2011 heritage festival, the audience was particularly excited when the Ammras took the stage, screaming and cheering as they both entered and left. In talks with both the Ammras and Marrakechis who knew the Square, this
popularity seems to derive from two main sources. First is the longevity of the family at the Square, and the continuity with the past that they represent – the Ammras have been “fixtures at the Jemaa el Fnaa for over three decades. They also occupy the same spot in the main performing area that their mentor Mikhi occupied, forming a physical link with the Square’s past for older visitors. This link with the Square’s history is a currency, and among other uses Said Ammra has become a kind of public spokesperson for the ḫlayqiya to the media, doing radio and television interviews when events turn media attention towards the Square. In addition to this social capital generated by their own career, the Ammra ḥalqa also borrows the power of their repertoire, a phenomenon familiar to cover or tribute bands anywhere. The popularity of the Nass al Ghiwane/Larsade/Jil Jilala/Lemchaeb songbook of the 1970s cuts across a wide segment of the Marrakechi audience, and playing it guarantees that most of the audience will know the words. This repertoire is a good fit for this setting, in that these groups themselves participated (and Nass al Ghiwane still do) in the Moroccan heritage discourse. In musical and lyrical content, all of these groups refer to (or construct a vision of) Moroccan heritage; the music is a soup of the old (malhun melodies and lyrics) the timeless and traditional (Gnawa qraqeb, ḥajḥuj, and songs) and low (the banjo and mandolina, chaʻabi-style sing-along refrains). The music and the way it invites participation through simple, popular rhythms and easy to sing refrains is almost tailor-made for performance in the ḥalqa. Furthermore, the way that this relatively young music is constructed as heritage music through this borrowing of the old, low, and timeless (in a manner reminiscent of Bill Monroe and company constructing the new heritage of

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49 Larsade and Jil Jilala also both originated from and currently based in Marrakech, and are thus especially popular there.
bluegrass music out of fiddle tunes, blues, and hillbilly music) makes the repertoire seem to fit well at a heritage site.\textsuperscript{50}

\textit{The Storytellers}

The storytellers are a complicated topic, one which will be addressed throughout this dissertation. They occupy the odd distinction of being emblematic of the heritage vision of the Square – the one promoted in UNESCO materials, tourism brochures, and the heritage festivals held at the Square – while at the same time being almost completely absent at the recent-day Square itself. They are the aspect of the Square that captured the imagination and attention of a number of foreign writers, such as Elias Canetti:

\begin{quote}
The largest crowds are drawn by the storytellers. It is around them that people throng most densely and stay longest. Their performances are lengthy; an inner ring of listeners sat on the ground and it is some time before they get up again. Others, standing, form an outer ring; they, too, hardly move, spellbound by the storyteller's words and gestures. Sometimes two of them recite in turn. Their words come from farther off and hang longer in the air than those of ordinary people. I understand nothing and yet whenever I came within hearing I was rooted to the spot by the same fascination. They were words that held no meaning for me, hammered out with fire and impact; to the man who spoke them they were precious and he was proud of them...The air above the listeners' heads was full of movement, and one who understood as little as I felt great things going on there. \textit{Storytellers and Scribes}, from \textit{In Marrakech} (Canetti 1978)
\end{quote}

and of course, that of Juan Goytisolo, who set his novel \textit{Makbara} at the Jemaa el Fnaa:

\begin{quote}
to live, literally, by storytelling: a story that, quite simply, is neverending: a weightless edifice of sound in perpetual de(con)struction: a length of fabric woven by Penelope and unwoven night and day: a sand castle mechanically swept away by the sea...

...the hearers form a semicircle round the peddler of dreams, absorb his phrases with hypnotic attention, abandon themselves wholeheartedly to the spectacle of his richly varied mimetic activity: the onomatopoeia of hoofbeats, the roaring of wild beasts, the screeching voices of the deaf, the falsetto of old men, the deep booming voices of giants, the weeping of women, the whisper of dwarfs: from ‘A reading of the space in Xemaa el-Fna’ in \textit{Makbara} (Goytisolo 1981)
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{50} This is not an opinion shared by all, as I will discuss in the next chapter.
Goytisolo’s long-time fascination with the storytellers made them one of the focal points of his efforts to get the Square’s heritage recognized and safeguarded by UNESCO and the Moroccan government, and as such they are the performers who receive the most attention in UNESCO-produced materials and activities. They are given significant coverage in the pamphlet produced by the UNESCO office in Rabat (eight pages of storyteller profiles and selected stories, versus a paragraph or two each for other types of performers) as well as being the subject of a UNESCO project to create a website of recorded stories (Skounti, Tebbaa, and Nadim 2005; Hamilton 2007). The ten-day festival in May 2011 that commemorated the 10th anniversary of the UNESCO proclamation commenced each day of performances with two hours of storytelling, and featured a photo of Abderrahim Makouri as the central image of all its promotional materials (fig. 21).

51 This website has yet, as of this writing, to come online.
Most of the materials written or filmed about the Jemaa el Fnaa in the last decade by non-Moroccans at least mention the storytellers. This includes scores of short travel articles (Bangs 2011, for example) that mention storytellers as part of the aforementioned colorful blur, but also a couple of longer works: Richard Hamilton, a BBC correspondent, compiled a selection of stories, The Last Storytellers of Marrakech, (Hamilton and Rogerson 2011) and German film-maker Thomas Ladenberger filmed and produced al-
halqa, a documentary about storyteller Abderrahim Makouri and his son (Ladenburger 2010). Despite all this attention, the storytellers have become a very rare sight at the Square. In fact, when I commenced outlining this chapter in late 2011, I had not intended to actually include the storytellers: in a chapter devoted to the Square as it was during my research, they had little place as I had only spotted one of them performing (the head of the storyteller’s association, El Ayachi ben Jakkane) on one solitary occasion at the Square proper during all of my 2010-2011 stay. It was a disheartening sight: El Ayachi, seated in the storyteller’s traditional spot in front of the Café de France, with one solitary listener straining to hear him over the din.

Returning to Marrakech in 2012, however, I found that several storytellers had begun to come to the Square in the late morning, to a spot in the middle of the north side of the performing area. Abderrahim Makouri, (possibly the youngest and certainly the most charismatic of the small remaining group) seemed to be doing actually quite well, holding a decent-sized ḥalqa for a couple of hours on a Friday morning – a good time to hold a ḥalqa, with three large mosques nearby to attract patrons with a bit of time to kill before mid-day prayer. Most of what I saw of the storytellers at the Square in my 2012 visit, however, remained more the more casual tea and conversation gatherings that the older ḥlayqiya – like the Awlaad Haouzi – often do in the mornings and early afternoons than a proper ḥalqa-making.

As one would expect, the actual physical materials used in performance are sparse and simple, mostly limited to the occasional props, usually a stick that becomes any number of things – a sword, a ladder, a dagger. A printed sheet with colorful illustrations that accompany the telling of certain stories, such as those from the 1001 Arabian Nights.
Like a number of other ḥlayqiya, Makouri had various artifacts on display that attested to his international recognition: a document from UNESCO, copies of books that he had contributed his stories to, and various visa and papers from countries he had traveled to.

He used these and referred to them explicitly in his fatha:

You are hearing a story, one of the ones I told in Jordan, in Egypt, in Germany. (holds up travel documents) They know that al-Azzaliya (an epic that has become Makouri’s stage-name) knows these stories, and I have come from all these places to tell them to you, praise be to God. Who will give me 100 ryal so that I may continue this story…They have written my stories down (points to a copy of *La Geste Hilalienne*, by Abderrahim Abnoudy) but you are hearing them from me myself.

This recognition by outsiders and foreign travel has become part of the working capital of the Storytellers and a number of other ḥlayqiya, such as Abdelhakim Khabzaoui, who would also display copies of articles written about him, as well as selling copies of a short film of him (also made by Thomas Ladenberger). This international attention served as social capital that helps to provide a variety of things, such as well-paid performances several times a year with cultural centers like the Alliance Française or help with medical expenses.

The storyteller’s main performing assets, of course, are the stories themselves, which are acquired in a number of ways. The first, and most obvious, is orally, through listening and repeating. The storytellers I spoke to at length – El-Ayachi, Mohammed "Sghiir" Erguini, and Mustafa Musta’id– all told a similar narrative: after becoming fascinated with storytellers they saw in their youth, they returned continually to the storyteller’s ḥalqa in their spare time. Most of the storytellers recounted a period of apprenticeship with an older storyteller, during which they exchanged the performance of

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52 Mustafa worked most of the time as a magician, which he found to be more profitable, although he returned to work as a storyteller in Casablanca during Ramadan when audiences tended to have more time and patience for long stories.
small tasks – carrying the mentor’s things, or helping collect the money during the fathâ –
for advice and coaching and being allowed to observe the storyteller. As Mohammed
Erguini told me:

I followed one ḥlayqiya. I followed him around to lots of places – to souqs, to Casa, to the mountains. I did the fathâ with him, and I carried his clothes (and things). He tried to teach me stories, and he was very harsh – if I got something wrong – Pow! He told me to how to keep the ḥalqa, how to own the space. I learned a lot on my own too. It isn’t easy.

They repeated the stories to themselves, and tried their hand gradually at performing in
front of an audience – first in front of friends, then in smaller venues, like souqs (سوق, a
large outdoor market), then finally in the larger public performing spaces like those of
Fes, Meknes, Casablanca, and of course, the Jemaa el Fnaa. They began with the smaller
stories that could be told in an hour or so (of the sort collected by Legey [1999] and
Hamilton [2011]) and gradually worked their way up to the larger stories and epics, such
as al-Azzaliya, al-Antariya, and the entirety of the 1001 Nights. Stories of this size are
serialized, and are told over the course of a great many sessions. The
Antariya epic, for example, takes nearly an entire year of serialized sessions – each
ending with a cliffhanger intended to bring the audience back the next day (Ladenberger
2010).

Like the Gnawa, the rwaïs, and the cha‘abi musicians, the storytellers also
described the Jemaa el Fnaa as a madrasa – both where a halaqui learns his craft by
observing others at work, and where one finally graduates’ by presenting himself in front
of a discerning audience. Although ḥalqa creation at the Square is not a difficult task,
keeping a ḥalqa entertained and attentive as a storyteller is another matter entirely. As
Mohammed Erguini said in an interview,
You can’t be ashamed (mathehmcch, also implying modesty, embarrassment, or humbleness). You have to look them in the eye, and speak with power. You have to know your stories very well. If you don’t know your story well (laughs and shakes his head), then God help you!

Based on what I observed in my overall time at the Square and my rare sightings of the storytellers there and at other sites, the competencies required in the recent-day Square would seem to differ somewhat from those with whom I spoke (whose careers all began in the 1970s) began their work. In the old Jemaa el Fnaa of the pre-1980s, the novice would likely have been competing with other storytellers – both the descriptions given to me by older ḥlayqiya as well as old photographs suggest that there were often several storytellers’ ḥalqas going at one time, with as many as 18 storytellers who regularly worked the Square (Torrione 2008).

But under current conditions, the storytellers compete not as much with each other as they do with the others attractions and distractions both at the Square itself an elsewhere in the lives of their potential audiences. Most obvious to the ear is the din – many I spoke with who have worked at the Square for several decades mentioned how much louder it had gotten. This has occurred despite noise-reduction measures like the installation of electricity for the restaurant stall (eliminating generator noise), the reduction of car traffic, and the banning of large speaker systems and Gnawa tbel drums after dark. But (especially after the mid-afternoon call to prayer, when is when many storytellers used to work in order to capture the post-workday traffic) the constant, crushing clatter of drumming resulting from afore-mentioned growth of the working population of Berber musicians (who use drum ensembles) and the Aissawa (who have their own tbel, as well as ghaita oboes) means that the storyteller would have to excel not
only in charisma but in sheer volume. And the dwindling audience itself exacerbates this problem – the massive, multi-layered ḥalqas that might block out the racket is no more. What is left to the storyteller, then, are the morning hours, when there are many fewer musicians. There are many fewer Darija speakers at that hour, however, which explains why Makouri was working on a Friday, when there is potentially more audience due to the proximity of several mosques.

At the recent-day Square (as also at Bab Boujloud in Fes, where I also one storyteller working) the repertoire was skewed towards very short stories, chosen to match the audience’s reduced attention span and available time. As I was told by El-Ayachi:

The audience, they don’t listen. Their ears are too tired for the stories, and they don’t stop for long. There is the satellite (TV), there is the radio, they have cell phones, they have schoolbooks, they don’t have time for us. We tell short stories, because they will only stay for a short time.

The audiences’ preferences are shaped by the length of films and television programs, as well as by the less-than-subtle tone of the storytelling. This also helps explain why Abderrahim is a last man standing in the area of storytelling: although his nickname comes from his skill in recounting a particularly long epic (Al-Azzaliya, which can stretch over a year of episodes), he was in the times I watched him perform not only the most skilled storyteller among his peers at tailoring his stories’ lengths to his audience’s needs, but also was by far the most theatrical. “When I tell a story and say something like ‘the hero draws his sword’, ” Makouri tells Richard Hamilton, “people often duck as if the sword is about to swing towards their heads.” In contrast with a storytellers like El-

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53 The magicians and vendors, who also work their voices, do work at these times. However, their pitches are simpler, make much more extensive use of visual aids, and – in the case of the vendors – involve a tiny, dense ḥalqa that blocks out sound. Even so, both of the magicians I spoke with expressed a desire to purchase small speakers to make their work easier to do.
Ayachi and Erguini, who are more subtle and almost hypnotically soft-spoken, Makouri delivers in a near-shout, augmenting his stories with comic or gory pantomime. Between this theatrical quality (and no small amount of business savvy and interpersonal skills) Makouri has managed to capitalize on the foreign attention given to the storytellers and maintain a local audience as well.

Orality/Literacy and transmission

Despite there being some aspect of the master-apprentice experience in stories the storytellers I spoke with told me about their lives, the importance of books and films as source material for the repertoires of latter-day storytellers cannot be understated. Deborah Kapchan, in fact, completely disregards the classic master-apprentice relationship in the formation of the modern Moroccan storyteller:

Unlike the storytellers of even a generation or two ago, however, contemporary storytellers in Morocco do not go through an apprenticeship with a master, nor do they learn their oeuvres through audition and committing formulae and form to memory. Rather, these storytellers buy books, most of them published in Beirut, read them carefully and then translate them to less-literate audiences with different degrees of fidelity.” (Kapchan 2003)

The focus on orality in Goytisolo’s writing, and in much of the UNESCO materials that follow it is interesting in light of the fact that part of the storytellers’ art is not purely oral memory, but the skillful translation and interpretation of texts written in classical Arabic into Moroccan Darija. All of the storytellers I met were quite literate in Arabic (and, in the case of Mohammed Erguini, in French as well) and adapted many of the stories they told from written works. Deborah Kapchan describes this as a process of translation: both

54 In Thomas Ladenberger’s documentary Al-Halqa revolves around a master-apprentice relationship of two storytellers. Interestingly though, much of the teaching of Zoheir Makouri by his father, Abderrahim involves this translation of texts into a successful performance. There is talk of how to memorize and access memory in performance, but the written text usually remains the original source for the story that is performed.
in terms of translating the classical Arabic into local Darija (which diverges significantly from classical Arabic) as well as translating from the written mode of narration to the oral. As Kapchan quotes a storyteller, Moulay ‘Omarr, as saying, “Because you have to translate what is there. You translate it in darija and transform it into dialect. You talk with people as if you’re talking with [them] ordinarily.” (Kapchan 2003) But this process of translation is not merely the exchanging of one language for another – there is the adding of humor, the “perfuming” and “flavoring” of the texts with the storyteller’s own additions in order to captivate and entertain his audience. He recognizes that there are places in the narrative that are significant, that the audience will possibly remember for themselves and expect to hear – place names in the story, in Kapchan’s example – and he uses those as the framework on which he hangs his own improvisation.

In learning and maintaining repertoire this way, storytellers (like the Gnawa, Aissawa, Berbers, and Cha’abi musicians, and every other person who makes a living at the Square) are performing in ways that are closely tied to the demands of their 21st-century audience and their own 21st-century lives. Although these performers may resemble the ḥlayqiya in old postcards from the 1920s (in performance context, in costume, in some aspects of repertoire) their process of learning is likely very different. They are literate, the product of increasingly available – albeit far from perfect – access to public education. For much of what they perform, there exists a written text which serves both a resource that provides new material and supplements memory, as well as a constraint on the bounds of their improvisation. These storytellers, while stunningly skilled performers in their own way, are not precisely the mythical repositories of oral heritage conjured in quotes from Juan Goytisolo like “It is important to understand that
the loss of a single halaqui [here speaking primarily of the storytellers] is much more serious for humanity than the death of 200 best-selling authors.” (Schmitt 2005) The UNESCO rhetoric, as well as that of authors like Goytisolo (1997), Hamilton (2011), Tebbaa (2005) rests on this idea that the art and craft of the storytellers and other ḥlayqiya exist somehow apart from globalized, modern culture, and need to be defended from it. Many potential projects proposed by those affiliated with UNESCO and others (proposals which I will describe in Chapter 3) – such as funding apprenticeships, awareness-raising campaigns among schoolchildren, and a ḥlayqiya school’ – all stem from this image of the fragile, intangible, oral heritage. If the storytellers, the very symbol of the Square as a last refuge of a fading, fragile orality are themselves a literate bunch who refresh their repertoire with tales from books printed in Rabat, Paris and Beirut and films made in India, Egypt, and Hollywood, it seems that a re-examination of the goals and methods of heritage projects like UNESCO’s is in order.

**Times of day and year**

Times of day at the Square can in some ways be thought of as an extension of the spatial organization – a ḥalaqi’s place is usually bounded in time as well as space, and the same patch of ground may be used by different people at different times. Although there are overlaps and staggering of exits and entrances, the borders of the Square’s shifts’ roughly correspond to prayer times. However, like everything else in Morocco, the times that anyone chooses to do anything are a negotiation between the structure given by the prayer times and that dictated by the clock. Performers usually have minimum and maximum durations that they will work, which vary according to weather, crowds, the claim of others on the space, and of course, the ḥlayqiya’s mood.
The day shift: roughly 10 A.M. to As\textsuperscript{55}

When looking at the day as a whole, the vast majority of the traffic at Jemaa el Fnaa is Moroccan. However, throughout the relatively desolate mornings to late afternoon foreigners seem to dominate the meager population, perhaps due to the fact that, despite the fact that the tourist literature typically celebrates the Square’s evenings, the daytime is the easiest to cope with for foreign tourists. The crowds are light, the place is sunlit, and Jemaa el Fnaa become an unintimidating, if a bit empty, place to wander through before returning to the tourist souqs. Very few Moroccans make stops at the Square during the day (unless they work there), and as a result the entertainments and performances are almost solely presented for the foreigners. Most of the few Moroccans about are women, either ones taking small children out for a stroll or those coming to get a henna design done for a wedding or other special occasion. The only attractions aimed specifically towards Moroccans to be found at this hour are a few lonely fqih, although they did not seem to get much business at all until the late afternoon. The roaming Gnawa expand their range to include almost the entire Place l-kbiir, and it is nearly impossible to pass through the entire Square without attracting a few. The other performers and vendors that make most of their money off foreigners are also present: Aissawa, Grraba, the henna women, and roaming vendors of souvenirs.\textsuperscript{56} There are no real ḫalqas formed during these hours – the approach is less one of attracting and holding attention than it is one of

\textsuperscript{55} Late afternoon call to prayer, around 5pm in mid-summer
\textsuperscript{56} An interesting case of a Square participant who provides different services to local and foreign visitors are the ‘dentists’ of Jemaa el Fnaa, who stand behind tables full of pulled teeth. They are often discussed by tour guides as remnants of the more ‘wild’ past of Jemaa el Fnaa, and tourists assume that they are merely present in order to pose for photographs. They actually still ply their trade at the Square (charging between 50-100 dirhams per pulled tooth) but must do the actual pulling somewhere else after having been forbidden by order from the Wilaya from doing so at the Square. This interdiction dates from the same mid-1980s period of tourist-centric improvements at Jemaa el Fnaa as the removal of the bus station.
forming a giant sieve to catch the meager business passing through, and those working are much more likely to chase the audience/customer than to wait for them. Ḥalqas attract Moroccans rather than foreigners for the most part, and there would be little sense in spending one’s time and energy performing in the ḥalqa at this hour.

What is significant about the current state of this time of day is the contrast with both written and oral accounts of the daytime Jemaa el Fnaa of even a few years ago. Schuyler (writing about 1978), Citron (writing about 2004) and Schmidt (writing about 2006) all mention the presence of all sorts of performers in the daytime – ḥalqas of berber and chaʿabi musicians, acrobats, and storytellers. Yet the only time in the course of an entire year I observed any of these other types of performers before the late afternoon was during one week of ‘utla dyal madaris (عطلة دِيْل مدارس, school vacation) when the additional crowds of schoolchildren, their parents, and families of Moroccan tourists were an incentive for ḥlayqiya to come and set up for an early round of performance.

So why the change? Ironically, I feel that these changes are in large part the result of improvement efforts at the Square, some of which were carried out post-2001 and intended to safeguard the heritage of Jemaa el Fnaa. In this case, the main change was one of traffic patterns. Up to the 1970s, Jemaa el Fnaa was the main transport hub for the city: the CTM bus terminal (immortalized in Alfred Hitchcock’s The Man Who Knew Too Much) was located at the now near-empty west end, the caleches, city buses and group taxis had their main hubs to the south and west, and a constant stream of local and intracity traffic flowed through the Square. The ḥlayqiya and vendors benefited from this river of people needing diversion, groceries, refreshment, haircuts, and medicine, and the majority of daytime custom was Moroccan. The bus terminals were moved to Bab
Doukala in the early 1980s, ending the stream of new arrivals through the Square. In 2002, the collective taxi rank was moved to Sidi Mimoun, as were a lot of the longer bus routes – an action praised as an improvement to the physical site and one done in accordance with the safeguarding plan. As a result of these changes, the passive local traffic through the Square dropped to almost nil, and the ḥlayqiya that depend on Moroccan traffic lost the incentive to work during workday hours.57

*Late Afternoon – Heritage hour: Asr-Maghrib*58

It is perhaps the two or three hours before sunset that has the most variety, both in terms of performers and audience. Based both on other descriptions of the Square by Theodore Grame (1970) or Schuyler (1984) and talks with the ḥlayqiya that play at this hour, this time would also be the most recognizable to someone who had spent time at the Square thirty or forty years ago. Although the Square at this hour is possibly more crowded with ḥalqas than it used to be, it has many of the same entertainments described in accounts that go back to the 1970s: the solo and group rwaïs, the Gnawa tbel/qraqeb groups, the Aissawa, and older-style cha‘abi groups – many, if not most of them in roughly the same places as they have been for the last three of four decades. On rare occasion the *Awlaad Sidi Hmad u Musa* (the acrobats), a group that have mostly left the Square in pursuit of better pickings elsewhere, will make a giant ḥalqa in the relatively open center of the performing area. And finally, my only sightings of a storyteller working at the Square during my entire research period were during this time of day,

57 The exception to this ḥalqa-less state of affairs is the very recent return of the storytellers to some mornings at the Square.
58 Sunset call to prayer, not yet dark but when the sun drops below the horizon line
when twenty years ago the workers at the tanneries would have been pouring southwards through the Square.

The crowd is a diverse mix at this time during weekdays, with hordes of foreign tourists but with a healthy component of Moroccans as well. Men of all ages are in the majority, but there are also families with strollers, groups of women in and out of hijab, mixed-gender groups of teenagers, and a higher number than other times of day of the elderly. During weekends, one sees an overall larger crowd and an even higher number of Moroccan families, and extra petting zoo’ ḥalqas featuring pigeons, turtles, and squirrels show up to take advantage of the higher numbers of children. All the magicians tend to be out on the Square at this time as well.

In my daily tours of the Square, I came to nickname this period ‘heritage hour,’ as it was the time that most closely resembled the UNESCO descriptions – as opposed to the lean, more foreigner-focused day hours or the cha’abi-heavy nighttime. This was the period of the day when I would occasionally see what looked like official visits, small crowds of well-dressed Moroccans or foreigners being led by a guide, skirting around the edges of the performance area. These were sometimes accompanied by news cameras, an addition that attracted enough attention to turn the party into its own mobile ḥalqa. On a number of occasions, ḥlayqiya told me that they had been instructed to dress well for the next few days in anticipation of the visit.

*Early evening – Dusk-‘Echa* 59: the changeover

As the sun starts to set, the Square slowly switches over to night-time mode. The restaurants move their stands and seats in, as do the satellite stands of snails and sweets.

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59 Final call to prayer at true dark
The cha‘abi and Berber groups that use benches set them up and sit around smoking cigarettes. A man with a wheelbarrow full of car batteries visits the ḥalqas that use amplifiers for their instruments, who pay 40 dirhams for a charged battery. The Aissawa pack up, as snake charming is a daytime-only activity. The southernmost ḥalqa of Aissawa, which is run by the head of the jam‘aya and his family, squeezes a few more dirhams out of the day by switching over to a proper ḥalqa, gathering a more stationary crowd by putting away the snakes and playing music. One of the Aissawa will often perform with a cobra as well, an alarming-looking combination of dancing and teasing. The groups of Gnawa that use tbel also leave, to be replaced with a couple of seated groups that use ḥajḥuj. The older rwaïs who perform with rebab in twos and threes usually also pack up for the night, squeezed out by the growing crowd and the roaring volume of the Berber percussion sections.

This changeover is marked by a noticeable shift in the soundscape, as I will discuss in a bit more detail in the next section. Both the daytime and nighttime Squares are loud places, but the source and timbre of the racket changes. The daylight soundscape is dominated by the ghaita oboe and drums of the Aissawa, which rise above the ever-present din of vehicles and shouting people. In this in-between dusk period the ghaitas fade out and are replaced by the triple-meter booming of the agwal pottery drums and clanging naquus (a Peugeot brake drum played with a metal stick) of the Berber groups. The interdiction against the Gnawa tbel is somewhat ironic considering the agwal’s volume and ability to carry over long distances; I could clearly hear separate drummers start and stop from my apartment in the Marjorelle area almost 3 miles away. This
timbral change begins about 45 minutes before the sunset call to prayer, and is complete soon after.

*Full dark to closing time – the night shift: after final call to prayer*

This period is dominated by the music ḥalqas, with a scattered few ḥalqas of comedians. Like many places where there are crowds of people in the dark, the rules that usually dictate public behavior in Marrakech seem a bit looser and actions and activities that would be discouraged or actively forbidden during the day become abundant. The female and male prostitutes come out, and transactions are arranged that are carried out elsewhere. Men, both Moroccan and foreign, meet discreetly for romantic encounters—perhaps in plain sight, but the intent is kept subtle. And men overall become a good deal bolder with bottom-pinching and groping of women both foreign and Moroccan. It was explained to me by Hassan, a Berber performer who works in the evening, that the benches are in part an adaptation to this problem: if one wants to benefit from either tourists or the new female clients that come either in groups or with their husbands or other family to the Square, one needs them to be comfortable. Suffering aggressive anonymous groping is an obvious discouragement to a female audience member who might otherwise stick around and give some baraka, and sitting on a bench puts vulnerable posteriors out of reach.

*Times of year*

As one would guess about an outdoor space currently devoted largely to entertainments and dependent on tourists (both foreign and Moroccan) for most of the

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60 I was mostly unaware of this going on at the Square until a friend who worked at one of the restaurants pointed out a few examples of interactions.
money that flows through it, the Jemaa el Fnaa has a year-long cycle with lulls in the winters. The cast of characters (at least during my research stay) does not change dramatically through the year, in that there did not seem to be entertainments only present at certain times of year. The ḥlayqiya’s repertoire performed stayed about the same, other than a few holiday occasions which I will discuss shortly. Instead, the main changes that I observed throughout the year-cycle were adaptations of the to the waxing and thinning crowds and the availability of work outside the Square.

Winter is, of course, the slowest time for everyone at the Square. Among other things, the relatively cold Marrakech winter evenings – made especially biting at times by the wind blowing down from the Atlas Mountains – mean sparser crowds that go home at much earlier times of night. Many ḥlayqiya, especially those like the cha'abi musicians that typically work into the night, start their performances an hour or so earlier and end as early as 9-9:30pm. Even if there is somewhat of a crowd remaining and money could possibly be made, many ḥlayqiya still head home. I asked Abderrahim Ammra, whose ḥalqa plays Nass al-Ghiwane and still draws a decent audience even in the middle of winter, why his ḥalqa packed up when they could still make money:

Are we employees (mxdmiin)? I hate the cold. You get sick, you get a cold (rwah). We don’t have to make a ḥalqa if we don’t want to; we have freedom.

The crowds of European tourists are also much thinner as well, which means that the income from outside the Square is greatly reduced, such as the hotels and restaurants in Guéliz and the Palmieraie resorts at the outskirts of town that employ the Berbers, Aissawa, and Gnawa. For some, usually those without sufficient savings or credit available to live on, this means actually more time spent at the Square – even if it only a few dirhams from a sparser crowd, Jemaa el Fnaa usually provides *something*. The few
times when I saw Berber or Cha‘abi performers during the morning or afternoons (other than the week of school vacations) were in the winter. This makes sense both because it is a way to recoup some of the lost income from sparser nighttime crowds and because winter is a fairly nice time of year to be at the Square during the day, which can be a sun-baked wasteland during a 45+ degree summer day. For the quieter performers, like the storytellers, solo rwaïs, and magicians, this time of day also allows a slightly less noisy environment, albeit one with a much sparser crowd.

During the summer is of course the peak time both for traffic at the Square, as well as for the performing work outside the Square. This season brings a larger crowd from all the different segments of the audience: European students and adults, Moroccan schoolchildren on summer vacation, and tourists from elsewhere in Morocco and around the Arab World. The ranks of the performers swell as well: performers (especially rwaïs) who may have wandered off to work at souqs return to their usual groups, the numbers of the roaming Gnawa double with the growing crowd, and the center and north areas where places are a bit less fixed (like the northern edge and dead center of the performing area – see the map in fig.4, p. 23) are always full. The work outside the Square improves as well, especially weddings, which are a significant source of income for the rwaïs, Aissawa, and cha‘abi musicians. As I will discuss later in Chapter 6, the April 28, 2011 bombing led to a fairly muted summer season in terms of mid-summer visitors, which was a hardship for almost everyone at the Square and in Marrakech as a whole.

Ramadan is in many ways its own season, with its own schedule. For the Gnawa, the season actually begins a month earlier – the preceding month of Cha‘ban is the season for many to hold the lila ceremony, and Gnawa who work as drari (دراي,
supporting musicians and dancers) with *maʻalems* in Marrakech and its environs spend less time at the Square. During the month itself, the whole timetable of the Square changes. All activity during daylight hours stops, save that which profits directly from the non-Muslim tourists: snake charmers, a few Gnawa, and the cafés and orange juice stands, all of which keep their usual hours, suffering relatively cheerfully without water, food, and smokes in the summer heat. While I did not personally manage to observe this myself, I was told that there are (or at least were) still spots where storytellers hold ḥalqas during the afternoon hours, when people are in need of distraction and not much else gets done.\(^61\)

Very little at all happens until after final call to prayer. Even after sunset call few set up, as there is the *iftar* fast-breaking meal and final prayers to go to. For the final prayer the courtyard of the Koutoubiya, which is usually a calm space for families to stroll and friends to meet, is packed to capacity with mosque attendees. A huge public-address system carries the sermon and leading of prayers to the congregation, and the sight itself—hundreds, possibly over a thousand men all praying together in the open air draws its own crowd of gawking tourists. After final call to prayer the Jemaa el Fnaa explodes with visitors, ḥlayqiya, and vendors of all stripes, and many ḥlayqiya keep working until the wee hours of the morning.

\(^{61}\) In what is likely a death blow to even this little haven of storytelling, the various Moroccan and foreign television stations show their best programming (new shows, film marathons, even filmed stagings of some of the same epics that the storytellers feature) during Ramadan, giving to the fasting Moroccan audience distractions that can be enjoyed in their own living rooms. Basic satellite TV is free to those with a decoder and a television.
Part II: Intangible Heritage, its problems, and the Square

Chapter 3: Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Jemaa el Fnaa: some background

In the previous chapters, I spent quite a long time answering the question ‘what is there at the Jemaa el Fnaa’ and its subsets of ‘who is found there?’ ‘what do they do?’ and ‘when/how/where do they do it?’ In this chapter I begin to put this material to work in the service of a critique of the notion of ICH and its safeguarding, and discuss how the idea of ‘safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage’ is a troublesome starting place for interventions (meaning projects and legal instruments) in the service of justice and human well-being. It represents a way of thinking about human activity that translates into real-world consequences: a dysfunctional bureaucratic logic, wasteful and ineffective projects, and potentially the alienation of people from the activities they once engaged in.

My assessment safeguarding is informed most strongly by a ground-level view of this group of people who were directly affected by the heritage interventions at the Square. In focusing on the actual lives of people I met, I intend to articulate a couple of large categories of disjuncture: between the simplified, limited theoretical model that is heritage and the complicated and vaguely defined real world of human activity. I will also focus on the disjunctures between the stated, face-value intentions of the heritage safeguarding programs based on these theoretical models and their actual outcomes. I am
motivated by a desire to address what lies in the cracks caused by these disjunctures: wasted money, wasted effort, and a general squandering of opportunities to genuinely improve people’s lives.

This statement may seem very black-and-white about a set of principles and practices that has produced net benefits for a great many people – not the least of which are the ḥlayqiya and other workers at the Jemaa el Fnaa. For those affected, heritage interventions can result in improved incomes, stronger political clout, enhanced social standing, and other changes that contribute to overall well-being. But as I will elaborate in this chapter and the next, the benefits enjoyed are *secondary effects* that often result indirectly from heritage safeguarding interventions, rather than being the principal goal at which resources are directed. Based on a construction of heritage as a public good (like roads, clean air, and drinking water) that contributes to well-being, ICH safeguarding interventions direct the bulk of their collected effort and money towards a goal – ensuring the survival of a particular practice into perpetuity – that is patently unattainable and of uncertain value to the populations serving as the project’s objects. Putting scarce resources towards this goal points them away from areas where they could potentially do more direct good, and does so in a way that can potentially change for the worse the affected population’s relationships with the things they do.62

In this chapter, I give some brief background on the Jemaa el Fnaa, the history of heritage building there, and its relationship to the development of the concept of ICH in UNESCO instruments and publications. One of the main reasons I chose the Jemaa el

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62 As of course can any intervention, done for any reason, done by anyone. But as I will discuss, this fact is obscured in discussions of safeguarding by the labeling of practices as “traditional,” and thus somehow out of the flow of day-to-day life – and thus safer to intervene in.
Fnaa as a research focus was that some of the story behind the genesis of the concepts of ICH and safeguarding in UNESCO policy begins there with the efforts of Spanish writer Juan Goytisolo to enlist outside help in preserving the Square’s threatened oral traditions. In addition to basing these discussions on my own fieldwork, I will refer often to the work of Valdemar Hafstein, whose 2004 dissertation chronicles the evolution of UNESCO’s current ICH safeguarding approach, as well as authors including Rachel Borghi, Thomas Schmitt and Ahmed Skounti who discuss the history of intangible and tangible heritage preservation at the Jemaa el Fnaa.

**The Square pre-UNESCO**

Al-Youssi, a Moroccan writer of the 17th century, is the first to have described the proceeding of a "ḥalqa” on the Place Jamaa El Fna. The importance of this narration resides in the fact that it is already about a ḥalqa with a burlesque theme, placing in the scene diverse elements of Moroccan society: a Fessi, a Marrakchi, an Arab, a Berber, and a Drawi (an inhabitant of the Dra valley).

The subject? Each one is invited to describe the favorite dishes of his region, in his own idiom. Beyond the scene's entertainment value -which is in itself well worth the recall – this is certainly the representation of all Moroccan society of the time in its various components, ethnic and linguistic, urban and rural, mountains and oases, being exhibited in public. One finds then, in the course of this description, one of the essential functions of the Jemaa el Fnaa.

– Hamid Triki, ‘Si la place Jamaâ El fna m'était contée…’ (Triki 2011)³³

The image put forth here, of the Jemaa el Fnaa as a diorama of Moroccan cultural life in miniature, comes close to a certain kind of truth: much later than the origin of this anecdote – in the 20th century – the Square was defined, carved out of an otherwise

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³³ Triki is an important figure in the heritagization of the Square. As a historian, he was member of the Amis de la Place, and worked closely with the drafting of the proposal sent to UNESCO, as well as the materials UNESCO published as part of the safeguarding plan. This particular scene also appears in the UNESCO booklet on the Jemaa el Fnaa.
loosely bordered clearing in the middle of Marrakech, as a space that symbolized the heart of Moroccanness. The irony is that a large part of this ‘carving’ was done not by the collective will of those who used the space, nor by a Sultan, Vizier, or Qaid, but rather by a French colonial administration that was trying to find more efficient ways of governing the territory it held and led by a Resident-General who was a believer in the sanctity of heritage. Without the colonial impetus towards heritage-making, the Jemaa el Fnaa might be no more noteworthy than a number of other public spaces in the city – or indeed might not exist at all, having been repurposed as a car park or transport hub. But to lead up to this topic, I will some of the known historical background.

That the Jemaa el Fnaa is a physical site whose existence stretches far back in Marrakechi history is accurate enough. Marrakech was founded between 1060 and 1070 as the capital of the Almoravid dynasty (Deverdun 1959; Borghi 2005). Accounts from the 12th to the 14th century describe a **raḥba**, a large space that sat in between the Sultan’s palace (likely the Ksar al-Hajar whose ruins now sit at the foot of the Koutoubiya mosque) and the rest of the city (Hamid Triki in Skounti, Tebbaa, and Nadim 2005). The space was used for open-air trade, as well as for public displays of state power like military parades and executions – the source of one of the popular (and certainly the most so in tourist literature) explanations of the name Jemaa el-Fnaa: ‘Assembly of the Dead.’

Marrakech changed hands a number of times over the subsequent millennium, first to the Almohads in 1146 and then to the Merenids in 1269, who moved their capital to Fes while keeping Marrakech as an important center of trade (Pennell 2003; Borghi 2005). While it shrank somewhat with urban growth, the Square remained a hub of trans-Saharan trade and travel, and the first written descriptions of the Jemaa el Fnaa come
from visitors to the city the second half of the 16\textsuperscript{th} century. Writing in 1573, the Spanish trader Luis Marmol describes a place in Marrakech that, while not referred to by name, is undoubtedly the Jemaa el Fnaa:

There are many boutiques in this place: locksmiths, shoemakers, carpenters, and all sorts of people who sell good things to eat. At one side is a place where they sell silk and cloths of linen, cotton, and fine or coarse wool. It is there that there is the customs house (Marmol in Skounti et al, 2005).

Although it seems likely that performers were present long before this point, it is from an account (quoted at the beginning of this section) written in the beginning of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century by the historian Al-Youssi that we first hear about performers at the Square. It is also from 17\textsuperscript{th}-century writings that we receive the most commonly accepted (among scholars who write about Marrakech) etymology of the name of the Square: "The Destroyed Mosque" (Deverdun 1959; Skounti, Tebbaa, and Nadim 2005; Borghi 2005). The Saadian sultan Ahmed al-Mansour commissioned a large mosque around what is now Rue Riad Zitoun, planning to call it Jemaa al-Hana, the ‘Mosque of Happiness.’ When the mosque went unfinished after a nine-year plague that brought the work to a halt and killed al-Mansour himself, the half-completed mosque was eventually torn down and popular humor substituted ‘hana’ with the rhyming ‘Fana’ (annihilation, from the root فنی, ‘ephemeral, mortal’) as the common name for the Square (Deverdun 1959; Skounti, Tebbaa, and Nadim 2005).\textsuperscript{64}

Though the Square rarely shows up at length in written descriptions until the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, accounts suggest that there were performers at the site throughout the 17\textsuperscript{th}, 18\textsuperscript{th}, and 19\textsuperscript{th} centuries. But this by itself may not have made the Jemaa el Fnaa ‘heritage’: as I

\textsuperscript{64} In another interpretation, Hassan Hanitja the rwaïs once stated, (as a few other ḥlayqiya also told me) that ‘What the name used to mean, it now means ‘Assembly of the Artists’ (from the word fnaan, ‘artists’). I will talk more later about Hassan’s ideas about the mutability of meaning and the importance of remaining current and flexible.
will discuss in this chapter and the next, heritage is something that is constructed rather than a natural consequence of age and permanence. There are likely countless sites throughout Morocco (and North Africa, and indeed throughout the world) where a long history of performance goes un-enshrined as heritage.

**Heritage-making and colonial Morocco under Lyautey**

As a number of writers (Borghi (2000), Morton (2000), Minca (2006)) have written, the heritagization of the Square (and the Marrakech medina as a whole) was put in motion by the urban planning policies of Maréchal Hubert Lyautey, resident-general of the French protectorate in Morocco from 1912 to 1927. As Minca and Borghi elaborate, Lyautey was a proponent of association, an approach of colonial administration that (in contrast to the earlier doctrine of assimilation) attempted to leave local political and social structures intact instead of forcibly coercing the colonized into French systems and lifeways and visibly replace local administrators with colonial. Rather than be re-structured into an attempted mirror image of French government and culture, the colonized were to be allowed to evolve more in their own fashion, though still with the goal of integration into the Metropole – and with French government, culture, and mode de vie as the projected apex of that evolution. During his previous service in Madagascar, Vietnam, and Algeria, (and in admiration of the techniques of indirect rule favored by the British in India and West Africa) Lyautey arrived at the view that rule was best maintained through a minimum of brute force: winning over local leaders, displaying respect for local custom, and using decisive military might as a last resort rather than a day-to-day tool (Pennell 2003; C. Minca 2006; Demerdash 2009). The trajectory of the French Protectorate both preceding and following Lyautey’s tenure
followed this pattern of more indirect rule: the treaty signed in Fes in 1912 left the Sultan Moulay Abdelhafid on the throne while functionally giving all executive power to the French.\textsuperscript{65} The use of the Sultan as figurehead lent his religious authority to French rule (Abu-Lughod 1980, Pennell 2003).

\textit{Association and the Jemaa el Fnaa}

In terms of urban planning policy under Lyautey in the imperial cities of Rabat, Marrakech, and Fes, the expression of association policy was what Abu-Lughod refers to as ‘urban apartheid’: the separation of Marrakech into a medina (the old, walled city) and a modern \textit{ville nouvelle}. The medinas were to be left with as little change to their structures as possible, and were to be where as much of the ‘authentic’ local architecture and lifeways as possible were left intact. As Janet Abu-Lughod and Claudio Minca quote Lyautey,

Yes, in Morocco, and it is to our honour, we conserve. I would go a step further, we rescue. We wish to conserve in Morocco Beauty – and it is not a negligible thing. Beauty – as well as everything which is respectable and solid in the institutions of the country.

And concerning the deleterious influence of European architectural approaches on local authenticity:

Nothing has been more deadly to the originality and the charm of Algerian cities, of so many oriental cities, than their penetration by modern European installations...The preservation of the native towns is not only a question of aesthetic satisfaction...but a duty of the state (Lyautey, 1927, in Abu-Lughod, 1980 and Minca, 2005).

\textsuperscript{65} Though one of Lyautey’s first acts as executive was to send M. Abdelhafid into retirement in favor of his more pliant brother Moulay Yusuf.
Clearly Lyautey believed in preservation as a moral duty of the colonial regime. In regards to the Jemaa el Fnaa, this duty was expressed in two vizieral decrees in 1921 and 1922 that defined the Jemaa el Fnaa as a protected site. These decrees:

- Defined the borders of the Jemaa el Fnaa
- Classed the area within those borders as a zone *non aedificandi* [i.e., upon which nothing may be built], (and attached the noun ‘Place,’ denoting a large open urban space, from that point on to the name ‘Jemaa el Fnaa’)
- Interdicted the sale or rental of property within or bordering the defined area to non-Moroccans (Borghi 2005)

The second of these decrees was followed a day later by a decree stating that “European buildings are to prevent compromising the picturesque neighborhoods of the indigenous population.” It prohibited the renovation of facades within the city of Marrakech except those in accordance with the “ensemble and decoration that characterizes the architecture of this agglomeration” (Borghi 2005). The decree also included language that specifically stated that these measures “will ultimately have the effect of ensuring a lasting medina for the benefit of tourism, since it will maintain the aspect for which [Marrakech] is universally admired.”

In these decrees we can see the relationship (one which Adam Kuper [1999] points out and which I will discuss in more detail a bit further on in this chapter) between the idea of preserving culture and creating a system of apartheid. Interaction between groups blurs distinctions and (by some definitions, if perhaps not mine) weakens the ‘authenticity’ of each, and it is a short distance between speaking of the preservation of a

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66 Note the use of the ‘vizieral’ decree in further continuation of the *association* approach of using local political structures to enact colonial policies.
way of life and the enforcing of separation between groups of people. In turn, the preservation of culture is an attractive rhetorical tool for those seeking to maintain social control and justify the keeping of populations physically and administratively separate, as in the case of French-occupied Morocco. It should be said that Lyautey seemed to be a genuinely true believer in the beauty and importance of Moroccan cultural heritage (as Borghi points out); however, it is tough to imagine that a consummate and shrewd occupier such as Lyautey did not include heritage preservation as a contributing component of his larger enterprise of bending Morocco to colonial rule.

These decrees’ focus on maintaining the authentic appearance of the Square and Marrakech environs, as Minca and Borghi point out, has changed little in the intervening years through multiple re-incarnations of the movement to preserve Marrakechi cultural heritage. For example, there is the emphasis on the appearance of buildings surrounding the Square in this excerpt from the UNESCO pamphlet:

Jemaa El Fna is a special space that must be preserved both in its physical, tangible dimension and its oral and intangible dimensions. However, the physical environment has undergone changes extremely fast. If in the past, and a number of iconographic documents attest to this, the construction surrounding the site was characterized by a lack of decoration and the exclusive use of simple traditional materials, we find in recent years flagrant breaches of these rules. The majority of buildings surrounding the square are panoramic cafes designed with materials of wood, plastic or metal, whose diversity affects the mission of aesthetic consistency, not to mention the breaking of continuity and visual pollution that it generates (Skounti, Tebbaa, and Nadim 2005, my translation).

Changes in the Jemaa el Fnaa between Moroccan Independence and UNESCO Recognition

In the years following the colonial decree there have been (as one might expect in a site designated as heritage) relatively few large changes to the place. Following Moroccan independence in 1956, there does seem to have been some crisis of conscience over what
to do about the Square – understandable, given both that the Square could have seemed rough and backwards to a new nation seeking to move forward from colonialism, and that it had been designated as a heritage site by the former colonial occupiers. A (somewhat apocryphal) story that Barnaby Rogerson tells concerns Eleanor Roosevelt’s 1956 visit to Marrakech: Upon requesting to see the Jemaa el Fnaa, she was told that it had been repurposed as a car park, but after expressing her dismay was told that it would be restored by her next visit (Hamilton and Rogerson 2011, foreword).\(^{67}\) This story may well be more legend than fact, but at any rate a number of elderly ḥlayqiya and other Marrakechi did relate to me that the Square had been cleared of encroaching cars in 1956, followed by a personal visit from King Mohammed V during which he declared that the Square would be maintained in perpetuity, belonged to the poor, and its performers would never be obligated to pay taxes.

The other changes to the Square throughout the 20\(^{\text{th}}\) century tended to be improvements in its appearance and suitability as a tourist and heritage site. Overall we see a pattern of relatively subtle improvements likely intended to make the visitor experience more pleasant while leaving the ‘authentic’ elements that lay within the heritage conception of the Square (like the surrounding buildings, the open area, and the performers themselves) intact and mostly unchanged. One such change that had a significant impact on the lives of the ḥlayqiya was the removal of the coach station from the western edge of the Square – what Minca refers to as a ‘purification’ of the Square’s image as heritage, but ironically having lasting negative effects on the ḥlayqiya’s source of clientele and ability to make a living. Starting in the 1970s, the marketplace inside the

\(^{67}\) Other versions of the story have Winston Churchill as the protagonist. As they both visited in 1957, staying at the Mamounia Hotel only a few minutes’ drive from the Square, either one is plausible.
Square itself began to dwindle, and the souks around the Square shifted to more tourist-focused knick-knacks and souvenirs. In the mid-1980s the less tourist-friendly activities like the dentists were banished (still posing for photos with tourists while conducting their real tooth-pulling elsewhere) and the local arrondissement began more aggressively cracking down on homeless occupants and pickpockets. During the 1990s, the food stalls and juice stands licensed and taxed, and their places (unlike those of the ḥlayqiya) defined and regulated by the local government. The restaurants were corralled into the concrete square they currently occupy and later, in 2004, they were supplied with water, electricity, and gas lines, eliminating the smoke and racket of generator and charcoal. The hard-packed dirt surface of the Square was paved with asphalt on the occasion of the 1994 GATT treaty meeting in Marrakech, which was in turn replaced with interlocking bricks in 2004.

The Jemaa el Fnaa and UNESCO

The more recent story of heritage-making at the Square starts in two places: in Marrakech with Spanish writer Juan Goytisolo’s campaign to stop two construction projects near the Jemaa el Fnaa, and at UNESCO, with a movement towards the recognition and safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. As Valdemar Hafstein chronicles in his 2004 dissertation, the UNESCO concept of heritage underwent a significant number of transformations throughout the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st. Throughout these changes, the meaning of ‘heritage’ expanded to include actual human practice, rather than merely the tangible products of that activity. Prior to the adoption of ICH as a focus for activity beginning in the late 1980s, the focus

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68 See also (Aikawa 2001; 2004; Aikawa-Faure 2008)
was on the tangible: monuments, buildings, cities. The 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage remains one of UNESCO’s most successful and powerful instruments, ratified by 190 countries and funded by required contributions from each ratifying country. It concerns two types of heritage: cultural, which consists of lasting, human-made structures, and natural – which consists of natural sites of outstanding beauty or scientific value. The 1972 Convention was enormously successful in terms of ratification (190 nations at the time of this writing) and funding, currently collecting around US$ 4 million for its projects between compulsory and voluntary contributions from ratifying states and private contributors. While its focus on the tangible and a particularly Western-biased definition of authenticity spurred the process that led to the movement toward ICH in general and the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in particular, the 1972 Convention still represented a successful template that the authors of the 2003 strove to maintain compatibility with. The 1972 Convention served as a model for the 2003 ICH Convention – in fact, the first working documents of the 2003 Convention language were simply the language of the 1972 Convention with the word ‘intangible’ added (Hafstein 2004, 64).

Between the 1972 and 2003 Conventions, however, there were a number of redefinitions of heritage in the UNESCO discourse. A shift away from this emphasis on the tangible came with the 1989 Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore. The 1989 Recommendation emphasized the making of inventories and lists of practices and repertoire by member states. However, the approaches put forth in the Recommendation were quite different from those in the current regime in that the emphasis remained on documentation and archiving. The holders of know-how were
objects to be studied and recorded, with the goal of preserving the products of their
activities rather than aiding in the continuation of those activities, as stated in Article C:

Conservation is concerned with documentation regarding folk traditions and its
objects is, in the event of the utilization or evolution of such traditions, to give
researchers and tradition-bearers access to data enabling them to understand the
process through which traditions change. While living folklore, owing to its
evolving character, cannot always be directly protected, folklore that has to be
fixed in a tangible form should be effectively protected.69

Throughout the recommendation, the proposed solutions to folklore’s erosion “by the
impact of the industrialized culture purveyed by the mass media” remain documentation
and dissemination, the freezing and converting of practice into text and recordings for
analysis and later discovery. The Recommendation was sharply criticized (for example,
by Janet Blake in her 2001 analysis of the Recommendation) for clearly assigning the
task of inventorying and documentation to researchers and officials, essentially
foregrounding the role of ‘outsiders’ in the preservation of folklore (Blake 2001). From
the standpoint of one advocating for the increased participation of actual practitioners,
this criticism has merit: the Recommendation’s proposals for action focused heavily on
Member States creating jobs for folklorists, encouraging the formation of institutions for
archiving and studying folklore, and disseminating and promoting folklore through
broadcasts, festivals, and museums. The intellectual property aspects of protection also
concerned the needs of the folklorists, as did the calls for the protection of collected
folklore materials from decay and natural and man-made disaster (Blake 2001). 70

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69 From item C: Conservation of Folklore. This quote at least shows some reflections on the argument’s
internal contradictions and attempts to come to grips with them.
70 The Recommendation in fact deliberately avoids the topic of intellectual property protection of folklore,
which reflects a split in the focal activities of UNESCO and WIPO (which became the body more
concerned with IP) throughout the 1980s. This split is discussed in-depth in Sherkin, 2001.
The 1989 Recommendation was ultimately unsuccessful in terms of its adoption and implementation. For example, one of the recommendations was that countries submit reports to UNESCO on their efforts to implement it, after a 1990 request for these reports only 6 countries responded. By the time of a 1994 UNESCO survey, only 43% of the countries responding had a copy of the Recommendation in their official language (Kurin, 2001). This poor adherence is unsurprising given the document’s lack of mandate; unlike a Convention or Proclamation, a Recommendation is more of a statement of principles than a binding resolution, and it suggests rather than obliges (Kurin 2001). The Recommendation also failed to create a specialized body to oversee its implementation, instead relying on the resolve of its signatories to carry it out (Blake 2001).

Following the Recommendation was a general shift from what Hafstein characterizes as a European model of heritage protection as recording and archiving to an East-Asian model concerned with transmission and continuation of practice. The 1972 World Heritage Convention had (and arguably still does have) flaws in its ability to include the holdings of many UNESCO Member States as a result of its bias toward large, monumental standing structures made of long-lasting materials. This bias towards this concept of the ‘authentic,’ where authenticity is in part defined by an item having a certain portion of old materials versus those newly added, excluded sites such as Japanese wooden temples that have stood for centuries but must be rebuilt every so often to replace aging materials. The overwhelming proportion of European and North American sites on the World Heritage register (48% of the world total cultural and natural heritage sites, 53% of the cultural heritage sites) attests to this (UNESCO 2013).
The growing interest within UNESCO towards intangible cultural heritage has much of its origins in East Asian approaches to heritage. Even prior to the adoption of the World Heritage Convention, Japan and South Korea had arrived at their own adaptations of the ‘monumental’ concept of heritage, adaptations which were to form the basis of the turn toward intangible cultural heritage in UNESCO in the 1990s. In the mid-1950s, the Japanese formulated a system for the recognition of "living human treasures," while adding the category of ‘intangible cultural properties’ heritage to be preserved on to a more Western-style list of objects, sites, and monuments (UNESCO 2002a).

The incorporation of Japanese concepts of authenticity also served as yet another important step towards the inclusion of the intangible into the definition of heritage and the formation of the ICH paradigm. Following Japan’s accession to the 1972 Convention in 1992, the member-state raised concerns that the heritage sites that it proposed would not meet Western criteria of authenticity, leaving it unable to participate fully in the Convention (Stovel in Knutsen 1995, foreword). The focus of concern was on the regular practice of repair and reconstruction of Japanese historical sites, such as the Nara and Ise shrines – shrines which, being made of wood in a warm climate and thus not long-lasting, are ritually demolished and rebuilt in twenty-year cycles (Bock, 1974, 56). This process of renewal, where the continuity resides in the know-how required to repair and rebuild rather than in the actual materials of the shrine, faced challenges in being accepted and included on a list where the criteria of authenticity for buildings were biased toward durability and antiquity of materials. Thus began a discussion within UNESCO on rehabilitating concepts of authenticity so as to allow the participation of member states with similar concerns, leading to the 1994 Nara Consultation on Authenticity and the
Document it produced. The Nara Consultation and the international Consultation held at UNESCO headquarters the preceding year marked a few important turning points within UNESCO: a further augmentation of the concept of cultural heritage, moving towards including the intangible as part of the cultural heritage concept rather than encapsulating living practice as separate "folklore." They represented a shift in focus from the archival approach found in the 1989 Recommendation to the Nara Consultation’s safeguarding approach, where savoir-faire was seen as something to be preserved in living practice and the practitioners themselves prioritized over researchers (Aikawa 2001, 14; Hafstein 2004, 22). In putting forth concepts of heritage that had origins in East Asia, it represented a power shift within UNESCO to include greater influence of Japan, Korea, and China – and allowed other regions that faced similar disadvantages under the old materials-based notions of authenticity, like much of Africa, the possibility of greater opportunity to participate in the UNESCO heritage lists.

*(In)tangible Cultural Heritage*

So as we can see by the short summary given above, the concept of intangible cultural heritage grew out the idea of tangible heritage. Intangible cultural heritage programs are frequently conceived as additions to existing tangible heritage programs or legislation, such as in the Japanese circumstance, or in the 2003 ICH Convention itself, which grew gradually from the 1972 World Heritage Convention. The 2003 Convention quite deliberately based much of its language on the 1972 Convention (Hafstein 2004). As a result the intangible heritage discourse is indelibly marked with an inherent tendency towards viewing ICH practices as discrete entities bounded by place: the categories of sites, buildings and monuments found in (tangible) cultural heritage
recognition and safeguarding are transmuted into items in a States inventory or a Representative List of ICH.

While the idea of a list of ICH Masterpieces was put forth by the Koreans during the 1993 Consultation, it was a letter concerning the Jemaa el Fnaa in 1996 that served as the catalyst for the list’s creation. In Marrakech, the movement towards valorization and protection of ICH comes with the actions of Juan Goytisolo, who was (and still remains) an esteemed author and a part-time resident of the Marrakech medina since the 1970s. Goytisolo was a regular visitor to the cafés and performances at the Jemaa el Fnaa, and who both came to love the Square and work it into his writing, most notably the 1980 novel *Makbara*, which is largely set in the medina and features an entire chapter devoted to an exuberant and raunchy depiction of the Square and its performers (Goytisolo 1981).

It is Goytisolo’s vision of the Square, his idea of what the Jemaa el Fnaa ‘is’ that looms largest in the heritage depiction of the Square: a place of the quirky and extraordinary, dominated by the personalities of orators like Cherkaoui the *mul ḥmaam* (pigeon handler) and the *tbiib hacharat* (the Insect Doctor) – and the storytellers, who Goytisolo likened to living libraries, whose each individual loss he felt was “was much more serious for humanity than the death of 200 best-selling authors.” (T. M. Schmitt 2008)

Much the chain of events that led to the Square's declaration as ICH was set into motion by the perceived threat posed by two large structures (a 15-meter glass building and an underground parking garage) that had recently gained permission from the city to be built near the Square. As a reaction to the proposed developments, an association was formed in 1997 – *Les Amis de la Place* -made up of intellectuals and businesspersons concerned with preserving the heritage of the Square, with Goytisolo as its most famous
and powerful member. Seeing that the protests lodged by the *Amis* to the city officials involved were met with disdain, the author contacted his publisher, Hans Meinke, asking that he in turn speak with Federico Mayor, then Director-General of UNESCO (T. M. Schmitt 2008). Through Meinke, Goytisolo inquired as to the possibility of the Jemaa el Fnaa being placed under UNESCO’s protection as part of the ‘oral heritage of humanity’, a concept for which a program did not yet exist.

As Thomas Schmitt and Valdemar Hafstein write, Goytisolo’s initiative to obtain UNESCO recognition and protection for the Squares’ oral traditions was a key catalyst in mobilizing the movement towards a further formalization of the impulse towards the protection of living practices that had been gaining momentum since the early 90s. As I discussed a bit earlier, the 1990s marked a shift in UNESCO towards the idea of preserving the intangible. The challenges to and redefinition of authenticity of the Nara Conference, as the general dissatisfaction with both the ineffectual nature and the more archive-based approach of the 1989 Recommendation left a receptive environment at UNESCO for Goytisolo’s request to serve as something for on which to make a new initiative. Schmitt emphasizes the importance of Goytisolo’s position as a “scale hybrid social actor,” i.e. someone able to act on multiple levels and social spaces of a local-global interaction. The fact that Goytisolo was someone able to both organize locally in Marrakech and (as a world-famous author and someone in a common generation of Spanish intellectuals as the UNESCO Director-General) to get powerful people in a supranational organization on the phone was a key factor. As Dr. Ouidad Tebbaa, (one of the founding members of the *Amis de La Place*, and one of the writers of the UNESCO materials on the Square) told me in an interview,
I tell you in truth, the idea of the intangible heritage came from here, from Marrakech. It came from Juan Goytisolo, who wrote about the heritage of the Square, and who was able to contact Federico Mayor and bring the Square to his attention. They were very receptive to Goytisolo, and were interested in working with us (Tebbaa 2012, my translation).

Certainly other factors were important as well: the relative proximity of Morocco to Europe, the notoriety of the Square even pre-Proclamation, Morocco’s stability and the whole-hearted cooperation of the Moroccan government (including Hassan II).

The Cultural Space of the Jemaa el Fnaa was declared a Masterpiece of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in the first round of declarations in 2001. As some ḥlayqiya I spoke with about that time recalled, there was much fêting of the declaration in Marrakech both at the Square and elsewhere, and general high hopes for the improvement of their social and livelihood status. Funds (approximately 153,000USD) for the safeguarding plans were allocated from the Japanese funds-in-trust established in 1993.

The initial safeguarding plan, which was eventually scaled back, included measures aimed at the aesthetic aspect and architectural heritage of the Square:

Stricter application of the law concerning the aesthetic aspect of the square and the renovation of surrounding facades

The destruction of two buildings unsuited to the popular and traditional aspect of the square

the removal of illuminated advertising boards

The transformation of streets converging on the Square into pedestrian zone

The reduction of car traffic

As well as measures aimed at the intangible cultural heritage of the Square:

The organization of weekly sessions of storytelling by the Jemaa el-Fna Square Association, for the benefit of pupils of the Marrakesh Medina schools, with the collaboration of a delegation of the Education Ministry

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71 It was the first of 3, followed by two more in 2003 and 2005.
The creation of a competition with different prize-awarding ceremonies for storytellers

Creation of a fund-in-trust for the benefit of old-aged ḥlayqiya, in order to prompt them to transmit their knowledge and know-how to young apprentices. (note: this item does not appear in later published versions of the safeguarding plan, such as that on the UNESCO website)

Encouragement of painters and photographers to create works about the Square

Inventoring and collection of documentation on cultural practices linked to the square (UNESCO, 2002b).

Many of these measures are aimed at the beautification, popularity, and valorization of the Square, an odd focus for a declaration that concerns intangible heritage. This seems especially confusing as very few of these goals address the actual ability to practice oral heritage at the Jemaa el Fnaa, addressing instead its physical appearance. It is unclear how the intangible heritage would be served, for example, by the destruction of aesthetically inconsistent buildings, removal of billboards or the creation of works of art about the Square.

*The Square and UNESCO in 2010-12*

As I wrote about at length in the first two chapters, what I found in 2010-12 was a thriving Square, for the most part: the local and tourist crowds were abundant, most of the ḥlayqiya making a relatively decent living and the place full of varied attractions. What I did not find was much remaining sign of any safeguarding activities that had taken place under the banner of the UNESCO declaration. The most lasting trace of UNESCO’s presence was its stamp, both actual and metaphorical: the plaque at the edge of the Square (Fig. 22), the UNESCO logo on the membership ID badges of ḥlayqiya associations, and the constant mention of the Proclamation by many Marrakechi when the
topic of the Jemaa el Fnaa was raised. The Proclamation still had noticeable emotional weight for many Moroccans I spoke with, both within and outside of Marrakech. What Goytisolo referred to as a “bourgeois disdain” for the Square was still in evidence when discussing the Square with middle – and upper-class Moroccans; it was still a place where unsavory things happened. However the form of that disdain, which interviewees (like Abdelhakim Khabzaoui the cha‘abi singer ḥalaqi) described as being focused on the denizens in decades past – the ‘sons of the Jemaa el Fnaa, and their lowly nature – was now more often focused on activities that had to do with visitors: the hash selling, the homosexual meeting-up, and the presence of child prostitution. Long-time ḥlayqiya I spoke with, like Khabzaoui and Abderrahim Ammra, spoke of the UNESCO Proclamation as an important catalyst that shifted public opinion of the ḥlayqiya for the better, although they discussed the Proclamation as one part of the general ‘cleaning-up’ of the Square that had been going on since the 1980s. Thus one of the enduring legacies of the Proclamation was the transposing the moral menace that the Square represented to the Marrakech public from being something indigenous (the scruffy, poor, and disreputable awlaad Jemaa el-Fnaa) to something endogenous (foreign tourists and the decadent behaviors and tastes they bring with them). And certainly an important aspect of this re-shuffling of public opinion was the enhanced social standing of the ḥlayqiya – from despised (or at least not well-respected) urchins to bearers of a heritage that had been internationally recognized. As I will discuss further in Chapter 6, this enabled

72 The meeting-up in question, while attributed to visitors, was something I only really observed (and only occasionally at that) among Moroccans. The topic of the Square as a place of increased sexual freedom – and some acceptance, however grudging or covert, of homosexuality – truly begs some good field research by someone better-versed in queer theory.
access to social capital: designation as heritage bought neighborhood respect, credit at the
general store, and the occasional gratis medical care from local doctors.

During my stay, the memory of the Proclamation also manifested itself in a two-
week festival in May 2011 that commemorated its 10th anniversary. The festival consisted
of a variety of events: storytellers told stories each morning and groups of ḥlayqiya
performed each afternoon and evening on a large stage set up in the Arset el-Bilk park on
the southern edge of the Square, while a photo exhibit and small performances went in
the Bank el-Maghrib and conferences and other events were held around the city. The
two-week-old specter of the Café Argana, hit by a terrorist bombing only a couple of
weeks earlier, was covered with a large temporary façade and what looked like giant
abstract acrylic paintings.

The performances in the Arset el-Bilk park were striking examples of what
Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1995) refers to as “the foreignness of objects to their contexts of
presentation,” with the performances presented as a ‘virtual Jemaa el-Fnaa’ (with the real one immediately next door) that presented the ḥlayqiya in a way more intelligible to audiences unaccustomed to the ḥalqa, giving their performances not in 3-dimensional theatre-in-the-round of the ḥalqa, but 2-dimensionally on a large aluminum stage, amplified by microphones and lit by spotlights with colored gels. The performances were announced for the most part not in Moroccan Darija but in Standard Arabic and French. And throughout the entire festival, as additional indices of the Square which was just a few tens of meters away, the stage was flanked by several grraba water sellers.

Many aspects of the safeguarding plan drawn up as part of the Proclamation, however, are nowhere in evidence. The more urban-planning aspects seem to have been carried out, as one would anticipate given the Square’s role as tourist centerpiece: the buildings Goytisolo objected to were never built, the couple of large billboards visible from the Square have been removed, the car traffic has been largely re-routed, and the facades have been kept fairly muted and free of copious amounts of neon. The proposed activities of the festival relating to the oral heritage of the Square (the main focus, after all, of the Proclamation) are not in evidence in present day. There were some activities carried out in the first few years following the Proclamation: there was a series of in-school workshops with the storytellers and local schoolchildren. While I was unable to find more specific records on or teaching materials from the workshops, the storyteller El Ayachi Ben Jakkane showed me pictures from 2003-4 of himself and the other storytellers working the Square at the time (Mohammed Bariz, Abderrahim Makouri, Mohammed Erguini, and others) telling stories to children.

73 Which could just as easily include middle- and upper-class Moroccans – who have often spent little to no time watching something in a ḥalqa – in addition to foreigners.
“This looks good. Still going on?” I asked him. “Are you still doing this in schools?”

“No. not now. That was years [ago].” He answered, waving his hand in dismissal. “Maybe from time to time. I tell stories for people like that thing you saw [referring to a multi-storyteller performance put on by the Alliance Francaise in the medina where I had first met him]. But not often.”

While following their recognition by UNESCO some storytellers like Bariz, Maqouri, and Erguini have managed to find occasional work at cultural centers or at events like the one I attended at the Alliance Francaise, the school programs seem to have folded. There was also at least one storytelling contest as per the safeguarding plan, although I was unable to find out more details about it. Also not evident anywhere is the website, which had still seemed to be a possibility when Richard Hamilton of the BBC interviewed Mohammed Ould-Khattar in 2009 (Hamilton 2009). And finally there is the small booklet produced by UNESCO about the heritage of the Square, which featured texts by Tebbaa, Skounti, and Triki, as well as photos taken by Hassan Nadim (Skounti, Tebbaa, and Nadim 2005).

When I asked Ouidad Tebbaa about the remains of the UNESCO initiative, she seemed less than sanguine about its current state or future prospects:

The Amis have disbanded, and don’t meet anymore. Mr. Goytisolo is a very old man now, and he doesn’t have the energy to work on the project…We [referring to the Amis] realized that we were not going to be able to sustain work on the project years ago, and we decided to return the remaining funds to UNESCO to oversee.

The funds that Tebbaa discusses, (152,898USD from the Japanese government’s Funds-in-Trust donated for the carrying-out of the safeguarding plans of the Masterpieces) remain a bone of contention between ḥlayqiya and the former Amis de la Place. I heard both sides of the discussion: ḥlayqiya who felt that the ICH initiative had used funds intended for them, and Amis exasperated at the misunderstanding of the fund’s purposes.
In a brief discussion with a musician ḥalaqi friend on the topic, he specifically mentioned Tebbaa:

Tebbaa is a thief! They were all thieves. Where is the money? We never saw any. It was for us!74

I had heard very similar statements (although generally directed at a faceless ‘them’ rather than at a specific individual) from a good number of ḥlayqiya. The actual amount of the UNESCO funds was usually unknown, imagined as a mythical sum that had made someone rich, if not them. The general consensus was that the money had either been inappropriately used up by people working for the UNESCO, or had been consumed by the baladiya, (البلدية, the city hall) which is popularly (and fairly accurately, in my experience) regarded as a black hole in which funds enter and never escape. When I brought the topic up (carefully) with Dr. Tebbaa, it seemed to be a familiar issue, and one that still invoked a lot of frustration:

Where’s our money? I am still asked this question by the ḥlayqiya. Fiin fluusnaa, fiin fluusnaa?! There was always this misunderstanding. I am very tired of this question. The money given to UNESCO by Japan for the project was never intended for the ḥlayqiya at Jemaa el Fnaa. It was intended for the project, not for the ḥlayqiya themselves, you see! It wasn’t stolen, and it wasn’t eaten by the baladiya. We used it for the project. We funded the schools project, the photography, some research. We had a conference. What was left we gave back to UNESCO (Tebbaa 2012).

Unlike the ḥlayqiya, I was never left with any sense of people like Tebbaa as dishonest, or the possible ending-place of the (relatively small) UNESCO funds as anywhere but back in some UNESCO regional office account. Instead, this back-and-forth between the

74 While the friend in question gave me permission to quote him, it seems prudent to leave his name out here. The specific direction of my friend’s accusation at Ouidad Tebbaa seemed likely due to her prominence in the events surrounding the declaration. As a scholar, a lifelong medina resident, a fluent French and Darija speaker, and a very photogenic person to boot, she remains (after Goytisolo) the public face of the UNESCO project to Moroccans in print and television. Goytisolo, on the other hand, seemed immune to criticism.
two parties in the issue highlights an issue I will discuss a bit later, which is the disjuncture between notions of heritage: the ICH discourse typically speaks of people like the ḥlayqiya as bearers and carriers of heritage, while the ḥlayqiya typically viewed themselves as heritage. Thus both parties, in their construction of the proper ends of funds intended for heritage preservation, have good reasons to hold the opinions that they do. But the ḥlayqiya, being the objects rather than the subjects of heritage-building by UNESCO, did not see their opinions borne into actual practice in the same way as the Amis de la Place.
Chapter 4: The Problems with Heritage

In this chapter I offer a point-by-point critique of the concepts and assumptions underlying the idea of intangible cultural heritage as a ‘good,’ supported by both my own fieldwork in Marrakech, as well as by examples taken from other case-studies of UNESCO ICH sites. This discussion of disjunctures – between constructed heritage and observed practice, between ‘culture’ as defined in the ICH discourse and as observed in my own fieldwork and experience, between the desire of the builders and objects of heritage – will lay a foundation for the chapter that follows, where I will present the Capabilities Approach as an alternative starting place for those looking to intervene in order to improve the well-being of a chosen population.

Finally, in the ‘coda’ I will address the macro-perspective put forth by Valdemar Hafstein, in which ICH makes sense as a tool of governmentality, a means of incorporating individuals into the larger project of governance. Seen from this perspective many of the nonsensical and dysfunctional aspects of it that I will discuss in the second part of the chapter make more sense than when taken at face value.

Many of the flaws inherent in the ICH paradigm and the projects created under its umbrella unfold from a central fallacy: that cultures, and the practices and ideas within them, are stable, discrete, internally homogeneous units. By criticizing the UNESCO position, I am of course not stating that human beings are not culturally diverse. Rather, I
am contesting the idea that this diversity occurs with the clear and stable boundaries that the UNESCO concepts of culture rest upon. In this section, building on the arguments of folklorists such as Dorothy Noyes (2006, 2011) and Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2004) and anthropologists such as Jean-Loup Amselle (2004) and Thomas Eriksen (2001), I will discuss ways in which UNESCO is working with a particular concept of diversity that does not reflect how people actually practice culture.

Establishing the predominant UNESCO discourse about culture

The concept of discrete cultures is a central pillar in the foundation of the idea of cultural diversity and intangible cultural heritage, and is something that UNESCO finds a robust enough basis to create normative instruments around. UNESCO’s concept of culture can be problematic to discuss, however, as the topic of the nature and definition of culture is rarely discussed explicitly, treated instead in any UNESCO instruments or documents (as it so often is everywhere else) as a given not in need of discussion – *res ipsa loquitur*, everybody knows what culture is and what cultures are, so it need not be hashed out or defined explicitly in the definitions section of a Convention. To better clarify the discussion, it is necessary to explain the basis for saying that UNESCO ‘says’ what culture is, and what the consistent culture theory threads are throughout its discourse.

I am drawing my impression of UNESCO’s discourse on culture and cultures from the content of UNESCO publications and instruments of the post-1989 Recommendation period, but there are a few particular points that one can point to as stronger positional statement on what the organization’s positions are. One of these is *Our Creative Diversity*, which Thomas Hylland Eriksen characterized (in his essay on the
work in *Culture and Rights: Anthropological Perspectives*) as expressive of the ideology that emerges from the organization's publications (UNESCO 1995; Eriksen 2001). As Eriksen discusses, one finds throughout the report (sitting alongside a contradictory Enlightenment-style discourse on universal human rights) the idea of cultures as bounded, homogenous entities. These cultures are presented as such sufficiently complete wholes that they may have their own discernable – and sometimes despicable – collective will, such as in this example:

> No culture is a hermetically sealed entity. All cultures are influenced by and in turn influence other cultures. Nor is any culture changeless, invariant or static. All cultures are in a state of constant flux, driven by both internal and external forces. These forces may be accommodating, harmonious, benign and based on voluntary actions, or they may be involuntary, the result of violent conflict, force, domination and the exercise of illegitimate power.

> In the light of this, the need for people to live and work together peacefully should result in respect for all cultures, or at least for those cultures that value tolerance and respect for others. There are some cultures that may not be worthy of respect because they themselves have been shown to be intolerant, exclusive, exploitative, cruel and repressive. Whatever we may be told about the importance of “not interfering with local customs”, such repulsive practices, whether aimed at people from different cultures or at other members of the same culture, should be condemned, not tolerated. (‘No culture is an island,’ page 54, UNESCO 1995)

The excerpt is immediately confusing, as it displays the internal contradictions of the concept of culture in use. At first, we see a brief nod towards a view of cultural permeability and instability. But the statement still rests on the idea of cultures, separate objects that influence each other. Furthermore, this is followed immediately by a jarring statement about the personality of a culture, a view in which a culture is an ‘itself,’ complete and distinct enough to be cruel towards other cultures. The people within the cultures imagined in this statement do not seem to possess individual will beyond the dictates of their culture; rather the *cultures* behave like people, given an independent will
and ability to act. The excerpt seems to advocate keeping cultures separate until, like bad children, they learn to behave. While not always making statements this startling, the rest of the document continues in the same vein – speaking of cultural minorities within larger societies, for example, as given facts without ever bringing up the potentially contested nature of such identities or the identity politics involved.

_Claude Lévi-Strauss as Theoretical Godparent_

In his critique of *Our Creative Diversity*, Eriksen gives some useful explanation of the theoretical roots of UNESCO’s position on the issue of discrete cultures (‘archipelago cultures,’ in Eriksen’s term). He cites the influence of Claude Levi-Strauss, (who was on the Committee that created the document and is cited within it) on the UNESCO discourse that the document represents, and Levi-Strauss’s cultural relativism (somewhat surprising in light of the universalist structural-functionalist writing he is best known for) as a shaping influence (Eriksen 2001). Levi-Strauss was commissioned by UNESCO to write two works, *Race et Histoire* (1952) and *Race et Culture* (1979). Levi-Strauss's *Race et Histoire* (the more optimistic about human coexistence, and thus the better-received and influential according to Eriksen) begins with a fervent rejection of a biological explanation of human difference, then defines cultural diversity as the thing that sets people apart:

It seemed to us, however, that the very effort made in this series of booklets to prove this negative side of the argument, involved a risk of pushing into the background another very important aspect of the life of man—the fact that the development of human life is not everywhere the same but rather takes form in an extraordinary diversity of societies and civilizations. This intellectual, aesthetic and sociological diversity is in no way the outcome of the biological differences, in certain observable features, between different groups of men; it is simply a parallel phenomenon in a different sphere…
...Yet it would seem that the diversity of cultures has seldom been recognized by men for what it is—a natural phenomenon resulting from the direct or indirect contacts between societies; men have tended rather to regard diversity as something abnormal or outrageous; advances in our knowledge of these matters served less to destroy this illusion and replace it by a more accurate picture than to make us accept it or accommodate ourselves to it (Lévi-Strauss 1952).

As we see in this excerpt, Lévi-Strauss not only adheres strongly to the idea of the separateness of cultures, but states that this separateness is essential for advancement of the species; advances in the human condition are not the result of groups simply ‘bettering themselves,’ but rather the product of coalitions between diverse groups.

Cultural diversity then becomes an essential resource to be husbanded by organizations like UNESCO:

The need to preserve the diversity of cultures in a world which is threatened by monotony and uniformity has surely not escaped our international institutions. They must also be aware that it is not enough to nurture local traditions and to save the past for a short period longer. It is diversity itself which must be saved, not the outward and visible form in which each period has clothed that diversity, and which can never be preserved beyond the period which gave it birth.

Thus we have one source of the idea of cultural diversity as a resource with its own intrinsic value, akin to biological diversity in its survival value—vigor, health, advancement comes from hybridity, thus the importance of encouraging diversity and preventing homogenization. This is reminiscent in many ways of Alan Lomax’s writings on the importance of the preservation of musical diversity, albeit arguing in favor of a more general notion of diversity and without Lomax’s particular bent towards preservation of older tradition forms of culture (Lomax 1968; 1977). But both authors see a danger in homogenization: stagnation, boredom, and inflexibility.
Cultural Diversity and Intangible Cultural Heritage

The idea of cultural diversity as a good – of innovation, improvement and general human well-being coming from interaction and collaboration between discrete cultures – has persisted in UNESCO materials and instruments up to the present. Whether one attributes it to the influence of Levi-Strauss or to pervasive multiculturalism, the idea remains that cultures are not only separate and different but that the maintenance of this difference is something to be striven for. Concurrent with UNESCO’s work in intangible cultural heritage are their efforts concerning the preservation of cultural diversity, most notably the 2001 Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity and the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. Both instruments affirm that the presence of ‘distinctive,’ (read: bounded and separate) diverse cultures is an important resource for human well-being and advancement, and that the maintenance of this diversity is of great importance. As it states in the 2005 Convention:

Article 1 – Cultural diversity: the common heritage of humanity

Culture takes diverse forms across time and space. This diversity is embodied in the uniqueness and plurality of the identities of the groups and societies making up humankind. As a source of exchange, innovation and creativity, cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature. In this sense, it is the common heritage of humanity and should be recognized and affirmed for the benefit of present and future generations.

Admittedly, the two policy initiatives – Cultural Diversity and Intangible Cultural Heritage – have different origins and sets of goals. The 2005 CD Convention was – behind the framing rhetoric – largely an effort put forth (primarily by France and Canada) to carve out an exception for culture in the market liberalization demanded by WTO agreements, giving some measure of protection to local measures to restrict the influx of
foreign (mostly American) mass culture (Bernier 2003; Hahn 2006). But the instruments of the two initiatives have significant overlap in wording, including the establishment of the threat of globalization (in the CD case, a threat to diversity, in the ICH case a threat to fragile intangible heritage), the importance of cultural diversity as a resource, and the urgency of the need to protect that resource. And Noriko Aikawa-Faure points out the important political boost given to the development process of the ICH convention when links were made (in terms of rhetoric used, which in turn which made their way into the 2003 ICH Convention) between the CD and ICH initiatives. Most obviously, they are both initiatives put forth by the same branch of the same organization. Thus it seems fair to say that the ICH initiative is very much a part of the same ‘lineage’ of thought as that of the Cultural Diversity, and those putting it forth are thinking of cultures along the same lines: as discrete, internally homogenous groupings of people.

In the more recent publications and instruments relating to ICH, there are some nods to greater complexity in some material but the basic idea of our culture and their culture as static categories remains, and is assumed within these writings to be a robust basis for making cultural policy. I do qualify these assumptions as tacit, in that in the ICH materials UNESCO never states ‘Culture is…’ But while a definition of culture is not to be found stated directly in these materials, one can infer one by statements about the importance of cultural diversity and the globalization that threatens it with homogenization. Inherited from the rhetoric of Our Creative Diversity and the 2001

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75 This is particularly evident within the document in such passages as “The objectives of this Convention are…(h) to reaffirm the sovereign rights of States to maintain, adopt and implement policies and measures that they deem appropriate for the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions on their territory.

76 “we may share expressions of intangible cultural heritage that are similar to those practised by others.” (What is Intangible Cultural Heritage?, UNESCO 2009)
Declaration on Cultural Diversity, diversity of cultural expressions (and thus diversity of bounded cultures) is still presented largely as an uncomplicated good that fosters sustainable development:

Considering the importance of the intangible cultural heritage as a mainspring of cultural diversity and a guarantee of sustainable development, as underscored in the UNESCO Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore of 1989, in the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity of 2001, and in the Istanbul Declaration of 2002 adopted by the Third Round Table of Ministers of Culture (2003 Convention preamble).

This diversity is presented as not only real but fragile, under threat from a globalized culture that is not only monolithic but – again – disconnected and separate from the cultures it may affect if left unchecked:

Many expressions and manifestations of intangible cultural heritage are under threat, endangered by globalization and cultural homogenization, and also by a lack of support, appreciation and understanding (UNESCO 2009).

The idea of a fragile, threatened diversity is impossible without the underlying idea of distinct, stable cultures to hold it up. In order for a practice, a culture to be threatened from outside there has to be an outside. There must be clear borders between what is and is not part of a culture, agreed upon by those who live without and within – as if cultural boundaries were uncontested facts, or at least uncontested enough for a consensus to be possible as to what constitutes ideas from ‘outside’. Despite the many qualifying statements that appear throughout UNESCO publications concerning the dynamic nature of these cultures, the idea that cultures (whether they are called ‘cultures’, ‘cultural groups’, or communities’) exist as categories that are stable enough to form policy around remains present throughout.
A messier idea of culture

In my above discussion of UNESCO’s treatment of cultural diversity, I am not saying that human beings are not culturally diverse. Differences between people are of course real, and my criticism of the idea of bounded cultures is not meant to imply that we are somehow actually culturally homogeneous. My objections are to the way the idea of culture is used: ‘culture’, as the field of human thought, action, and interaction, is not reducible to a series of cultures that abut each other yet remain discrete, that interact but keep their own stable identities and ethos. In thinking that our various names we give to cultures describe a reality that is similarly ordered – what Eric Wolf refers to as a ‘billiard-ball’ concept of cultures:

The point is more than academic. By turning names into things we create false models of reality. By endowing nations, societies, or cultures with the qualities of internally homogeneous and externally distinctive and bounded objects, we create a model of the world as a global pool hall in which the entities spin off each other like so many hard and round billiard balls (Wolf 2010).

What Wolf is getting at with this statement, and what I am arguing in a variety of ways throughout this dissertation, is that a view of cultures as internally homogeneous closed systems that interact only at their peripheries will lead to a lot of misleading hypotheses about how people actually do things. The kind of multicultural thinking that UNESCO displays in the rhetoric and execution of the ICH programs is well-intentioned and not without a certain utility and possibilities for the empowering of individuals to imagine and construct themselves in the ways that they choose to. But the uncritical application of what Terence Turner refers to as an ‘encyclopedic’ idea of culture – static, reified, inert – introduces a set of flaws into the process and end product of any formulation of policy (Turner 1993). And to expand on Wolf’s statement, the field of human interaction is not
reducible to discrete cultural ‘items’, self-contained practices that are consistently conceived of and performed – the billiard balls are not filled with marbles. It is often necessary to speak of cultures, practices, items or aspects of culture (as I have done in this dissertation and will do again) in order to make certain points. But these are abstractions made from a reality that is an unstable, ever-changing emergent system of interactions.

The idea of culture I am working with – which will have implications for the character and kinds of interventions that I will propose later on – is one that is very much influenced by authors such as Jean Loup Amselle (1998) writing about the history of ethnography in Africa, Anne Phillips (2007) and Seyla Benhabib (2002) writing about multiculturalism and rights claims, and Eric Wolf (1982) writing about European history: cultures – whatever one chooses to call them, be it ‘culture,’ ‘community,’ or something else – do not exist as discrete entities, and traditions or ‘items’ of culture do not exist as stable segments of human activity outside the confines of the kind of conscious effort towards taxonomy and classification characteristic of colonial policy or ethnography. To assume that they do exist as such is to not only discount the fluidity of human interaction, but to assume sufficient homogeneity within cultures (or groups, or communities, or whatever term one chooses to use) so as to allow their members to speak with one voice.

Instead, what I propose is a much messier view than a mosaic of interacting but discrete cultures: what we call culture is instead located in the dynamic interactions of individuals, each with their own minds and habitus (Bourdieu 1977). Of course, culture is learned, created, recreated, negotiated only through interactions with other people, but what is created is not a coherent whole – instead, culture is an emergent property of
individual people interacting and the sum of their inputs. What is produced in this emergence is unstable, constantly renegotiated and reshaped by those whose actions constitute it and the physical environment they live in. And while we do endless things to build and enforce consensus, to ‘sync up’ – education, ritual, law, to name a few – each of us remains locked in our own minds and bodies with only imperfect means of communication (speech, gesture, writing, image) to use in arriving at a shared idea of what the world is, who we are, and what we are all supposed to be doing.

Culture is an emergent property, the sum of our interactions. As an explanatory metaphor, I return to the ‘map’ of the divisions and individual ḥalqas in the performing area of the Square that I discussed in Chapter 2. To call it a map is a bit of a misnomer; there is no physical ‘map’, per se, on the local administrator's wall or anywhere else. Instead, (aside from the actual physical boundaries of the area as a whole) the map exists in the minds of those who go there: the ḥlayqiya and vendors of course, but also in those of the regular patrons, the Qaid and his informants, the policemen, the tourists Moroccan and foreign, the boutique and restaurant workers who walk through on their way to work. Each participant has an idea of what is there, and where it is and where it should be, and the form of the Square’s activities is the sum of their interactions: some of them are conscious, explicit, and verbal, like a Gnawa informing a new performer that this space (which he well knows as being adjacent to the Poste and the Café des Etoiles, next to the cigarette vendor and just south of the circle of cha‘abi musicians) is his and the newcomer best find another or negotiate with him and his co-occupants about sharing it.\(^77\)

\(^{77}\) It should be said that while that quote I use is handy to illustrate the concepts I am trying to get across, it is just a quick excerpt from a conversation and is not meant to imply that his worldview is actually
Some are less conscious and nonverbal, like the boutique worker taking a habitual path to the bus stop, past his favorite Berber group in whose ḥalqa he sometimes leaves a few dirhams – he forms part of the ḥalqa while he is there, and his passage through the whole space both follows and subtly shapes the flow of human traffic. The same sorts of endlessly variant types of interactions and negotiation shape the map in terms of the dimension of time as well, and the Square’s schedule emerges from actions and interactions that are conscious and unconscious, verbal and nonverbal, passive and active.

In the end, the bounded-ness of the life of the Jemaa el Fnaa is an illusion springing from the words and efforts of those with the power to define it, such as the French colonial administration, the tourism industry, UNESCO, and writers – including myself. In reality the life of the Square is part of the world outside it and the lives people lead when not there: a Berber group finds a better place to play and leaves a gap, the Wilaya makes a films festival and sets up a giant screen on one end, UNESCO pronounces the Square to be intangible cultural heritage and publishes descriptions of its heritage. Many of the performers work outside the Square – occasionally as far away as the US and Europe.

And of course, the Jemaa el-Fnaa is a cultural tourism destination, whose visitors both bring money, ideas and expectations from outside, while taking photos, experiences, and items of material culture away with them (not to mention the mutual exchange of viruses and bacteria).

This shape taken by the activities that go on at the Square—what I simplify into the map and schedule— is itself both ‘culture’ and a useful metaphor for the larger idea of how culture works: it exists as an emergent product of the interactions of everyone anywhere near that simple. Mustafa’s explanation was part of a conversation where he was trying to get across how he reckons his working boundaries.
involved. The norms, the constructions of what things mean, the aesthetic, the knowledge about practices – *none of them exist in their entirety anywhere*. Instead, each participant has their own idea of these things in some ways that is unique; it differs from everyone else’s as a result of their own physical separateness, their personal biography, and the imperfect nature of our ability to communicate with each other. We interact, we are taught, we learn what we are supposed to do and what things mean – but it is never the exact same thing as anyone else knows, even those we live with and would identify as members of our own group. All these norms, meanings are constantly redefined as we are confronted with the versions held by others, and we influence others in turn. Of course, we learn these only in a social context with other people, but these circumstances and social networks are constantly shifting and changing in ways not captured by the idea of a homogenous culture; we do not all learn the same things.

Different forces – political, economic, geographical – may influence the rate and scope of these redefinitions, but they occur at all times in all places, and culture is never stable. This is not only because we have interactions with those who define themselves differently than we do (and this increasingly more so as people become more commonly mobile and connected) but because we are all conscious, reflective beings whose own ideas about what it means to be a member of our groups can never be quite the same as anyone else’s, and can often be very different.

What this idea of culture (as opposed to cultures) implies about the ICH discourse is twofold:

*First*, the idea of communities that are bounded, homogeneous and stable mistakes a construct (the community, whatever the circumstances of its imagining) for
the reality, which is a fluid network of people that are connected and interact in surprising ways. There is no ‘thing’ there, no entity that can be addressed, spoken with, spoken for, and acted on. To assume so will produce perverse, unintended effects, as I will talk about throughout this chapter.

For another example of this disjuncture between ethnographic construct and actual lived practice, there are the Gnawa, whose music forms a part of the recognized intangible heritage of the Square. As constructed in popular depictions like the surrounding materials and program of the Essaouira Gnaoua Festival, they not only have all the necessary earmarks of a coherent group: the shared (real or imagined) historical connections to sub-Saharan Africa, common elements of dress and musical style, a shared language (which includes words not present in everyday Darija), and a set of distinctive religious practices. There is also a fairly substantial body of writing that presents Gnawa as ‘a culture,’ both academic, (see Pâques 1991; Chlyeh 1999; Kapchan 2007, for example) and pop. Leaf through the pages of Deborah Kapchan’s *Traveling Spirit Masters*, for example, and you will see the Gnawa depicted as a coherent group. Individuals and their personalities and quirks do of course appear, as Kapchan is a scholar whose facility with Darija and long-time commitment to the study of Moroccan music allows her to get to know people, and she conveys that in her work. But they are still presented, as in the vast majority of writing on the Gnawa, as members of a fairly homogeneous group: the Gnawa are, they have, they do. Which – for scholarly works that are not intended to have prescriptive power – is just fine. Given the way ethnography
works it is nearly impossible not to do, regardless of how strongly one tries to take Abu-Lughod’s admonition to ‘write against culture’ (L. Abu-Lughod 1991).\textsuperscript{78}

But a safeguarding plan made as part of an addition to the Representative List of ICH would have some normative power. In actual practice, ‘Gnawa’ is neither a homogenous community nor one that has clearly defined borders. There are, to be sure, a good many people who called themselves Gnawa whose practices would fit well within the borders of the description that would shape a safeguarding plan, and many at the Square, like ma’alem Koyo’s or the Gnawa that work regularly with Abdelkabir Marchane would do so without problem. They are full-time Gnawa who perform lilas, their \textit{Abdellawi} style is the one most people think of when they think of Gnawa music. But even within the small population I got to know in and around Marrakech, there were many ways to be a Gnawa, many different ideas of who had \textit{tagnawit} (‘Gnawa-ness’) and who did not. In Brussels I have met Gnawa who keep themselves employed nearly full-time by working both as Gnawa and Aissawa. I have also heard of the same being done in Fes, and there is crossover in the repertoire between Gnawa and other groups that perform lila, like the Aissawa and Hamduchiyya (Nabti 2007; Christopher Witulski, personal communication). As discussed in Chapter 2, there were a number of varieties of repertoire, practice, and livelihood strategy to be found even in the small space of the Square: the \textit{Gnawa Chleuh}, the \textit{Abdellawi}, the roamers versus the Gnawa who played in ensembles. There are no end of examples of Gnawa who work in other genres, adapting instruments and sometimes core repertoire items to work with jazz, rock, or pop musicians. And there are certainly no institutions that determine membership (although

\textsuperscript{78} This dissertation, with its ‘ḥlayqiya do this’ and ‘ḥlayqiya think that’ is certainly no exception.
most who call themselves Gnawa have been some kind of apprentice) or provide a standardizing force – and even if there were, would its measures be uncontroversial or uncontested? We have something again like the activity at the square: a complex system whose qualities result not from a central set of mutually-understood rules but from a process of constant interaction, appraisal, and adaptation.

Second, the idea that there are practices, ‘items’ of culture that have meaningful borders does not work as a basis for normative intervention. Just as cultures do not have stable boundaries or homogeneous compositions – making the idea of cultures instead of a common human culture a problematic place to start from – the idea that culture is made up of practices or items that have discrete borders is an unworkable prospect. All of the statements about instability and constant renegotiation in the preceding section could be applied to the idea of ‘items’ of culture; the idea that practices (like storytelling or Gnawa music) have stable characters not only ignores the fact that they exist in the spaces between people interacting, but also ignores the fact that no human activity is truly separate from everything else. Culture cannot be broken into units that can be treated as items that can be acted upon in isolation. To quote John Gatewood,

Neither cultures nor traits are well-bounded, well-defined units. Rather, they are distributionally unstable, and their identification as units involves arbitrary judgments. In short, Lowie (1936) was correct when he wrote, "There is only one cultural reality that is not artificial, to wit: the culture of all humanity at all periods and in all places (Gatewood 2000).

As Anne Phillips points out throughout her book *Multiculturalism Without Culture*, assuming that cultures are stable, homogeneous, discrete structures that in turn dictate an individual’s ethos, thoughts and actions ignores the endless wrangling and renegotiations that take place within populations over the meaning of that identity (Phillips 2007). As
she also discusses, it also discounts an individual’s power to reflect, make choices, and act independently of the supposed dictates of their culture. As ‘culture’ is something most often ascribed to the less-powerful by the more-powerful (whose habitus, values, and practices are seen as cosmopolitan and universal) this discounting of individual agency is worrisome, as I will discuss later. And as Dorothy Noyes reminds us, to assign a tradition to a community creates a border that is both too large and too small: too large because it draws in those who have no stake in the practice (businessmen, politicians, men who do not perform a women’s practice, and so on.) Too small, in that in defining a ‘community’ draws an artificial boundary that inevitably severs the communicative network in which the practice exists (Dorothy Noyes 2011). I would argue that the same can be said of defining a ‘tradition’ or any other item of culture: the border drawn will be too large in that it will include things that many of the participants would feel are not part of the item, too small in that it will ignore many aspects of the practice that the bordering leaves out.

‘Identifying’ or ‘inventorying’ heritage for safeguarding is actually a creative process; as Kirshenblatt-Gimblett puts it, “Heritage is a mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past.” (B. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995) In saying that the idea of items of culture as a basis for intervention ‘does not work,’ I am saying that since a cultural ‘practice’ is actually an emergent property of many diverse inputs and relationships, it cannot be preserved. True preservation would involve the severing and/or freezing of these relationships and forcing the society to stop its development, which is impossible. All that can be accomplished is the creation of something new, despite the fact that it may resemble its pre-heritage inspiration (again, see Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995).
So in the end, the uncritically-applied concept of ICH on the basis of the assumption that cultures exist as stable, discrete entities flattens out and artificially segments the warp and weft of human interaction and agency. It presents groups and their practices as whole and bounded, ignoring the emergent and dynamic natures of daily life and the frequency and complexity of interactions that take place across what would be considered cultural boundaries. And finally, assuming cultures exist in a fashion sufficiently uncomplicated such as to allow their use as a basis for policy renders invisible the unequal power relationships involved in cultural definition and naming, often an artifact of the European colonial project. As Amselle points out in *Logiques Mêlisses* in regards to African ethnic divisions, “The invention of ethnic groups is the joint work of colonial administrators, professional ethnologists, and those who combine both qualifications” (Amselle 1998, 35).

**Race into Culture**

The threat of the loss of cultural heritage posed most particularly by globalization is one of the pillars of the ICH project, as is the claim of the benefits of safeguarded and revitalized heritage. This way of thinking coagulates culture into discrete cultures and cultural practices, making them into bounded packages. Turning that way of thinking into projects and instruments with normative power imposes this way of thinking onto the flow of human activity. 79 This logic and its expression potentially leads us potentially down ideological roads we may find ourselves uncomfortable taking. To be specific, the rhetoric surrounding the ICH paradigm shares some unfortunate coincidences with

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79 Which is not to say that this flow and the ideological landscape of any given region does not already include such thinking, just that ICH injects yet one more stream of it.
another cultural heritage-concerned socio-political project: apartheid, both in the sense of the South African policy as well as other similar systems of segregation put into place elsewhere. This is a sensational claim, of course, and a seemingly harsh one given that one of the main stated purposes of the ICH convention is to promote mutual respect among cultures, and one generally thinks of a system like that of apartheid as an utter breakdown of mutual respect. But the streams of thought behind the two projects share some common features and, in the case of the overall history of safeguarding of the Jemaa el Fnaa, some ideological intersections.

At the root of this claim is the fact that cultural heritage thinking rests on what Udo Will and Walter Benn Michaels refer to as a racialized, or essential, notion of culture, in which culture merely replaces race as an essence that binds populations together in time and space (Michaels 1992; Will 2008). As an example of the genesis of this thinking in anthropology, both Michaels and Will discuss the work of Melville Herskovits, and his challenges put forth in *The Myth of the Negro Past* to the idea that the African-American was a ‘man without a past’ whose experiences of the Middle Passage and slavery had robbed him of all connections to his African heritage (Herskovits 1970). The authors point out that in rejecting race as real thing, Herskovits turned to a notion of culture that was functionally identical to race: in order to explain how African cultural practices are the genuine past of African-Americans, there must be the assumption the African and African-American are both the same people, and this in turn merely replaces race with culture as the innate thread that binds the two populations in time. To assume that what people other than yourself did before you were born is a part of your own past is to assume a thread of culture that runs between your own experience and theirs,
something ‘in the blood’ in the same manner previously assigned to race. Herskovits attempts to avoid a genetic component by crafting a narrative of unbroken oral transmission as the means by which this culture is passed on, rather than genetics: even house slaves who lived separately from field hands had moments of contact that permitted africanisms to be passed on (Herskovits 1970, 133). But as Will points out, if the ‘ancestral notion of race’ would refer to the ‘background’ of one’s group only in cultural terms, that is in terms of transmitted knowledge about the group’s past, then everyone, whether borne into the group or not, could at least in principle acquire it, and heredity and genealogy could not be defining elements of this notion: we could all be Igbo, Guarani, or Walpiri, nothing in our biology would predetermine us otherwise (Will 2008, p. 6).

Herskovits’s collapsing together of race and culture is evident in the same passage as he discusses the interactions between poor whites in the South and black slaves, as in this quote from a traveler though coastal slave territories in the mid 19th century:

We were passing some cottages on the way-side, when a group of children rushed out, half of them white and half negro, shouting at the full stretch of their lungs, and making the driver fear that his horses would be scared. They were not only like children in other parts of the world, in their love of noise and mischief, but were evidently all associating on terms of equality, and had not yet found that they belonged to a different caste in society (F.L. Olmstead 1856, quoted in Herskovits 1970, p. 130).

Herskovits uses this passage to demonstrate the kind of extended contacts with whites through which africanisms could have been lost, to be later regained through contacts with other slaves. However, it does not seem to fully occur to Herskovits here that by his definition of ‘African’ as an identity that is transmitted through cultural contact, not only could the house slaves never have lost their culture (as they had not learned it before being introduced to it by the field slaves – you cannot ‘lose’ something that you did not have in the first place) but also the poor whites would have become at least in part ‘African’ by learning africanisms from their contacts with blacks. But in this logic, the
cultural transmission only counts as inheritance if you are the right person (i.e., the right race) to acquire it.

The ICH discourse that displays a very similar line of thinking, the rhetoric of loss and revitalization as well as that of the looming threat of globalization display the same collapsing of race into culture and confounding of genetics and culture implied in the use of the term ‘heritage’. If members of a community can experience loss when an item of intangible cultural heritage is not practiced, and potentially find it again when it is revitalized, it implies that something connects those people to that practice beyond their actual lived experience. Culture is learned; if you have never done something, never engaged in an activity, you cannot lose it as you never had it in the first place. To say that a group of people have lost an item of cultural heritage (and could find it again through safeguarding and revitalization efforts) is to imply that there is a connection between it and them on a level outside their lived experience.

The ICH discourse employs this essentialized view of culture, albeit encased in several layers of doublethink that clearly try to leave some rhetorical distance between the idea of ‘cultural’ heritage and racial or ethnic heritage. The people who write UNESCO materials and instruments are clearly not unaware of the implications of the heritage concept and its potential to be used as fodder for claims based on race, and for the celebration of heritage to be taken as a prescriptive statement on what particular activities are ‘good’ for people based on their ethnic affiliation:

intangible cultural heritage can only be heritage when it is recognized as such by the communities, groups or individuals that create, maintain and transmit it – without their recognition, nobody else can decide for them that a given expression or practice is their heritage. What is Intangible Cultural Heritage? (UNESCO 2009)
This quote, clearly intended to inject conscious decision-making into the discourse in order to counteract this essentialized view of heritage, still fails to address the problem. First, if the practice is already something that people recognize as important, then why does it need to be preserved? This question points to the unspoken implication in this quote: there are people who should be practicing this heritage, but are not. If people are not engaging in a practice, what basis is there for saying that they should, other than making a connection with an inherited, essential nature?

There is also (as seen in Herskovits’s writing) a visible effort towards emphasizing continuous practice as a way of establishing a lineage rather than a genetic link:

This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity (2003 Convention, Article 2)

Despite this conscientious application of ideological duct tape to the heritage concept, in practice ICH still necessarily rests on an essentialized, reified version of culture. The emphasis on a non-prescriptive approach in the UNESCO materials (“nobody else can decide for them that a given expression or practice is their heritage”) and on a non-genetic link between person and practice is contradicted by the idea and practice of safeguarding: if a heritage item is dying out because people in the community are not practicing it, then trying to grow the practice through awareness-raising, workshops, festivals and the like means encouraging people who do not currently do it to take the practice up, or at least to appreciate it as part of their own heritage. Now, UNESCO is not trying to get just anyone, anywhere to engage in these ICH practices –
no one is suggesting that safeguarding entails encouraging kids from central Ohio to take up storytelling in the ḥalqa, or balafon-making (except perhaps as a project to promote cross-cultural understanding). Safeguarding involves the construction of a package of a described practice and its appropriate region and community, and it is to that described community that awareness-raising and promotion efforts are to be aimed. The implication is then that those to whom the promotion efforts are aimed share the same natural potential to enjoy the ICH as the active practitioners – as well as sharing possession of it – because they come from the same culture. This practice will ostensibly be good for these people based on an affinity with the practice and practitioners that exists outside of their actual lived experience: they all share the same culture, even if what they actually do and know is different. The establishing of homogenizing globalization as a threat to ICH works in the same way. If your own intangible cultural heritage is good for you, globalized culture is just the opposite: it comes from a sphere outside of your own culture, and is destructive of the ICH that is good for you.

To say that something is good for you that you have perhaps never practiced depends on this swapping of culture for race; it supposes that there is something about a person that defines them beyond the things they actually say and do – one’s culture becomes another unchangeable, innate fact about a person akin to eye or hair color. In this use, culture is not what you have learned, experienced, and decided about yourself; it is instead an inherited attribute that explains you rather than you explaining it. One’s claimed (or assigned) identity then becomes a prescription for a set of things that are good for you: you can listen to globalized music and choose to define yourself through it, but your innate cultural character means that your own musical heritage will always
remain potentially soul-nourishing. In the opposite case, as W.B. Michaels points out, not engaging in practices of one’s essential culture becomes abandonment and neglect, and assimilating into another culture a kind of betrayal. It is then difficult to see a distinction in this line of thought between culture and race.

By extension, as Michaels also states, if other people who are not connected to this heritage learn to do it this becomes a kind of theft (Michaels 1992). By this logic, one can learn the practices of another culture, but at best one is merely *passing* and at worst *stealing* – unless one has the appropriate essence. Enforcing these ideas in the negative in this manner, of course, is not really what UNESCO does – it has, in fact, assiduously avoided getting into the business of designing and enforcing culturally-held intellectual property regimes, ceding that to WIPO (the World Intellectual Property Organization) and gradually distancing itself from the topic since the 1980s (Sherkin 2001). But asserting appropriateness *for* and possession *by* in the positive implies the negative; if you own your own "heritage" someone else does not.

To be certain, this way of thinking of culture as something innate, in the blood, is a part of our everyday thinking. As an American musician working in the Belgian music scene, I confess to allowing this line of thinking to open professional doors for me – while I like to think that my guitar playing speaks for itself, I know full well that I have an easier time finding gigs due to the perception that my ability to play blues or country music is something I am born to as *un vrai américain*. I in turn feel plenty of guilty pangs over being seen as representing American ‘cultures’ that are not ‘mine,’ such as when I
I also confess to finding myself at times idly wishing that my Moroccan heavy metal musician friends would sing in Arabic, or incorporate more ‘authentically Moroccan’ elements into their music. Thinking about culture in this way is common to those of us raised in a multiculturalist environment (we have learned it, internalized it – made it, in fact, into part of our…culture?). The important point is this: despite the presence of this line of reasoning in our unexamined day-to-day thinking, culture is not genetics, and treating it as such in policy or programs will produce perverse effects. Turning this uncritical essentialist thought into policy and projects intended to promote cultural diversity may work in ways one does not anticipate, and share a certain affinity with practices one abhors.

*Apartheid/Segregation and ICH*

By raising the issue of apartheid, I am *not* suggesting that UNESCO policies are intended to contribute to the kind of ‘separate but equal’ horrors seen in places like South Africa or the United States. This sort of thing, of course, is a clear failure of the mutual respect and understanding that UNESCO intends to promote. The justifications for the Cultural Diversity and Intangible Cultural Heritage initiatives and those of apartheid systems are close cousins of each other in that they follow the same lines of logic, if obviously not practice.

As Adam Kuper discusses in *Culture: The Anthropologist’s Account*, while the installing of apartheid in South Africa post-World War Two was clearly motivated at its heart by racism and fear, much of the *volkekunde* scholarship that served as the basis for

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80 This, of course, despite the fact that I am intellectually well aware that what I practice is indeed mine, because I practice it – and what I am representing, as a result, is myself and my own practices and tastes.
policy was focused on cultural rather than racial differences (Kuper 1999, xiii). In a 1929 lecture, W.W.M. Eiselen (the intellectual ‘architect’ of apartheid, influential as a writer, director of the popular Ethnology department at Stellenbosch University and later as a Native Affairs administrator) stated that there was no evidence that intelligence varied with race, and no evidence that one race was destined to dominate over others (Gordon 1988; Kuper 1999). The true determinant of destiny, Eiselen stated, was culture. Cultural diversity was to be valued and cultural integrity was to be defended against the threat of disintegration. The goal was not to create black Europeans, but rather to foster a “higher Bantu Culture”:

The potential of the Bantu is largely unknown and the success of our great experiment will naturally be determined thereby. But we feel that the way of “eiesortige” (autochthonous) development is the only healthy way whereby real community growth can be promoted (W.W.M. Eiselen in Gordon 1988).

This way of thinking clearly rests on the idea of a South Africa composed of separate cultures with clear borders, rather than as Radcliffe-Brown defined it, as one system of many people interacting (Radcliffe-Brown 1940). Contact happens across these cultural borders, and an overabundance of contact leads to cultural miscegenation and the disintegration of traditional values and ethos. It is no leap to see the similarities between statements like those of Eiselen quoted above and those of other programs founded on the idea of discrete cultural identities. In both, autochthonous development is prized; the difference between the separation proposed by proponents of apartheid and those supported by the rhetoric used in support of the 2005 Convention on cultural diversity is more one of degree than of substance. Of course, as I said before, in the UNESCO environment these statements are not charged with the voltage of racial hatred and xenophobia, and are instead intended (at least on paper) to foster mutual understanding.
and respect. However, the similarity does point out the glaring possibilities for misuse and perverse effects, or at least the failure of their intended goals.

The similarity and compatibility between the logic of cultural diversity and heritage and that of apartheid is particularly evident in a look at the Jemaa el Fnaa’s history. Part of the reason why the Jemaa el Fnaa was such a natural fit for a pilot project of the ICH initiative, as it was itself in part the product of the designing of a system of urban segregation. As was discussed earlier in the previous chapter, Claudio Minca and Rachel Borghi point out that the modern Jemaa el Fnaa is at least in part an artifact of the program of ‘urban apartheid’ carried out in Morocco under Maréchal Lyautey (Minca 2006; Borghi 2005, the term 'urban apartheid' is taken from Abu-Lughod 1980). The French colonial principle of association (which succeeded the assimilation approach in Morocco), which greatly shaped Lyautey’s administration of Morocco, resembles the apartheid rationale in some key respects: keeping cultural groups separate not only makes them easier to govern, but also would allow them to develop and evolve in their own distinct ways (Abu-Lughod 1980, Betts 2005). Cultural mixing was detrimental to the ethos of both colonizer and colonized, and both philosophies rely, of course, on a Romantic imagining of bounded cultures with distinct cultural ‘souls’ that determine the course and shape of their development. There are differences, to be sure – association was primarily an administrative approach intended to be an improved means of managing a colony and had much of its origins in the experiences of French colonial officials, while apartheid is more solidly focused on culture, based in Afrikaner volkekunde ‘ethnos theory’81 (Sharp 1981, also see Gordon 1988). But association certainly did concern itself

81 See Sharp, 1981 for more on ethnos theory in Afrikaner scholarship.
with culture, particularly as expressed under the hand of Lyautey – a great believer in the preservation of the cultural integrities of the colonized.\textsuperscript{82}

Yes, in Morocco, and it is to our honour, we conserve. I would go a step further, we rescue. We wish to conserve in Morocco Beauty-and it is not a negligible thing. Beauty-as well as everything which is respectable and solid in the institutions of the country…(Lyautey, 1927, in Abu-Lughod 1980, 143)

As Minca and Abu-Lughod discuss, this valuing of cultural integrity translated into an urban policy that created bifurcated Moroccan cities: the traditional medinas for the natives and the \textit{villes nouvelles} for the French. And through ‘vizieral’ decrees, the Jemaa el Fnaa was defined spatially, functionally, architecturally, and reserved exclusively for occupation by the native population with non-natives barred from owning or renting the surrounding property\textsuperscript{83} (Borghi 2005). All of this done, as the decrees mention, with not only the cultural integrity of the site in mind but also with an eye to the newly designated Square’s potential as a tourist attraction. The decrees established the Jemaa el Fnaa as the heart of the medina, which was in turn the center of Moroccan urban culture – separated from the colonial \textit{ville nouvelle} of Guéliz by a substantial buffer zone.

Thus the Jemaa el Fnaa was made in a very durable fashion into a center of Moroccan-ness, and the appearance of the Square and the activities that went on there were maintained in line with an imagining of the ‘real’ Marrakech. As I discussed earlier in the previous chapter, the maintenance and ‘purification’ of the Jemaa el Fnaa’s appearance and character continued long past the decrees of the 1920s: the reaffirmation

\textsuperscript{82} As Rachel Borghi (2005) mentions, there was and still remains debate on whether Lyautey was a believer in segregation per se, or solely concerned with the maintenance of Moroccan cultural integrity and the use of indigenous administrative structures as a means of rule. Regardless of his true inner motivations, Borghi concludes, his segregatory urban planning still occurred either way. Abu-Lughod (1980, 142) describes Lyautey as consistent in his rhetoric of preservation throughout the body of his speeches and writings.

\textsuperscript{83} Scare quotes added to emphasize that these were decrees of the Lyautey colonial administration, but administered through a Royal Dahir in line with Lyautey’s use of native administrative structures. It is interesting that in the UNESCO materials the fact is never mentioned that these are in truth colonial decrees made with the goals of the French colonial system in mind. – See Abu-Lughod 1980, 136
of the Square’s importance by Mohammed V in 1956, the moving of the bus station in
the 1970s, the cleaning up of the kinds of performances and services allowed in the
1980s, and the many changes to the traffic patterns in the 1990s and 2000s.

Perhaps most importantly, there is the internalized, seldom-spoken-aloud rule
shared by most performers, vendors, and patrons that I spoke with that whatever
performances or services occur at the Square must be ones that have been accepted as
authentically Moroccan. (By whom it must be accepted as such was never clear or stable
– sometimes it seemed a matter of ‘all of us ḥlayqiya’, sometimes the important opinion
seemed to be the customers’, sometimes a combination of both) This way of being and
thinking that seemed common to those involved in the Square and that expressed itself in
the emergent structures of the life that went on there helped make the Jemaa el Fnaa a
good fit for the ICH program in both directions: for the nascent ICH program, the Square
represented an island of cultural and architectural ‘survival’, threatened just enough to
inspire urgency but whose apparent authenticity and representative (of Moroccan culture)
nature were robust from their colonial and post-colonial maintenance. For those involved
in the life of the Square, the ICH proclamation at very least did not demand great changes
in the way things were to be done. The invasive potential of safeguarding interventions
did not and still has not seemed to matter much to those at the Square – because those
exact kinds of interventions had already been occurring for the better part of a century.

To sum up, by discussing how a policy of segregation contributed to the building
(in symbolic and concrete aspects) of a Square that was an ideal first case the ICH
project, I am not making a genetic argument: the process of identifying, celebrating, and
safeguarding the intangible heritage of the Jemaa el Fnaa is not a bad enterprise simply
because it is the legacy of Lyautey’s policy of urban segregation. I am discussing it because it demonstrates a clear affinity between the two streams of thought, an affinity that made the project of a policy of segregation an ideal candidate for one of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding. This similarity/affinity illustrates the shortness of the distance from the assertions that undergird segregation to those behind the logic of ICH: *people are members of distinct, internally homogeneous cultures, and appreciating, celebrating, and maintaining this* (inventoried, recognized, and normalized) *distinctiveness is good not only for the individual culture but to humanity as a whole.*

*Steps should then be taken to preserve these distinctive cultural practices* (as described), *and* (if one adds UNESCO’s Cultural Diversity rhetoric and initiative into the mix) *steps should also be taken to limit outside contamination.*

By any reasonable measure, the social experiments of apartheid in South Africa, segregation in the United States, and social engineering under *association* in Morocco did few any genuine good, and were artificial divisions imposed on a complex society that resulted in gross injustice and the reification and magnification of inequality. Putting aside the horrors that resulted from these social experiments, the fact is that they *did not work*: the populations involved still interacted, still changed in ways that had to do with their interchange with the world they lived in rather than their own distinct cultural soul. The primary achievements of apartheid were human suffering and the stunting of the growth of the social network; the distinctions truly created and preserved were ones of economic and social inequality, not between independently evolving and thriving cultures. Why then would a project that follows nearly the same logical path produce its intended results and benefits?
Heritage interventions and their on-the-ground effects at the Square

The kind of safeguarding programs put into action by (and inspired by) UNESCO are not without benefit to the populations concerned. As I stated in the introduction to this chapter, both those directly addressed by heritage recognition (i.e. the actual practitioners of the recognized heritage) and those who are more indirectly connected to the practice can benefit in all sorts of ways. I will discuss some of these ways in more detail in a moment, but they include the economic benefits of enhanced tourism, the political benefits of greater visibility and recognition, and the enhanced access to social capital resulting from having one’s activities recognized as heritage.

However, as I saw at the Jemaa el Fnaa during the period of my fieldwork, safeguarding itself rarely –if ever – seemed to accomplish the on-paper goals it set, and many of these goals make little sense in terms of on-the-ground realities. The storytellers were mostly gone from the Square, and they are not likely to reappear in significant numbers. The threats of inauthentic real-estate construction and tourist ‘acculturation’ made little sense, especially in light of both how the Square actually worked as a place that depended on tourism. And many of the ḥlayqiya (though not all) I spoke to seemed less than sanguine about encouraging their children to follow in their footsteps. Things had happened, but ‘safeguarding,’ the preservation of the Jemaa el Fnaa as it was described in UNESCO’s (and in Goytisolo, Tebbaa and the rest of the Amis de la Place) vision of it, did not seem to be one of them. While those who made their livelihoods at the Square may have enjoyed some enhancement of their incomes and social status as a result of the recognition of their activities, the nature of the heritage-building process did little to enhance their level of agency – rather the opposite: the safeguarding process
provided some with a podium to speak and be heard, but the ḥlayqiya were not prominent among them.

Some benefits

There were, to be sure, a number of positive benefits of the Declaration to the performers themselves. Among these, perhaps closest to the stated intentions of the UNESCO ICH project is the improved social status of the performers – the derogatory label of *wld Jemaa l-Fnaa* (‘son of the Jemaa el Fnaa’) seemed to have entirely lost its negative sting, becoming instead a badge of honor. A number of ḥlayqiya attributed this to the recognition by UNESCO – certainly enough to attribute the declaration as being at least partly causative of the change, though likely it also results from the ascendance of the Square in importance to the local economy. This is certainly no small thing, and it echoes elsewhere in the ḥlayqiya’s lives as improved social capital tends to do: improved credit at the grocery and elsewhere, better gigs outside the Square, the occasional bit of doctoring done *pro bono*, better chances to marry, and so on.

Also stemming without a doubt from the Declaration is the improved sense of both their value to the economy and life of Marrakech and identity as part of a community of performers. Following the Declaration, performers associations started to form among the ḥlayqiya, and during my time there I saw numerous efforts underway to join these smaller associations into a larger body including all ḥlayqiya for the purposes of collective bargaining, mutual aid, and connecting members with clients for performing work outside the Square. (I will discuss these associations further in Chapter 6.) At the time of my most recent visit, however, these efforts to organize seemed to be languishing as a result of still-lacking social capital among the different groups of ḥlayqiya and
inadequate financial resources. The improved clout and increased potential political power resulting from the visibility afforded by the 2001 Declaration remain, and efforts to organize and bargain collectively may yet bear fruit.

Finally, of course, there is almost certainly enhanced tourist traffic to the Square as a result of the UNESCO recognition. The Square, impressive as it is, is still but one attraction in a country filled with places and activities of interest to tourists, and the incomes of the ḥlayqiya have benefitted not only from the promotion of their activities in the tourist literature, but also from the improved tourist infrastructure that uses the Square as showplace and point of embarkation to the other points touristique in the city and region. These benefits to the ḥlayqiya are perhaps meager in comparison to the profits enjoyed by others in the tourist industry, but they are there nonetheless.

_Disjunctures_

Despite these benefits, there remain a number of problems and missed opportunities to do tangible good for this population. These failings stem from some fundamental dysfunctions in the concepts that UNESCO is working with: both the concept of intangible heritage and idea of its safeguarding and are built on shaky, unexamined sets of assumptions. The objection, and the raison d’etre of this dissertation, is that this well-intentioned but poorly formulated bureaucratic discourse of intangible heritage preservation is the foundation for a lot of actions that waste time, money, and effort in the pursuit of something that can never be accomplished – the safeguarding of intangible heritage. To quote Dorothy Noyes’s proposed maxim, “good policy cannot come from bad theory.” (D. Noyes 2006)
In this next section I build on my previous discussion of UNESCO’s culture concept by enumerating these problems with the ideas of intangible cultural heritage and safeguarding, discussing ways in these concepts are flawed grounds for action even if they do produce peripheral benefits. This is done with the intention of setting up the next chapter, where I will discuss an alternative basis for thinking about ways to encourage and facilitate the social practices that ICH safeguarding is intended to address.

**The meta-problem**

In the scholarly discourse – and in my own definition – heritage (tangible or intangible) is a creation: an ‘authentic illusion’ (Skounti 2008), a ‘metacultural production’ (Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004). Heritage is something new, ‘a mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past.’ (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995) In short, heritage is something that is built, and the products of the ‘building’ of intangible heritage – the festivals, workshops, books, films, archives, inventories, plaques, and exhibits – exist in a certain relationship with their objects, but are not the same thing as those objects.

This is an umbrella issue that encompasses all the points that will follow. One of the striking things about working on this document has been the disjunction between ‘heritage’ as used by UNESCO in its materials and the actual practice of heritage safeguarding – a process that is, as I will discuss, an act of creating something new rather than finding something old. In the way UNESCO speaks about heritage in the 2003 UNESCO ICH Convention and the publications that surround it we have a solid, unquestioned reality; heritage as extant thing waiting to be recognized, described, protected. This heritage, while it needs to be identified and named as such by the
“communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals,” exists for an undetermined period of time before this recognition and the commencement of its safeguarding. As the 2003 convention (Article 2) reads,

The “intangible cultural heritage” means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity…

[...]The “intangible cultural heritage”, as defined in paragraph 1 above, is manifested inter alia in the following domains:

(a) oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage;

(b) performing arts;

(c) social practices, rituals and festive events;

(d) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe;

(e) traditional craftsmanship.

Leaving aside for a moment the question of interpreting precisely what is included or not included in this definition, we can see that in the 2003 Convention we are dealing with something that is entirely extant. Heritage, rather than being a metacultural operation, a construction ‘extracted’ (to use Bendix’s term) out of the stream of human activity, is a finite (if vast) set of real entities that can be listed, celebrated, and protected (Bendix 2008). While there are endless elaborations of the formulation of ‘heritage’ found in the quote from the Convention text above, throughout all of it the factual nature of heritage remains constant. Each item of heritage is something that existed long before the thought of its safeguarding, and the fact that it exists puts it under threat:
Just like culture in general, intangible heritage is constantly changing and evolving, and being enriched by each new generation. Many expressions and manifestations of intangible cultural heritage are under threat, endangered by globalization and cultural homogenization, and also by a lack of support, appreciation and understanding. If intangible cultural heritage is not nurtured, it risks becoming lost forever, or frozen as a practice belonging to the past. – *What is Intangible Cultural Heritage?* (UNESCO 2009)

There is a blatant contradiction here created by this treatment of heritage as something that exists before its creation, something that somehow exists independent of the rest of the flow of human activity. If heritage is constantly changing and evolving, how can it be under threat from change in the form of globalization or "lack of support, appreciation, or understanding"?

UNESCO’s vision of heritage is clearly a persuasive one, as evidenced by the success of the 2003 convention, and this seductive self-evidence is part of the power of UNESCO’s argument. Of course, it seems, intangible heritage exists/has existed. Why not? Certainly the cultural spaces and activities that are the objects of safeguarding seem to have been around for a long while, hence they provide a connection to the distant past of a community and are worthy of safeguarding. The Jemaa el Fnaa has been there for a long time, as have the ḥlayqiya – as the description by the traveler and writer Al-Youssi recounted in the UNESCO booklet illustrates, there have been performers there since at very least the 17th century (Skounti, Tebbaa, and Nadim 2005). Though to be clear, there is little evidence about their exact repertoire and performance practice, and what things may or may not have changed since these early reports.

A focus on the previous existence of the Square as recorded in available sources as proof of the enduring, unchanging nature of the Square and the activities it contains obscure what Amselle refers to as the “optical illusion” of oral tradition (Amselle 1998,
35). The paucity of written sources about a place, population, or practice (and the willful ignorance of some that do exist) allows the casting-back of a present-day state of affairs into the past, allowing things that are occurring now (and are the products of and reactions to the same modern world to which they are presented as antithesis) to be regarded as ancient, timeless, and unchanging. As Amselle points out in specific criticism of the idea of ICH through a discussion of traditional versus modern African art,

…recording the sound or image of musical feature, or physical techniques that are supposed to refer to an age-old tradition would mean forgetting that these same cultural features have if not submitted at least reacted to every political situation that they have faced since the European conquest. Dance forms, tales, and oral traditions are therefore as contemporary as the works of the contemporary artists they inspire. All African art whether labeled traditional or rural or, on the contrary urban and modern, is thus part of the same contemporary state.” (Amselle 2004, 88)

As I will discuss later in this section, this ‘packaging’ and ‘casting-back’ simplifies and homogenizes the histories of the practices concerned, ignoring the changing forms and influences that a place like the Square or a practice like storytelling has undergone – and, simultaneously, casting the modern-day cultural identity packaged with that practice back into the primordial past as well. At the same time, it obscures the fact that both culture and practice are modern phenomena, shaped by current events and consisting of people with current-day minds, desires and needs.

What is also rendered transparent, ignored in the assumption that intangible cultural heritage is extant, is the process that converts habitus to heritage – the eye, mind, and hand of the authors of heritage. The webs of interactions that are the object of heritage-building, the tangled mess of actors, activities, ideas and physical environment that make up the sorts of things that are chosen are not what reaches the table when building a safeguarding plan. They cannot be, as human life is too complex to do more
than suggest it on paper. But a safeguarding plan of action is a normative document that dictates codes of behavior, and the normative demands the concrete. And if the normative demands the concrete, the protean flow of human activity at a place like the Square provides nothing solid for a normative document to base itself on, no ‘this’ to place in the statements of ‘this is what we will protect, this is what people should do, this is what is best and appropriate here.’ What a safeguarding plan must be based on is the descriptions gathered in the earlier stages of inventorying. What is involved in the early stages of safeguarding is the translation of a complex and multidimensional network of human social production into this concrete thing that can be described, discussed, and protected – what will be referred to throughout the rest of this document as a ‘heritage package’ consisting of culture/community who owns it, the descriptions of a tradition, and the how, when, where, and why of that tradition. By conflating the two realms – of the description and of the described, the package and activity that it is based on – the UNESCO view of heritage fails to account for the huge distance between them and the many problems that lie within that gap. It ignores the fact that safeguarding is itself a part of the larger process of social production, and that the authors themselves bring to the table their own experiences, biases, priorities, and lenses which may be very disjunct with those of the people whose lives they are describing.

*Heritage ‘bordering’ and its consequences*

When speaking of heritage as a construction, a mode of social production, this is not said to posit it as a falsehood – like the things that it is ‘about,’ it is an intertextual weave of stories told and activities undertaken by real people. Like any other thing that people do, it borrows from the past and becomes woven into the present and future of its
object. In its ‘recourse to the past,’ it borrows tidbits of history to imbue its current-day object with a ‘pastness’, and to re-construct (in part or in full) its object’s relationships with the present. Of course, at the Jemaa el Fnaa it is no simple matter to discuss the ‘real’ life of the place versus the ‘constructed’ heritage version of it: the Square has been constructed and re-constructed throughout the last ninety years (and possibly longer) as a diorama of Moroccan-ness, an exhibit intended for both tourist and local audiences (Borghi 2005; C. Minca 2006). From the vizieral decrees in the 20s to the various waves of ‘cleaning up’ that have occurred since then it has been updated structurally to fit an evolving concept of the heritage that it represents.

It seems a bit naïve then to refer to a safeguarding plan for such a place, which has been shaped so strongly and incessantly into a heritage exhibition for almost a century, as ‘confusing a construction for reality.’ Heritage is very much the reality of the Jemaa el Fnaa, both for the physical site and for those who make their livings there. As Bel‘aid Farouz, the amin (treasurer) of the snake charmers’ association told me when I asked if he considered his practices as turaath (heritage),

Of course! I am folklore (ma’lum ana folkuur)! I am folklore, my father he was there, he was folklore. My grandfather here (shows me a very old postcard with a snake-charmer on it), he was folklore. That is what we do! We belong there (Farouz 2011).

As Bel‘aid’s emphatic statement is informed and sharpened by his awareness of the UNESCO Declaration (and as I will discuss later, the existence of his association is a direct result of it.) But Bel‘aid and the other performers I spoke with who had worked there before the declaration spoke of the Declaration of the Square as a Masterpiece as a continuation of a process of renovation, touristification, and general re-imagining that had been going on as long as they had been there. The Declaration was another event,
like the re-pavings, (1994 and 2005), the re-arrangement of the space (90s and 00s), the removing of the bus station and taxi ranks (1980s and 2004). While the Declaration was a big deal, and changed the lives of the ḥlayqiya in many ways, it did not introduce the idea of their own ‘heritage-ness’ to them.

So if we have a population of people who already regard themselves, the place they work and the activities that go on there as folkluur, how then is it possible to say that the valorization by UNESCO and the safeguarding plan that was formulated in the process are a mistaking of a construction for reality? The answer is that this latest ‘heritage version’, the vision of the Place that is contained in the threads of the discourse that informed/informs the safeguarding project is still for all its complexity just a schematic. Far more occurs at the Square, goes on in the daily lives of those who work there, than is included within the borders of the vision of the Square contained in the heritage and tourism discourses. Referring back to the description of the Square in Chapters 1 and 2, we see that what goes on at the Square on a daily basis is lived, created, and negotiated. Recall Mustafa Sema’s description of the borders of his workspace – defined to some degree by the Square’s physical architecture (the Poste), but also by the actions and choices of his neighbors (the cigarette-seller, the other Gnawa, the Aissawa). Or the way that the Ammra family ḥalqa – arguably one of the most popular acts at the Square for many years, yet left out entirely from any UNESCO materials – plays repertoire entirely from folk-pop groups like Nass al-Ghiwane and Larsade, and features Bladi, a mandolina virtuoso who quotes as often from Jimi Hendrix and Chuck Berry as from other cha’abi musicians. The Jemaa el-Fnaa is not only a constantly dynamic place with fluid internal structures of schedule, space and repertoire, but also one that features
performers in artistic dialogue with contemporary music from both Morocco and abroad. Thus at the Square all manner of borders (between internal structures, as well as with things ostensibly external) are fluid and permeable at best, if not completely illusory.

Safeguarding, the process of making intangible heritage creates borders on the previously borderless. It defines the parameters of a set of authentic practices – how are they done (repertoire, costume, performance practice, etc.) who may do them (often creating or redefining a ‘community’ in the process) where they occur, in what language are they done, and so on. In the making of recourse to the past, the heritage-making process makes another key border in terms of time, cutting off the activities of concern (which are occurring in the present day) from their contemporary surroundings. These ‘surroundings,’ which are in fact a part of the same warp and weft of contemporary life that the objects of heritage belongs to, become a threat, a bogeyman to be fought off: globalization, acculturation, inauthenticity.

As a rare instance (in the UNESCO case, at least) of a place that is already physically bordered, it is the ‘bordering’ between intangible heritage and intruding modernity has had perhaps the most visible effects on the lives of the ḥlayqiya. Take, for example, the taxi and coach traffic that has been relocated to other parts of town, and is specifically referred to in the safeguarding plan. The taxi traffic, at least (the coach traffic had been moved in the 1980s) delineated by the safeguarding plan as being outside the borders of the intangible oral heritage of the Square. As I mentioned in Chapter 2,

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84 The CTM station was actually moved in the late 1980s, which was of course long before the UNESCO ICH initiative. However, it was moved as part of the protection plan following the declaration of the Medina as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1985, so it seems correct to group it with other removals intended to protect the heritage of the site – if it had not been moved before taxi rank was moved in 2002, it undoubtedly would have been moved then.
several storytellers and other ḥlayqiya referred to this traffic as an important source of clientele: passengers waiting for a ride or having time to kill after disembarking would sit in a ḥalqa, listen to a story or a song, and leave a few ryals behind in the process. The storytellers in particular benefited from this traffic, and would station themselves close to the CTM coach station – and later the taxi rank – in order to do so. The taxi rank also drew workers from the tanneries, who would often spend a bit of time and money in a ḥalqa before heading home or going to work (Erguini 2011). In the days of the CTM station, the ḥlayqiya also performed an important role for the travelers, who were often coming to the city from the rural areas around Marrakech. As the storyteller Mohammed Erguini told me,:

That was my place over there, long time ago. Over there by the CTM, it was there [points to the old site of the CTM station, now the Jemaa el Fnaa market] They come to Marrakech, the country (beldi) people, and they don’t know anything about the city and what they [are supposed to] do here. I tried to help, give a little advice, tell them something in a story. A lot of my stories are about Marrakech, they learned about the city from me.

Here is an aspect of life at the Square – the motor traffic – which was actually a fairly important part of the practice and livelihood of many ḥlayqiya but was not included in the heritage construction of it. In fact, it was identified as an active threat whose banishment was fêted in the UNESCO booklet as a safeguarding accomplishment (Skounti, Tebbaa, and Nadim 2005, 30). Vehicle traffic through the Square was something that had become not only a fact of life to be worked around, but a vital source of clientele for many performers. As I gathered from many interviews with ḥlayqiya like Mohammed Erguini, the removal helped shift the population that came to the Square away from the local workers and shoppers and rural travelers and towards those exclusively seeking leisure – a population
that, ironically, spends less time in any given ḥalqa and is thus much less interested in long tales that require extended concentration.\textsuperscript{85} By drawing a line between what is an authentic aspect of the Square’s heritage and what is external intrusion and intervening to eliminate or reduce that ‘intrusion,’ the ICH safeguarding process changes and reconfigures more than it preserves.

Another clear and consistent omission in the ICH discourse is the fact that the performances are an economic activity. Being a ḥalaqi, among other things, is a job. It is also a calling, to be sure, and in my life as a musician I have never seen anyone who loved the ‘stage’ as much as Abdelhakim Khabzaoui. But the ḥlayqiya see themselves as not only performers and artists but also as workers who are extremely savvy in ways of extracting money in exchange for their services. It is not properly possible, in fact, to make some kind of distinction between the ‘cultural’ and ‘livelihood’ aspect of what they do: the fatha, the ‘opening’ in the performance during which the audience is simultaneously blessed and hit up for donations is as much a part of the ḥlayqiya’s art as the songs, comedy, and stories they perform. Competence in the fatha is part of the required set of skills that one needs in order to work at the Jemaa el Fnaa. Yet this aspect goes unmentioned by those discussing the ‘oral heritage’ of the Square, and leads quite directly to the sorts of disjunctures between the safeguarding of constructed heritage and the actual lives of heritage’s objects. It also leads to proposals that solely include charity-based interventions like the suggested old-age fund for ḥlayqiya, or the actual Eid I-Kbiir sheep-buying that took place in 2004 and 2005.

\textsuperscript{85} This statement is based on interviews and personal observations. I feel that there is certainly room for some empirical work here to test and verify this, which will be part of my future work at the Square.
Heritage-makers vs. Heritage objects

This exclusion of a basic aspect of the ḥlayqiya’s lives and artistic practice – the earning of a living – from discussions of the Square’s intangible heritage and its omission from the proposals in the safeguarding plan are a result of another aspect of this and many other intangible heritage projects: despite stated intentions towards the contrary, intangible heritage is often a construction built and maintained by a different population than the one whose practices it addresses. The group of people that ‘make’ the metacultural artifacts of intangible heritage – the lists, archives, workshops, monuments, festivals, websites – is very often an entirely different population from the ones that engage in the practices that intangible heritage is concerned with. As Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2004) points out, the process of making heritage requires a very different set of skills from those required to perform the concerned activities, hence in most (though of course not all) circumstances of ICH-building, there are two discrete and unequally empowered sets of participants: the heritage ‘bearers’ and the heritage ‘makers’: the academics, cultural administrators, writers, and others with skills or connections that place them in a position to shape the discourse.

Looking specifically at the instance of Jemaa el Fnaa, we have the heritage ‘makers’ (Goytisolo, Tebbaa, and the other Amis de la Place, others on the UNESCO side of things, and so on) who are literate, multilingual, and (as Schmitt 2005 illustrates)

86 Now, to be clear I am not making some kind of argument against social assurance here, rather a protest against plans for interventions that treat their intended population as objects rather than active subjects who already have their own means of support that should be respected and aided.
able to act on multiple ‘scales’ in ways that most of the ḥlayqiya are not creates an unequal situation that effectively silences the ḥlayqiya. Take, for example, the basic fact of language and literacy: while the ḥlayqiya are in their way masters of language – a key aspect of the heritage they are said to bear – and the storytellers are often quite literate in Arabic, the business of making heritage in this circumstance not only involves fluency and literacy in at least French and likely English as well. Moreover, it involves mastery of a seemingly endless set of linguistic and technological skills in these languages, ones that those who make their livings at the Square rarely possess: writing convincing academic prose, sending an email, preparing a UNESCO dossier, making a project budget. It also requires the accumulation of kinds of capital the ḥlayqiya are unlikely to acquire: university degrees, positions at the Ministry of Culture, or any other distinctions that give their words weight in heritage discourses. In the discussion about matters that will have potential deep and lasting effects on their lives and livelihoods, the ‘makers’ are effectively the only voices heard, and those who are the objects of the activities remain subaltern and do not speak: none of the ḥlayqiya were directly involved in the preparation of the dossier submitted to UNESCO and there were no ḥlayqiya members of the Amis de la Place. As Ahmed Skounti told me in an interview, "But there wasn't anyone from the Jemaa el Fnaa in the Amis de la Place! They talk about the Place, but not to anyone. This is ordinary – their intentions are good, but they don't talk or work with anyone from the Jemaa el Fnaa."  

87 Skounti, while involved in the UNESCO project from start to finish, often takes a different line in his writing and verbal statements from the very ‘practice-focused’ (as opposed to practitioner-focused) nature of the others (Tebbaa, Faiz, Triki, and others) who write about the heritage of the Square. The snippets of talk in the UNESCO booklet that concern the social rights of the ḥlayqiya are attributable to him, and he has recently (in 2011) brought groups of university students into the Jemaa el Fnaa to interview Hlayqiya about their lives and needs.
The objectification of the heritage bearer

It is this unequal distribution of power between these two groups that both enables and is enabled by the idea of heritage (again, confused and conflated with the realms of activity that it is ‘about’) as something that people ‘bear,’ or ‘carry.’ Activities rewritten as intangible heritage are disengaged from the people that do them, are artificially separated from the embodied context as an part of their practitioners lives and encapsulated as a magical, moldable football – something that was passed to them, will perhaps be altered somewhat while in their possession, and will be (hopefully) passed on to apprentices or children.

As I discussed earlier when talking about the friction between the Amis de la Place and the ḫlayqiya over the proper disposition of the funds donated by the Japanese government, this is fundamentally different from the way that the ḫlayqiya I got to know view themselves and what they do. For the majority of the ḫlayqiya I spoke with, such as Hassan Hanitja the Berber musician and Bel‘aid Farouz the snake charmer, the important activities that went on the Square came from them; this is to say, they saw themselves as the source of the important cultural character of the Square, rather than as maintainers or bearers of it. Recall the quote: ‘Of course I am folklore!’ says Bel‘aid, not I hold, I know, I carry. The ḫlayqiya did of course speak of their connections to the Square’s past, and all – like Bel‘aid – were of course very aware that the ‘heritage’ brand that had been stamped onto their work was a large part of their working capital. But in speaking with them, it became clear that, unsurprisingly, they saw themselves as contemporary workers in modern Marrakech. They learned, they innovated, they viewed what they did at the Square as of a piece with the rest of their lives in 2011.
I heard an elegant description of a ḥlayqiya-eye view of heritage in a talk with Hassan Hanitja, a Berber rwaïs that works solo at local souks and tourist spots in addition to the Jemaa el Fnaa, (see Fig. 20). Speaking about heritage, he placed human action and creativity at the center of the practice:

“Well, we work with heritage. If you are a rwaïs, you are heritage. You play at the Jemaa el Fnaa, it is heritage. What I do is Amazigh. What they [referring to Oudaden, a very popular Amazigh-pop band] do is Amazigh. We are rwaïs – It’s all our heritage. What we do is heritage, but it is tuurath dyal l-wqt (roughly, heritage of the time, or of the moment). It is what we need to do now. Tomorrow, we will need to do something different. Long ago, we had to do something different. Everyone, every place, every time has their tuurath dyal wqthum (heritage of their time)…”

“I change my song to the place I am working. I write new songs, I learn new songs, always. I listen to them again and again and learn the words. When I sing for someone, I think about what song he needs to hear, and I try to sing it to him…”

Me: “So what if the music changes? What if it becomes 100% different?”

Hassan: “In the future, they will have their [own] tuurath dyal l-wqt, no? They will need something different.”

Like Bel‘aid Farouz, Hanitja’s concept of the tuurath dyal l-wqt places his (and others’) actions at the center of the definition of what heritage is for him – not something he had received, or carries, but rather something generated by his own activities out of his accumulated knowledge and experience, in response to constantly changing conditions, and in collaboration with both other musicians and his audience. Turaath, heritage, in his use of the word seems to refer to identity: one to be expressed by rwaïs and audience in performance, and one that necessarily changes with time and context.

In contrast, intangible cultural heritage in the sense used by UNESCO removes much of this individual agency from its definition. While much of the rhetoric of ICH

88 Lest I lend the impression that my Arabic was sufficient for this conversation to proceed this elegantly, I disclose that this is a summary of the exchange, which was broken by many requests for a repeat, trips to the Darija dictionary, and re-phrasings by Hassan. Note, for example, my use of ‘100%’, as I wasn’t until much later that I learned how else to say ‘entirely.’

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safeguarding concerns empowerment and respect, this has the opposite effect in that it creates something in the form of this ‘football’ concept of heritage: a ‘thing’ that is more important than the people who ‘bear’ it. The heritage is at the center of the activities, the target of the safeguarding, not the people. This is evident for example in not only the assortment of activities that were proposed under the safeguarding plan for the Square, but those that actually came to fruition. The school workshops, the storytelling contest\(^9\), the colloquia, photography, archives, and publishing of the descriptive book, all of these activities make the actual people recede into the background, placing the heritage they bear at center stage. This has the ironic effect of depersonalizing these heritage activities, and making the people who do them relatively unimportant: they become interchangeable members of a community, a anonymous Folk. The practitioners become depersonalized representations of an heritage practice, able to be spoken about but unable, as ‘objects’ being spoken about, to speak themselves.

This objectification is apparent in the way that ICH practitioners are depicted in almost every instance – in the UNESCO pamphlet written about the Jemaa el Fnaa, in the book (Jemaa el Fnaa, Tebbaa et al. 2004) published a few years after the declaration, on the UNESCO website – without their names. If captions exist, they refer to the general title of their performance genre: acrobat, Berber, Gnawa. The performers become interchangeable symbols of the intangible heritage under discussion, their individual lives, motivations, personhood suppressed in the assumption that the description and

\(^9\) As my research occurred years after the school workshops and storytelling contest took place, I am basing this and other statements about the workshops on how Mohammed Sghir Erguini and El Ayachi described them, which sounded much like the storyteller’s concerts I saw presented by the Alliance Francaise and the Institute Cervantes: an introduction to the audience by a presenter who explained the importance of the material to be presented, followed by a number of stories told by the storyteller.
discussion of the intangible heritage that their pictures accompany adequately describes them. The names of the ethnographers, administrators, donors, and other authors of the materials and projects, on the other hand, are not difficult to find.

Again, to be fair to UNESCO, considerable effort has been and continues to be expended in the form of capacity-building and training of heritage workers. Numerous workshops are regularly held worldwide in the training of fieldworker, with the goal of both expanding the abilities of communities worldwide to participate in the safeguarding ICH, as well as the democratizing of access to the inventoring/safeguarding process so as to include as many locals as possible. The materials for these workshops emulate (or at least parallel) fieldwork guides for ethnographers in their emphasis on best practices on obtaining informed consent and asking questions that produce richer, more detailed responses (UNESCO 2011). It is difficult to see these workshops as a bad thing; UNESCO’s democratizing approach to training inventory staff may empower and inspire, and could well contribute to the lessening of the poverty of non-Western voices in the overall discourse about culture. At very least it shows an earnest desire on the part of UNESCO to include diverse voices in the ICH project, a desire for inclusion shared by the various branches of academic ethnography but not always as sincerely pursued. But the this training merely allows more people on the "subject" side of the subject/object gap, rather than closing it: the inventory-ers are still trained to gather information about practices as homogeneous wholes that exist outside of the people that practice them – to construct their own heritage packages. Thus the objectification of the "bearers" remains largely in place in many ways, ironically even if they are among the inventory staff.

Despite the subjective agency exercised in crafting the heritage, the architecture of ICH
and its logic of heritage as a package held by bearers still writes individual agency out of the package they construct.

**Coda: Heritage, UNESCO, and Governmentality**

One important point to discuss before moving on to alternative ways to formulate culturally-focused interventions is to acknowledge the distance between what I am arguing for – greater empowerment and freedom of individuals to shape their world, to interact, to be creative – and what UNESCO is trying to do. Thus far, the reader might have noticed my focus on the individual, and my overall rejection of the discrete, bounded culture or cultural practice in favor of a view of culture as an emergent property, unstable in both character and border, resulting from the inputs of individuals. I will continue my thoughts on how interventions based on this definition of culture might best be formulated in terms of concept and practice in the next chapter. However, before I move on I should say it is perhaps unfair that I am leveling criticism at both the concept of intangible heritage and at UNESCO, or at very least a case of criticizing a concept and organization on the grounds that they do not fulfill a purpose for which they were never designed or suited. Improving the quality of individual lives, leaving individuals more free to pursue their creative goals, to participate in the fullest in the building of the own cultural worlds – these are arguably neither quite what UNESCO has set out from the beginning to do, nor what the tool of heritage is for.

From its post-WWII beginnings, UNESCO has focused on what Wiktor Stoczkowski calls a "secular soteriology," an approach to the salvation of humankind from its troubles on a macroscopic scale, primarily from the scourge of war (Stoczkowski 2009, 7). “…Since wars begin in the minds of men,” the Preamble to the UNESCO
constitution reads, “it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.” So, while still acknowledging that UNESCO is a multitude of voices that do not always agree, what UNESCO as a whole seeks above all is stability, the taming of conflict – preventing war by building the defenses of peace in the minds of men. Seen in this light, the cultivation of human creative potential is not as much the point of the ICH program as is the simultaneous celebration and taming of difference and diversity. Used to this end, ICH is a technology of governmentality, a term coined by Michel Foucault to refer to, among other things, “The ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power [TB – i.e., government], which has as its target population, as its principal form of knowledge political economy, and as its essential technical means apparatuses of security.” (Foucault 1991, 102) In his analysis of the ICH discourse, Hafstein uses Foucault’s idea of governmentality to make sense of ICH as a technology, one that uses culture as a kinder, gentler means of rendering individuals governable. In celebrating diversity, the ICH program does important political work: it provides a tool with which to counter the homogeneity brought by globalization (or, more accurately, a bureaucratic nostrum to soothe fears about it), a way for states to recognize the rights of minority groups to exist without directly addressing their claims for autonomy, and a way to present a member-state’s best face to the international community as a place tolerant of its internal diversity. At the same their inventoring, listing and valorization, practices are described and normalized, and through this process, the community that owns the practice is described, bounded, reified in a way that both makes it governable and encourages its members to participate in that governing. Citizens
are encouraged to see themselves as both members of a community, while the listing of the community’s heritage practices under the umbrella of the state ties community and practice to that state. Thus the ICH process – inventorying, listing, recognition, display – provides a means for people to see themselves as recognized members of a state, and those states are in turn tied together by UNESCO through the shared listing of their ICH on the representative and urgent safeguarding rolls.

Viewed as a governmental tool, many of the ICH discourse’s quirks – the unreconciled contradictions between preservation and creativity, the maddeningly oversimplified notions of culture, the imposition of borders and definitions on fluid and unstructured patterns of human interaction and creativity – make much more sense. The exigencies these interventions address are not those of individual creative activity, but rather of governance: encouraging individuals to ascribe to larger communities that can more effectively interface with government. This perspective also works towards explaining the resonances between the ICH and apartheid discourses I mentioned earlier, in that both are governmental tools, concerned with the topic of culture and ethnicity, intended to facilitate the governing of populations. (Apartheid of course being a particularly malignant and dysfunctional tool that ultimately rendered populations ungovernable, but a tool all the same.)

Thus my statement about why I and other assorted ethnographers who spend large amounts of time and energy complaining about the ICH paradigm’s failings are perhaps missing the point. We express our misgivings about the logic or potential effectiveness of ICH safeguarding, coming from a fieldworker’s-eye view – we know how culture works, we say, and this isn’t it. As I have spent this chapter discussing, the approach to
intervention under the ICH safeguarding umbrella does not do enough (by my own opinion, and in those of the ḥlayqiya I came to know) to directly improve the actual conditions under which individuals may invent, re-create, or maintain their cultural worlds. It denies agency and imposes a constructed heritage version of a practice onto existing social practices. But this view, I feel, expects something from the organization and from the ICH paradigm it has fostered that it was not designed to do. UNESCO’s goals are utopian, not pragmatic. The point of the organization is not specifically to help develop and improve living or economic conditions or individual agency – as might be said of UNDP – or to ease the burden of human suffering due to wars or other displacing disasters, as in UNHCR. UNESCO’s raison d’être is less practical than it is philosophical: to "build the defenses of peace in the minds of men." It exists to build stability, to promote collaboration and mutual understanding, to sort out peaceful and constructive ways for its members to interact. One could say of UNESCO’s main aspects is as a philosophical laboratory in which member states collaborate in the development of new governmental technologies, of "governing-at-a-distance" (Rose 1999, 49, 52). This in turn is meant to provide new frameworks within which member-states may interact, and collectively imagine and present themselves as a more peaceful world community. This is the enterprise for which ICH is designed to be a part of – perhaps not consciously, but as a result of the shape and nature of the organization that formed it. Thus when we gather at our conferences to discuss ways in which ICH safeguarding failed our populations of concern in ways that seem obvious and easy to avoid, we are faulting an organization concerned with the broadest possible scope of international intervention for

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90 For an in-depth discussion of this philosophical basis, see Sathyamurthy 1964 and Pavone 2007.
its failures to work smartly and efficiently on a small local level: we are cursing the steam shovel for doing a poor job of potting a houseplant. As researchers who become concerned with local populations and the plights and injustices they face in their attempt to live well (in terms of culture or otherwise), ICH is simply not a tool built to work in many of the ways we want it to. The disjunctions I have spent this chapter discussing are evidence of this, yet a study more concerned with larger issues of international relations in the cultural realm may show ways in which the ICH concept is very useful indeed.\textsuperscript{91}

The flaws inherent in the bounded concept of cultures and practices, in the "magical football" approach to heritage, and in the safeguarding plans that are based on them – they may not be flaws when viewed in regard to the larger task that UNESCO as an organization has set itself. Certainly in the case of Jemaa el Fnaa, ICH has proven to be an effective tool of governmentality, visible in the role it has played in fostering the growing sense the ḡlayqiya have of themselves as being a community – a body that is more readily able to act upon and be acted upon by government than would be a population of ungrouped individuals.

But while the governmental aspects of ICH do bring some benefits, they leave other needs unmet. As those concerned with the real-world problems of the people we care about, what do we do if the ICH approach does not work for us? In order to effectively address the problems we observe in our fieldwork, the many threats to the abilities of human beings to live full, free cultural lives, we will need different tools and

\textsuperscript{91}Valdemar Hafstein’s work of course points to this, as do the writers he cites, such as Nikolas Rose and Tony Bennett. These authors employ Foucault’s idea of governmentality in an analysis of, among other things, cultural policy. I am deliberately avoiding opening a deeper discussion of Foucault’s ideas here in order to avoid flying off onto a theoretical tangent already covered very well by these scholars. For a very good summary of the discussion of governmentality, UNESCO, and heritage, see Hafstein 2004, pp. 133-137.
other ways of formulating problems and devising solutions. In the next chapter, I will discuss the Capabilities Approach developed by economist Amartya Sen as an answer to this question, using it both as a tool of analysis in a further discussion of the factors that negatively and positively affected the cultural lives of the occupants of the Jemaa el Fnaa and as a framework for suggesting potentially useful collaborations with this population.
Part III: The Capability Approach

Chapter 5: The Capability Approach as an alternative framework for intervention

“Cultural invention and differentiation are ongoing, and forgetting is as necessary as remembering for life to go forward. If people do not value practices, why not let them die? New stuff keeps happening. History is not over.

But there is an important caveat: the poor lack the freedom of choice possessed by the rich as to maintaining their traditions. This is a problem of inequality, not of cultural difference.” Dorothy Noyes, ‘Traditional Culture: How Does it Work?’ (Noyes 2011)

In the previous chapter I discussed the limitations of ICH safeguarding and the view of culture and cultural practices that it imposes on its objects: cultures and cultural practices as bounded, internally homogeneous entities. In viewing these practices as heritage, as things passed whole from generation to generation, they are presented as existing in opposition to and survival despite modern-day practices rather than being integrated within and affected by the modern lives of their practitioners. In terms of its success in achieving its stated goals concerning the ḫlayqiya of Jemaa el Fnaa Square, this approach had effects that were at best lackluster and at worst arguably harmful to the lives of those they affected. On the other hand, it had beneficial secondary effects not directly intended in the safeguarding plan, most notably an enhanced sense of group identity that encouraged the formation of associations that (while nascent) may prove to be useful sources of mutual aid and bargaining power.
To griping and beyond

I suggested briefly towards the end of the last chapter that to discuss the effects on the individual lives of the populations whose practices are the objects of ICH is perhaps to miss the point of the program, and of UNESCO itself. UNESCO’s goals are utopian (to build peace in the minds of men) rather than pragmatic, and thus its programs are truly aimed at larger targets of national and international stability and cooperation rather than the well-being of a handful of artists, craftspersons, and performers. But this, from both my perspective and the unanimous perspective of the many ḥlayqiya I spoke with on the subject, does not jibe well with the hopes and promise inspired by the project. While they are presented by UNESCO wrapped in the language of international cooperation and shown as part of the colorful photo collages UNESCO favors, projects like the one at the Jemaa el Fnaa seem to concern themselves with the local, and to promise local benefits. The ḥlayqiya expected good things to come to them as part of the ICH, based on the projects ostensible focus on their lives and activities. As I discussed in the last chapter, for the most part they did not, and the human objects of the heritage project were left in various measures angry, puzzled, and demoralized. While there is arguably a place for UNESCO’s utopian ICH approach, with its potential to build governmental inter-twinings that at very least may reduce conflict and enhance interaction between administrative structures and populations, this is not typically what many on the ground (both would-be do-gooders and the populations we hope to do good for) are directly concerned with. Either as off-and-on scholarly observers or permanent residents in a given environment, we observe injustices, inequalities, poverty, and a general waste of human potential and the effects these have on the cultural life of a population. In
response, we usually want something to be done about *those* particular problems *where* they are happening. The safeguarding project at the Jemaa left more or less everyone I spoke with – including those most closely involved in trying to make it work – with the feeling that this improvement of local circumstances had not happened.

While it could be argued that this was somehow the result of other factors, (such as insufficient funding and a general lack of coherence and efficiency in the administration of the project) I lay the blame squarely at the feet of the guiding principle: the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. In the last chapter I discussed a number of reasons why this approach was flawed: it aims at unattainable goals (the preservation of cultural practices), it is based on bad theory (an essentialized, bounded concept of cultures and practices) and despite its ostensible focus on the practitioners of heritage, it still writes them into the process as bearers, objects with little personal agency.

But criticism is not sufficient, and beyond the necessary identification of the problem, serves to do little beyond vent steam and generate snarky academic prose – more needs to be done than to merely complain. In the introduction to this dissertation, I spoke about the bonds of mutual trust and caring we build in the process of our fieldwork, and the desire to reciprocate the kindnesses we are shown. Mere complaint does not address the desire to act that these feelings generate. But if the ICH paradigm doesn’t work for us, how do we make a plan to help that uses the skills and expertise we have to offer? And what, exactly, should be our goal?

*Back to the map*

The answers to this question are to be found, I feel, when we look beyond cultural practices and cultural groups as stable things to be preserved and protected, and start
looking at the factors that affect individuals’ abilities to participate in and work together with others in the building and maintenance of a socio-cultural world that they wish to live in. To explain this rather new-agey statement, I return to the definition of culture I laid out in the last chapter: an emergent property of the interactions of many individuals. Each participant possesses a mind of their own and concepts of the world that, while they may at times closely resemble those of the others they interact with, are never quite identical. The world that results changes constantly and appears differently depending on the participants and the vantage point from which it is viewed. As an analogy/example, I used the "map" of the Square's performing area, a physical layout of performing, vending, begging, and walking spaces that exists in its entirety in no fixed place – not on a drawing on the local administrator’s wall, nor in markings on the interlocking tile of the Square, or even in the mind of a particular person. Instead, it is created and re-created in the interactions between those who go there, each of whom knows a part of it. A given ḥlayqiya or vendor usually knows his or her portion they occupy very well and a certain amount about the rest, and the whole structure at any given moment is the end result of these many visions of the space coming together. This map, in turn, is only one visible physical aspect of the emergent property that is the Square. As I discussed in Chapter 2, there are a great many such structures (schedule, sound, income strategy, repertoire, types of patron) overlaid and intertwined there. There is no thing with defined boundaries to preserve in this phenomenon and to try to do so would require willful ignorance of its complexity.

As I discussed in the last chapter, projects that use intangible cultural heritage as a guiding principle both have had and will continue to have problems dealing with this
complexity. Given the flaws in the ICH paradigm, a better path to intervention would be through a more holistic approach, one that looks at and seeks to constructively support the things that enable people’s abilities to participate in a life that they have reason to value – rather than trying to preserve a particular practice that is deemed appropriate to them by others on grounds of their ethnicity, phenotype, nationality, etc. Furthermore, in light of the objectification of heritage bearers and failures of agency created by the ways in which ICH requires specialized skills and access, a better path also calls for a more participatory approach, one that seeks to enhance the agency of those whom it involves. In other words, it would be better to find ways to help people build their worlds, rather than to try and preserve what we others define as their most authentic, appropriate world.

What is needed is a different way of thinking about how and why to intervene. In this chapter, I hope to outline an approach that addresses this need, both drawing from my fieldwork already performed and pointing the way towards future research that still needs to be done. In the sections that follow, I will discussion the Capability Approach (put forth by economist Amartya Sen), discussing ways that it may be applied to performance practices. While it is a tool developed for somewhat different purposes than the ones I will discuss here, it is useful in the building of an improved basis and method for constructively intervening in matters of expressive culture. In this chapter, I will give a summary of the Capability Approach, its basic ideas, and how it might be applied to performance practices.

Applying the capability approach to performance practices

The Capability Approach (CA, also referred to in other instances and variations as the Capabilities Approach, the Human Development and Capability Approach, or the
"Development as Freedom" approach was developed initially by economist Amartya Sen as an alternative approach to defining the means and ends of development. It has been extremely influential in development policy and practice of the last several decades, and Sen’s ideas (and the developments of them made by other thinkers in the field of development) have been instrumental in the formation the UN’s Human Development Index. It has been elaborated and expanded upon by other scholars such as Martha Nussbaum\textsuperscript{92}, Sabina Alkire, Ingrid Robeyns, and Paul Anand, who have addressed such topics as ethics, women's rights, and issues of measurement and application.

With the CA, Sen challenged previous commonly-held assumptions and practices used in the judging of welfare by stating, among other things, that the proper goal of development (and measure by which it should be judged) was the expanding of real human freedoms to be and do the things they value. This is as opposed to a focus on measures of resources (most often expressed as money) or utility (here referring to a measure of happiness or satisfaction) (Sen 1999, Introduction). Incomes – or any other type of resources – are seen as an insufficient proxy for well-being because of other conversion factors (social, environmental, personal) that may affect an individual’s ability to turn them into the things they wish to be and do (Robeyns, 2008).

Regarding the inadequacy of income as a measure of well-being, Sen gives as one example the acceptably universal goal of living a long life, and the false picture given by looking solely at measures of income: African-Americans, for example, despite earning an absolute income far higher than those of Chinese or Indians in Kerala State, have lower life expectancies due to factors not captured by income (Sen 1999b, 23). The

\textsuperscript{92} Nussbaum’s contributions, as I will discuss later, are significant enough that the CA is often referred to as the Sen/Nussbaum Capabilities Approach.
measure of income taken on its own fails to capture not only relative disparities in income within a country (African-Americans earn less on average than other census categories) but also social factors, such as those stemming from entrenched racism, the impact of the war on drugs and inequalities in the educational system and access to nutritious food. Environmental factors also affect the conversion of income into well being: in another example outlining Sen’s concept, Séverine Deneulin discusses the growth of the mining industry in Peru, and ways in which local rural populations have not only not benefited from the economic growth from the mining boom, but have also shouldered a large share of the environmental costs in the form of mercury poisoning and soil and water pollution (Deneulin, Shahani, and International Development Research Centre 2009, 9). On an individual level, personal factors such as a physical disability can affect the amount of a given resource that a person needs to achieve a particular goal: two people may receive the same amount of food, but if one has a parasitic disease they may still not reach an equivalent level of nourishment, or need additional inputs (such as medicine) in order to do so (Sen 1999, 63).

While Sen singles out monetary income due to its predominance of use as an indicator, he objects in general to resource-based measures and theories of justice, (including those like that of John Rawls that include certain rights and liberties as part of a bundle of basic resources) well-being in that they still fail to account for the variety of factors that influence what people can actually do with these resources to achieve the goals they value (Sen 1999, 63-65). In terms of ethical orientation, Sen also criticizes the use of utility, which could also be referred to as achieved happiness or satisfaction, as a measure of well-being. The problem, as he points out, is the limited informational basis –
if the ultimate measure of the good is solely happiness or satisfaction, many other factors are left out that this measure fails to capture. Because of the phenomenon of adaptive preference, two people may have very different levels of objective well being but similarly high levels of utility from the lives they lead: one, because he has mostly everything he or she needs and does not suffer the deprivations of poverty; the other, because he has adapted his expectations downwards and finds joy in the few pleasures his life affords.

*Functionings and Capabilities*

Instead of placing the evaluative emphasis on resources, utility, or on a list of inalienable rights, the CA focuses (often solely) on the abilities of individuals to achieve the things and to live the lives that they value. The CA refers to these valued beings and doings as *functionings*, and the freedoms to achieve them as *capabilities*. Functionings can conceivably include any reasonably valued state or activity, though in discussions of the CA Sen and others typically focus on basic functionings like living a long life, being healthy and well-nourished, learning to read and write, and so on. Capabilities are the actual possibilities to achieve a chosen functioning, a sort of holistic package of the resources, rights, and other assorted social, environmental, and personal factors necessary to achieve the functionings they value. Poverty is not only conceived in terms of lack of access to resources, but the lack of opportunities to turn available resources into valued functionings. The CA thus calls for a wider base of information to evaluate well-being and to serve as the basis for interventions, taking into account the factors that permit the converting of resources into capabilities. Capabilities have intrinsic value, but can also be instrumental in that they are necessary for the achievement of functionings that permit
still other capabilities: a minimum ability to be healthy and safe is necessary in order to
go to school and become literate, and a minimum level of schooling can in turn be
necessary to participate in the economy and democratic process, and so on.

Agency, choice, and democratic deliberation

The focus on capabilities, rather than on particular functionings, reflects Sen’s
liberal valuing of agency and choice. Instead of stating that a particular functioning must
be achieved, the CA emphasizes people’s real freedoms to achieve that functioning.
Instead of stating that a person must eat healthily, it ask the question of whether or not the
person has the choice of being well-fed: the hunger-striker and the famine-sufferer both
starve, but one has the capability to avoid starvation and the other does not (Sen 1999,
76). The capability set of the hunger-striker includes the functioning of being well-fed,
and while she is choosing not to pursue this functioning, she is still freer than the other
who does not have that capability. It is the ability to choose a life that one has reason to
value, and the individual agency that this involves that is the thing to be preserved.

For Sen and others who have worked on the development and implementation of
the CA, the role of democratic deliberation is paramount in determining both which
capabilities are prioritized (what beings and doings are valued), the weighting of these
capabilities, and what form any interventions will take:

The people have to be seen, in this perspective, as being actively involved—
given the opportunity—in shaping their own destiny, and not just as passive
recipients of the fruits of cunning development programs. The state and the
society have extensive roles in strengthening and safeguarding human
capabilities. This is a supporting role, rather than one of ready-made delivery
(Sen, 1999, 53).
Thus, rather than somehow concern itself with the making of endless lists of all the possible capabilities that a person could possibly have, Sen’s conception of the CA avoids list-making in favor of a democratic process, where lists of important capabilities are arrived at through deliberation by the populations concerned. Other scholars, most notably Martha Nussbaum (2001), have formed lists of some basic capabilities and practical applications like the Human Development Index focus on a couple of basic capabilities (living a long life and being educated) in addition to measures of inequality and overall income. Nor is the goal of the CA to achieve overall equality in terms of functioning, but rather for everyone to achieve a basic level of capability – we can’t all have what we want, the various formulations of the CA follow, but we should be all ideally able to have a certain level of valued freedoms.

As far as lists go, in her 2001 book *Women and Human Development* and subsequent writings philosopher Martha Nussbaum has made a list of ten basic capabilities that should be guaranteed by social and political institutions at a minimum threshold. She qualifies the list as being non-exhaustive, intended for the modern world (thus not timeless) and open to multiple realizations in varying cultural circumstances, though she (like Sen) rejects the idea of denying any of them to specific groups within a society on the basis of "cultural values" (Nussbaum 2001). These include:

1. Life: being able to live a decent lifespan.
2. Health: being able to live in good health, have access to healthcare, and adequate nutrition, and live a life free from avoidable illness.
3. Bodily integrity: being able to move freely; being able to be free from assault and violence; being able to make decisions about one's own body, such as reproductive decisions.

4. Senses, imagination, and thought: to be able to use reason and imagination in a human way, in a way developed by an adequate education. Creating an umbrella category having to do with using one's mind in a human fashion, Nussbaum includes a number of different topics under this rubric: being able to be literate; being able to learn how to reason; practicing one's religion freely; (and particularly pertinent to this discussion) being able to produce and experience "self expressive works and events of one's own choice, religious, literary, musical, and so forth."

5. Emotions: to be able to freely feel and express emotion, without having one's emotional development stunted by fear, anxiety, trauma, or the depredations of poverty.

6. Practical reason: to be able to form one's own ethical concepts, and to freely develop one's own conscience.

7. Affiliation: to be able to live socially with others, to be able to care and be cared for, to freely associate with others, "to have the capability for both justice and friendship." Nussbaum also includes the capability to live in conditions of dignity, equality, and mutual recognition under this category.

8. Other species: being able to interact with and enjoy nature.

9. Play: being able to "laugh, play, to enjoy recreational activities."
10. Control over one's environment: Nussbaum splits this into two sub-emphases: *political*, concerning one's ability to participate in the political process, and to have freedom of speech and association; and *material*, the real ability to control one's physical environment, to hold property, seek and hold employment, and be free from unreasonable search and seizure.

There is clear overlap in some of these categories – for example, the capabilities of affiliation and political participation, or the capability of practical reason and that of using one's senses, imagination, and thought in a human way. However, Nussbaum emphasizes that these components are separate, in that one cannot make up for the lack of one with more of another. For the purposes of this discussion, Nussbaum's list provides some more articulated discussion of specific capabilities, in a way that Sen deliberately shies away from (Sen 2004). Whether one's idea how to define a given capability lines up with Nussbaum's or not, the items on her list provide a starting point for discussion – the purpose for which I will use them here. There are limitations – her cultural biases as an American, Western-educated person peek through in the ways she formulates her basic capabilities, such as the way she speaks of the capability to produce or enjoy "artistic works". Even her emphasis on literacy, as S. Charusheela (2009) points out, reflects modernist assumptions about what allows a person to reason and a certain blindness about the ways that institutions have been shaped to exclude the non-literate. But many of these list items are useful in a discussion of the ḥlayqiya if treated with a bit of critical caution, such as this attention to the role of literacy – while the illiteracy common amongst the ḥlayqiya does indeed limit many of their capabilities, I do not follow Nussbaum's logic that in lacking it the ḥlayqiya are somehow less able to "reason".
Applying the CA

In using the CA as an additional lens with which to critique the idea of heritage safeguarding and to point to alternate formulations of problems and solutions, the focus would seem to best lie with the CA’s liberal emphasis on agency – the ability of individuals to choose the life they would like to lead. In this regard, the focus on the preservation of an item of intangible cultural heritage would represent a very limited expansion of a person’s capability set, limited not only to the one activity but to the conception of that activity constructed as part of the heritagization process that may well have been developed without their input (as this further denies them the capability to participate in decisions that affect them.). Admittedly, as I will discuss more a bit later on in this chapter the UNESCO efforts did produce some benefits that enhanced capabilities – for example, some ḥlayqiya enjoyed better access to medical care (and thus an improved capability to live a healthy life) from doctors who believed in the cause of safeguarding Moroccan heritage. But as I discussed in the previous chapter, the bulk of activities were aimed at promoting a narrow set of functionings, conceived of in relatively little conference with the population most immediately affected. Thus while they may have marginally increased the affected population’s overall capability set, the poor level of participatory involvement of this population meant that the efforts failed to take into account which capabilities the population might have found most important to focus on, while also denying them a measure of agency – the capability to participate fully in decisions about their own lives.

An approach that took the CA as its starting place (in place of ICH safeguarding) would ideally seek to enhance the range of valued capabilities that those most affected
would possess, rather than promote a specific functioning. In other words, it would avoid an ideal set of functionings (who people should be and what they should do, based on assumptions about what is best for them based on their ascribed group identity) in favor of seeking to create conditions that afford people the greatest opportunity to choose who they will be and what they will do, and to participate socially in the building of the world in which they live. It would also involve them as fully as possible in democratic deliberation (and re-evaluation) over the valued capabilities, the weighting of those values, and the activities proposed. And finally – and this is where I feel this approach diverges furthest from the ICH safeguarding model – it would involve seeking those interventions with the broadest possible range of applications, encouraging the autonomous choice and ingenuity of the beneficiaries.

To put this all more plainly, an emphasis on capabilities would mean that we would stop worrying whether or not people were engaging in "authentic" activities, as long as they had the capabilities to both form an opinion about what they wanted to do and to engage in the activities they preferred. If a Marrakechi teenager freely chooses to sing Katy Perry songs or play Norwegian-style black metal in place of cha‘abi or melhun, it is their prerogative and should not be a matter of concern. Instead, we should be concerned that said teenager has both the ability to engage in the activities they choose – that he or she has the instrumental factors (health, education, ability to associate with others, safety, and so on) to make and execute choices about what, if any, performance practices they want to engage in. In turn, though, we should also be concerned that other choices truly exist – do Moroccan artists have a fair shot at their own media markets, so that our hypothetical teenager could possibly choose them (or make music that becomes a
choice for someone else)? Are Moroccans censored and limited by their political system in terms of the choices they can make about what to play or enjoy? Are there accessible educational structures (formal or informal) in place that provide Moroccan children with the tools needed to learn about music, dance, theater, and so on? Again, we move from an emphasis on what someone should be doing based on what ethnicity or nationality they were born in to an emphasis on their abilities to form, possess, and execute choices about what to do. I return to my discussion with Hassan Hanitja, the Berber musician, and his useful concept of the turaath dyal l-wqt (التراث ديال الوقت, heritage of the time/moment)⁹³: "It is what we need to do now. Tomorrow, we will need to do something different. Long ago, we had to do something different. Everyone, every place, every time has turaath dyal wqthum (التراث ديل ألوقتهم, heritage of their time/moment)…" In crafting a descriptive term for what he does, Hanitja refers both to the way his art positions itself as being rooted in the past, while at the same time being very much an adaptation to the needs of the moment. Looked at from a capabilities perspective, the goal of intervention should be to enable people to engage in this process, to do what they need to do and make what they need to make, without deciding beforehand what form that should take.

**Measuring capabilities**

Figuring out people's capabilities in any area is an inherently difficult task, if for no other reason than the aforementioned hypothetical and counterfactual nature of capabilities: one is asking what people can possibly do under present circumstances and

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⁹³ For speakers of other dialects of Arabic: in Moroccan Arabic the word 'dyal' (دیال) indicates possession, as in sayaara dyal walidi ('سيارة دیال والدي', 'our car'). As shown in this example, it is often mixed with the use of possessive suffixes مي (مضاء) found in other dialects.
what *could* they do if obstacles were removed and the necessary conditions were present (Sen 1980; Comim 2008). As Flavio Comim points out, a straightforward observation of what people do and how they live is not sufficient – capabilities are not the things people do, but rather the opportunities to choose and the range of things that can be chosen. People can have the capability to do a lot of things, but choose never to do much – there are many healthy, safe, well-educated people with music instruments gathering dust in the corner. I met many middle-class Marrakechis who seemed to have little to no interest in participating in any sort of cultural practices beyond parking in front of the television, or who had adopted a *salafi* (fundamentalist) brand of Islam that led them to actively avoid participation in cultural practices like music or dance. It is not really possible then to simply observe or make common-sense assumptions about what people do, as one might be able to do in other cases – as Sen points out, sometimes the nature of counterfactual choices are not difficult to guess at all, and it is not unreasonable to assume that most would want to be decently fed, and live long lives free of pestilence, war, and famine (Amartya Sen 1992, 66). But practices like music-making or story-telling are simply not on the same level of essential importance to most as the capability to stay alive or live without fear of violence. It is not a given that people will want to engage in them at all, (as shown by the hypothetical but often-observed cases of the middle-class couch potato and the pious Salafi) and even less so to assume that there is a particular form that their activities should take if they do opt to participate in something. While there are social scientists like Flavio Comim and Paul Anand, who have made steps towards developing empirical tools for capability measurement, I feel that the clusters of activities that the ḥlayqiya do – what I am collecting under the group term
"performance practices"—do not lend themselves to empirical measurements. It may well be possible to determine, as Sen and the researchers just mentioned have attempted to do, measurements of the capabilities to live a long life, be healthy, participate in the market and the political process, and so on, finding ways to account for adaptive preference, and developing composite indicators that suggest an individual's overall capabilities. But for an activity like musical performance, unlike (perhaps) life and health, it would seem a bit misleading to pretend that there was some sort of baseline indicator of the capability to engage in performance practices. With the ḥlayqiyah's activities I feel that in this absence of concrete indicators a more holistic approach that pays attention to the enabling instrumental factors would give a better, more accurate idea of the ḥlayqiya's capabilities to perform, while at the same time giving a well-rounded view of the sorts of interventions that would be necessary to improve the capabilities of this populations to achieve the beings and doings they most value. Thus my discussion in the latter portion of the chapter will focus on questions seemingly well outside the topic of performance: can the ḥlayqiyah earn an adequate living, can they access their government and have a democratic say in political decisions, do they have access to medical care?

A case study: Mahmoud Abdelhakim Khabzaoui

As a case study to introduce the sort of topics I will explore in the next section, I will briefly discuss some capabilities issues surrounding Mahmoud Abdelhakim Khabzaoui, a chaʻabi singer who worked in the Jemaa el Fnaa l-sghir (the smaller east wing of the Square) whom I had the privilege of speaking with at length, and someone whom I came to greatly like and respect. This discussion of the valued functionings and
performance practice capability set of one performer will serve to lead us into the next section, where I will give a more general, Square-wide view of the instrumental factors that influence the ḥlayqiya's capabilities to engage in performance practices.

Abdelhakim (pictured in fig. 12) had performed at the Square at least since the mid-1960s, and commanded a fair deal of love and respect throughout the Jemaa el Fnaa and indeed throughout Marrakech. He was a student of the famous ḥalaqi Mikhi (who I heard about from many other ḥlayqiya, and is discussed further in Malhuni, 2009) and inherited his teacher's place as the best known of the cha'abi performers at the Jemaa el Fnaa. He and his group held the same place at the corner of the Jemaa el Fnaa l-sghiir and l-kbiir since at least the mid-70s, playing tkitikate and other cha'abi sub-genres as well as (in more recent times) the obligatory tunes by the group Nass el Ghiwane. Marrakechis referred to him as Khabzaoui (a comedic stage name, a joking reference to bread and money), Qu'elle est Jolie (from his most popular song) or mul ndadr ("Man with the Glasses", on account of the sunglasses he wore to cover his missing right eye).

When I first saw Abdelhakim in Autumn of 2010, he was working each evening with his group, but not having a very pleasant time of it: a polyp on his vocal cords had progressed to the point where he was largely unable to perform. He would perform a number or two in a near-silent croak, and while his charisma and comedic timing were still on display, his absent voice left him mostly on the sidelines of his own group. Most of the time he played a small hand drum, danced, and collected the donations during the fatha (فتحة, the short break when blessings are said and money is collected) between songs. This left him predictably upset, although he was a buoyant character who did not
complain often. On the occasions he did, he spoke mostly of the frustration with being unable to perform like he could before, rather than the loss of income for the group:

Look, look here. (Shows me a much younger picture of himself, with a full head of black hair, both eyes intact, dancing in the ҳалқа.) I was handsome, I could dance, I could sing. Not like haaa, haaa (makes a raspy noise in his throat). I sang, truly.

He was also clear about what he had always wanted to do with his life:

From the time I was a boy, I wanted to be a ҳалқа. I snuck out of my home, and went to the Jemaa el Fnaa. My family, my father was angry. They would lock me in a room, tie me to a bed! But I always went to the Jemaa el Fnaa. When I finally left home, I worked with Mikhi, watched him, I danced, collected money... I learned the ҳалқа, the Jemaa was a madrasa, my madrasa. I always brought home money, but my family was ashamed that I was a ҳалқа, a wld jemaa el fnua. They didn't respect me again until I got married. They saw that I was a man, at that time.

We can see from these quotes (quotes that resemble statements I heard from other ҳлаъюиа) that there is a clear set of functionings that Abdelhakim values: He loves to perform in the ҳалқа, both as a lead singer and a dancer and musician alongside other musicians. He loves to do so in the Jemaa el Fnaa especially, and had worked hard and sacrificed much to do so. Thus the set of performance functionings he valued looked something like this:

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95 This seems a bit obvious, given that he was a ҳалқа, but there is a commonly-held notion among both performers who do not work in the ҳалқа and Moroccans in general that being a ҳалқа is a desperation option, something that a performer would do solely to survive when other options are not available. When speaking with many ҳлаъюиа, especially older ones, this was clearly not at all the case.
Figure 23: Valued functionings

Although we largely discussed the Square, it is reasonable to assume that there were other functionings he valued in relation to performance. For example, he did mention that he liked teaching others how to sing and perform. There were likely other things as well, but in this case we will group them under "other possible functionings".

Then we have some of the instrumental capabilities necessary to have this set of capabilities to perform:

Figure 24: Instrumental capabilities set

When some key instrumental capabilities were not present earlier in 2011 and 2010 due to his vocal cord polyp, Abdelhakim's capabilities set of possible functionings regarding performance was smaller:
This is of course a very simplified look at the instrumental capabilities that enable this performance capability set, drawn from Nussbaum's list. Of course, his performance functionings impacted all of these capabilities in turn: they allowed him to make a living, they helped him associate with others and build access to social capital, all of which contributed to his continued lifespan, and so on. A diminishing of his capability to be healthy in the form of his vocal cord ailment (which, as I will discuss, he was unable to fix on his own) in turn diminished his capability set regarding performance, as well as likely having a general effect on his overall set of capabilities: he could no longer sing lead or tell jokes and stories well, which were both his favorite things to do in life and the activities that earned his group the most money.  

Abdelhakim's upset over the roughening and fading of his voice was enough to overcome his reluctance to spend money on a doctor visit. However, he was then told that

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96 As far as I could tell, his 4-man group split the money equally, although Abdelhakim was the star attraction. This approach paid dividends when Abdelhakim was unable to contribute as much to the group’s earning power, and helped make for a very tightly bound circle of care and mutual aid. Many other groups at the Square seemed to work this way as well.
an operation to fix the polyp on his vocal cord would cost between 8000 and 10,000 dirhams, (1000-1200 dollars) a decent price by American standards perhaps, but a massive expense amounting to as much as 3 to 6 months of income for Abdelhakim.97

As I said earlier, Abdelhakim was at the time of my fieldwork perhaps the most beloved and well-known ḥalaqi at the Square, and had performed there full-time since at least the mid-1960s (he stated that he had actually started sneaking away to perform there as a child in the mid-to-late 50s). A doctor who was a fan heard about Abdelhakim's plight and agreed to do the surgery at cost (operating theater rent and supplies, apparently around 2000MAD (250USD) according to Abdelhakim) Abdelhakim raised some of this amount, and the rest was chipped in by folks at the Square who heard about this: other ḥlayqiya, fans, vendors, and certain foreigners. When Abdelhakim's voice was restored (when his access to social capital paid a dividend in the form of a doctor willing to fix his vocal cord polyp at cost and people willing to help with this reduced fee) his set of possible functionings increased to include his most beloved, valued functioning: singing the lead voice and leading the group, while being able to be heard by the whole audience. He was really happy, and so was everyone else. The capability set then looked more like this:

97 The inexact guess here is partly a result of the fact that I never finished Abdelhakim's income survey, which was interrupted by the April 28th bombing. Abdelhakim was very popular, and also came to the Square and sold DVD's of his performances (made by German film-maker Thomas Ladenburger #) during the day to earn a bit extra, so he may have earned a good bit more than your average cha‘abi performer. Based on the incomes of other cha‘abi musicians (which averaged an estimated 20,000MAD a year), this amount still would not have likely been over about 40,000MAD a year, however, and was more likely around 25-30,000MAD. On a side note, Abdelhakim did give verbal permission to me to mention facts about his income in our first long talk.
When I say happy, I mean happy: I recall sharing a few moments with complete strangers while watching Abdelhakim sing in his repaired voice, both of us wanting to share our joy in the moment – ('Mzyaan bzaf, y ghnni bhal haka, yek?’ 'Iyeh, bhal fi-chhaaal hadi!’ 'It's wonderful, him singing like this, eh? 'Yes, it is, like ooold times!') This also in turn translated into a somewhat improved capability to earn an income, when larger crowds would gather to see Abdelhakim singing like old times, as well as responding to the return of his ability to draw and hold new audience members in thrall. And Abdelhakim's joy in performance was clearly on display, an unsurprising result in a man who had worked very hard his whole life to stay in the ḥalqa and be the best ḥalaqi he could be.\(^{98}\)

\(^{98}\) Thus, while adaptive preference is essentially impossible remove from the equation in matters of capabilities relating to performance practices, based on talks I had with Abdelhakim it is hard to imagine someone with a more clearly-defined idea of what he wanted to do with his possible options. In his youth, he had braved beatings and a period of excommunication from his family, the rigors of the life of a ḥalaqi, and a long period of badly-paid apprenticeship in order to become a top-notch performer.
Thus, as shown in the diagram above, we have a cascading chain of benefits: the capability to associate freely and the antecedents to social capital afforded by the climates of the Jemaa el Fnaa and Marrakech in general⁹⁹, and Abdelhakim’s work in using those resources to build his social capital, paid a dividend in the form of a generous surgeon and willing donors. This in turn enhanced Abdelhakim’s capability to be healthy, which then expanded the capability set related to performance: he could return to leading the group most of the time, which improved his ability to earn, likely revived his notoriety somewhat (raising the likelihood of future ability to help and be helped), which (could have potentially) increased his lifespan beyond the 60-odd years he had lived. All of this could and likely would have in turn improved all the capabilities just listed in a positive feedback loop.

Sad, one good, generous doctor is not the same thing as a general environment of accessible medical care; charity is no substitute for a functioning social safety net. Abdelhakim's polyp had grown as large as it had because of a general disinclination to spend money on his own medical care, as well as a very real lack of funds to do so – or to take time off to recuperate – without creating a deficit in some other area of the household budget. Thus problems were cared for when they became emergencies (such as his near-total loss of voice) and given little time to heal. While the polyp ceased to be a problem, six months or so after my research period ended and I returned to the US, Abdelhakim began to suffer weakness and coughing spells. Eventually, according to his band mates and his wife, he did go to the doctor who told him he was sick and at the

⁹⁹ By this I am referring to the fact that the Square and Marrakech are relatively safe, stable places where life is generally not so stressful as to interfere with the process of making lasting social ties. One does not have to go looking too far from Marrakech to find places where this may not be the case (much of South Sudan, Western Sahara, Libya and Egypt, for example).
advanced state his illness had reached would need a great deal of treatment, medication, and rest.\textsuperscript{100} Abdelhakim, through a combination of inability (his household lacked the funds for the course of treatment as well as the funds to replace his missed work time) and sheer obstinacy (he did not like to miss work and did not have great faith in doctor's diagnoses, despite his recent experiences) did not follow the course of treatment. He died in September of 2012, a few hours after visiting the Square for the last time.

Another cascade, but this time one of failures in instrumental capabilities: a mix of factors resulted in a diminished capability to be healthy, eventually resulting in the collapse of all other capabilities. It should be said here that Abdelhakim did not smoke or drink, ate very healthily, exercised daily, and kept himself in terrific physical shape – while life affords no guarantees, it seems likely that given access to decent treatment and preventative care he would likely have lived a great while longer. It is possibly arguable

\textsuperscript{100} I never heard (or was unable, with my limited Arabic, to understand) a more exact description of his illness, but more medically-educated people I spoke with said that given the symptoms and his age it sounded like a possible combination of congestive heart failure, possibly with a bit of pneumonia thrown into the mix. Care for CHF is palliative, not curative, but can extend lifespan and increase quality of life significantly.
that he could have made different choices about following his doctor's recommendations about treatment, medication, and rest – thus having the capability to be healthy but choosing not to be. But as poverty encourages unfortunate trade-offs (deferred doctor visits and rest vs. more money for other household needs) and downwardly adjusted expectations (in that Abdelhakim accepted a certain measure of illness as a natural part of life as a poor Moroccan) it can be reasonably argued that Abdelhakim's real capability to be healthy, the set of possible functionings, did not include living in good health to an age that most of us consider a desirable lifespan. Thus treatment was in both the case of his voice and of his final fatal illness too late, and in the latter, too little. This is more or less, of course, the same phenomenon that occurs elsewhere in regards to the poor and medical care, such as the American emergency-room-as-caregiver state of affairs – see Olson 1993; Newton et al. 2008 for discussion. And finally, lest one be tempted to think that this is less lamentable due to it being a foreseeable consequence of choosing the life of a ḥalaqi, keep in mind that this is a situation common to nearly anyone in the Moroccan informal economy (see Citron 2004).

In this one example, we can see a few characteristics of capabilities:

- They affect each other in synergistic ways, and like everything else about people, cannot be spoken about in isolation from each other. The capability to live in health exists within a web of other capabilities, and poor access to medical care affects every other capability set in some way and is in turn affected by them.

- They are a holistic package of factors: while good medical care exists in Marrakech, it requires resources that many, if not most, do not have. And
even if it is within financial reach, *knowing* about it, *believing* that it is important and can extend life and improve its quality, these often result from factors like education and, in modern-day Morocco, literacy.

- Even if one rejects *my* rejection of the ICH paradigm in favor of *my* emphasis on performing capabilities, it should be readily apparent that some holistic thinking about instrumental factors is necessary.¹⁰¹ The repertoire of many ḥlayqiya who suffer from the same lack of access to health care is *precisely* the locally distinct practice that most of those concerned with the Square's intangible cultural heritage, if asked, would agree to be valuable ICH. Their repertoires often die with them likely years before they would with adequate health care, closing off unknown avenues of future transmission, collaboration, and creation.

- Finally, it is important to notice the ways the cultural and physical structures at the Jemaa el Fnaa support capabilities – before his illnesses, Abdelhakim (like many other ḥlayqiya) was able to live the life he chose in part because of the way the Square works: the freedoms it affords to make a living, learn/practice/improve one's performance, build social capital, and so on.

In the chapter that follows, I will discuss capabilities at the Jemaa el Fnaa in terms of this web of capabilities that are both instrumental *for* and affected *by* the capabilities to engage in performance practices. I will both discuss the ḥlayqiya in general as well as spend a bit of time talking about ways their capabilities differ from group to group or

¹⁰¹ See Titon (2009) for a discussion of musical "ecosystems" in the support of traditions.
person to person, supporting this discussion with brief case studies and data gathered in a short quantitative survey I administered in 2011.
Chapter 6: Capabilities and livelihoods at the Jemaa el Fnaa

As I stated in the previous chapter, the focus of interventions should be to enable the populations concerned to achieve the functionings – the "beings" and "doings" – they value, rather than to promote a specific set of functionings deemed to be their "heritage."

But the problem with speaking about the capabilities to do and be these things is the difficulty of measurement: what would be a minimum level of capability to participate in these activities, and how could it possibly be measured? Observed behavior is not an indicator, as participation (as performer or spectator) is often a matter of choice, and people may not participate as a matter of inclination or religious observance. So how to evaluate this capability set, and determine if there is space for helpful intervention?.

By way of an answer, I turn yet again to the idea of emergence: as we saw in the case study discussing Abdelhakim Khabzaoui, the capabilities to perform emerge from the web of other capabilities a person possesses (or lacks): the capability to be healthy, build and use social capital, make a living, and so on. Add to this list some capabilities not discussed in this case (study): to learn and teach (both formally and informally), to be able to interact with others in a climate of mutual respect and dignity, to have a measure of control over one's environment in the form of a political voice. None of these capabilities exist in isolation from the others; they mutually influence each other in numerous ways, and the capability to perform is an emergent property of this interaction.
If one or more of the instrumental capabilities is deficient, the capability set regarding performance practices is diminished and possibly eliminated, as in the case of a person's death or conditions so extreme (war, imprisonment, famine, plague, etc.) as to entirely prevent the capability set from existing.

For the purposes of discussing the ḥlayqiya's capabilities to perform I have put together a short list of instrumental capabilities which affect the size and extent of a performance capability set. The aforementioned works by Sen and Nussbaum were influential in the formation of the list to be sure, but also work like Melanie Walker's writing on capabilities and higher education (Walker 2003) and Anthony Bebbington's and Robert Chambers' work on capabilities and livelihoods (Chambers 1984; Chambers and Conway 1991; Bebbington 1999). I also base my list on what in my field observations seemed to be to be enabling/hindering the ḥlayqiya's capabilities to achieve valued functionings, as well as what they themselves told me in interviews:

1. **Livelihood:** the capability to make a livelihood, borrow and save, and have access to capital
   a. Do people (or their guardians, in the case of children or other dependents) have the ability to make a living in a safe, healthy, dignified, and sustainable manner?
   b. Do they have access to credit and savings instruments?
   c. Do they have access to the necessary forms of capital, both in terms of their means of financial income and their capability to engage in performance practices?

2. **Association:** the capability to associate with others freely
   a. Do people have the ability to seek out and associate with others with whom to perform?
b. Do people have the capability to be treated (and to treat others) with dignity, mutual respect, and equality?

c. Are performers able to build and use social capital to achieve valued functionings?

d. Do performers have access to an audience, and vice-versa?

e. Do people have the time and freedom from undue stress necessary to associate with others?

f. Do performers have an available physical space (performance, rehearsal)?

g. Do people have access to transportation?

3. Safety: the capability to both be and to feel safe

   a. Are people reasonably free from physical threats – from violence, accidents, and natural disaster?

   b. Are they able to live without the stress and anxiety created by the presence of physical threats?

4. Health: the capability to live a long and healthy life

   a. Do people have access to clean and adequate food, water, and shelter?

   b. Do performers have real access to preventive, palliative, and curative medical care?

5. Political agency: the capability to exercise some control over one's environment

   a. Do performers have access to their political representatives, and have a voice in matters that concern them?

   b. Do they have freedom of speech and opinion?
6. **Education**: The capability to learn both about performance and the world in general

   a. Do people have access to the formal and informal education and instructional opportunities that enable performance capabilities and capabilities in general?

This list is not intended to be comprehensive or universal – as Sen (Amartya Sen 2004) emphasizes, any sort of list-making must be a flexible operation, reacting to the circumstance they are applied to. This is developed for this purpose, while in another circumstance it may make sense to group sub-categories differently, or add entirely new ones – if speaking of children, for example, one might add emphasis on the capability to play. It is also placed in no particular order of importance – and might, in fact be better represented like a web of mutual influence:

![Figure 28: A web of capabilities](image)

Each element in this web affects the others. For example, take a diminished capability of political agency: the inability to be heard and responded to by those in
political power could (and arguably does, in the case of the ḥlayqiya) result in diminished capabilities to be healthy, resulting from the lack of a social safety net:

Figure 29: A deficit in political agency

This in turn could result in an individual's diminished capability to access the market and make a livelihood, as well as a reduced capability to associate with others: to see friends, family, and colleagues: ¹⁰²

Figure 30: Repercussions of further deficits

¹⁰² For professional performers like the ḥlayqiya, the reduced performing capabilities and the reduced livelihood capabilities are of course often concurrent things.
All of which diminishes the capabilities to engage in performance practices: to perform in front of an audience, to watch and listen to performance, to compose, to rehearse, to learn, to teach. If one is sick, unable to support oneself, and politically voiceless, one not only lacks the intrinsically important capabilities that health, livelihood, and political representation represent, but also suffers knock-on effects on all the other capabilities one has.

In the discussion that follows, I will use the six capabilities categories presented above (Livelihood, Association, Safety, Health, Political Agency, and Education) as a framework for presenting various capabilities issues observed in my fieldwork in Marrakech, relating them ultimately to the capability to engage in performance practices which emerges from them. For the most part, I will take what Robeyns (2005, clearly borrowing from Clifford Geertz 1973) refers to as a thick descriptive analysis, producing a prose description of the ḥlayqiya's capabilities, combined with some quantitative data given as supplemental detail. This is as opposed to the work of those like Paul Anand and others that base their discussions and results entirely on quantitative survey data (Anand, Hunter, and Smith 2005; Anand, Santos, and Smith 2007) or measures like the UN's Human Development Index, which choose certain quantitative indicators in order to create an index that facilitates comparison. I will use information gathered from October 2010-August 2011 and December 2012 in qualitative personal interviews, participant-observation, nightly walkthroughs and note-taking, and a short quantitative survey (whose methodology is discussed below and in more detail in Appendix A). All of these various approaches helped to provide multiple ways to look at capabilities among this
population of performers – as the discussion of one performer's capabilities above shows, this issue requires a holistic approach from multiple angles to discuss properly.

Any figures given in the text about the ḥlayqiya's income, credit, savings, or expenses come from the quantitative survey I conducted myself among the Square's performers. Commencing in February 2011 and finishing in August of that year, 52 subjects were interviewed using a short survey (attached to the end of Appendix A) in locations where they could ideally answer freely, i.e. where their responses would not be easily overheard.103 They were paid 50 dirhams (5EUR, 6.25USD) for the survey, which took approximately 30 minutes, and gave verbal consent (recorded) for their responses to be reported anonymously. I discuss further details about sampling and limitations and provide a copy of the survey questionnaire in the appendix.

Livelihood: do the ḥlayqiya have the capability to make a living, borrow and save, and have access to capital?

Speaking about money is certainly a prosaic place to start, but one that keeps the discussion grounded in a focus on the daily realities of these performers, rather than a romantic ideal. The Square is a remarkable place, one of romance, mystery, excitement and drama for the ḥlayqiya as well as the crowds – in the stories they told me about their lives, I heard the Jemaa el Fnaa described by the ḥlayqiya and those who worked around them in ways as emotional as any tourist guidebook: a madrasa, a lit stage, a never-ending theatre, a grand comedy, a film noir. But in the day-to-day life of the ḥlayqiya, the Square is also a workplace where they do their job. They wake up, get dressed, have their coffee, grab their kit, and head out to the Square, returning hours later tired and sore,

103 Of these 52, 40 were ultimately used in the quantitative discussions, for reasons discussed in Appendix A. Those 40 represent approximately 11% of the total population of performers.
hopefully with money in their pockets. And while one of the foundational ideas of the CA is that money (financial income, savings, and access to credit) are not a suitable complete proxy indicator for capabilities, it remains a significant instrumental factor in building and maintaining them. As Belʿaid Farouz, the Aissawa snake charmer said, "Makaynch turaath bla khubz," 'there's no heritage without bread.'

Overall, the ḥlayqiya's incomes are meager, near the bottom of the scale for the Moroccan informal sector, a state of affairs which limits capabilities: to access health resources, education, housing, even basic governmental services (such as getting an ID, a lease, a driver's license) that require frequent and expensive bribes. This poverty of income is made all the more poignant when considering the ḥlayqiya's role as the heart of the Square's tourist draw, from which they see very little of the income. On the other hand, this income places them in a similar financial situation as a great many in the Marrakechi informal economy.

In terms of income, we can split the ḥlayqiya into two larger groups based on which segment of the audience they deal with the most: those who are able to get income from foreign tourists (Gnawas and Aissawa), and those who rely mostly on Moroccans for their income (Ṣaḥarawi, chaʿabi musicians, magicians, comedians, etc.). This difference in income has a few explanations, but here I will focus on performance genre and audience, as well as types of work done outside the Square.

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104 See Citron 2004 throughout regarding bribes in the Marrakechi informal economy.
105 The bulk of the income goes to those who sell physical items, like hotel rooms, souvenirs, and food.
106 The Ṣaḥarawi do sell incense and knick-knacks to non-Moroccan tourists, of course. However, non-Arabophone tourists have many other more convenient or aggressively-marketed places they can buy such things, and only make up a small portion of the typical Ṣaḥarawi's customer base.
Musicians who work most of their time in the ḥalqa earn income while staying in one place, as baraka – blessings, or in this case, donations. There are strategies for maximizing this income, such as the fatḥa (a break in the act where the audience is blessed and encouraged the audience to give baraka) and the small good-luck tokens with a fixed donation amount that magicians give out. This is semi-passive, as the performers are stationary and must attract audience to them. This is also conducted in Arabic or Berber, thus both performance and money pitch are typically inaccessible to the non-Arabic speaker, who (if not intimidated by the crowd and noise into remaining on the periphery and heading straight to a safe café terrasse) understand little of the performance and rarely stay long enough to leave much money behind. Occasionally the groups hire pitchmen to go into the crowd and solicit donations from the tourists at the fringes of the ḥalqa.

On the other hand, while the Gnawa and Aissawa do make a ḥalqa on occasion, they usually move around, actively pursuing tourists in what I call the "gotcha" approach – typically putting their hat or draping a snake on the hapless tourists, encouraging them to take a photo, and then demanding money in exchange for the photo-op. This more aggressive approach, combined with the obvious appeal of the snakes or the colorfully-dressed Gnawa, make for attractions that do not require language skills to comprehend or allow much of an option – once viewed – as to whether or not to pay for it.

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107 I describe this in more detail when discussing the Aissawa and Gnawa in Chapter 1. Henna women and monkey handlers (not included in the survey or treated much in this dissertation, as they generally do not perform in the ḥalqa) also use the "gotcha" technique using quickly-scarred henna tattoos or an unhappy monkey sat on the arm of the customer. Interestingly, as I found out from a couple of surveys performed on a whim with henna women, they can earn several multiples of the typical ḥalaqi’s income, which comes from a wide variety of henna-painting engagements.
In the end, the average ḥlayqiya income is comparable with the bottom rung of other artisans (such as leather workers, potters, and other informal workers) around Morocco: overall, they earn around 25,000MAD (3000USD, 2181EUR) a year, with the tourist-friendly earning 31,000MAD (3875USD, 2818EUR) and the more Moroccan-focused earning around 21,000. It is not terribly useful, however, to speak of an aggregated average income figure among this population, as there was a huge diversity of income figures – from an Aissawa who earned 94,000MAD (11,750USD, 8475EUR) a year to a blind, homeless solo violinist who effectively earned almost nothing in terms of money and relied on food, tea, and other donations (often coming from other ḥlayqiya). As the standard error bars in the chart above show, there can also be considerable variability within genres, reflecting diversity in terms of livelihood strategy or access to

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Figure 31: The ḥlayqiya's mean yearly income (in dirhams) with indication for standard error

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108 See Appendix A for information on survey methodology and weighting of 'overall' figures. Comparison data for other informal workers is from a survey on the informal sector done by the Moroccan High Commission for Planning in 2007 (Haut-Commissariat au Plan, Royaume du Maroc 2007).
capital. The Aissawa, for example, vary widely depending on the number of sets of snakes they own or the types of work they do outside the Square.

In addition to the income strategies pursued at the Square itself, the deciding factor in the income variation between genres was often access to artistic work outside the Square. As one can see in the graphs below (figs. 23 and 24), there is correlation between the total amount earned and total percentage of income earned in other places:

Figure 32: ḥlayqiya mean income by quartile

Figure 33: Non-Square income as percentage of total income, split by quartile of total income
When outside income is removed from the total income figures, the variations flatten a good deal (the standard deviation of the overall mean reduces from 15,539MAD in the original average to a less huge 9,136). It is again the Gnawa and Aissawa who come out on top in terms of income earned outside the Square as well as within. This can be explained by the particular kinds of work available, as well as the frequency of and usual pay for that work: All the Gnawa and many of the Aissawa at the Square play night-long trance/healing ceremonies called *lila* (see Chlyeh 1999; Kapchan 2007 for more on Gnawa, Nabti 2007 for more on the Aissawa), as well as hotels and the occasional festival, tour abroad, or movie extra appearance. Aissawa are also a staple of Marrakechi weddings. The other genres still had outside performance opportunities: weddings and hotels for the Berbers and Cha’abi, circumcisions for the Berbers, souks for the Ṣaḥarawi, Berbers, and assorted other solo ḥlayqiya. These opportunities paid much less in general than those available to the Gnawa and Aissawa. Finally, the Aissawa and Gnawa had more professional connections outside the Square simply by virtue of belonging to a *confrérie* – they are more connected to a larger population of Gnawa and Aissawa outside the Square, who will hire them for work. The cha’abi and other performers, on the other hand, seemed much less connected to outside social networks of similar musicians from whom they might get work. As I will discuss in the latter portion of the chapter and in the final concluding chapter, these aspects mentioned (tourist accessibility, access to outside work) that contribute to this variation in incomes have implications for the general capabilities of the ḥlayqiya, the more specific capability to engage in valued performance practices, and the sorts of interventions that might be undertaken to improve these capabilities.
Seasonality of income

Finally, it is important to mention the Jemaa el Fnaa's place as a reliable source of income, despite its seasonality. I heard time and time again from members of all genres of performer that while the Square usually paid less than working on the road, it always paid. Especially for the middle-aged ḥlayqiya with wives and families, this predictability of income combined with the far gentler life off the road and closer to family made the Square a preferable place to work over the traveling life, and a place one could work at longer before being too old to do it effectively. The overall tourist trade of Marrakech has a fairly gentle seasonal cycle, with tourists visits distributed throughout the year – neither the city as a whole nor the tourist hotspots in the medina become a ghost town in the winter months (Bigio 2010). There is undoubtedly the period in the winter when things are slow, but at no point does the audience that is the lifeblood of the Square dry up and disappear. The different genres of ḥlayqiya of course did report a level of variation that was significant as seen here (Fig. 25), with the percentages of income of the other three seasons significantly lower than the summer peak season:
There is a big difference between a 43% percent dip in income and a complete lack of income, and the low season in Marrakech is mild when compared with a place like Essaouira to the north, which largely empties in the winter. This is likely explained by the seasonal appeal of Essaouira's main attractions (beaches and ocean) versus the less variable ones of Marrakech (the city, its inhabitants, architecture, and surrounding palmeraie resorts). In addition, as mentioned when describing the audience as a resource, the ḡlayqiya's audience is not solely (or even chiefly) composed of foreign tourists – while the slower seasons mean that everyone in the tourist economy has less money to give, the overall audience does not diminish at the same rate as the tourists. Thus most ḡlayqiya tough it out at the Square during winter rather than seek other means of income.

As I was told, the most common means of coping with this seasonality was a combination of savings and (when savings inevitably ran out towards the beginning of spring) credit at the hanoot general store. A few ḡlayqiya also reported that their landlords would insist on
all the rent being paid for the year in one or two payments at the end of the summer, when they knew the ḥlayqiya would be more flush with cash.

Another seasonal aspect are the variations tied to the Islamic *hijri* calendar. Contrary to what one might think upon seeing the quietness of daytime streets during Ramadan (رمضان, the 9th month of the *hijri* calendar, when Muslims are expected to fast during the day), the month is generally a quite good one for the ḥlayqiya: after the final call to prayer, the Square fills to bursting with Moroccans (with the occasional foreigner looking bewildered as to where all these people came from). The busy times also extend to the wee hours of the morning, and overall most ḥlayqiya do better. While this perhaps would not include the Aissawa and Gnawa, who see less business from foreigners that stay away due to the season, this is largely compensated by the busy month of Sha'ban (شعبان, the 8th month) that precedes Ramadan, when Gnawa and Aissawa do a great many well-paying *lila* trance ceremonies.

The difficult side of the *hijri* seasonality for everyone is the need to buy a sheep for the Eid el-Adha slaughter. While the buying and slaughtering of a sheep is, like other aspects of Islam, not intended to cause hardship, the procuring of the sheep was a source of worry and stress for many of the ḥlayqiya with families. The price of live sheep inflates radically as Eid approaches, reaching (circa 2011) between 1800-3000MAD (225-375USD, 165-275EUR) for an adult sheep – a month's income or more for many of the ḥlayqiya. At one point the Wilaya actually bought sheep for the ḥlayqiya, though this

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109 For those who have not lived in Morocco: while I knew middle-class Moroccans who actually did not practice the Eid slaughter, for many missing it would be akin to skipping Christmas. Added to this is the social pressure, so that skipping the Eid sheep for some would be a bit like a combination of the family disappointment of skipping the holiday combined with a public announcement of one's inability to do it, through a combination of poverty and the lack of willpower to save the money. One can see how this would potentially be a source of public shame.
only continued for a couple of years. The Aissawa jam‘aya actually does disburse some of the collected dues each year for its members to buy sheep (about 1200-1400MAD).

But for most, the approaching Eid means a tense scramble for the needed funds – which also applies to many audience members, who have less available dirhams to leave in the ḥalqa.

Credit and borrowing

Most ḥlayqiya claimed very limited access to credit. As members of the informal economy with no provable income, they very seldom used formal banking. Most credit they have access to comes in the form of loans from their family and social circle, as well as a certain amount of credit at the local hanoot (حانوت, a small general store), which extend credit to those in the neighborhood. Aissawa have access to small loans from their association for large and unexpected health events. And a few ḥlayqiya I spoke with had landlords that extended credit on some of the rent. Overall, most ḥlayqiya surveyed had credit available to cushion some shocks and vulnerabilities, as well as some needed purchases: seasonal dips in income, minor health problems, purchase of some essential items and equipment. Those surveyed were in an average of 1750MAD of debt, largely due to medical expenses for themselves and their families, as well as school expenses like books and afterschool lessons. Most of these surveys were conducted in the more profitable summer months, however – many ḥlayqiya stated that if polled in the winter, the figure would have been a great deal higher due to hanoot store credit that gets paid off during the summer. In discussions that surrounded the surveys, medical debt came up the most often as the most common source of debt – even if the money is technically
owed to the landlord or ḥanoot, it was removed from the household budget to pay for a chronic illness, accidents, or infection suffered by the ḥlayqiya or a household member.

There is also a dearth of access to the credit needed to obtain performing capital like instruments, snakes, loudspeakers, and costumes. The instruments the ḥlayqiya use are often locally made, but are still an artisanal labor intensive product and thus not cheap: 1000MAD (125USD, 91EUR) for a rebab, lotar, or gimbri, 1500 for a mandolina, 2000 for an imported banjo. For the Aissawa, cobras are around 2000MAD or more each, vipers 400-800, and small snakes for hanging around a tourist's neck are around 200-500 – meaning a working set of snakes costs around 8000 – 10000MAD (1000-1250USD, 720-900EUR), plus the cost of cages, warming bulbs, and the occasional rat. Owning the needed working capital (instruments, in this case) allows drastic improvements in income resulting from new opportunities: new work at additional gigs away from the Square for the owner of instruments or amplification, extra work days that pay better for the owner of a set or two of snakes. This is not to mention the capital required by various other livelihood activities – not properly explored in this study – that were undertaken by other members of the family.

**Savings**

There were a broad range of both amounts of and approaches to saving amongst the ḥlayqiya. Overall, the surveyed ḥlayqiya stated they held an average of around 1100MAD in savings, but again an average belies the diversity of the situation: some ḥlayqiya lived almost entirely hand-to-mouth, with essentially zero savings, while some (especially Aissawa and Berbers) were dedicated savers of money, with month's worth of income saved away. A few were (through their wives) members of neighborhood savings
clubs that served as a social piggy bank and a means of pooling money for larger purchases.\textsuperscript{110}

The Ṣaḥarawi, as a combination of performer and merchant of tangible goods, had a slightly different situation than the other groups: while they had cash savings comparable to the rest of the ḥlayqiya (that is to say, almost none), they had large amounts of savings tied up in their inventory. The value of this varied but was figured by all surveyed at around 20-30,000MAD. Ownership of much of the stock is generally shared between the Ṣaḥarawi himself and his family (in places like Zagoura, Imzazen, and Tata in the south of Morocco) who provide much of the medicines that he sells. This stock is not insured, and secure storage and transport is a constant concern.

Given that the average reported total household expenses averaged around 37,000MAD (4,626USD, 3367EUR), it is clear that a ḥlayqiya's income is only one element in the budget. Most ḥlayqiya have at least one family member, such as a spouse or child, that brings in supplementary income. Some ḥlayqiya were actually secondary breadwinners in a house with a wife or child that had a good job in the formal sector, or a family that owned a business. While the study conducted for this dissertation was not able to get adequate information on these contributions made by non-ḥlayqiya to total household income, future studies of the ḥlayqiya should involve a mixed-gender team of researchers to get a better look at the incomes earned and financial resources used by women in these households.

\textsuperscript{110} Again, this seems like a fascinating and important piece of the general issue of livelihoods and capabilities that I was not able to adequately capture in this current study, largely because it seems to be a phenomenon engaged in entirely by women and both my own gender and focus on the (almost entirely male) ḥlayqiya deprived me from learning adequately about women's livelihood roles among this population. More research on this topic would shed a great deal of useful light; in addition, while there is no shortage of writing on ROSCA\textregistered s (Rotating Savings and Credit Associations, see Geertz 1962; Bouman 1995) very little seems to be written about Morocco or North Africa in general.
Association: do the ḥlayqiya have the capability to associate with others freely, build access to social capital, and connect with an audience?

The Square provides a commodity that is both precious and rare: public space that is safe (although with certain limits, which I will discuss later), accessible by public transport, geographically central, and devoted largely to the purpose of performance. It is also, thanks to the Square's place as tourist centerpiece (and admittedly, bolstered by the UNESCO ICH and World Heritage declarations) protected from the whims of urban development. Both the space itself and the physical and cultural infrastructure that surround it provide a place where performers and audience may associate, engaging in valued social functionings – performing, watching, building social capital, even expressing sexuality and gender identity in ways that would be impossible elsewhere.

Social capital and the ḥlayqiya

As the description of the life of the Square given up to this point would suggest, this is not a simple topic to write about. While the simplifying devices I have employed here – such as referring to these people collectively as ḥlayqiya – lend the impression of some sort of collective, the reality is one of diverse and layered networks of people. A discussion of social networks at the Square and of ways that identity and community as performed shape these networks is a potential topic for its own long-form discussion. What I am most concerned with for the present discussion, however, is a specific focus on potentials for mutual aid and collective action such as negotiation with the Wilaya – in other words, on the ways that social capital within this population affects both the capabilities to engage in performance practices, as well as the other capabilities that are instrumental in possessing them.
When speaking of social capital, I am using Bourdieu's definition: "...the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group." (Bourdieu 1986) I expand this somewhat to include resources available through extra-group ties, i.e. in this case speaking both of resources available as a result of intra-ḥlayqiya ties as well as ties between the ḥlayqiya and others in Marrakech, Morocco, and beyond. An example of this would include the assistance that was used by Abdelhakim in the case study given earlier, which came from both outside the immediate group of ḥlayqiya (the surgeon's reduced price for his services) and within it (the pooled money that was still necessary to meet the reduced price). Abdelhakim's set of social capital thus included both the surgery, which came from outside the Square, and the money to pay for it, which largely came from inside it.

In sociological and development literature, the lumping-together of the network and resource aspects of social capital – the resources themselves and the social links that make them possible – can make discussions somewhat confusing. Following Richard Carpiano, I make the distinction between Bourdieu's definition, which focuses on the resources themselves, and the usage popularized by Robert Putnam, which refers to the social links that provide access to resources: "...features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions." (Putnam 1993, 167; Carpiano 2006, 168) To keep things more legible, I will refer to this aspect in terms of social links or social networks and the
strength of these ties in terms of social cohesion, keeping "social capital" in reserve for
discussions of the actual resources to which these links provide access.

_Heritage and cohesion: lumping together, pushing apart_

The ḥlayqiya are, of course, not bereft in terms of access to social capital – after all, almost 80% of the total debt they reported in the survey was owed to sources in their informal network, such as friends, family, and other performers. But as I mentioned in Chapter 4, one of the main beneficial secondary effects of the UNESCO heritage designation was to expand their social capital and access to social capital in a number of ways. Not least of these is the increase in the availability and amount of social capital available from sources outside the Square, both in terms of the strengthened and expanded links (whom ḥlayqiya can rely upon for things they need) and available resources from these links (what and how much can they ask for). The most common examples I observed of this expanded capital I heard of was with doctors: a surgeon willing to give a reduced fee, the price of a hospital stay for respiratory distress forgiven, a lowered fee for physical therapy for a disabled child. True, many doctors might have been willing to extend this generosity to others who needed it, but in all the cases just mentioned the recipient pointed out that their position as a ḥlayqiya had been a large factor in the doctor's decision to help.

This improved status goes hand in hand with the increasing visitor-friendliness of the Square, in which someone like a doctor, likely a middle – or upper-class Marrakechi who might never have visited the Square thirty years ago, will now visit the Jemaa el Fnaa regularly (possibly with spouse and child) and develop a fondness for a particular
This change in the Square's attendance, and the resulting increased presence of foreign tourists and intermixing of Marrakechi social strata that goes on there, was one of the most regularly-mentioned changes of the last several decades by both ḥlayqiya and older audiences I interviewed. As I discussed in Chapter 3, the rebranding of the Square as ICH was an important step in this process, which among other effects allows ḥlayqiya to form more of what Putnam calls bridging links across social strata – the links that allow not just for getting by, but for getting ahead (Putnam 2001).

In terms of cohesion among the ḥlayqiya, however, heritage is a mixed bag. The designation of the Jemaa el Fnaa and the activities as heritage, in terms of the UNESCO ICH Proclamation and its reverberations in the yearly festivals, tourist literature, and general ideas held by audience and ḥlayqiya, exerts a multi-directional effect on how the ḥlayqiya view themselves as a group. On one hand, we have the unifying effects of the designation itself: the performers all reside under the umbrella of heritage (if perhaps some keeping more dry than others.) The heritage festivals have had a large part in the more unifying aspect of heritage: the performers are all referred to as ḥlayqiya (when referred to as a group rather than their individual genre titles), they are all paid the same, they are all presented to the audience as equal parts of the big lump of Moroccan heritage that is the Jemaa el Fnaa. It is no surprise that the first of the larger, more formalized multi-genre ḥlayqiya jam ‘ayat (جمعيات, the plural of جمعية 'jam‘aya', literally, 'association') the Association des Maitres du ḥalqa, was formed in 2002 following the

111 See page # in Chapter 1 for more on how ḥlayqiya go about cultivating audience. This is not to say that the richer and better-resourced have not always developed fondnesses for particular ḥlayqiya – it has long been an exciting place for other strata of Moroccan society to get a taste of the wild side. But the taming and heritagization of the Square means that a vastly larger swath of Marrakech is willing to go there, and more links can be made.
first of these festivals, in part as a way of negotiating collectively over the pay for the festival and anticipated benefits coming from the UNESCO designation.

But performing heritage also feeds a strong impulse against collective identity and action: what the ḥlayqiya actually do all day is to display their own "distinct heritage" through performance. As reproducers and re-enactors of ascribed identities, of cultural heritage, they need to be distinct from one another – while the genres may in reality borrow elements, performers, and repertoire from each other, at the Square a Berber is supposed to look and sound like a Berber. While the Square has been drawn and redrawn as a portrait of collective Moroccan identity, it is one drawn as unity in diversity. Performers can and do associate across genre lines but it is those within their own genre that they build more lasting ties with, if for no other reason than because they see their genre-mates for more hours of the day while working and depend more directly on their cooperation to make their livelihoods. Thus while performers from different genres may be friendly, greet each other warmly, even chip in when a central beloved figure like Abdelhakim or Saïd Ammra falls ill, the links made between them do not seem to be as robust as the same-genre ones that exhibit more of the "bonding" (to use Putnam's term) that can be counted upon for regular mutual aid (Putnam 2001; as used in DeWitt 2009).

*Formalizing ties: difficulties with the jam‘ayat*

Efforts to organize the performer's associations have met with mixed success, and in the time of my research period (and a more recent visit in 2012) the ḥlayqiyas' jam‘ayat were still smaller organizations dedicated to a particular genre or ethnicity – one Berber association, two Aissawa, two with assorted musicians and other performers, four Gnawa, and one of storytellers. Most ḥlayqiya claimed to have membership in an
association, though a great many stated that their membership had brought them no great benefits and that organizational aspects like regular meetings, membership cards and dues collection were not being kept up. The Aissawa and Berber associations were in decent repair however, and had kept current rolls, membership dues, and services for their members like a mutual-aid fund and help with off-Square bookings for hotels and weddings. But there existed no organization that gave the ḥlayqiya any sort of unified voice in dealings with the Wilaya or other government.

When talking to ḥlayqiya who were in the process of both trying to keep the associations running as well as organizing a multi-association strike, they complained of the factionalization of the Square – as Mustafa told me, "the Berbers don't trust the Gnawa, the musicians don't trust the Aissawa, people don't trust people, it's difficult." This was a problem for these ḥlayqiya, as they were specifically trying to work across genre lines. The current push to organize was particularly in regards to the problems with disturbances to the Square and the ḥlayqiya's income resulting from the various festivals and concerts held by the Wilaya, disturbances that affected the income of almost all the Square's performers. With a great deal of legwork and persuasion, they had managed to get several of the associations to agree to participate in a quiet protest at the Square the Thursday following my talk with Mustafa – a gathering that was unfortunately scheduled on April 28th, the day of the bombing, and thus never took place.

As these ḥlayqiya's experiences in trying to unify their colleagues in collective action demonstrate, social cohesion among the ḥlayqiya is patchy at best, and there do not

112 With the Aissawa, the strong functioning of their jamʻaya makes sense given that they are already an exclusive group, with many layers of familial, work, and friendship ties between them. See Chapter 1, page 89# or Nabti, 2007 for more about this.
seem to be sustained bonds of trust that run throughout the population of performers. There is certainly some group feeling amongst the ḥlayqiya, as evidenced by Mustafa's near-success at organizing the strike, as well as the widespread chipping-in when a well-known ḥlayqiya like Abdelhakim or Saïd Ammra fell on ill health. And ḥlayqiya did often refer to themselves as a group during interviews, and refer to shared problems and issues. But actual cooperation, the day to day helping each other to get by, still occurred almost exclusively along genre lines. The "dense, multiplex networks" (Noyes 1995) that consist of many strands – family, close friends, and co-workers one relies upon to make a living – exist within but rarely across these genres.

There are a couple of other factors that discourage a more formalized civic organization amongst these performers: one, despite their current static nature, most of the ḥlayqiya are an independent bunch who have only performed at the Square full-time in the last couple of decades. True, there is a healthy contingent of performers like the Ammra family, Abdelhakim and his ḥalaqa, the Gnawa Chleuḥ, and others who have remained full-time at the Square for much longer. But many of the others – solo performers, Berbers, Cha‘abi, and Gnawa, storytellers – still travelled much of the time until the mid-1990s or later. Thus for ḥlayqiya at the Square over 35 (approximately 65%), the life of a sedentary ḥalaqi may not have been what they had in mind when starting to work in the ḥalaqa. Working closely together with and depending on others: when asking ḥlayqiya about the benefits and appeal of life in the ḥalaqa, a high value was often put on the independence and autonomy the job afforded. As Mohammed Jumu, a former acrobat who now worked as a seller of liniments in the ḥalaqa, put it:

I need money, I work. I don't need money, I don't work. I do what I want, I have freedom. No boss, except me.
Admittedly, Mohammed Jumu is a solo ḥalaqi, single and without children, and thus is able to be freer than other ḥlayqiya in his choice of income and working hours. But despite my working-Joe characterization of the ḥalaqi's day at the beginning of the finance discussion, his statement reflects the fact that many of these people chose this occupation and life in the ḥalqa in large part because it involved less people telling them what to do. Thus constructing some level of administration over this population, even democratically elected from their own ranks, is not a simple prospect.

Transport infrastructure and access to an audience

As discussed in the preceding chapters, the shifting and re-arranging of the public transport system has had a drastic effect on certain ḥlayqiya's capabilities (to earn a living, to perform in front of an audience, and the resulting effects on capabilities to be physically and mentally healthy) especially the storytellers that particularly relied on the crowds of (Arabic-speaking, and thus able to enjoy the stories) people that would peruse the Jemaa el Fnaa while waiting for a bus, coach, or taxi back in the days when the Square was a main transport hub. The current transport infrastructure setup that has arisen in staggered changes beginning in the 1980s has the hubs located away from the Square's performing area, largely in sites with no open space to make a ḥalqa. The irony is that these changes occurred as part of efforts to preserve the physical heritage of the medina and the intangible heritage of the Square, while unintentionally removing the sources of much – if not most – of the income for the storytellers. This, combined with the increasing spatial and sonic crowding of the Square and with the changing infraculture of Moroccan leisure and quotidian entertainment that has occurred with the wide spread of satellite television, effectively spelled the end for the storytellers at the Square.
This moving of the local-traffic infrastructure hubs has been concurrent with the development of more tourist-friendly access to the Square, in the form of the large tour-bus parking bay at the Arset el Bilk at the Square's southern border, as well as the #19 airport bus line that has its terminus there. This has probably benefited most – the ḥalqa is among other things a livelihood strategy that requires foot traffic to work – but the benefits have likely accrued much more heavily to the attractions best equipped to extract dirhams from the foreign tourists on the tour and airport buses: the restaurants, boutiques, guides vrai and faux, and of course the performers and others who practice the more aggressive "gotcha" strategies.

*Audience: television and the storytellers*

The audience is for obvious reasons a crucial component in the capability to engage in performance. When Abdelhakim was a boy yearning for a life in the ḥalqa, he imagined the audience that made the ḥalqa's walls – the audience watching him sing and dance, laughing at his jokes, sharing his experiences, exchanging baraka (blessings) not only in the form of money but in shared joy. I did meet a few ḥlayqiya who performed solely as a means of income, but the vast majority I got to know viewed it at least in part as a calling – they did it because they loved it. The ḥlayqiya are not beggars, they are performers seeking an audience that will share their joy in addition to their money. A ḥlayqiya without an audience does not have the capability to be and do what they most value.

Speaking to El Ayachi Ben Jakkane and other storytellers like Mohammed 'Sghiir' Erguini, they cited television (among other things, like the moving of the bus station and taxi ranks and the Square's increasingly crowded land – and soundscape) as
one of the main factors that had largely driven them out of performance. To quote Erguini,

Practical [meaning banal, simple] entertainments! That's all you see now! You see it, you watch five minutes, you see everything. From the television, the audience has no patience. They don't know how to wait for a story, to see it in their heads without pictures. It is more easy to just watch the pictures than to 'picture' [kat-tswwr, 'picture' or 'imagine'] something yourself!

Television and satellite receivers have made their way into most Moroccan living rooms: as of the 2004 Moroccan national census, only 11.2% of households in the median were without a television, and 27% of households had a satellite antenna (Haut-Commissariat au Plan du Royaume du Maroc 2004). By the time of my stay, this latter number had undoubtedly increased: with the exception of a couple of visits to ḥlayqiya who lived in funduks (الفندق, traditional hotels for traders now often adapted as workshops or low-rent dwellings), I never once saw a household without both a television and a parabolic antenna. The television and the hundreds of channels made available by the parabole are an unquestionably large part of the ḥlayqiya's competition for the attention of the Moroccan audience, especially for the storytellers offering a similar entertainment – although as Mohammed Erguini points out, the pictures are provided directly by the screen rather than by the imagination. The television, for better or worse, also provides engaging, serialized entertainments that encourage the viewer to return again and again. The storytellers had adapted to competition that threatened their audiences before – the opening of cinemas like the nearby Cinema Eden encouraged the storytellers to add film

113 A particularly striking thing one sees throughout Morocco is the forests of satellite dishes on the tin roofs of bidonvilles outside places like Casablanca or Rabat, communities where running water and basic sanitation might be unavailable but televisions still glow through the windows.
plots to their repertoire of stories they translate into their own dialect and idiom (see Kapchan 2003). But the television offers this essentially for free (once the TV and *parabole* are purchased) and in the dark privacy of one's living room or the comfort of a cafe. Even the storytellers' yearly heyday, the Ramadan days when crowds would gather for hours to hear stories that would distract them from the fast, are now dry – many stations play back-to-back films day and night through the entire month.

**Safety: Do the ḥlayqiya and their audiences have the capability to both be and to feel safe?**

Both the actual fact and the general impression of safety are key to being able to engage in performance practices. The reasons for this are clear: if people are not able to gather, travel, and generally live without oppressive amounts of fear and danger to life and limb, then their real abilities to do a great many things are curtailed. This is not to say that people do not engage in performance when in danger or afraid of danger, but the range of possible functioning is reduced.

By most any measure, the ḥlayqiya were safe – perhaps more so than musicians in the United States, and well more so than in the same region: Morocco as a whole had a murder rate of 1.4 per 100,000 people, lower than the United States' rate of 4.7. for the most part, the worst hazards one could encounter at the Square were pickpockets, horse and buggy traffic, or food poisoning. I did hear stories of gangs and protection rackets that affected workers at the profitable open-air restaurants, but the ḥlayqiya seemed to be free of these sorts of problems – perhaps because it makes little sense to blackmail those without money. When asked about issues of safety, the performers seemed to agree that it was a safe place to be – not without its share of problems, but danger to life and limb was
not generally one of them. For the most part, as I will discuss, the issues involving real or perceived safety and capabilities that I observed at the Square seemed more often to involve the audience.

Speaking personally, once I became accustomed to the crowding and confusion of the night time Jemaa el Fnaa, it came to seem perfectly safe, if perhaps too intense to be relaxing. However, I am speaking as a man, and for the female members of the Square's audience the experience can be quite different. In the past twenty years the Square has seen a large increase in the number of women who go there for entertainment, frequently cited by ħlayqiya and others I spoke with as being the largest change they noticed over that period. This mirrors other shifts: at the Square, the adaptations towards tourist friendliness like the traffic shifts and the improvements to the restaurants; in Morocco in general, in the improvements in women's rights, especially those following the reign of Mohammed VI such as the changes to the family law code in 2004. But while the daytime Square has become a pleasant and welcoming place for women to visit, the Square at night remains a potentially difficult place for women to enjoy and feel safe, largely due to the incessant groping of pointeurs ("pokers") emboldened by the darkness and anonymity of the crowd. A woman – particularly a woman in Western dress and/or unaccompanied by a man, although dressing in hijab and jellaba does not necessarily help – may well find the nighttime Square a horrible place to be due to this constant onslaught, thus severely limiting her capability to participate in the performances there. The benches many of the ħlayqiya use are an attempt to adapt to this situation, and women spotted in the audience are quickly directed to an available bench seat, leaving them less vulnerable to abuse.
Another obvious influence on the perceived (and to an extent, real) safety of the performers and audience is the threat of terrorism. As I have referred to a number of times throughout this dissertation, the Square was bombed during my research stay – during an interview, in fact, while doing an economic survey with Abdelhakim the cha’abi singer at a nearby cafe. The explosion, which was later determined to be caused by a backpack filled with plastic explosives and nails, ripped the roof off and collapsed the terrace of the Cafe Argana on the Square's north side. The Argana is (it has since been rebuilt) one of the tourist "islands" I discussed in the first chapter, and of the seventeen people killed, fifteen were Moroccan. There is much to say about the attack, its effects on the Square, Marrakech, and the economy and political discourse in general, some of which I have already mentioned. For the moment, however, I would like to focus on this issue of the capabilities to be and to feel safe.

In terms of what threats to safety both those who work at the Square and those who come as visitors are actually afraid of, the moments on the cafe balcony (next to the Cafe de France) where Abdelhakim, Si Mohammed (who played banjo in Abdelhakim's group) and I were sitting illustrated some stark differences: We were interrupted by the crack and boom of the explosion, and all of us rose to our feet to see the roof of the Argana lift up and gouts of debris fly out of the top floor. I recall thinking without hesitation that it was a terrorist bombing, as I had been thinking for months about potential terrorist attacks on such a tourist-filled space. On the other hand, the Moroccans on the balcony with me all seemed to be shouting their assertions that it was a butane explosion, as the tanks that are used by all to cook and heat are prone to leaking and do

114 For more general discussion of the attack and the image and cultural life of the Jemaa el Fnaa, see Gauthier 2011; Oiry-Varacca and Gauthier 2011; Debarbieux 2011.
sometimes explode, taking most of the dwelling and its occupants with them. For the rest of the day, I had two types of conversations: with non-Moroccans like family, friends, or Embassy staff, the fact of an attack was assumed and we discussed worries about future attacks. With Moroccans, the attack/butane explosion issue remained speculative, and I was warned many times to check the seals on my tanks at home.

The fact that the explosion was indeed an attack was confirmed a day or so later, and a tense period at the Square followed. For the ḥlayqiya I knew, coming around to the reality of the terrorist attack added new burdens of worry to those they already bore: about being hurt or killed in another attack while at the Square, about the future of their livelihoods if the crowds were scared away permanently or the Square was in some way closed off to them. The latter was perhaps stronger – the attack seemed to be a "lightning only strikes once" kind of phenomenon (I was actually told this by a ḥalaqi when speaking about the subject) for many, and the increased visibility of police and other security measures seemed to reassure them. In addition the bomber himself, Adil el Othmani, along with his co-conspirators were captured only a week or so later and did not seem to be part of Al Qaeda or any other organizations likely to commit more attacks on Marrakech (Reuters 2011). The half empty Square that followed the weeks after the attack seemed to be a much more frightening prospect, and the ḥlayqiya were both relieved at the fact that they would be paid for the festival that followed a few weeks later and that the crowds gradually started to return after a month or so.

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115 This was in fact the going theory on the radio and television for the rest of the day, until investigators had had a chance to inspect the site.
The impact of the fear caused by the attack on the tourism industry was felt in the livelihoods of the ḥlayqiya, as it was for much of Marrakech. Once the foreign tourists returned home who were already in Marrakech or too late to change their flights, there was a period of roughly a month with very few foreign visitors to the Square, which affected many of the performers, especially those like the Gnawa and Aissawa that made much of their income from foreigners. The traffic from Moroccan visitors seemed to rebound in only a few weeks, but the numbers of foreign visitors had done so only partially by the end of my initial research stay. Othmani’s attack was ideal in terms of scaring away foreign visitors – as Lionel Gauthier points out, the Argana is one of the number of cafes in which foreigners may take part in the second half of the Square’s double experience: first wading briefly into the imposing crowd, then viewing that crowd from above from the safe aerie of a cafe terrace (Gauthier 2011). The bombing struck directly at one of those aeries, leaving an unsettling reminder that they were still places one could be vulnerable.

**Health: Do the ḥlayqiya have the capability to live a long and healthy life?**

While there are plenty other issues that pertain to the capabilities of the ḥlayqiya to be healthy (such as the doubtful sustainability of water use in Marrakech, the increasing amount of processed sugars in the diet, the prevalence of smoking, and a dearth of affordable housing), I am choosing to focus here on the availability of health care. Of all the income shocks I observed, health failures seemed to be both the most common and the most severe both in their affects on both the ability to earn and to

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116 Myself included – the cafe in Guéliz, (the wealthier ville nouvelle of Marrakech) where I had been paid to sing and play guitar eventually lost enough business that they could no longer afford to hire me.
perform. These failures were exacerbated by a lack of real capabilities to access health care, both due to a genuine lack of access resulting from poverty and a failure to connect the poor with available preventative and curative medical resources.

In theory, all Moroccans have access to health care. About 16% of the total population has coverage through CNOPS (Caisse Nationale des Organismes de Prévoyance Sociale), a federation of health mutuelles that cover workers in the formal sectors (Ruger and Kress 2007). For those in the informal sector, care is available at Ministry of Health clinics and hospitals at reduced charges providing the patient can obtain a certificat d'indigence attesting that they are unable to pay full price for services. In reality, access to health services for most of the ḥlayqiya, while much better than for Moroccans in rural areas, still left much to be desired. Marrakech does have a relatively large number of health clinics, and in respects to some health aspects like pre-natal care, it is a very good place to live (El Hamdani et al. 2013). But even for those as poor as many of the ḥlayqiya are medical care is rarely free, and while cheaper in absolute terms than comparable services in Europe or the US, is expensive relative to the budgets typical of the Square's performers: doctor visits averaged around 150MAD, and co-pays for larger hospital visits for injuries and surgeries (with the discount available with the certificat) were often well upwards of 2000MAD.

Many ḥlayqiya reported problems affording medication, especially for the 38% surveyed that had at least one person with a chronic illness (most often diabetes or respiratory problems) in the household. The price of medications led many ḥlayqiya I knew to ration them, choosing among the most important medications and finding among those the minimum dose necessary to keep them going. Over 50% of the people I
surveyed stated that they did this at least occasionally, and 13% of the total said that they rationed medication regularly (usually those with a person with chronic illness in the house and thus more regular buyers of medicine) or simply did without.

**Political agency: Do the ḥlayqiya have the capability to access political power and exercise some control over their performing environment?**

As Sen points out, the capability to participate in a democratic process not only has intrinsic value as part of a fully human existence, it also has instrumental value in possessing other capabilities – in one of his most-cited arguments, he points out that famines do not occur in functioning democracies (Amartya Sen 1999a). The capability (or lack thereof) to be democratically represented affects the gamut of other capabilities one has: to be healthy, safe, free to associate, able to make a living, and in this case, to perform at one's chosen venue without being drowned out by massive cinema speakers. I will speak here about the problems ḥlayqiya had with access to local government, introducing it with my own brief impressions of the larger climate of local and national political access.

2011 was an interesting year to be in North Africa, although in Morocco much of the Arab Spring was a frightening thing happening on television rather than a present daily reality. There were demonstrations throughout the country, of course, but they lacked the persistence of those in Egypt or Tunisia – while the largest and best-known protest group, the February 20th movement was (and still is) committed to the cause, they did not appear in the sorts of numbers seen elsewhere in the Arab Spring, nor were they
typically met with the same abundance of visible state violence. They were most visibly countered by the King's announcement of a new Moroccan Constitution, which did (superficially, at least) shift some power away from the throne, further established equal rights for women, and recognized Tamazight (Berber) as an official language. In contrast with the international praise for the move, no Marrakechi I spoke with about it (even the many who expressed reverence for the King) seemed terribly impressed about the prospects of improved democratic political access resulting from the new constitution. And, tellingly, no one I spoke with then or since seems to have bothered to vote in the July 1st, 2011 referendum that approved the new constitution, despite the government's reported turnout of 75% (Moroccoboard.com, 2011).

The overall impression gained during my stays in Morocco was of a government remarkably unresponsive to the needs of its citizens in terms of health care, housing, and infrastructure, and public services beyond unrest-calming subsidies of flour, oil, sugar, and butagaz (butane gas used for cooking and heating). While Moroccans I spoke with by and large revere their king, they seemed have little faith in the effectiveness of government to respond to demands and meet day-to-day needs, as evidenced by the Transparency International figures on perceptions of government corruption cited earlier. As part of this general climate of lack of access to political power, the capabilities of the

117 Though there were a good number of instances of police brutality and violence resulting in the deaths of protesters, one of the preferred methods of countering protesters was the use of baltajiya (بطلجية, lit. "thugs"), paid counter-demonstrators who both intimidate and drown out the original protestors (Bouhmouch 2012). I saw baltajiya counter February 20 Movement protests on a couple occasions, seemingly appearing from nowhere and uniformly male, rough-looking, and visibly roaring drunk.

118 As one would guess, these were increased following the Arab Spring, reaching their peak of 53.6 billion (USD) in 2012. They have proved difficult to sustain, and have been reduced significantly (around 25%) in 2013-14, including a complete removal of the diesel subsidy that accompanied them (Flah 2013; El Yaakoubi 2014). This was at least part in reaction to pressure from the IMF to implement structural adjustment policies following the use of a 6.2 billion (USD) credit line in 2012 (Escribano 2013).
hlâyqiya to control their work and performance environment were limited in terms of participating in or giving input to changes to or activities planned at the Square. Despite the previously discussed improvements in access to social capital afforded by their designation as heritage bearers, they remain subaltern – poor, mostly illiterate, and lacking in economic or political clout, they remain effectively outside the structures of political representation in Marrakech and Morocco. As I observed during my time there, while their status as heritage bearers might have helped them to have things done on their behalf by those possessing the necessary clout, they lacked the power to be heard and responded to on their own terms.

This has some direct impacts on their performing lives and livelihoods. As I mentioned earlier, the Square has been used more and more often for activities and public events put on by the Wilaya (the regional government, in this case for the Marrakech-Tensift-al Haouz region) such as the Marrakech International Film Festival, public concerts unrelated to the ḥlayqiya, and televised sports events. These crowd the Square's soundscape and leave many ḥlayqiya unable to keep an audience, and often unable to work at all. This is a continuation of the general practice of acts that dramatically affect the work and life of those who work at the Square, such as the transportation infrastructure changes, the banning of activities like dentistry and hair cuttings, and various decrees concerning food and juice vendors – consistently passed down without the recourse of those concerned.

For the ḥlayqiya, local government beyond the immediate level of the Jemaa el Fnaa's Qaid and muqaddemiin (القيد و المقدمين, the local administrator and his informants/emissaries housed in the arrondissement on the western edge of the Square)
was largely an inaccessible *them*. Even communications from the Qaid, aside from the occasional resolved interpersonal conflict, largely consisted of directives handed down via the muqaddemiin, usually along the lines of *dress nice tomorrow, someone important is coming* or *no work tomorrow, there will be an event*. The Wilaya occasionally did things that demonstrated some concern for the ḥlayqiya, such as allocating funds so that the ḥlayqiya could be paid adequately for the May heritage festival – but this benevolence came as a bit of a surprise to those concerned: the ḥlayqiya had been trying to meet with representatives of the Wali (الولي, the head regional administrator) or the city mayor to no avail for weeks in order to ask for compensation for lost income during the heritage festival. Like the other disturbances the festival meant a reduced income, but in this circumstance they would actually be expected to participate. They had been paid a few hundred dirham in the past for participation in such festivals, a small sum in comparison to the potential wages lost during a festival of two weeks or more.

The ḥlayqiya had done their best to try and speak to the Wilaya on the issue. I recall an interview (ironically on the subject of *jamʻayat*, associations and representation) with Mustafa Musta'id the magician that was interrupted by a group of fellow ḥlayqiya who had just returned from an attempted meeting with the Wali's representatives. They all looked tired and discouraged.

*We waited five hours, and nothing! Nothing! This was the third appointment like this,*” said one of the returnees, banging his hand on the cafe table and nearly shaking with anger. "*They don't hear, they don't care!*
Eventually it seemed to be the bombing, combined with some lobbying on the part of the Marrakech Heritage Association\(^{119}\) and the restaurant owners' association that spurred the Wilaya to pay the ḥlayqiya adequately for the festival. I was told by Abdulateef Burudi from the Marrakech Heritage Association that the bombing seemed to encourage the Wilaya to allocate funds to pay the ḥlayqiya, and that the restaurant owner's jamʻaya had donated additional funds. He seemed more than a bit cynical, however, about the benefactor's motives:

> The *Makhzen* know the ḥlayqiya are suffering after the attack. And look, the Jemaa el Fnaa and the ḥlayqiya are where their money comes from.\(^{120}\) They need to take care of them! (Burudi 2011, personal communication)

But in the same way that charity is not the same thing as a reliable social safety net, those in power being grudgingly aware of the ḥlayqiya's needs and occasionally responding charitably to them is not the same thing as the ḥlayqiya having genuine access to the political process. Lacking a coherent voice as a group, the ḥlayqiya still have no particular way of being heard and responded to – thus affecting the possibilities of addressing other limitations to their capabilities: improving access to medical care, educational resources, capital, and a generally larger slice of the wealth that their activities draw to the Square. As discussed earlier, a functioning *jamʻaya* (جمعية, association), while certainly not a panacea for problems of representation, could

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\(^{119}\) A small association run by various business owners and intellectuals (Cadi Ayyad faculty, other professional and semi-professional writers and teachers) from around the city. It puts on about 5-7 events a year around Marrakech. It is responsible for most of the basic organization of the Jemaa el Fnaa festival, and does much of the fund-raising and allocation.

\(^{120}\) The term *Makhzen* (مختزن) is here used to generally refer in a negative way to people in power. In the past, the term refereed to the royal court and tax collectors (the word literally means 'warehouse', where taxed grains were kept). It generally refers in modern-day use to the vaguely-defined network of ruling elites in Morocco – businesspersons, politicians, and other powerful people.
potentially help with this by pooling the financial and social resources of the ħlayqiya to accomplish political goals not achievable otherwise.

**Education: The capability to learn both about performance and the world in general**

Only 18 out of the 40 ħlayqiya in the survey had any kind of formal education. This number makes sense given their average age, the low enrollment rates in the years when many of them were school age (37% in 1971, which only rose to 57% by 1990 (World Bank Group 2009), and given that many come from smaller towns and rural villages with less access to schools and/or from the poorer end of the economic spectrum where child labor is more common. While their numerary skills were far past mine, the majority of ħlayqiya did not seem to be literate.¹²¹ This said, there were exceptions: The storytellers, for example, are all avid readers, unsurprising given that much of their work is often "translating" works written in Classical Arabic into the vernacular (Kapchan 2003). And there were a few performers who were quite well educated, like the Berber musician Ahmed Biiga (in fig. 6) who left his second year of college to become a performer.

The children of ħlayqiya are a somewhat different matter. Morocco has had compulsory schooling since 1963, and strides have been made in enrollments, particularly in urban areas. But as I learned interviewing Marrakechi parents and students, while public schooling is free, there is a general perception that it is inadequate for success, both on the baccalaureate exam and in life in general. Many Moroccans,

¹²¹ I do not have a figure for the percentage of ħlayqiya that are literate. This question was on early surveys, but when the answer was in the negative it was often clearly a source of some embarrassment. As I prioritized a good working relationship with these folks over having that bit of data (in addition to not wanting to feel like a jerk), I decided to remove it.
including many of the ḥlayqiya, thus enroll their children in after-school tutoring – a common phenomenon, especially in developing countries and especially ones like Morocco where everything leads up to a large test (le Baccalauréat, in the Moroccan case) (Dang 2007). Parents recognize this tutoring is often a dividing line between the future haves and have-nots, and will allocate funds away from other purposes, work extra gigs away from the Square, and generally worry about the tutoring fees – in visiting a friend's house and overhearing conversations about them I recall thinking that the fees were a source of money anxiety nearly on par with the Eid sheep.¹²² And when asked what benefits the government could provide (other than a salary) to the ḥlayqiya, the answer from parents of school aged children always included something along the lines of Lesson fees! Give us help with the lesson fees! Many parents stated that they simply couldn't afford them, but parents who did pay for them spent between 1500 and 2400MAD a year, although I did not obtain information on precisely how those were structured and how much time and attention that price would buy.

**Informal education: Jemaa el Fnaa as madrasa**

Much of the preceding discussion has focused on the things that the ḥlayqiya possess or lack in regards to things outside of performance: access to health care, housing, money – things that are instrumental in keeping body and soul together. It is of course much of the basic point of this dissertation that these things are fundamental to the existence of the capability to engage in performance. While it is possible to make music or tell stories while one is homeless, hungry, endangered, or sick – and people certainly

¹²² There are some inherent conflicts of interest in this practice worthy of a raised eyebrow – often the paid tutor is also the classroom teacher.
do – it is not difficult to see that the real capabilities to perform are reduced. But while individual capabilities to be healthy, safe, sheltered, and fed are instrumental to having the physical capacity to perform, performance is a social phenomenon, and having the capability to perform also depends on the capability to associate with others – it is learned, taught, and created in a social context. One learns it from interacting with people, and what the Jemaa el Fnaa still provides is a rich environment where that may take place. The Square, as many told me, is a kind of madrasa (school) for the ḥlayqiya; it is a sort of giant workshop where the craft of performing is learned, and where connections are made with still other opportunities to learn.

As a sort of school of performance the Jemaa el Fnaa has a great deal to offer: other skilled performers to learn from, a means of support while one is learning, and a patient audience (if you are still lacking in skill, the audience may wander away bored, but it is unlikely that they will jeer or throw tomatoes). Many long-time performers at the Square learned most of their skills by working with other, older ḥlayqiya. This is sometimes in a teacher-apprentice kind of relationship, such as that of Abdelhakim (and many other cha‘abi musicians) to his teacher Mikhi. Other times the learning is still less formal (such as with the Berber groups), with the new performer working his way over time in from the peripheral percussion instruments towards the central banjo and rebab, learning repertoire and instrumental skills as he gains acceptance and respect from the more established musicians.

For the Gnawa and Aissawa, the dynamic works a bit differently due to the fact that these performers do different things at the Square than they do anywhere else. For example, the Gnasas’ "gotcha"-style begging and general harassment does not involve
particularly complex skills beyond a basic knowledge of the qraqeb castanets and a certain amount of chutzpah. The Gnawa groups that perform at the Square perform from the main repertoire, but only a small selection of songs from the public, non-spirit-related portion of the *lila* ceremony are performed. Rather, the madrasa aspect of the Square relates to the performing at *lila* one does with the other Gnawa one meets at the Square. The Square becomes a way to meet and network with Gnawa from whom one can learn and expand repertoire. Contrary to the assertions one hears to the effect that the Gnawa at the Jemaa el Fnaa are not "real" Gnawas, most Gnawa who work there also perform at *lila* regularly, and there are some (such as Ma‘alem Tayyib, Ma‘alem Koyo, and Hicham Marchane) who are both well-known and quite accomplished Gnawa. The same is similarly true for the Aissawa, although the snake-charming practiced at the Square is certainly more of a demanding art that does take time to learn.

**Summary of discussion**

There are a lot of things about the Jemaa el Fnaa that support the capabilities of the ḥlayqiya to perform. The Square provides a steady audience and a source of income, one that is admittedly meager but still reliable. It allows the ḥlayqiya to earn their livelihoods without the rigors of the road or being separated from their families for long periods of time. It provides a local social network that may be called upon in times of need, and the potential to develop contacts with those outside the Square that may also be used for aid or advancement. Assuming there are no further terrorist attacks, it is a safe

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123 With the ironic exception of the song that calls forth Lalla Aicha, an extremely powerful song but also one of the Gnawa 'greatest hits' that the average fan expects to hear.
place to work and to visit. As many ḥlayqiya pointed out, the Jemaa el Fnaa is a kind of *madrasa*, a school where performance may be learned and improved.

Yet the ḥlayqiya do have gaps in their capabilities, gaps that translate into reduced capabilities to perform. They earn money, but an amount often too meager to keep important items like school fees for their children or medicines for themselves and their families within reach. This limited access to health care and medicines potentially reduces their capabilities to live long, healthy lives – a sick person (or obviously a deceased one) has a reduced set of possible functionings related to performance: performing, composing, teaching, or learning. The ḥlayqiya have little control over their work environment and their lack of access to those who do leave them at the whims of the more powerful, resulting in days when performing is impossible. And the lack of access to education many of them suffered as children limit their access to the rest of the world through literacy-dependent means such as the Internet, preventing them from actively finding performing work abroad or simply learning about other kinds of performance.

The ICH Declaration and the safeguarding measures that followed it addressed *none* of these things. Instead, the ICH model treats the practices classed as intangible heritage as something that exists outside of these factors, that can be safeguarded separately from the people who practice it. The Declaration itself did have positive secondary effects, however, and in the end the awareness-raising in the ICH safeguarding approach did do some good by raising awareness of the ḥlayqiya themselves: it spurred the creation of the first associations among the ḥlayqiya – they began to see the possibilities of a unified cause and of their great importance within the larger picture of
tourism in Morocco. It convinced others of their value and importance, such as the doctors that gave reduced-price or pro bono services to some ḥlayqiya, or the city and regional administrators that approved funds to pay the ḥlayqiya for the 2011 heritage festival.

The safeguarding project at the Jemaa el Fnaa did nothing to accomplish any of this directly, however, putting the resources it gathered towards preservation of the heritage it described.¹²⁴ What the preceding analysis of the ḥlayqiya's capabilities shows is that those who genuinely care about a group of people should look elsewhere than the construct of heritage. To return to the quote from Dorothy Noyes that opened Chapter 5, "the poor lack the freedom of choice possessed by the rich as to maintaining their traditions. This is a problem of inequality, not of cultural difference." (Noyes, 2011) The gaps in instrumental capabilities discussed here are what truly impede the ḥlayqiya's capabilities to perform and make choices about what practices to preserve or discard. They are the same sort of impediments faced by people all over the world: poverty, illness, poor access to education, and lack of political agency.

¹²⁴ And, as discussed in Chapter 2, when those in charge of the project no longer felt able to continue, those resources were simply given back to UNESCO.
Conclusions

The declaration of Jemaa el Fnaa Square to be a Masterpiece of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity was, as part of UNESCO's move towards the intangible, an act intended to accomplish a number of good things and contribute to a better and more culturally rich world. It was intended to address the threat of homogenizing globalization to cultural diversity:

**Considering** the importance of the intangible cultural heritage as a mainspring of cultural diversity and a guarantee of sustainable development, as underscored in the UNESCO Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore of 1989, in the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity of 2001, and in the Istanbul Declaration of 2002 adopted by the Third Round Table of Ministers of Culture...

**Recognizing** that the processes of globalization and social transformation, alongside the conditions they create for renewed dialogue among communities, also give rise, as does the phenomenon of intolerance, to grave threats of deterioration, disappearance and destruction of the intangible cultural heritage, in particular owing to a lack of resources for safeguarding such heritage,

-Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, preamble

But rather than save old things from modern threats, intangible cultural heritage instead creates something new. To quote Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett once again, "heritage is a new mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past." (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995) Rather than protect something that already exists, heritage creates something new. While it uses the language of empirical description of extant things ("inventorying", "cataloguing"), intangible cultural heritage is actually a
creative process that involves the drawing of new borders around practices and populations, simplifying and freezing into place relationships and practices that are in reality fluid and complex. The ICH safeguarding process requires this reification process, in that concrete borders are needed to define what is to be defended and what is to be defended against.

The concept of intangible cultural heritage also rests on a linking of practices to essence, merely replacing race with culture as a population's essential binding force. This is visible in the idea of losing or regaining one's cultural heritage, which rests necessarily on this racialized, essential notion of culture. Unless the "culture" in intangible cultural heritage is little more than a synonym for race, how can heritage ever be "lost" or "found"? This idea that one can regain one's culture would imply that culture is tied to inherited essence, rather than being a product of lived practice (Michaels 1992; Will 2008). This line of thinking carries with it disturbing prescriptive implications: certain activities (and not others) are good for certain people (and not others) because of their "culture", a culture that is inscribed upon them rather than being a practice they are actively engaged in. As I discussed in Chapter 4, this line of thinking is a close cousin to the logic behind systems of apartheid, including the "urban apartheid" practiced by the French colonial authority in Morocco under Hubert Lyautey's association policy (J. L. Abu-Lughod 1980; Borghi 2005). These shared aspects of ICH and apartheid – the collapsing of race into culture and prescriptive ideas of what is good for people – point to the potential for abuse and increase of human suffering in the putting into practice of such essentialized notions of culture. Perhaps less grandiose is the implication that the Moroccan and South African apartheid precedents have for the effectiveness of ICH
safeguarding enterprise: they did not work. People still mixed, interacted, and made new "culture". Attempts to preserve can only introduce new variables into the dynamic processes of culture, not stop them.

And to further cite Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, this process of heritage creation is one that requires a special set of skills and assets, often ones not found in the population that actually practices the intangible cultural heritage (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004). This was the case at the Jemaa el Fnaa, where the actual people who performed the activities discussed in the Declaration – the ḥlayqiya – were involved only peripherally in the creation of the vision of the Square as an item of intangible cultural heritage. As a result, this vision as reflected in the UNESCO materials and the activities that followed from the Declaration as a Masterpiece reflects not the daily, lived reality of these performers, but rather the image of the Square held by the heritage makers: Juan Goytisolo's vision of the Square as an Oriental bacchanalia punctuated by flares of oral-literary genius; the other Amis de la Place members' nostalgic memories of the Square of their childhood; the UNESCO ICH program's positioning of the Square as one among a number of islands of authentic resistance existing in opposition to (and threatened by) homogenizing globalization. Without their input into this vision, the ḥlayqiya emerge as nameless archetypes, important as "bearers" or "custodians" of an oral heritage but unimportant as actual people. Their real human needs, their capabilities, are not truly considered.

In regards to the declaration's relationships to its objects, this is troubling on a number of ethical and practical levels. First, it is questionable to apply a paradigm (intangible cultural heritage) that places yet more power out of the reach of a population already so lacking in power. Participation in the shaping of ICH requires kinds of capital
most ḥlayqiya do not possess: literacy (in French and possibly English in addition to Arabic), training in the vocabulary of heritage preservation, university degrees that confer respect, access to email and other means of speaking and being heard, and access to social capital on the multiple levels that made the influence of people like Juan Goytisolo possible. This lack of access renders them nearly voiceless in a process that affects them in a great many ways.

In addition, the ICH program is troubling in that it uses the scarce resources of money, time, and international attention towards an approach that accomplishes little in the end. It attempts to solve a manufactured problem – the loss of intangible cultural heritage – with means that use these resources towards very little direct good for the performers, including awareness raising, inventory-making, and listing on a heritage register. While these activities carried side benefits (festival income, improved access to social capital) that did help the ḥlayqiya, these were not the activities' focus and thus not what they could have been had the UNESCO efforts been directed towards them.

I grant that benefiting the Square's performers, and positive intervention on such micro-level may not precisely be the point of UNESCO's ICH project. Unlike other UN bodies like the UN Development Programme (UNDP) or the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) that focus on more concrete objectives aimed at affecting individual circumstances, UNESCO displays what Stoczkowski (2009) calls a "secular soteriology" – a doctrine of salvation. In UNESCO's case, this salvation is of humankind from war, pursuing the utopian goal of building "peace in the minds of men" (as stated in the preamble to the UNESCO Constitution). As Valdemar Hafstein discusses – building on the work of Michel Foucault, Nicholas Rose and Tony Bennett – UNESCO's ICH project
works towards this goal by acting as a tool in the promotion of internal stability within states (Hafstein 2004; Foucault 1991; Rose 1999; Bennett 2003). ICH tames internal difference and disjunctures between nation and state by acting as a governmental tool in the "conduct of conduct", encouraging people to see themselves as part of more governable bounded communities, communities which are then tied to the state via recognition of that community's intangible cultural heritage.

Whether this governmental aspect of ICH does genuine good for those it affects is a subject for another study. But as the experience of the ḫlayqiya and many others at the Jemaa el Fnaa illustrated, the ICH process – inventorying, nomination, and recognition – leads those engaged in the practices recognized as heritage to hope for more tangible, local benefits. More specifically, the ḫlayqiya (who view themselves and what they practice as the important heritage to be safeguarded) expected to benefit personally from the UNESCO declaration. These expectations were quite different from the goals of both the architects of the local Jemaa el Fnaa Declaration (such as Juan Goytisolo and Ouidad Tebba) and the larger UNESCO project, who regarded the heritage in question as something the ḫlayqiya carried – thus possible to support on its own through valorization, awareness-raising, and efforts to promote transmission. This disjuncture left the ḫlayqiya for the most part dismayed, bewildered, and mistrustful of UNESCO and those closely affiliated with it. In the end, nothing whatsoever was safeguarded, and very few in Marrakech were helped beyond the possible benefits to the local tourist industry. The storytellers still lost their place at the Square, the other ḫlayqiya fare little better than they would have without UNESCO's intervention, and those who worked with UNESCO seemed to be largely discouraged by the experience.
As an alternative to the ICH inventorying-safeguarding paradigm, I suggested an adaptation of the Capabilities Approach, first developed by economist Amartya Sen, as an alternative orientation for interventions in matters of culture. The CA considers as the ideal space for evaluation and intervention the real capabilities that individuals have to achieve desired "functionings", to do and be the things they have reason to value: to be healthy, to be safe, to be politically represented, to be educated. Following Sen's line of thinking – as well as rejecting essential, racialized notions of culture – it would be better if interventions at the Square or elsewhere focused on supporting capabilities rather than encourage people to engage in specific functionings on the grounds of "heritage". This might include capabilities such as those to engage in music, storytelling, comedy, or any other practices they choose (a cluster of activities that I grouped under the term "performance practices").

The shift involved in this change is from practices to people, and from preserving constructed heritage practices to supporting people's capabilities to construct their own cultural worlds – if culture is lived practice, it makes sense to work towards the goal of people having the greatest amount of freedom to engage in that practice. For the ethnomusicologist seeking to intervene in a positive way in the cultural lives of others, supporting the freedom to engage in performance practices is the appropriate goal – what people actually do with the freedoms they have to engage in performance practices should not an appropriate concern – in other words, it is their say, not ours.

As a step towards forming an evaluative framework, I discussed several areas of capabilities instrumental in possessing the real capabilities to engage in performance practices. To be free to do what they do at the Square and elsewhere, the ḥlayqiya need
other instrumental freedoms: to be healthy, to be able to associate with others, to be safe, to be educated, to be politically represented, to be able to make a livelihood. As I discussed, some of these capabilities are unquestionably lacking, such as the ḥlayqiya's capability to make an adequate living, to fully access health care, or to control their working environment through being heard and represented by local government. In the section that follows, I will discuss steps that could be taken next to address these capabilities deficits and capitalize on the resources that the Square does provide.

**Future Actions: research and possible interventions**

Before discussing any possible interventions that could be taken at the Jemaa el Fnaa, it is important to point out the kind of research that needs to take place there first. While the solo participatory observation/interview and small survey methodologies employed in this study give some ideas about future directions for action, they are not fully adequate for the task of evaluating capabilities or designing interventions to support them. The large informational burden of the Capabilities Approach and the participatory involvement it demands call for more: improved empirical and qualitative methodology, a broadened scope of research, a larger research team, and far greater participation of the people concerned (both by ḥlayqiya and others at the Square) in both the research design and execution and the design and evaluation of interventions.

Regarding the empirical survey, many aspects of the both the instrument and the way it was applied were lacking. Both contain much room for improvement in terms of their scope of inquiry, (i.e. what kind of expenses, income, access to resources like health care and education, and access to government were asked about), respondents (who in the household was asked these questions), sample population, and time frame (when were
these questions asked and how often). Much of this was due to inexperience in survey design and administration, as well as an insufficient prior understanding of the environment in which the respondents lived in terms of things like available financial instruments, health care access, sources of income, and so on. The survey methodology that was applied in the research for this dissertation was lacking in all of these areas in ways that limits its usefulness for describing the lives and capabilities of the population concerned on a large enough basis to serve future interventions.

A more accurate picture of livelihoods and capabilities at the Square would also be given by repeated survey interviews. In the "financial diaries" studies discussed in the book *Portfolios of the Poor*, Daryl Collins et al. were able to put together quite detailed pictures of how respondents in South Africa, India, and Bangladesh managed household finances over the course of a year (Collins et al. 2009). They were able to gather not merely static figures on income and expenses, but dynamic depictions of how their respondents used a variety of strategies and financial instruments to meet their needs despite extreme poverty. This involved twice-a-month interviews for a year, far beyond anything that would have been possible in the current project. But even one repeat of each survey would likely have provided more accurate estimates of income than were obtained in the single survey interview of each subject that as performed, which required respondents to estimate income over an entire year.

In many ways, performing the research involved in answering questions about performers' capabilities would benefit from the presence of a team of researchers. The first obvious way this would help would be in terms of expanded capacity, as the scope and depth of the qualitative and quantitative work was limited by the fact that there was
only one person to do it. This affected other variables as well – for example, the survey work was undertaken over the course of several months, stretching across both the spring and summer seasons. While the way that the questions about income were structured accounted for the difference in seasons, other questions did not, such as the expenses. Both the shorter survey period and the possibility of repeated visits afforded by a team would help give a more accurate picture of these and other figures. A mixed-gender and mixed-nationality team would also allow more and better access to different kinds of people. As a man in Morocco, it was difficult to find ways to interview and get to know women, such as the ḥlayqiya's family members, the henna women, and other women involved both directly and peripherally in the life of the Square. This left a large gap in the knowledge gathered about many issues, gaps that could potentially be remedied by having a team that included female co-researchers (c.f. Cull and Scott 2010; Stanley and Slattery 2003). There is also the simple fact that all information had to pass through my limited Arabic, which could have been remedied by an interpreter but would have been aided better still by a Moroccan-dialect native Arabic-speaking team member conducting their own interviews. And finally, the single-perspective nature of the current study leaves all of my own personal biases unmediated. In the end, a study conducted start to finish by a single person potentially reflects as much the researcher's own bias as anything else.

Lastly, as Sen points out, the capabilities approach calls for people to be involved in things that affect them, and not merely "passive recipients of the fruits of cunning development programs." (Amartya Sen 1999a, 53) This involvement has intrinsic value – there is inherent worth in having the capabilities to have control over your environment,
and to have your needs and opinions represented in decisions that affect you. As Robert Chambers (1984; 1997) points out in much of his work there is also the fact that people often have a much better idea than an outside researcher or development worker about what they need, and what solutions will work for them. Lack of input from those concerned has real potential for negative consequences, as can be seen at the Square itself. The ḥlayqiya were left out of the building of the ICH vision of the Jemaa el Fnaa, emerging only anonymously in the written materials, declarations, and safeguarding as "heritage bearers". In addition to the failure in the intrinsically valuable capability to have a say in this process, this resulted in a series of safeguarding activities that did little practical good for any of the ḥlayqiya. Future research on the Square and the capabilities of the people who work and perform there needs to involve more input from them. For example, while the discussion in the previous chapter was based on interviews with the ḥlayqiya and observations of their lives, it still lacked any systematic attempt to involve them in a determination of the list and parameters of the capabilities they feel should be addressed. How precisely would they define the capability to be healthy, for instance? What would be the parameters be – what amount and kinds of access to housing, medicine, or food, would be adequate in order to have a live that they have reason to value? The same is true for any subsequent projects based on this research, which should also attempt to include the ḥlayqiya and any others affected as much as possible in their design and execution.

There also needs to be more information gathered and discussion on the ways the decisions about the Square are made at the city and national level. The actions of the city and national governments taken at the Square (the holding of the film festival, the
moving of public transport, the directives regarding acceptable activities) appear in this
dissertation as the working of an unexamined, largely anonymous outside force, which is
consistent with the way that such things appeared to the ḥlayqiya – they arrived
unannounced and unexplained, beyond a mention from the local administrator's (the
Qaid's) representatives (his muqaddemiin). My own attempts over my research period to
access the people involved in these decisions did not meet with any particular success,
resulting in a string of missed appointments and afternoons waiting at the Wilaya (main
city administrative building) to little avail. A better look at this administrative level in
future research trips (using contacts recently established) would give information about
the ways decisions are made on the local level about the Square: use of the grounds,
planning of events, and how and when to interact with the ḥlayqiya.

Possible interventions

As this dissertation is intended to suggest an alternative approach to intangible
cultural heritage to intervention in matters of culture, I wanted to end with some ideas for
possible interventions that could be undertaken at the Jemaa el Fnaa. The projects I will
discuss here represent alternatives to the projects the ICH safeguarding approach
generates. The ICH model produces projects intended to protect heritage as a carried item
that lives somehow independent of its practitioners: awareness-raising campaigns,
academic conferences, inventorying, apprenticeships, contests. These programs treat
practitioners as bearers of this heritage, rather than as people who are engaged in a
dynamic practice of culture. They facilitate the maintenance and transmission of a
particular construction of heritage, but do not directly address the very real gaps in
capabilities that may people may face. The alternative projects I offer in this section
attempt to address some of the gaps discussed in the previous chapter, gaps that inhibit the ḥlayqiya's capabilities to engage in performance practices. They are cautious suggestions, in that in actual real-world application – to emphasize the points just made in the previous section – the population concerned would need to be involved in the research, planning, and implementation. They are also theoretical in terms of funding source – they assume the possibility of funding on roughly the same order of magnitude as the funds-in-trust provided by the Japanese government for the UNESCO safeguarding project (158,000USD).

Of all the possible projects that one could propose, the most fundamentally important is to aid in the formation of a pan-ḥlayqiya association with a democratically-elected leadership and regular membership rolls and dues. It is also the project that lies closest to the observed and stated aspirations of the ḥlayqiya themselves, a number of whom were working towards the formation of a larger association during my research period. The Association des Maîtres de la ḥalqa was formed by a large group of ḥlayqiya in 2002 following the UNESCO declaration, and while it is now more or less defunct due to lack of available resources (money, social cohesion, meeting space, and outside support), numerous attempts have been made to revive it or to form new pan-ḥlayqiya associations (T. Schmitt 2005). In addition, some smaller associations of ḥlayqiya have been formed to varying degrees of success, including the two very stable and well-functioning associations of Aissawa snake charmers and the on-and-off functioning of the Berber musician's association. It was very clear during the period of my fieldwork that the desire to organize was present, but the desire did not seem to be matched with the resources needed to overcome the difficulties involved. These lacking resources included
a space in which to organize and funds to set up the infrastructure (a bank account, registration with the government). While perhaps thirty years ago, the population at the Square might have been too variable for an association, the static nature of the current body of performers makes one possible. The same can also be said in response to worries about changing the Square's character as an open performance space: the ḥlayqiya already respond to the Square's crowding by limiting access to the grounds in a variety of ways – see the discussion of space at the Square in Chapter 2.

As discussed in the previous chapter, there were a number of capabilities deficits that could be addressed by the formation of a larger collective, especially the limited control over their environment resulting from an unresponsive government. Communication between the ḥlayqiya and their local government is largely one-sided, consisting of directives from and actions by the Wilaya (the local government) and transmitted by the local administrator (the Qaid) and his emissaries (muqaddemiin) to which the ḥlayqiya have very limited means to respond. Some of this is due to the overall dysfunction of Moroccan democracy: corruption, lack of transparency and accountability, and the tenacious control of the ruling elites (the Makhzen). Some is also simply due to the poor lines of communication these democratic failures create between people like the ḥlayqiya near the bottom of the economic ladder and those in the Wilaya that may want to work with them. As the Jemaa el Fnaa is the heart of the Marrakechi tourist trade, it is in everyone's best interest if the Square works well and the ḥlayqiya are happy and healthy. Given this mutual self-interest it seems that more functional dialogue could be established were the means available, and an association and the louder collective voice it would provide could make two-way communication possible. As Mounir el Alami, a
development project manager who worked in Marrakech with APP (Agence du Partenariat pour le Progrès, a Moroccan institution that works in partnership with US development agencies), put it:

The Wilaya want people to form associations, they need them. They want to work with people, they want development, but they can’t work with everyone individually. Without an association, you can’t make the Wilaya listen to you, you can’t tell them what you need (El Alami 2014).

Without a larger association, the ḥlayqiya have no means of harnessing the potential power they possess as the heart of the Square’s activities. They can neither communicate as a group through sit-down meetings with the administration or through strikes and demonstrations.

Beyond the Wilaya, an association would provide a body that could negotiate with and advise other outside bodies – like UNESCO – in their dealings at the Square. When observing the meetings of the Association Patrimonium Marrakech (an association of business owners interested in Marrakechi heritage that had a large part in organizing the 2011 Jemaa el Fnaa Heritage Festival), for example, I saw them struggle to find representatives from among the ḥlayqiya with which to consult. They managed to meet with the heads of many of the smaller associations (the Aissawas, the Berbers, and the storytellers) but the incomplete and fragmented nature of the contact led to a great deal of frustration and miscommunication. The larger, more unified front that an association would provide would also likely help remedy the lack of the performer’s voice in the case of future heritage safeguarding efforts by UNESCO or any other outside party. It would also provide a structure that could manage any aid or interventions coming from outside (be it from UNESCO, the Moroccan government or elsewhere) and be a force that must
be reckoned with in the shaping and application of that aid. For example, while the Square's borders are permeable and complex, any intervention taken there will require parameters of who is included and who is not. The process of deciding on the borders of a population or a set of activities is necessarily fraught with problems, as observed in my discussion of the UNESCO ICH declaration. An association would at least provide the ḥlayqiya with a means of democratically participating in these decisions in a way that they previously could not.

An association would also provide greater capacity for the pooling of mutual aid: funds for relief of health and other income shocks and small loans for things like equipment and costumes.¹²⁵ In the previous chapter, I mentioned the use by some of the ḥlayqiya's wives of ROSCAs (Rotating Savings and Credit Associations), that pool savings and loan them to one member at a time for larger household purchases, or ASCAs (Accumulated Savings and Credit Associations) that pool savings and disburse them equally on a set date (Bouman 1995). This could take place on a large scale within an association. It already does on a small scale among the Aissawa, whose association acts as an ASCA that accumulates and disburses funds for the purchase of sheep for the Eid el-Adha holiday.

Finally, there are other projects that could be run by an association (or through and association with some outside help), using the pooled economic power of the ḥlayqiya as an engine to keep them running sustainably as opposed to being dependent on the continuation of fickle government or international funding. Collective purchase of

¹²⁵ This sharing of resources currently exists in a functional form among the Aissawa, and it would be wise to do further research with them to see how exactly they structure these mechanisms and to find possible ways to reproduce this on a larger scale.
goods or services could provide bulk discounts or reduced rates in exchange for guaranteed business. These goods or services include:

- **Sheep** – one of the largest single expenses throughout the year for many of the ḥlayqiya is the sheep for the ritual Eid el-Adha slaughter. These ran anywhere from 1800 to 3000 dirhams in 2011, and the purchase of the Eid sheep was a source of stress for many people I knew as the holiday approached. Ranchers might give a discount for a bulk purchase of several hundred Eid sheep, and at very least an ASCA organized by the association (like the one currently used by the Aissawa) could aid in the saving of money for the purchase.

- **Children's tutoring** – a close second in terms of sources of financial anxiety for the ḥlayqiya were the fees for after-school tutoring, viewed as essential for their children's academic and later-life success. As a teacher of private music and English lessons myself, I am confident that tutors could be found that would be willing to give a reduced rate if the association members pooled funds to buy a large block of children's after-school tutoring services.

- **Pharmaceuticals and medical care** – As I have discussed numerous times throughout this dissertation, lack of access to medicines and medical care limited the ḥlayqiya's capabilities to live long healthy lives, which in turn limited their capabilities to perform. While the expanding of the relatively small coverage of the social safety net available to Moroccan workers in the formal sector to the ḥlayqiya seems beyond the range of the plausibly attainable, some small measures could be taken. Arrangements could be made with pharmacies for association discounts on medicines, or with doctors for discounts on examinations. These arrangements
already exist in a patchy, informal manner with a few places (such as Sidi Mimoun hospital, or the pharmacy on the grounds of the Square), but lacking a formal means of identifying someone as a Jemaa el Fna ḥlayqiya it is limited to people the doctor or pharmacist knows. Making this more formal and attached to a large association both expands access and increases the incentive to the doctor or pharmacist created by the raised volume of business.

- **Storage** – a large majority of the ḥlayqiya pay to have working capital (benches, instruments, snakes, props) stored somewhere near the grounds of the Square – a back room in a boutique, a *funduq*, a utility space in a private home. These are not always secure, and are vulnerable to theft and fire. A collective storage space would both likely increase the security and reduce the cost of storage (especially if included space for bicycles and mopeds). It would also provide a focal meeting-point to build social cohesion among the ḥlayqiya, especially those who might not interact during the rest of the day.

- **Internet access** – One group of ḥlayqiya already has a web presence (the Group Argane, younger musicians who play contemporary Berber music) in the form of a Facebook page and YouTube videos. Other ḥlayqiya expressed desires to do the same, with the goal of connecting to possible work outside Morocco – and more broadly, participating more fully in the larger world outside the Square. The limiting factor, of course, are literacy and computer skills. Group Argane has a member that is both literate and multilingual, and posts to social media in French, Arabic, Berber and English. An arrangement could be made with one or more of the local *siber* (internet cafe) to offer assistance with use of the internet to association members, as well as
paying to have YouTube pages, other social media, and email contact maintained for the association.

Final thoughts

As scholars, we often possess both the desire to help those we study and access to resources that might allow us to do so. Heritage safeguarding has an undeniable appeal: it seems like a clear course of action to those concerned about people being forced into homogeneous expression with globalized culture. It appeals to our egos as well by requiring the skills of description we have cultivated as scholars, and re-casting our roles as not merely observers of a set of practices, but as its saviors. But this approach introduces a host of new problems, and offers solutions that work indirectly at best. As this dissertation has endeavored to show, the attempt to preserve a reified notion of culture leads to a neglect of the actual lives and needs of those whose practices are deemed heritage.

The rejection of heritage safeguarding as a raison d'être for intervention does not negate the validity of the impulse to do good for those we work with in our research. Perhaps we cannot cast ourselves as heroes or saviors of tradition – but we can try to lend a hand in improving the capabilities of others to choose what to save, discard, adapt, or create. In order to do this, we need to expand the frame of our research to inquire about the things that make these choices possible. As I discovered while researching and writing this dissertation, this is can be an uncomfortable process of rooting around in the dark: using unfamiliar methods, discovering unforeseen complications, and often finding more questions than answers.
Ironically, we may still find ourselves working to counter aspects of globalization. But different aspects will concern us than the globalized culture Alan Lomax warns about in his dire predictions of the "cultural grey-out" (Lomax 1977). The global flows and globalized ideas that should concern us most are those that remove capabilities, such as the spread of religious extremism and conflict, social and economic inequality, the ongoing ascent of austerity and other neoliberal economic policies, and the many disruptions and deprivations resulting from climate change. These forces can create conditions under which making music, telling and listening to stories, dancing – activities that all should have the capability to engage in as part of a fully human existence – are difficult or impossible. As many of those reading this have personally witnessed, people do perform, maintain, and create practices under the worst of circumstances. They make music on empty stomachs, as they do in circumstances of poverty, disease, war, oppressive governments and other conditions of deprivation. Our primary goal in our applied work should be that they do not have to.
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Appendix A: The quantitative survey – methodology and challenges

While the bulk of my conclusions are drawn from qualitative, participant-observation-interview research, I did perform a small quantitative survey with the ḫlayqiya on the recommendation of Dr. David Kraybill, an economist in the Agricultural Economics department at OSU who advised me throughout the early stages of this project. The purpose was to provide some empirical backbone to the statements about capabilities and livelihoods among the ḫlayqiya – if one wants to make assertions that can be responded to by development plans, as Dr. Kraybill pointed out, one needs some data to make the case with. As it was my first attempt at doing any sort of quantitative research, the survey was a mixed success, although the additional qualitative insights it gave were well worth the time. In the end it did provide data useful for a discussion of livelihoods and capabilities among the ḫlayqiya, as well as plenty of experience for the next fieldwork trip. Commencing in February 2011 and finishing in August of that year, subjects were interviewed using a short survey (attached at the end of this appendix) in locations where they could ideally answer freely, i.e. not where there responses would be easily overheard. This was not a simple prospect. They were paid 50 dirhams (5EUR, 6.25USD) for the survey, which took approximately 30 minutes, and gave verbal consent (recorded) for their responses to be reported anonymously. In the few circumstances
where I mention information about finances tied to a particular person, this info was gained from a separate interview and additional consent was obtained.

**Sampling**

Sampling was a particular challenge, as I found it impossible to do completely random sampling for a number of reasons. Principle among these were my limited resources: I had limited available time, and most instances of giving a survey took the better part of an afternoon when one factors in the work involved in simply getting a respondent to meet me in a place where their responses could remain anonymous. There was also a lack (at the time of the initial research planning) no rolls from which subjects could be randomly sampled – I refer here to the lack of any ‘map’ or official rolls at the office of the Qaid or at the Wilaya as discussed throughout the dissertation. I did my best with randomly choosing interviewees, but pure roll-of-the dice selection had to give way to asking those whom one could find and get to show up to an interview. Thus there is a possible bias towards those with more free time, or interest in the 50 dirhams paid for participation. However, my experiences gathered in the qualitative work suggested that the sorts of interviewees and responses even within given performance genres varied widely enough to suggest that a representative range was reached.

There was also the challenge of representing the diversity of performing genres. As I discussed further in the chapters on livelihoods and capabilities, different performance genres and livelihood strategies pull in different amounts of money. This often reflects the audience segment the performance connects with – as one might guess,

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126 There was something like an official roll of performers made for the May 2011 festival, however the survey was well underway by the time this roll was discovered. It (or even possibly a more recent roll) will be extremely useful for future studies.
those who aggressively seek foreign custom (such as the snake-charmers and Gnawa) often earn significantly more than those who rely on Moroccan audiences. I decided to designate 6 categories of performers: snake charmers (Aissawa), Gnawa\textsuperscript{127}, Berbers, Cha'abi musicians\textsuperscript{128}, Ṣaḥarawi, and "other," which includes solo performers like magicians, vendors and comedians.\textsuperscript{129} In order to be able to make more general statements about the ḥlayqiya's income (and knowing that I would have in the end a sample that was too small to throw away responses with impunity) I allocated my survey time to different genres in proportion to their representation at the Square. Based on counts I took during my walk-throughs of the Square, information gathered from interviews, and censuses of the total numbers active performers taken by myself as well as others\textsuperscript{130}, I arrived at the following rough percentages of the total body of ḥlayqiya (roughly 360 in all) who worked regularly at the square:

\textsuperscript{127} 'Gnawa' includes all of those who define themselves as such, although an ideal study would distinguish between roaming and stationary performers due to the large differences in income and repertoire. The stationary Gnawa's income often more resemble that of the Cha'abi performers, while the Gnawa who also roamed made much more.

\textsuperscript{128} I am aggregating these groups based on a combination of their repertoires, stated (via dress as well as verbally) ethnic identities, and audience composition. Berber musicians also, as discussed in Chapter 1, congregate in a specific area of the main performing section of the Square, although there are (as also discussed) variations in repertoire. 'Cha'abi' is defined very broadly here, including all musicians doing musical entertainment in Arabic. I have included the musical group that performs mostly folk-pop (Nass al Ghiwane, Jil Jilala, etc.) despite the fact that they are not normally defined as cha'abi, based on the fact that most other groups share some of this repertoire and they unquestionably share audience members.

\textsuperscript{129} This last category would include idiosyncratic performers and vendors who did solo performances/pitches in the ḥalqa, such as liniment vendors, magicians, and storytellers. I was unable to persuade any of the 4-6 comedians at the Square to participate, though this is in part due to running out of time. I decided not to include quasi-performers like the monkey handlers or the Grraba water-sellers due to the fact that they do not make a ḥalqa (they just sort of stand there, waiting for people to photograph them), while including the Saharawi, who do often make a ḥalqa. The storytellers essentially made no money at the Square during the duration of the survey (although they seemed to have returned in small measures by 2012) thus were included in the qualitative research but not the survey. Finally, there are no acrobats included – although the acrobats make appearances at the Square, these have become very rare and most of their income is made elsewhere.

\textsuperscript{130} These include figures gathered by the Wilaya to organized the 2011 Heritage festival, as reported to me verbally by several involved with the festival. The 360 figure was arrived at by counting the rolls of all the associations who were polled during the preparations for the festival, and made sense based on counts made during my own walkthroughs.
In the dissertation, when a quantitative assertion made about the ḥlayqiya in general, it will come from 40 survey results (9 Aissawa, 7 Gnawa, 6 Berber, 4 Ṣaḥārawi, 12 Chaʿabi, and 2 'Other') chosen at random in order to better reflect this distribution from the 52 total surveys that were performed. I will also use this same group when the categories are disaggregated, such as in order to discuss differences in income between performers that appeal to foreign tourists and those that do not. I feel that this approach, combined with a sample size of over 10% of the total population of concern, gives us as representative a sample as possible given the circumstances.

**Challenges**

The principal problems I encountered were ones that could be expected when asking people about money, especially those who work in the informal economy, making

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131 This number was also arrived at in part by throwing away survey results that I knew without a doubt to be wildly inaccurate based on observations gathered in my qualitative research, as well as very incomplete surveys from respondents who had little concrete idea of what they made or spent.
and spending cash earned daily: they often had trouble recalling exactly what they made, sometimes likely stretched the truth (usually downward on income, upward on expenses) when they did. I arrived at the estimated full-year income figures by starting with the current week as a baseline for establishing a normal income for the current season (*Was this a normal week? If not, is a normal week more or less? By what amount/percentage?*)\(^{132}\) then ranking the different seasons in regards to each other. I discuss this further when talking about seasonality of income. And while some expenses like medicine or rent were very clear in their minds, it was clear that for many ḥlayqiya's households I was asking the wrong person: I realized late in the process that for most of these households it is the wives who mind much of the finances, a fact I should have likely foreseen based on my previous life experiences working with musicians in Ghana. The gender relations dynamic in Morocco being what it is, a future study would be best served by a mixed team of men and women querying both heads of the household. This also became clear in when I made qualitative interview or purely social visits to households where the male head had claimed on a survey to be the sole breadwinner, only to be offered cookies from his wife's wedding-cookie baking business or to say a quick hello-goodbye to her and the couple's daughter as they headed off to clean houses in the *palmeraie*. Clearly future research needs to better reflect these realities.

**Deficiencies of the survey instrument**

In terms of the items on the survey, many items were not included that would have proved greatly useful in speaking about the role of financial resources in supporting

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\(^{132}\) This was almost always answered in fairly definite percentages or amounts. Once we found a starting point to estimate from, they typically got much more sure of themselves in estimating their income.
the ḥlayqiya's capabilities. For example, questions about insurance were not included, and as Daryl Collins et al. (2009) discuss, various types of insurance (crop, life, health etc.) are used by even those living on far less than the ḥlayqiya in order to cushion shocks to household income. It is entirely possible that the households use such instruments. In another example, while there were questions about household expenses like food, butane, health care, and rent, there was insufficient information gathered to determine whether the ḥlayqiya's income provided the capability to buy a sufficient amount of these things. This would have involved a couple more steps: conferring with the ḥlayqiya and others to determine thresholds – for example, what is a sufficient amount of healthy food per person in a daily/weekly/monthly food "basket", or what is the typical assortment and sufficient amount of medicines in a diabetic's or asthmatic's medicine "basket"? The next step would involve finding the prices (and real availability) of these various "baskets" of goods in order to make more accurate statements about how the ḥlayqiya's household's income supported (or proved insufficient to support) other capabilities.

Other questions could be added to future surveys to supplement qualitative data. For example, on the topic of safety, subjective questions could be asked (do you feel safe?), supplemented with more objective questions on frequency of violence, accidents, and theft. Without this information, the discussion on safety that currently exists relied largely on my own subjective perceptions, qualitative information gathered from a less-than-random sample of ḥlayqiya, and scant statistical data on violence in Morocco in general. Other areas of instrumental capabilities could also be addressed in more robust

133 This was done to a small extent, such as determining the prices at local pharmacies of commonly used medications, but not in a sufficiently broad or systematic manner.
quantitative detail in the survey, such as access to local government and levels of trust with co-performers.

There is also the issue of the choice of respondents and sample population. Merely asking the ḥlayqiya themselves about household income and expenses yielded a very incomplete picture, as demonstrated by the gap between mean estimated yearly income and mean expenses:

![Figure 36: Mean yearly income compared to mean yearly expenses](image)

How much of this difference is actual shortfall in income, and how much is simply income not adequately recorded by the survey? This 32% (25,422MAD income vs. 37,471MAD expenses) gap between the two figures testifies to the fact that there is need for both a more accurate means of determining the ḥlayqiya's own income and an expanded look at the whole household income. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, I would often learn about other sources of income (cookie baking, dress making and alteration, and so on) within the household soon after completing a survey in which the
interviewee claimed to be the sole source of income. At very least, future interviews on household income should be conducted with spouses as well as the ḥlayqiya. This may be more readily possible with a research team than it was as a solo researcher, as I will discuss in a moment.

In addition to improving the survey methodology in terms of questions, expanding the population from which the sample frame is derived and the sample taken for the quantitative survey would give a more complete picture of capabilities at the Square. The frame for the qualitative research was far wider, and included many who worked at the Square not covered in the survey: restaurant workers, cigarette vendors, henna women, monkey handlers, orange juice sellers, and others. Speaking to these people gave wider insight into the life of the Square, and excluding the non-performers from the survey was largely done for reasons of limited resources, as the process of giving a single survey (scheduling, meeting up, interviewing, and being generally sociable while doing it) would take the greater part of a morning or afternoon. There is also the additional work of determining a sample frame, a roster from which respondents can be chosen. But as I have emphasized throughout this dissertation when discussing the "map", performance at the Jemaa el Fnaa is an emergent and interconnected phenomena, tied to everything else that goes on at the site and in the city, country, and world. The larger the frame of the quantitative research, the better the picture of the way things work at the Square.

Finally, it should be mentioned that many of the surveys were performed after the April 28th bombing, which took a large toll on the incomes of many of the ḥlayqiya.

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134 While there was no roster or other list of performers there may be some helpful documentation with some other kinds of workers at the Square, as the restaurants and boutiques are more integrated into the Moroccan formal economy.
Thus the income estimates, particularly those of performers whose principal clientele consists of foreign tourists (such as the Gnawa and Aissawa) are likely lower than they would have been in a different year due to the reduced attendance of the months following the attack.
# Identification Particulars

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. NOM:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. GENRE DE SPECTACLE:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. CODE DE PARTICIPANT:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. AGE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SEXE:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. NOMBRE DE TELEPHONE:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hour:** Morning-Dhuhr/Dhuhr-Asr/Asr-Mghrb/Mghrb-close

**Work location:**

![Diagram](image-url)
**Age:** (ch7al f-3mmrk?)

**Marrakeshiy/a?:** (wach nta/nti mraakchi?)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Y</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

If no, from where? (Mniin nta?)

If no, year moved to Marrakech? (Imta jiti l-Mraakch?)

**Formal classroom Education – years:** (Wach mchiti l-mdrasa? Ch7al min 3am?)

Year began at Jemaa l-Fnaa

Total years at Jemaa l-Fna(ch7al min 3am xdmtí f-Jem3a l-Fnaa?)

**Genre(s) of performance**

Married?

# of children, ages

Total # of people in home

---

**Expenses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Taxes and fees</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remittances, gifts, and other transfers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social functions (weddings, funerals, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offerings and contributions to mosque (zakat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unofficial fees (bribes, etc.) related to JIF ch7al taymshi lik dyal fluu taddawwar m3 l nass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unofficial fees unrelated to JIF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Dependents (ask monthly)**

| Clothing |
| childcare |
| transport |

Money sent to village, etc. for parents or family

**Housing and utilities (ask on a monthly basis)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>rent/mortgage/upkeep likra?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Utilities:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water/Lights ddo u l-maa?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Allowance (daily or weekly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food (ask weekly)Note: ask “Wech tatswq? If no, ask ch7al min fluu tat-3ti 3la s-sou9 youmiyan wlla semanan?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

bread/biskwi/other starches (5bz, kisksou, riz, farine)

fruits/vegetables (fawaakiH/Ghlla/fruits)

Meats (lahm, djaj, 7ut)

Times per week meals include meat, chicken, or fish

Packaged drinks (monada, 7liib, laban)

Spices/sugar (sukkar, 3chub, 3triyat)

Tea/coffee
“Oils/fats – Zit zitun, l’oud, zbda

Cigarettes/other (dak-shi li m3a)
total amount (f-msrouf dyal d-dar)
Were these expenses of the last week typical of the past year?
If the answer is no, what is the normal amount?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transportation</th>
<th>Y/N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Own a motorcycle or bicycle?  <em>Wach tat-mlk l-motor?</em></td>
<td>Y/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of motorcycle? <em>Bch7al chriti?</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long did it take to pay it off? <em>Ch7al glisti f-l waqt bash shriti?</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In last 2 months: Tires, tubes, spares, and repair? <em>Ch7al taymchi lik bnuwat u ilsahat</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much did you spend on gas last week?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much is insurance per year? <em>Ch7al tay-mchi lik l-assurance dyal motor?</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the last week: Taxi sghir fares and fares for other private vehicles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the last week: Bus fares</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the last month: Intracity buses/trains</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other transport:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were these expenses of the last week typical of the past year?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the answer is no, by what percentage were they different?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Artistic Business Expenses | |
| In the last year: Instruments or props *Ch7al kay-tiHu 3liik l-Hwayj dyal xdma – Matalan, alat, u hwayj uxxriin?* | |
| In the last year: amplification *Ch7al kay-tiHu 3liik l-ampli?* | |
| In the last month: equipment storage rent *Likra lli tatxls bach txlili hwajk dyal xdma tmma* | |
| In the last week: Battery charging *bch7al tatcharger batterie dyal l’ampli mustiqa? ch7al min mrrat xssk tat-charger f-semana?* | |
| In the last year: Costumes *Ch7al kay-tiHu 3liik l-labs dyal xdma?* | |
| Were these expenses of the last week typical of the past year? | |
| If the answer is no, by what percentage were they different? | 

| Money spent on other (non-music) business ventures (cross out if answer is no) *Wach 3ndik chi xdma Medxuul uxra? uxra* | |
| Supplies? *Hwayj dyal xdma* | |
| Transportation/rent *wach tat-xls chi likra, lisans, wlla chi haja?* | |
| Payment of employees | |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education expenses</th>
<th>Y</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you have children in school?</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the total for</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

341
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uniforms? Yearly</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Books? Yearly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do your children take after-school lessons? <em>Wes tay diru swaeyeh tl9raya/ wech tayzidu swayeh tl9raya</em></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If no: Are you unable to afford after-school lessons?</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, monthly total: <em>Ch7al tat 5ls f-swaya f-s7r</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Healthcare for self (rask) in last 6 mois |  |
| Consultation fees – <em>ch7al tatxls l-tbib</em> |  |
| Medicines, etc. – <em>ch7al tatxls l-dwa</em> |  |
| Traditional doctors’ fees / medicines <em>dwa l-bldi</em> |  |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Others</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total amount spent — ترiban تايمشي ليك ف-سا7ا دياليك ف-ش7ار/شام ليت؟</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare for dependents (3ائلاتيک)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation fees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicines, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional doctors’ fees / medicines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total amount spent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were all these expenses of the last week typical of the past year?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the answer is no, what is a normal amount?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assorted Health Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Someone in household has chronic ailment that you have to buy medicine for? (دي9ا (ارضما) سوکک ولا چی مالاد مزیین)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you ever take the medicines for this illness less often than the doctor says because they are expensive?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Do you buy all the medications that the doctor prescribes?  
Wach tatchri غذ دوا لي تاغول لي تیب؟ | Neveг | Sometimєs | Usually |
| Have you borrowed money in the last year to pay medical expenses – if so, what was the amount?  
Wach 3میرک سلفی fluus bach tshri 1-dwa؟ | Neveг | Sometimєs | Usually |
| How many days of the last year have you missed at JIF due to illness?  
3لا7قاح چی مالاد، چ7ال مین یوم الغتی مین 1-ش7ما ف-شام لیت؟ |       |       |       |
### INCOME

**Personal income from Jemaa l-Fna for the last 3 days worked**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Ask # of days worked last week</th>
<th>Estimate for last week:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**What is typical weekly earning for this season?**

**Work at Jemaa l-Fna: estimated weekly income, days of week, time of day**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chtwa : D,J,F</th>
<th>Typical days of week</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>Th</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>Every day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Times of day</td>
<td>Morning-Dhuhr</td>
<td>Dhuhr-Asr</td>
<td>Asr-Mghrb</td>
<td>Mghrb-3sha</td>
<td>3sha-close</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rbi3: M,A, M</td>
<td>Typical days of week</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Th</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times of day</td>
<td>Morning-Dhuhr</td>
<td>Dhuhr-Asr</td>
<td>Asr-Mghrb</td>
<td>Mghrb-3sha</td>
<td>3sha-close</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sif: J,J,A</td>
<td>Typical days of week</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Th</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times of day</td>
<td>Morning-Dhuhr</td>
<td>Dhuhr-Asr</td>
<td>Asr-Mghrb</td>
<td>Mghrb-3sha</td>
<td>3sha-close</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5lif: S,O,N</td>
<td>Typical days of week</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Th</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times of day</td>
<td>Morning-Dhuhr</td>
<td>Dhuhr-Asr</td>
<td>Asr-Mghrb</td>
<td>Mghrb-3sha</td>
<td>3sha-close</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other artistic work for pay (Also ask: Wech tat-dir haqta f-chi blasa u5ra, b7al swaq f-medinat u5riin?)**

**Total in last month**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Frequency per Month/Season</th>
<th>Winter DJF</th>
<th>Spring MAM</th>
<th>Summer JJA</th>
<th>Autumn SON</th>
<th>Amount earned per gig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

344
### Household income totals in last week/month (SELECT ONE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Spouse</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Other household member</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Were all these amounts of the last week typical of the past year?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the answer is no, by what percentage were they different?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Loans – access and debt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of credit used in last year</th>
<th>Available?</th>
<th>Est. Amount Available</th>
<th>Amount used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Bank</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Family or friends</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch7al min fluus taytsaluk?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Savings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wach tAXBbi fluus 3la qbl dwayr zmaan? Wach daba mxbbi d-fiuus?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ch7al mxbbi d-fiuus dada, tseriran, f-...:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Store (חנוט) credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wach mul hanoot taydir m3k credit?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch7al d-fiuus taytsaluk daba?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Landlord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Religious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Other:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
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<td>1</td>
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