

Resources for Teaching Arab Music

Prepared by Robyn Davis, University of Washington, August 2018

**4 is in English, and 1, 2, 3, 5.iii and 6 have English-language explanations/translations*

1. Al Bustan Seeds of Culture has two **lesson plans** based on the classical Egyptian song “Planting the Oranges” (Lesson 1 is for 3rd-8th grade, Lesson 2 is for 6th-12th grade). The ‘About’ link on the lesson plan page has information about the composer, the song, the maqam and the rhythm.
 - i. Lesson plans are at: <http://albustanseeds.org/digital/yalli/lesson-plan1/>
 - ii. Song is at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5eEQi18z6Ac&feature=youtu.be>
2. Other resources on the **maqam** and classical Arab music:
 - i. Maqam World is a rich resource on the maqam, including song fragments grouped by maqam. <https://www.maqamworld.com/en/maqam.php>
 - ii. Brief descriptions of classical Arab music instruments:
<http://almashriq.hiof.no/lebanon/700/780/fairuz/legend/instruments.html>
 - iii. Ibrahim Maalouf (added a fourth valve to a trumpet so he can play Arab maqam)
 - o “Beirut” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4DkeNh3YCys>
3. Virtually every **Iraqi** knows and loves the song “*Tala’ min bayt abuha (From her father’s house)*” by Iraqi Nazem al-Ghazali. The song is about a flirtatious encounter. It’s in maqam ‘ajami (see ‘maqam ‘ajami’ at Maqam World website referenced above)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hVBzhvov0w0>

Tala’a min bayt abuha (From her father’s house) (English translation)
by Nazem El-Ghazali

Chorus

She comes out of her father’s house
Going to her neighbor’s house
She passed and didn’t say hello
Maybe she is annoyed.

I said to her, “Sweet one, quench my thirst. I’m thirsty--give me a drink of water.”
She said, “Go along, you poor thing. Our water doesn’t quench the thirsty.”

Chorus

I said to her, “Sweet one, quench my thirst. Show me your figure.”
She said, “Go along, you poor thing. My figure is like basil perfume.”

Chorus

I said to her, “Sweet one, quench my thirst. Show me your eyes.”
She said, “Go along, you poor thing. My eyes are the eyes of the gazelle.”

4. "Hamdulillah" by **Iraqi-Canadian** Narcicyst expresses sadness for Iraq and reflects the challenge of mixed identities : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ISHZQJdeSw>
Lyrics at: <https://www.musixmatch.com/lyrics/The-Narcicyst-feat-Shadia-Mansour/Hamdulillah>

5. **Children's songs:**

- i. *"The Night Has Passed, the Dawn is Here "*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nm9YLWpAzHc>
This Egyptian song is popular among Arabs and was written by Hussein El Sayed (who wrote many songs for famous Arab singers) and is sung by Mohamed Fawzy
 - ii. *"Mama's coming"* is also a popular Egyptian song sung by Mohamed Fawzy.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_uV9RkXrls
Here's Mohamed Fawzy singing this song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dj8qHP1l8j4>
 - iii. *"Numbers song"* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9yPB6L7ky8E>
Score and lyrics for this song at Al-Bustan Seeds of Culture:
<http://www.albustanseeds.org/digital-education/arabic-song-tools-for-educators/>
 - iv. *"Five Senses"* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4-pctyXiEYc>
6. This article provides a nice introduction to the role of music in the recent **revolutionary** movements in Arab countries:
<https://live.stanford.edu/blog/september-2016/islamic-voices-music-arab-spring>
- i. "Rais Lebled" by Tunisian El General (with English subtitles):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=leGIJ7OouR0>
 - ii. Ramy Essam leading chants in Cairo's Tahrir Square during the revolution:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-rEKmTBKiBM>
(The chant is: "We all want unity, we demand one thing: leave, leave, leave, leave. Down with Hosni Mubarak. Down with Hosni Mubarak. The people want the regime to fall.")
7. *Qasida Burda* is an early **Islamic** poem of praise (nasheed) to the Prophet Muhammad. It is extremely popular all over the world.
- i. A recent version by the popular singer Sami Yusuf:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fvIWPFEZi_s
 - ii. Another version: <http://www.nasheedbay.com/talibalhabib/songs-of-the-wayfarer/qasida-burda-the-miraj>
8. The **marching band** is thought to have originated with the Ottoman (Turkish) military.
Examples:
- i. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1bUpaOf7E>
 - ii. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pcOfib-2r9I>