

**Conference for early career researchers:
“Evolutions or revolutions? Contemporary Middle Eastern
and North African Music – traditions and new tendencies”
June 13-14, 2017, National Institute for Oriental Languages and Civilisations,
INALCO, Paris**

Call for Papers

There is both an interest and a need to bring together musicologists, ethnomusicologists, historians and sociologists to the National Institute for Oriental Languages and Civilisations which focuses mainly on research on languages, literatures, civilisations and cultures. We propose an international gathering of PhD candidates and early-career researchers from multi-disciplinary backgrounds who are researching Middle Eastern and Southern Mediterranean music. INALCO and more specifically, the Research Centre for the Middle East and the Mediterranean (CERMOM), are interested in the organisation of this conference which completes its research fields.

The Middle East and the Mediterranean region, as the cradle of ancient civilisations and of the three major monotheistic religions, is a rich field for the study of music. The conglomeration of ethnicities from African and Asian cultures combined with European and American influences extends from the Mashreq to the Maghreb.

The continuous contacts with Europe facilitated the development of cultural spaces such as operas and musical theatre, both a direct legacy of western colonialism during the last two centuries. The largest cultural and academic centres of North Africa and the Levant, such as Beirut, Cairo, Casablanca, Jerusalem, Tunis or Dubai, among others boast modern conservatories, operas and symphony orchestras. Recording studios, used also for radio, television and the film industry developed in Cairo and in most of the large metropolises of the Maghreb and the Mashreq. Middle Eastern and North African diversity includes elements from their indigenous folklore, with various external influences coming from: Europe, Turkey, South America and more. Borrowing from these traditions, musicians create contemporary music.

Arabic music covering the whole region from North Africa to the Levant and the Arabic Peninsula can be treated on several levels, despite its apparent unification due to the domination of the Arabic language and the Islam, and common historical, political or cultural aspects to variety of communities comprising Arabic and non-Arabic speakers, Muslims, Christians and Jews.

Traditional music is cultivated in cultural centres by professionals that continue to study it in order to preserve its roots. Historic centres of music, like Aleppo, Baghdad or Fez continue to attract musicologists that want to save disappearing musical heritages.

It is obvious that the changes occurring in these various countries are accelerating and inevitable. Digital media's permanent presence brings with it a constant contact with other cultures creating a permanent assimilation of diverse musical influences and a weakening of the knowledge of traditional and classical music. Artistic performances are no longer the space of the connection between performers and their audience, in neither singing, recitation nor dance. Now with CDs and digital media production the audience is reduced further and further to a simple customer, who consumes a

product. At the same time, global cultural integration has brought musical styles that fuse with rock, rap, jazz etc.

Israel is a particular case because of the immensity of musical styles that exist, revealing the complexity of its own culture. This country benefitted from the arrival of musicians from all over the world coming from extremely different musical cultures and bringing musical instruments, ideas and varied heritage. They contributed to the formation of a particular Israeli musical culture which combines many different Jewish music traditions, while keeping the musical specificity from their origins (Arabic, Maghrebi, Europe, North and South America) and inscribing them into a multi-cultural world model.

Finally, it is important to stress that all countries in this region have a very strong tradition of sacred and spiritual music. Either in the chanting of religious texts, liturgical songs, ritual music or spiritual dances, this music form an integral part of the general musical context of their cultures.

We invite researchers specialising in music of the Middle Eastern and Southern Mediterranean region (musicologists, ethnomusicologists, sociologists, anthropologists, historians and political scientists) to present their work around the following topics:

- vocal, instrumental or mixed music
- musical theory and practice
- art music
- traditional and popular music
- religious, sacred and spiritual music
- entertainment, variety and media music
- occasional music
- sung poetry
- organology
- modes of production and consumption of music
- music of religious and ethnic minorities
- diasporic music
- music and society
- dance
- sound archives.

We welcome proposals of presentations (not longer than 20 minutes) in French or in English as a Word attachment to the email addresses of both organisers. They must not exceed 300 words, including bibliography and must, in addition, have a short biographic note about the author. The final date for submission is February 20, 2017 at midnight. The scientific committee will send the notification of acceptance by the beginning of March 2017.

Hosting research institution: CERMOM/INALCO

Scientific and Organising Committee:

Dominika Czerna-Saumande – CERMOM / INALCO; cutecoolkikaczerska@yahoo.co.uk

Vanessa Paloma Elbaz – CERMOM / INALCO; palomasereia@gmail.com