Cornell University Middle Eastern Music Ensemble  
Fall 2015  
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Ensemble Website: cmeme.arts.cornell.edu  
Lincoln Hall B21

**Weekly Subjects**

**Aug 31**  Overview of Middle Eastern Music  
- 'iqa’at (usulu)  
- maqamat (makamlar, dastgah)  
- sharqi (şarqı, sharki)  
- the rules of taqsim (taximi, taksim)  
- alphabets, transliteration, and pronunciation; naming conventions

References:  
[www.maqamworld.com](http://www.maqamworld.com)  

**Sept 7**  Labor Day (no class)

**Sept 14**  Rosh Hashanah (no class)

**Sept 21**  Sacred Music of the Middle East  
- Ancient Egypt  
- Ancient Hittite  
- Ancient Sumerian/Akkadian  
- nomadic Hebrew music arises out of Egyptian and Akkadian traditions  
- Tengrism  
- Christian music, the Pentarchy  
- early Islamic poetry/music  
- Mevlevi music  
- Alevi ceremonial dance and music

References:  

**Sept 28**  The Levant & Southeastern Pontos  
- Levantine Music: Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Kurds, Alevi  
- Southeastern Pontos: Laaz, Georgian, Armenian, Ossetian, Baloch, Azeri

References:  
Oct 5  Music of the Hebrews and Jews
-ancient Hebrew instruments:
  -Tehillim (Psalms) compiled under King David
-relationships to West Africa
-Jewish diaspora in the Middle East:
  -Persia
  -Khazar conversion to Judaism
  -Ladino (murrano)
  -Ottoman
  -Yemen
-Jews in Islam
-modern Israeli music

References:

Oct 12  Fall Break (no class)

Oct 19  Music of Modern Egypt
-Ottoman influence on modern Egyptian music
-relationships to N. Africa and the Levant
-Egyptian influence on American hip-hop culture

References:

Oct 26  Music of the Ottoman Empire
-Turkish migrations: origins in Central or NE Asia
-origins of the baglama
-Peşrev form
-unique usulu
-Persian influence (e.g. al-Farabi)
talent-based classical musical system allowed for women and minorities

References:
Nov 2  **Persian Music**
-connections to India
-relationship to Central Asian music
-Dastgah & Avaz
-heavy influence on early Islamic culture, especially Turkey
  -spread of the harp
  -yuruk semai
-Revolutionary restrictions on music

References:
Alizadeh, Hossein, Afsaneh Rassa'i, and Madjid Khaladj. “Musique Iranienne: Saz-e No.” Paris:
Blum, Stephen. “Persian Folksong of Meshhed,” Yearbook of the International Folk Music

Nov 9  **Greek Music: Ancient, Classical, & Modern**
-Mount Athos
-Byzantine chant
-rebellion against Ottomans
-rebetika

References:
Choir Of Monks From The Monastery Of Simonos Petra. “Hymns of Mount Athos.” Jade/Milan,
2009.
Holst(-Warhaft), Gail. *Road to Rembetika: Music of Greek Subculture.* Limni, Evia, Greece:
Denise Harvey, 1975.
Paniagua, Gregorio & Atrium Musicae de Madrid. “Musique de la Grece Antique.” Harmonia

Nov 16  **Ancient Arabian and Early Islamic Music; the Raj Movement**
-origins in Greek academic culture
-Syrian Christian (Maroni) Sacred Music (maqamat)
-classical Arabic theory sources
-Reconquista: 711(or 718) - 1492
-influence on W. European classical music
-Muwashshah diaspora
-classical Arabic rhythm in Latin music
-the emergence of Raj in Algeria

References:
Rachid Aous; Mohammed Habib Samarakandi. *Horizons maghrébins: le droit à la mémoire.*
Schade-Poulsen, Marc. *Men and Popular Music in Algeria: The Social Significance of Rai.*
Nov 23  The Nomads & Khaleej
-Nomads: Roma, Bedou, Pashto
-Khaleej (Arabia)
- samri tradition
- Kuwait
- Yemeni singers

References:

Nov 30  Modern Turkish Music & The Ottoman Musical “Diaspora”
-repression of Ottoman culture
-looking Westward/Euro-integration-Bulgarian/Macedonian
-Serb
-Romanian
-Greek
-Egypt and the Hijaz
-Mesopotamia and Persia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iraq, others)

References:
**General Resources**

cmeme.arts.cornell.edu (click the daf in the upper left to access the CUMEME archive)
www.neyzenn.com
Grove Music Online (database via library.cornell.edu)
Ethno-musicology Online (database via library.cornell.edu)
www.maqamworld.com
www.ethnomusicology.org

**Main Performances:**

November 11, 8pm, Barnes Hall
December 5, 8pm, Watermargin (date may be subject to change)

**Open Dancing and Drumming:**

September 30, 8pm, Sacred Root Kava Lounge (Cornell Daily Sun Building)
October 28, 8pm, Sacred Root Kava Lounge (Cornell Daily Sun Building)
November 25, 8pm, Sacred Root Kava Lounge (Cornell Daily Sun Building)
December 30, 8pm, Sacred Root Kava Lounge (Cornell Daily Sun Building)

**Other Engagements:**

September 6, 1pm, Barton Hall: Clubfest
September 19, 7:30pm, 855 Taughannock Blvd.: Radwan & Julia's CUMEME Jam Party
October 1, 6pm, La Tourelle Resort: Firelight Camps – Ethical Travel Association

**Repertoire Selection**

I will be happy to accept suggestions for songs to learn and sing in the group. Musical works will get priority consideration for how much they diversify the group's perspective, in particular:

1) uniqueness of geographic or ethnic origin,
2) uniqueness or rarity of maqam (makam) or iqa' (usul) in the CUMEME collection,
3) associated composers or performers of the work and their historical relevance,
4) subject matter of the lyrics in historical or cultural terms, and
5) artistic cultural value of the lyrics.

**Course Materials**

CUMEME aims for the same professional academic standards as other music ensembles. Each member is responsible for bringing his or her own instrument(s) as well as music charts. If you cannot read music, please try to ask questions and pick it up in class as much as possible, but always bring charts and a pencil (not a pen) to mark them with notes and corrections. If you prefer to go paperless, all charts will be made available online (see link above under General Resources).
**Class Participation**

Our main purpose here is to teach one another what we know about our own cultures. Members' insight on historical or sociological issues is necessary and will be appreciated by all. Don't be shy in sharing your thoughts. Each of you is an expert with subject matter we all want to know.

To participate with the group, try to sing and clap at the very least. Some pieces are learned and sung to help the singers learn the anatomy of maqamat (makamlar or dastgah), which improves the quality of singing and helps instrumentalists improve their ability. Clapping helps study the rhythmic cycles, which increases the power and artistry of both singers and instrumentalists. If you would like to try to learn an instrument from the Lincoln Hall collection, you are welcome to try. Just talk to me or Greg Ezra. To take an instrument home for further practice, you will need to sign an agreement.

There are two ways to engage with the Ensemble on an academic level: a formal talk or translating lyrics. If you feel you can bring perspective to any of the weekly subject areas, please see me to request that date for your talk. We will also need help translating our lyrics for the concert, so feel free to volunteer to create English translations for your favorite songs!

**Extra Assistance**

I will be happy to provide extra time to ensemble members looking to improve skills in the performance of any instrument or voice, or the reading of music. Experience and auditions are not required, and I am happy to help improve the abilities of any interested student.

**Academic Credit**

Since the Middle Eastern Music Ensemble is no longer offered as a for-credit course, you may ask a professor if he or she would be willing to accept your work for the ensemble as an independent study under him or her. That professor may require you to do more work, e.g. write a formal paper, in order for you to receive credit.

**Rehearsal Location**

All sessions will be held in Lincoln B21 unless otherwise notified. The group will be notified the week prior if the location changes, and a sign will be posted on the door of Lincoln B21.

**Rehearsal Format**

Closer to performance dates, the rehearsals may become more orderly, but in general I will try to strike a balance between music rehearsal and the discussions we have about performance practice. This may be different from other musical ensemble rehearsals. This atmosphere is necessary for the study of performance practice.