

## ICTM Study Group on Music in the Arab World

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My relationship with the ICTM dates back to the 1970s, first as a member, then as a liaison officer for Iraq, and later, from 1989 to 2019 as a chair of the Study Group on Music in the Arab World. By late 1987, when I was preparing to organize a conference on the documents of the 1932 Cairo Conference on Arabic Music, Dieter Christensen and Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco suggested creating a study group on the music of the Arab world (the name was later changed to Music in the Arab World). Thus the conference that took place in Cairo in 1989 was the antecedent and the de facto forebear that led to the creation of our study group. Many of the 1932 themes that were revisited and questioned in 1989 revealed their long-term effects that decided the future of music in the Arab world on theoretical, practical, and intellectual levels.

The 1932 conference was the very first in history held on non-Western music, and specifically here on Arabic music. The decision to convene the conference at that time was related to the historical context of the beginning of the twentieth century which was a socio-political phase bathed in paradoxes. In 1917, the Arab world was liberated from the Ottoman Empire. At the same time, the serious economic crisis in Europe accompanied direct and indirect colonial hegemony over the Arab world that started by shaping and reshaping borders. This period led to the affirmation of nationalistic trends, and to anti-colonial movements inspired by the desire for independence and the aspiration to promote progress and change in all domains of society, including music.

In that context, a conference on Arabic music in 1932 could not have taken place if it had not corresponded to the needs of Egyptian organizers that included members of the governing class, intellectuals, and musicians, who all aimed not only at modernizing Egyptian music but also at extending changes to Arabic music in general.

In that, the 1932 conference was firmly established and had a prominent role in shaping the discussions of music in the region. It was the first in history to have brought together a large number of well-known musicians

and scholars from both Europe and the Arab World. Personalities, among them Béla Bartók, Curt Sachs, and Henry George Farmer, came to Cairo to meet with musicians from different Arab countries including Kamel al Kholā'i, Darwish al Hariri, Sami al Shawwa, and others, to discuss various issues of Arabic music.

The 1932 conference and its outcome were certainly outstanding markers that had tremendous impact on Arabic music up to our day. However, this historical encounter had not revealed all its secrets and not enough was known to contemporaries about all its details. The two books published as an outcome of the conference—in Arabic in 1933 (*Kitāb mu'tamar al-mūsīqa al-'arabiyya*), followed in 1934 by the French version (*Recueil des travaux du Congrès de musique arabe*)—needed republication. The 169 78-rpm recordings of the Egyptian, Moroccan, Algerian, Tunisian, and Iraqi ensembles that performed at the conference were distributed only to those who attended the conference.<sup>1</sup>

In 1987 in Cairo, when I was preparing for the conference, I came across many Cairene musicians and individuals knowledgeable in Egyptian and Arab music, who had heard about the recordings but, though they had the two conference books, needed to have more details about the 1932 conference. An important specialist in Egyptian music, Tareq Hassan, a professor of medicine and also a composer, revealed to me that the 1932 recordings were neither known to him nor to other specialists in Egypt. He even asked whether they really existed, and, if they did, how to make them available through cassette copies. Meanwhile, we learned that they were kept at the Oriental Institute of Music in Cairo, but have been sealed for many decades. We thus wrote to the minister of culture to present the idea of the conference and its importance, asking, on the one hand, for the support of Egyptian

1 The original record collection was given only to official participants of the conference, apparently on their request. The French curator of Musée Guimet, Philip Stern, who participated in the 1932 conference, brought back the complete set of the conference recordings and deposited them at the museum where I heard them.

institutions to facilitate inviting groups of traditional music and folk arts, and, on the other, asking for his help to facilitate our access to the historical sealed recordings. This second request could not be realized for unknown reasons.

Among the consequences of the new nationalistic trend at the 1932 conference was the birth of the designation “Arabic music,” meant to be considered as an independent category within the broader denomination of “Oriental music.” This last designation, besides being applied to the music in the Arab world, covered the musical heritage of many non-Arab Oriental cultures that shared common history with the Arabs. One of the main ideas projected by Egyptians at the conference, based on the inspiration of the European model designated as scientific and universal (Hassan 1992), was the strong quest for fixing durably the rules of Arabic music considered as only oral and the outcome of practice. In point of fact, the conference organizers ignored the reality that the rules of Arabic music had been organized and written down many times throughout its history. These issues that were raised during the 1932 conference that expressed the desire of modernizing Egyptian and Arabic music remain important questions among contemporary Arab musicians. The concern about fixing the post-Ottoman scales, modes, rhythms, and other elements of music, aimed to unify these aspects of music over the whole Arab world, was itself an issue that represented a critical stand against the oral tradition, which was considered to be inferior. And, of course, there is also the well-known increasing influence of Western music with its theory and pedagogy, which at the time was considered the proper model to follow. The paradox of the situation was that Europeans present at the 1932 conference were opposed to this orientation. However, if these issues remain valid among many groups with whom I met, they represent only one aspect of the more varied opinions and priorities in the contemporary Arab world.

Thus the aim of our 1989 international conference, held on 25–28 May 1989, was to explore the vast and global corpus of written and audio documents that was presented on Arabic music in 1932, and to interrogate the different issues that were dealt with and the questions these raised. Through the perspective of contemporary researchers of each of the countries present at the first conference, we hoped to re-examine and help fill in the gap of the documentation inherited from that period on the different Arab musical traditions presented at the conference.<sup>2</sup>

It is important to mention that the 1989 conference was totally backed and organized by the French centre CEDEJ (Centre d'études et de documentation économiques, juridiques et sociales), directed then by Jean Claude Vatin. CEDEJ acted as a local committee in contacting and inviting in its name the Egyptian musicians and personalities to attend the conference, and also asking for their support in organizing performances of Egyptian traditional music. In 1992 CEDEJ not only translated, edited, and published the outcome of that conference in a book, *Musique arabe: le Congrès du Caire de 1932*, in addition, it published a cassette, that consisted of a selection of Egyptian folk music recorded in 1932 (*Musique arabe* 1992).

### The study-group policy and goals

It was during the ICTM Executive Board meeting held in Schladming, Austria, in 1989 that our study group was recognized as a group-in-formation, waiting for its first symposia to be organized, after which the study group would be considered official. Inspired by our 1989 conference, we thought that the very first and central goal of the new study group would be to organize its meetings as much as possible in the Arab world. Direct in situ and long-term encounters between scholars who work in the West with musicians, scholars, and other knowledgeable individuals interested in the musical traditions of their countries, who knew little about the way Western scholars represented their music, seemed crucial.

Moreover, in each symposium that we organized in different Arab countries, where we dealt directly with a new context of cultural specificity, diverse perspectives were opened to us. Meeting with individuals interested in research, teaching, or performing musical traditions in their social contexts brought to light various approaches towards musical concepts and research methodologies, and revealed the complexity of the field realities in the different parts of the Arab world, stretched over a wide territory of 13 million square kilometres with rich musical traditions that cover a great number of different genres.

Concurrently, our work process faced serious obstacles. The main and the greatest difficulty was that our study group was formed in the 1990s, during a turbulent period where wars started to destabilize the Arab world. This reality that continues to be the case up to

2 Participants in the 1989 Cairo international conference included Jean-Pierre Belleface (France), Pierre Bois (France), Nadia Bouzar-Kasabdjji (Algeria), Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco (Egypt/Portugal), Jürgen Elsner (GDR) via text, Linda Fathallah (Egypt), Mahmoud Guettat (Tunisia), Scheherazade

Hassan (Iraq), Suleiman Jamil (Egypt), Mahmud Kamil (Egypt), Issam al Mallah (Egypt), Nadia Mechri-Saada (Algeria), Eckhard Neubauer (FRG) via text, Ali Jihad Racy (Lebanon/USA), Martha Roy (Egypt/USA), Philip Schuyler (USA), Artur Simon (FRG), Margaret Toth (Hungary), and Habib Hassan Touma (FRG).

our day, affected our meeting projects more than once, preventing us from the desired interaction and the more regular contacts that we hoped to realize. Evidently, it also compromised the original idea to organize more symposia in the 1990s, which unfortunately could not be accomplished, precisely because of such conditions.

Simultaneously and on a different level, the regional geopolitics inherited from the period of colonization had left an impact on the relatively separated relations between the Middle East and North Africa. While French domination in North Africa, and partly in Lebanon, impacted the use of French language for research, in the other parts of the Arab world the use of Arabic language dominates. And even though papers and presentations were often trilingual in our symposia, the drive to present local scholars who only use Arabic presented difficulties whenever publications were planned. This explains why publications resulting from our study-group symposia were not easy to realize, leading to publications of individual papers scattered in different journals and books, depending on the individual possibilities.

## Symposia

### ALGIERS, 25–27 NOVEMBER 1990

For our first official study-group symposium, we had two choices of locale. In 1990, CEDEJ invited us to hold our meeting in Cairo again; at the same time, the Algerian musicologist Nadia Bouzar-Kasabji, head of the Music Department at the *École Normale Supérieure* of Algiers, who had participated in our Cairo conference, suggested organizing our symposium in Algeria. We accepted her proposal, and the meeting was planned in collaboration between the ICTM and the Algerian Ministry of Universities, and with the backing of the association for the preservation and promotion of the Algerian classical music.

The belief in the necessity of modernization, expressed in the 1932 conference, inspired us to choose for our Algerian meeting the theme “Changes in Arabic music in the twentieth century.” We aimed at identifying new musical thinking on change as reflected in written material and applied in teaching institutions, and revealed as well in performance contexts in the Arab world in general, and ways in which Algeria created its own concept of what change meant.

The Algerian meeting was a unique occasion that revealed to us the presence of a large number of Algerian colleagues working on their music about whom we knew little. Among the twenty-four participants, twenty were Algerian musicologists, music sociologists, and anthro-

pologists,<sup>3</sup> who presented various forms of mutations and changes in Algerian classical and regional music (Constantine, Bedouin Sahara, and Hagggar), in musical instruments, and in education. The Algerian case interacted with different forms of change that affected the music of Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Tunisia, the Gulf, and Yemen. Two concerts were especially organized for the symposium participants: Algerian classical music at the Palace of Culture, and a performance given by musicians of the Department of Music at the *École Normale Supérieure*. A specific dimension of Algerian musical traditions was presented at the rich and important exposition of Algerian musical instruments from the collection of the National Centre for Historical Studies. The National Institute of Music also organized a visit to the Algerian National Archive, where documents on traditional music were preserved.

If the two international meetings on Arabic music that took place in Cairo and Algiers succeeded in bringing together individuals concerned with music who did not necessarily know much about each other, it was certainly thanks to the institutional backing we received in local accommodation, plane tickets, and cultural musical activities. It is precisely in the 1990s that the situation in the Arab World started to gradually change due to wars. With the Algerian civil war and, soon after, the war on Iraq that started in 1991, our study group went through an unattended period, in which many of the projects we worked on could not take place.

After the Algerian meeting, we had planned to hold our next symposium in 1995 in Aden, Yemen, at the French Cultural Centre “Arthur Rimbaud” on the theme “Tribal and Bedouin music in the Arab world,” considering its particular importance in the Arabian Peninsula, which was not sufficiently known. In addition, the changes in the lives of many nomadic tribes who started to settle down presented the question of how these new situations affected their performances and its contents. We had hoped to map the space of Bedouin music and its manifestations in the national culture of each country of the Peninsula, together with the way this music was presented in the audiovisual sphere. Unfortunately, the meeting did not take place for multiple reasons, including economic. However,

3 Participants in the 1990 symposium in Algeria included Kadri Agha (Algeria), Abouzaid Amour (Algeria), Jean-Pierre Belleface (France), Zineb Benazzouz (Algeria), Abdelhamid Benmoussa (Algeria), Nadia Bouzar-Kasabji (Algeria), Omar Bouzid (Algeria), Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco (Egypt/Portugal), Aziz Chaker (Algeria/Syria), Scheherazade Hassan (Iraq), Mohamed Kamal al Kodsí (Algeria), Issam al Mallah (Egypt), Nadir Ma'rouf (Algeria/France), Abdul Hamid Mashaal (Egypt/Algeria), Bezza Mazouzi (Algeria), Abdel Mejid Merdaci (Algeria), Leo Plenckers (the Netherlands), Ali Jihad Racy (USA), Rashisa Rostane (Algeria), Nadia Mechri Saada (Algeria), Mohamed Aziz Shakir (Algeria), Nouredine Sraieb (Tunisia), and Habib Hassan Touma (Germany).

due to its importance, the subject found its place in the two next study group symposia.

#### OXFORD, 4–6 OCTOBER 1996

The next study-group symposium took place in October 1996 in Oxford, UK, for the first and only time in Europe. The former director of the French centre CEDEJ, Jean Claude Vatin, to whom we owed much for helping in the organization of our 1989 Cairo conference and in publishing its papers, was by then appointed director of the Maison Française in Oxford. He generously offered to organize a study-group symposium there, where we had a most stimulating meeting. However, meeting in Europe clearly implied that fewer participants from the Arab world would attend. Among the twenty European participants, many of whom did not have the opportunity to come to our previous meetings in the Arab world, were added those Arabs who live in Europe. Only one scholar was able to come from the Arab world, due to difficulties that were easy to foresee.<sup>4</sup>

Besides the theme “Bedouin and tribal music,” scheduled for a previous meeting that did not take place and retained here, two other themes were proposed: “Arab music during the Ottoman period” and “Musical instruments.” A session on “Music in the world of Islam” was added. Presentations ranged across a broad canvas, with a majority that dealt with Bedouin and tribal music, its historical roots and stylistic features in Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, the Arabian Peninsula, Oman, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, and Jordan. It was followed by a session on music during the Ottoman period where Arab-Ottoman contacts, sources, and Ottoman music influence in Tunisia and Iraq were presented and discussed. A session devoted to the use of musical instruments was followed by debates of converging lines of interest on the music of some other parts of the Islamic world, namely Afghanistan, Iran, and Uzbekistan. Presentations were followed by extended discussions.

#### ALEPPO, 28 APRIL – 1 MAY 2000

In December 1998, two years after the Oxford symposium, we started preparing for our next meeting that we hoped to organize in Syria. Thanks to the full backing of the French Institute for Arabic Studies in Damascus (IFEAD) and its director, Dominique Mallet, the

meeting took place from 28 April to 1 May 2000 in Aleppo, one of the most remarkable historical cities of the Middle East. Nuri Iskandar, the director of the Conservatory for Arabic Music (Ma’had al mosika -l ‘arabiyya) in Aleppo, helped in inviting Syrian musicians, musicologists, and other specialists in Syrian traditions. He also found a most exceptional, historical meeting place, the fifteenth century Syriac Catholic monastery of St. Asia and its church, situated in one of the oldest neighbourhoods of the city, far from the city’s turbulence. Conference sessions, discussions, and live performances of Syrian and Aleppan music took place in the convent. The encounter among Syrians interested in their local music, whatever the differences in origin or religion, reflected the normal-life practice in the Middle East before the intervention of foreign wars. It was in this Christian convent that Islamic music was discussed and performed together with Christian church performances. And it was with our Christian colleagues including Father Assouad, head of the convent who was himself a musician, that we attended the Islamic Sufi *dhikr* session. More than twenty scholars and musicologists from Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Bahrain, France, Germany, the Netherlands, UK, Ireland, and the USA participated in delivering papers in Arabic, English, and French,<sup>5</sup> while a number of students and journalists attended as listeners (figure 1).

“Bedouin and tribal music” and “Arab music during the Ottoman period,” the two themes that were discussed in the previous meeting in Oxford, were again chosen to become the substance of the Aleppo symposium. The old roots of Bedouin tribes, who live in the eastern desert of Syria, and the long historical exchange of the country with the Ottoman world, both present in Syrian musical life and in the research activities of many knowledgeable Syrians, pushed us to seek for more information. To these themes we added “Terminology and concepts of the music in the Arab world,” a subject that was meant to prepare the way for a possible dictionary project, but that would unfortunately face many difficulties, and thus could not be realized.

Presentations on Bedouin music in Syria, the upper Euphrates, Jordan, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, and the Algerian Sahara in their different genres added to the Berber High Atlas traditions related to agriculture, were given

<sup>4</sup> Participants in the 1994 Oxford symposium included John Baily (UK), Monique Brandily (France), Dieter Christensen (USA), Ruth Davis (UK), Veronica Doubleday (UK), Jean During (France), Jürgen Elsner (GDR), Saadi al Hadithi (Iraq/UK), Abdul Hamid Hammam (Jordan), Scheherazade Hassan (Iraq), Issam al Mallah (Egypt/Germany), Jeremy Montagu (UK), Eckhard Neubauer (Germany), Anne van Oostrum (the Netherlands), Leo Plenckers (the Netherlands), Philip Schuyler (USA), Razia Sultanova (Uzbekistan/UK), Owen Wright (UK), and Habib Yamine (Lebanon/France).

<sup>5</sup> Participants in the 2000 Aleppo symposium included Jabbar Ali Ahmad (Yemen), Mahmud al ‘Ajjan (Syria), Ammar al Ammari (Bahrain), Father Assouad (Syria), Saadallah Agha al-Qalaa (Syria), Monique Brandily (France), Qadri al Dallal (Syria), Veronica Doubleday (UK), Jürgen Elsner (GDR), Sa’adi al Hadithi (Iraq/UK), Abdul Hamid Hammam (Jordan), Ghassan al Hassan (United Arab Emirates), Scheherazade Hassan (Iraq), Mahmoud Ismael (Syria), Sabri al Muddallal (Syria), John Morgan O’Connell (Ireland), Miriam Olsen (France), Leo Plenckers (the Netherlands), Gerard Rayissian (Syria), Omar Sermini (Syria), Jonathan Shanon (USA), and Habib Yamine (Lebanon/France).



**Figure 1.** Participants at the study-group symposium. Aleppo, 28 April – 1 May 2000 (photo courtesy of Scheherazade Q. Hassan).

together with those on the historical connections between Arab song and Turkish music since the seventeenth century, Arab reactions against Ottoman style, and presentations on specific cases of Armenian and Iraqi musicians at that period. The session on terminology addressed concepts used in Aleppan *dhikr* also related to the secular *wasla*, terms relative to the Yemeni *ūd*, rhythmic terminology, terms for the Bahraini *ṣawt* in the Gulf and Yemen, and the Syrian *mawwāl*. This session benefitted greatly from the thorough discussions with local musicians.

Remarkable sessions on “Sacred chant in Aleppo since the nineteenth century” included performances by the most-renowned Aleppan singers performing sacred music. Among these was the famous muezzin of the Aleppo Umayyad mosque and an important singer of Syrian secular repertoire, Sabri al Muddallal (1918–2006), accompanied by his young disciple, Omar Sermini. The well-known Aleppan *ūd* player, Mohammed Qadri al Dallal, analyzed, discussed, and played examples of Islamic sacred music in the Mar Asia chapel.

After the midday prayer on Easter Friday, we attended the weekly Sufi ritual at Tekkiet al Bandanijī, related to both Qadiri and Rifa’i Sufi traditions. This was followed by the Good Friday Easter ceremony of the Urfa and Edesse Orthodox traditions, where a liturgical singing ritual was performed by priests with an antiphonal chorus of men and women, accompanied by organ synthesizer. Afterwards, the Aleppan Archbishop Gregarious Ibrahim honoured us with a reception. Other mem-

orable concerts of Syrian classical music in which the mutual exchange between musicians and audience that usually takes place in Oriental music, enhanced by the role of instrumental improvisation, induced *tarab*, took place in the gardens of the convent.

Things changed for the study group in first decade of the new millennium, as the region was further inflamed. The invasion of Iraq in 2003 added to the regional tragedy and to displacements of population. This calamity had a negative effect on our meeting initiatives. We tried to organize meetings in regions relatively far from the war zone, specifically in the Peninsula, but we failed despite long months of deliberations. Bahrain and Qatar presented excuses for budget reasons. Al Harthy, the Omani musicologist, accepted the idea of organizing a study-group symposium in Muscat. A project based on the theme “A century of musical traditions in the Arab world” was elaborated, and a programme committee was constituted. But the almost-finished project for a meeting in Oman ended without results. Afterwards, our symposia started to take a different turn in that we had to prepare for joint meetings.

#### **BA’ABDA (LEBANON), 20–21 MARCH 2013**

Nidaa Abou Mrad invited our study group to take part within the annual musicological meeting that he organizes at the Department of Musicology at Université Antonine in Lebanon on March 2013. Because of the disastrous regional situation, we chose to investigate the theme “The situation of music in the Arab world in the new millennium,” covering its

traditions, practices, training/education, and research, and examining the apparent consequences of the war on different regional traditions.

Most of the Lebanese contributions by musicians/musicologists dealt with musical education in the context of a society under a high degree of Western influence. They revealed striking examples of how musical education in the Arab world, through its institutes employing Western teaching methods, transformed local styles. They all revealed a strong awareness of the vital importance of transmitting local and *mashriqī*, that is, the eastern Arab traditions and style, in all levels of musical teaching. Teaching musicology at a university level was an occasion for both ethnomusicologists and musicologists to present their methods.<sup>6</sup>

A general closing discussion was followed by a very interesting and original concert of a Levantine oratorio, *The Seven Last Words of Christ*, as they appear in the four gospels, performed with well-known Syriac, Maronite, Byzantine, and Coptic chants, and with music from the Arab Oriental art tradition, accompanied with instrumental improvisations. The oratorio was performed by the ensemble of classical Arab music of the Université Antonine, directed by Nidaa Abou Mrad, who also played the violin, accompanied by *qanūn* and two chanters.

#### ANKARA, 17–21 DECEMBER 2014

Our next study group symposium took place in Ankara on 17–21 December 2014. It was organized jointly between two study groups, the Maqām study group, chaired by Jürgen Elsner, and that on the Music in the Arab World. Organizational backing came from the State Conservatory of Ankara, under the auspices of the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism and backed by Cenk Güray, who represented the Vildrim Beyazit University Conservatory for Turkish Music.

For those among us who work on the Arab world, it was a great occasion to share the broad topic “*Maqām* traditions between theory and contemporary music making,” common to a vast region that stretches from North Africa to Central and Southeast Asia. For the first time, scholars from Islamic countries outside the Arab world met with Arab scholars to discuss the phenomenon of *maqām* and learn about its local uses. Subjects presented and discussed covered the concept of *maqām*,

its theoretical and historical aspects, its specificity in contexts of local heritage, transmission, performance, modern teaching and the impact of social and cultural contexts. In sum, all that characterizes the practice of the *maqām* in the different regional traditions was dealt with. Thirty-three scholars from Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Oman, with European scholars from Germany, France, Greece, the Netherlands, and Russia presented papers and participated in panel discussions.<sup>7</sup> Twenty-one papers were chosen for publication and, with the backing of the Ankara conservatory, they appeared in the volume *Maqām Traditions between Theory and Contemporary Music Making* (Elsner, Jähnichen, and Güray 2016; see also Hassan 2016; Lambert 2016; Saidani 2016; Oostrum 2016).

#### CAIRO, 7–10 JANUARY 2019

Thirty years after the first conference had taken place in Cairo in 1989, we chose that city again for our most recent symposium in 2019. We based our reflection on the fact that the rich outcome of research conducted in the second half of the twentieth century and early twenty-first century in different parts of the Arab world were not widespread or well enough known. Based on field surveys and usually centred on specific communities or on a particular genre in a distinct geographical space in one particular Arab nation state, this rich variety of musical cultures is either known in limited places, or reserved to restricted circles of scholars and/or to particular institutions. Thus the theme, “A socio-musical mapping of music in the Arab world,” chosen for our Cairo symposium, was based on the expanding knowledge of recent research. We hoped to better locate new research outcomes that relied on field collecting and documenting done in different geographical locations. Details provided in describing structure, performance contexts and transformational processes, relations to neighbouring or even remote traditions, interactions, evolutions that took place, without neglecting their historical background, would help expand the boundaries of history on music in the Arab world. And this more global view, we thought, would help us towards achieving a large mapping that would cover the musical genres and forms that exist in urban, rural, or nomadic

6 Participants in the 2013 Ba’abda symposium included Nidaa Abou Mrad (Lebanon), Bouchra Bechealany (Lebanon), Abdulwahab Redha Benabdallah (Algeria), Amer Didi (Lebanon), Ahmad Hamdani (Lebanon), Jumana Hassan (Iraq), Scheherazade Hassan (Iraq), Kathleen Hood (USA), Abderreda Kobeissy (Lebanon), Jean Lambert (France), Evrim Hikmet Ögüt (Turkey), Maria Rijo (Portugal), Ghassan Sahhab (Lebanon), Mustapha Said (Egypt), Celine Waked (Lebanon), and Hayyaf al Yasin (Lebanon).

7 Participants in the 2014 Ankara symposium included Suraya Agayeva (Azerbaijan), Fazlı Arslan (Turkey), Sanubar Baghirova (Azerbaijan), Hakan Cevher (Turkey), Virginia Danielson (USA), Tamila Djani-Zade (Russia), Alexander Djumaeov (Uzbekistan), Jean During (France), Mehmet Uğur Ekinçi (Turkey), Jürgen Elsner (GDR), Süleyman Erguner (Turkey), Cenk Güray (Turkey), Scheherazade Hassan (Iraq), Judith Haug (Turkey), Gisa Jähnichen (Germany), Jean Lambert (France), Otanzar Matyakubov (Uzbekistan), Anne van Oostrum (the Netherlands), Okan Murat Öztürk (Turkey), Maya Saidani (Algeria) via text, Gyultekin Shamilli (Russia), Emin Soydaş (Turkey), Nasser Al-Tae (Oman), and Timkehet Teffera (Ethiopia/Germany).



**Figure 2.** Participants at the study-group symposium. Cairo, 7–10 January 2019 (photo courtesy of Scheherazade Q. Hassan).

societies in Arab countries, whether of Arabs or of all, and the various ethnic communities who live within the Arab world.

At this precise historical phase, we did not neglect the relationship between traditional practice and the shape it has partly taken in the present, due to the dominant influence of media and technology, whether emerging from internal evolution or from Western influences. And besides dealing with the traditional music, on which we have worked until now, we took into consideration the new interests that emerge among the young generation, particularly in Western universities, where subjects on popular music became a focus of research.

Researchers from the USA, UK, the Netherlands, France, Malta, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Yemen, and the Emirates participated (figure 2) in presenting some general theoretical issues, as well as on multiple subjects on the music and instruments of North Africa (Libya, Tunisia, Morocco), the Middle East (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon), and the Peninsula (Oman, Hejaz, and the Emirates). Old record collections, the role of the *Nahḍa* or renaissance movement, and issues on new teaching

methods for the *ūd* were presented alongside papers on popular music.<sup>8</sup>

This most recent study-group symposium that took place in Cairo differs from other symposia in that it was the only one in which we were entirely responsible for matters of organization due to the absence of a local organizing committee. However, we had the chance to use the meeting room of the Centre Français d'archéologie Orientale (French centre for Oriental archaeology; IFAO) and some of its rooms usually available for scholars who pass through Cairo.

8 Participants in the 2019 Cairo symposium included Rafik al-Akouri (Yemen), Amine Beyhom (Lebanon), Aisha Bilkhair (United Arab Emirates), Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco (Egypt/Portugal), Hicham Chami (Morocco/USA), Philip Ciantar (Malta), Sophia Frankfort (USA), Badih El-Hajj (Lebanon), Scheherazade Hassan (Iraq), Alan Karass (USA), Jean Lambert (France), Anne Lucas (USA), Miquel Merino (USA), Gabrielle Messeder (UK), Salvatore Morra (Italy), Miriam Olsen (France), Anne van Oostrum (the Netherlands), Nour El Rayes (Lebanon), Maria Rijo (Portugal), Ghassan Sahhab (Lebanon), Mustafa Said (Egypt), Melissa Scott (USA), Maho Sebiane (France), Andrea Shaheen (Lebanon), Søren Moller Sørensen (Denmark), Kawkab Tawfik (Egypt), Clara Wenz (USA), and Farah Zahra (Lebanon).

This Cairo symposium concludes the series of symposia under my responsibility that started in Cairo and ceased at the end of 2019. Throughout all these years, during all the study-group endeavours, I have been fortunate to have had the help and backing of many scholars, musicians and musicologists, members of the advisory board, and others who represent different world centres and universities. I thank them all. My thanks go particularly to Virginia Danielson, the vice chair, who with her stimulation did not leave me struggle for myself. I am also grateful to Philip Ciantar, Michael Frishkopf, Anas Ghrab, and Hayaf Yassine who accepted the task of carrying the group's responsibility to decide for the future.

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