

"Masterfully orchestrating the sounds of the North African music industry, *Recording History* provides a fresh, unique tune to North African history. This delightful book is a classic in the making."

— AOMAR BOUM, editor of *Wartime North Africa*

"A highly original transnational study in the history of popular culture in Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria. By astutely listening to the past, Christopher Silver paints a rich and complex picture of North African music, aural culture, and recording history."

— ZIAD FAHMY, author of *Street Sounds*

If twentieth-century stories of Jews and Muslims in North Africa are usually told separately, *Recording History* demonstrates that we have not been listening to what brought these communities together: Arab music. For decades, thousands of phonograph records flowed across North African borders. The sounds embedded in their grooves were shaped in large part by Jewish musicians, who gave voice to a changing world around them. Their popular songs broadcast on radio, performed in concert, and circulated on disc carried with them the power to delight audiences, stir national sentiments, and frustrate French colonial authorities.

With this book, Christopher Silver provides the first history of the music scene and recording industry across Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, and offers striking insights into Jewish-Muslim relations through the rhythms that animated them. He traces the path of hit-makers and their hit records, illuminating regional and transnational connections. In asking what North Africa once sounded like, Silver recovers a world of many voices—of pioneering impresarios, daring female stars, cantors turned composers, witnesses and survivors of war, and national and nationalist icons—whose music still resonates well into our present.

CHRISTOPHER SILVER is the Segal Family Assistant Professor in Jewish History and Culture at McGill University. He is the founder and curator of the website Gharamophone.com, a digital archive of North African records from the first half of the twentieth century.