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Front

The Islamic call to prayer.

Back

Adhan (also, Azan)

Front

A geographic region in the Middle East that includes Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, and the various smaller nations on the Persian Gulf.

Back

Arabian Peninsula

Front

The improvised, non-metrical section of a performance in the Persian classical tradition.

Back

Avaz

Front

A high-rank clergyman in Islam.

Back

Ayatollah

Front

A frame drum common to Turkish and Arabic music.

Back

Bandir

Front

A Jewish “coming-of-age” ceremony.

Back

Bar Mitzvah

Front

An Arabic musical form.

Back

Bashraf

Front

The freely rhythmic opening and conclusion of a dastgah performance in the Persian classical music tradition.

Back

Daramad

Front

A goblet-shaped hand drum common to various Turkish music traditions.

Back

Darabuka

Front

A mode or system of rules and expectations for composition and improvisation in Persian classical music.

Back

Dastgah

Front

Turkish word literally meaning “beggar,” but often used to refer to Sufi Muslims.

Back

Dervish

Front

A ritual commonly performed by Sufi Muslims in which believers chant the names of Allah with the goal of entering a spiritually ecstatic state.

Back

Dhikr (also, Zikr)

Front

A goblet-shaped hand drum used in Arabic music traditions.

Back

Dombak

Front

A small, single-headed drum, sometimes having snares, common to Turkish and Arabic music traditions.

Back

Duff

Front

A compositional form found in Turkish and Arabic music.

Back

Dulab

Front

Large orchestral ensembles consisting of traditional Arabic instruments from the Middle East.

Back

Firqa

Front

Term in Arabic cultures for female dancers who specialize in very rapid hip shaking movements.

Back

Ghawazi

Front

Short composed melodic phrases found in Persian classical music.

Back

Gusheh

Front

The Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

Back

Hajj

Front

A pair of cymbals found in Sufi Muslim music performance.

Back

Halile

Front

A Sufi Muslim hymn.

Back

Ilahi

Front

Rhythmic modes used in Arabic music.

Back

Iq'a

Front

The central or “home” pitch of a Persian classical music performance.

Back

Ist

Front

In Islam, word used for an important mosque.

Back

Jamaca

Front

A corps of elite troops commanded by the Ottoman caliphs from the late 14th century until their destruction in 1826.

Back

Janizary (also, Janissary or Yeniceri)

Front

Freely rhythmic melismatic passages performed by a vocal soloist in a Sufi Muslim ritual.

Back

Kaside

Front

A spiked fiddle common to Turkish and Arabic music traditions.

Back

Kemence (also, Kemancheh or Kemanja)

Front

A type of metered piece in the Persian classical music tradition.

Back

Kereshmeh

Front

A type of Sufi Muslim monastery.

Back

Khanegah

Front

A European-derived dance music commonly associated with Jewish celebrations, influenced by jazz and other non-Jewish styles.

Back

Klezmer

Front

The sacred text of Islam.

Back

Koran (also, Qu'ran)

Front

A type of kettle drum common to Turkish and Arabic music.

Back

Kudum

Front

A vocal improvisational form in Arabic music traditions.

Back

Layali

Front

A geographic region in North Africa that includes Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya.

Back

Maghrib

Front

A mode or system of rules and expectations for composition and improvisation in Arabic classical music.

Back

Makam (also, Maqam)

Front

Term for a local mosque in Islam.

Back

Masjid

Front

Ceremonial music of the Turkish Janizary.

Back

Mehter

Front

A small “niche” or focal point found in a mosque, used to orient Islamic worshippers in the direction of Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

Back

Mihrab

Front

The tall tower of a mosque, used for the Islamic call to prayer.

Back

Minaret

Front

A house of worship for Islamic believers.

Back

Mosque

Front

A low-rank clergyman in Islam.

Back

Mullah

Front

A vertical flute found in Turkish and Arabic music traditions.

Back

Ney (also, Nay)

Front

An empire centered in what is now Turkey that spread throughout West Asia, Eastern Europe, and Northern Africa from the 14th to 19th centuries.

Back

Ottoman Empire

Front

A plucked zither used in Turkish and Arabic music traditions.

Back

Qanun (also Kanun)

Front

A collection of gusheh for each dastgah in Persian classical music.

Back

Radif

Front

Middle Eastern dance form characterized as “belly dance” by outsiders to the region.

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Raqs sharqi

Front

A small, single-headed drum with pairs of small cymbals inserted into its frame (i.e., a tambourine), common to Turkish and Arabic music traditions.

Back

Riqq

Front

A fretted plucked lute from Turkey.

Back

Saz

Front

The title formerly given to hereditary monarchs in Iran.

Back

Shah

Front

A Middle Eastern dance in which the dancer performs with a large, heavy candelabrum with lighted candles balanced on the head.

Back

Sham'idan

Front

The fundamentalist branch of Islam.

Back

Shiah

Front

A Jewish ritual trumpet made of a ram's horn.

Back

Shofar

Front

The mystical branch of Islam.

Back

Sufi

Front

The mainstream branch of Islam.

Back

Sunni

Front

A Jewish house of worship.

Back

Synagogue

Front

A goblet-shaped hand drum found in Arabic music.

Back

Tabla

Front

A compositional form found in Turkish and Arabic music.

Back

Tahmala

Front

A freely rhythmic section emphasizing melismatic performance found in Persian classical music.

Back

Tahrir

Front

A type of instrumental ensemble found in Arabic music traditions.

Back

Takht

Front

A fretted plucked lute common to Turkish and Arabic music.

Back

Tanbur

Front

An instrumental improvisational form in Turkish and Arabic music traditions.

Back

Taksim

Front

Arabic word for a state of emotional transformation or ecstasy achieved through music.

Back

Tarab

Front

A compositional form found in Turkish and Arabic music.

Back

Taslam

Front

A type of Sufi Muslim monastery.

Back

Tekke

Front

In Judaism, the first five books of the Bible, or more generally, all sacred literature.

Back

Torah (also, Pentateuch)

Front

A fretless plucked pear-shaped lute found in Arabic music traditions.

Back

Ud (also Al'ud

Front

A specialist group of male vocalists who perform metered hymns in unison during a Sufi ritual.

Back

Zakirler

Front

A metered piece in the Persian classical music tradition.

Back

Chahar-mezrab

Front

A person who calls Islamic believers to worship five times a day.

Back

Muezzin

Front

A vocal improvisational form in Arabic music traditions.

Back

Mawwal

Front

A goblet-shaped hand drum used in Persian classical music traditions from Iran.

Back

Zarb