A series of monthly concerts celebrating a wide range of Turkish music through several centuries. Ottoman classical music, songs from the Turkish countryside, Sufi devotional music and Turkish pop music interact with one another and with other world traditions to provide a contemporary view of tradition itself.

A SACRED MUSIC CELEBRATION:  
Greek Orthodoxy and Turkish Sufism  
featuring Photis Ketsetzis, Şenol Filiz and Birol Yayla

In this special concert a choir and an ensemble composed of Greek and Turkish musicians will perform together a program of Greek Orthodox (Byzantine) and Turkish Sufi (Melevi) music. These two traditions exhibit substantial musical and historical commonalities, and share many instances of mutual influence and cross-fertilization.

The concert will feature internationally acclaimed master musicians from Greece and Turkey: chanter Photis Ketsetzis, Professor of Byzantine Ecclesiastical Music at Hellenic College/Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology; and Şenol Filiz, ney and Birol Yayla, tanbur, the Istanbul-based duo YANSIMALAR, whose many recordings span the range of contemporary Turkish classical and Sufi music, original composition and music for film.

Harvard University, Paine Hall, Friday, September 25, 8:00 pm  
general: $20, students/seniors: $15

DÜNYA’s Concert Series continues in the Spring of 2010 with concert programs including:

Alexander the Great:  
Hero, Warrior and Lover  
with the Boston Camerata

Armenians of the Ottoman Period

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**Jews and Sufis: A Sacred Bridge**

Thursday, October 29, 2009, 6:30pm  Temple Beth Zion

**Panelists**

Benjamin Braude  Robert Labaree  Mehmet Ali Sanlkol  
Rabbi Moshe Waldoks, moderator

**The Dünya Ensemble**

Robert Labaree/çeng, percussion, voice  
Cem Mutlu/percussion, voice  
Mehmet Ali Sanlkol/voice, ud, divan sazı, rebab, ney  
Noam Sender/ney, voice  
Chris Veilleux/ney

Since at least the 16th century, the *maftririm* repertoire—Hebrew devotional poetry set to Turkish *makam* music for use in the synagogue—has demonstrated the close relationship Jews established with members of Muslim mystical brotherhoods in the Ottoman regions. The maftririm example may also provide for our own time clues to the ways in which at least one religious minority managed to make a rich life for itself within an otherwise alien environment.

A panel of three scholars moderated by Rabbi Moshe Waldoks will speak on cultural, historical, religious and musical aspects of the topic, followed by dialogue with the audience. The program will conclude with a 40-minute recital featuring an ensemble of Jewish, Muslim and Christian vocalists and instrumentalists demonstrating examples of musical repertoire created through this historic collaboration of Jews and Muslims in Turkey.

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**The Ottoman Jewish Musical Traditions, Influences and Contribution**

During the 15th century, thousands of Jews and Muslims were expelled from the Iberian Peninsula through the efforts of the Inquisition, the institutional within the Roman Catholic Church charged historically with rooting out heresy. A large population of Iberian Muslims and Jews settled in the predominantly Muslim regions of North Africa, the Balkans and the Middle East, most of which were governed by the Ottoman Empire from its capitol, Istanbul. In the following centuries, a number of descendants of the Iberian Jewish émigré (Sephardim) had established for themselves influential positions in Ottoman music, including Musi (Haham Moše Faro, d. 1776), Mısırı İbrahim efend (Avram Abut, 1872-1933) and İzak Algazi (1889-1950). Unquestionably the most respected Ottoman Jewish musician of all time was the composer and musician Tanburi İsak (1745-1814). The teacher of the sultan-musician Selîr III, a number of İsak’s instrumental and vocal compositions survive to this day and he is considered one of the creators of the modern approach to the classical *tanbur* (long-necked lute).

To this day, Turkish Sephardim still maintain spoken Ladino, a Romance language fusing elements of medieval Spanish and Hebrew which is also the language of Sephardic secular music. Some of this repertoire has its roots in urban music from pre-15th century Spain. However, much of it grew out of larger shared urban folk music tradition from the Balkans and the Middle East with direct counterparts in Turkish, Greek and Arabic. The well-known Sephardic song *Kante katife*, for example, has a Turkish language equivalent in the popular song *Kadifeden kesesi*. But even in those Ladino songs which had a Turkish equivalent, the style of the melodies and rhythms are often unmistakably Middle Eastern.

This evening’s program features another way in which the Ottoman Jewish—one of several non-Muslim peoples, along with Armenians, Greeks and other Balkan Christians--interacted with the Muslims. Modern readers may be surprised to learn that the Jewish-Muslim interaction also extended to sacred music: the music of the so-called maftririm. The majority of the examples in our program this evening are drawn from this choral tradition of the 16th to 20 centuries, in which *piyutim*, Hebrew liturgical poetry, was set either to musically composed in the Turkish style by Jewish composers, or to the melodies of secular Ottoman court music and Sufi devotional music. This practice follows the standards set by the famous Rabbi and mystic Israel Najara (1555-1625), the legendary founder of the maftririm. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, prominent centers such as Edirne, Istanbul and Izmir, maftririm choirs regularly sang entire suites of pieces (*fasîls*) before Shabbat services. Maftririm choirs are still active in Istanbul today. Of special interest here are the ongoing links which made this maftririm repertoire possible, allowing Jews, some of whom were themselves mystics, and friends of Muslim Sufi orders to collaborate closely enough to leave their mark on the repertoires of both communities.

Dr. Mehmet Ali Sanlkol
PROGRAM

PART I. THE OTTOMAN-JEWISH MUSICAL LEGACY

In the first part of our program we offer examples of Ottoman classical music, Turkish Sufi music and Jewish maftirim music. The set will close with a well-known secular piece in Ladino, La Rosa Enflorese. Our performance of this secular song is based on a 1907 recording by Haim Efendi (Haim Behar Menahem, 1853-1938), the earliest known recording of the song, which exhibits the characteristics of an up-beat popular Istanbul folk song.

Ney Taksim (improvisation on the end-blown flute)

Elohai Kha’kartani Va’teda - [“God You Search Me and You Know”], a piyut (Hebrew liturgical poem) by Abraham Ben Meir Ibn Ezra (1092-1167), adapted and arranged by Noam Sender using a well-known Turkish Sufi melody commonly associated with the words of the 13th century Muslim mystic, Yunus Emre. This adaptation is modeled on the methods of the maftirim choir tradition.

Elohai kha’kartani va’teda mezimati vere’ee le’merakhok ve’shiviti ve’k’imati. Banta kol tkhoo’nat ve’arkhi ve’r’ivee aht zerita, ve’hiskanta dra’kah lo be’atzmati. Ra’eeta dvar libi be’terem k’tseh milah bil’shoni, ve’yada’ata akh’riti ve’tuamati. Hen kedem ve’hen akhor tzar’ani ve’al roshi shat kaf ve’minekha, ve’yadkha be’admati. Ma’lehta shmay sha’khak ve’akh’rit yam, ahh me’rukhkha elekh – ve’sham ata le’umati? Khosekho lo ye’shoo’feini, ki en mim’kha yakh’shikh, ve’ata asher totsi la’or ta’talumati hen kedem knitani uva’beten tesu’keini ve’al sifre’kha koolam yikatevu, ve’lo aht zerita, ve’hiskanta Elohai kha’kartani va’teda mezimati vere’ee le’merakhok ve’shiviti ve’k’imati.

Oh God, You have searched me and know my intentions; You discern my thoughts for afar; You are privy to my every move. You anticipate my plans; my walking and reclining. You observe and are familiar with my thoughts for afar; You are privy to my knowledge and wisdom is foolishness. I thank You for your wonders; am grateful for your loving kindness. By your powers my body is sustained to You belong my breath and soul.

all recorded in your book; in due time they took their separate shapes. How vast are the sum of your thoughts, they are most difficult to comprehend my knowledge and wisdom is foolishness. I thank You for your wonders; am grateful for your loving kindness. By your powers my body is sustaine

Hicaz Yürük Semai

Music: Anonymous
An instrumental performance of the following maftirim piece (see below: Kha-desh Ke-kedem), which was originally composed to a Turkish instrumental form in a Turkish melodic mode.

Kha-desh Ke-kedem, a piyut from the repertoire of the Edirne maftirim. Text (and possibly music): Rabbi Hayim Bejerano (1850-1931), Chief Rabbi of Istanbul in the 1920s. The performers first encountered this piece in a 198 recording of Samuel Benaroya (b. 1908, Edirne, Turkey), member of the Edirn Maftirim chorus from 1920-34.

Renew as of old our days, Dweller of the Celestial Abode / To live honorably in our land so full of praise/ Exalt and enoble us, Much Elevated One / We will come to our rest, to our portion.

La Rosa Enflorese

Text: see below: Anonymous
Music: Anon
An i

El bilbílico canta el suspira del amor
The nightingale sings with sighs of love

Y la pasión la mata muchigua mi dolor
And passion is killing me ever adding to my pain

**Teur mishelo akhal’nu bar’ku emunai.
Sa’vanu ve’hotarnu ki’dvar Adonai.
The Almighty, whose food we ate, bless and praise Him.
We are full and more than satisfied, according to God’s word.

**NOTE: The borrowing of secular Sephardic melodies for piyutim was and still is, a characteristic of Turkish Jewish music. The piyut known a Teur mishelo akhal’nu, is popularly sung around the table after the Shabbat meal as a table song (Zmirot) to the melody of La Rosa Enflorese. Therefore, we decided to incorporate this verse as part of our performance.
PART II. BEKTAŞİ SUFIS AND MAFTIRIM

The close relationships between Jewish and Muslim mystics in the Ottoman world were especially visible in the music of the Mevlevi and Bektaşi Sufi orders. This part of our program is based on the relationship with the Bektaşi dervishes, a heterodox form of mystical Islam with strong Shiite tendencies. Here we will include an adaptation of a Bektaşi hymn (commonly referred to as nefes, lit. “breath”) in the manner of the maftirim, along with other examples associated with this order in dialogue with maftirim music.

Shakhar Avak’shekha - [“At Dawn I seek You”], a piyut by Shelomo Ben Yehuda Ibn Gevirol (1021-1058) adapted and arranged by Noam Sender using the music of a Bektaşi Hüseyni nefes. This adaptation is modeled after the maftirim choir tradition.

Sha’khar avak’shekha tsuri u’msigavi, e’erokh le’fanekha shakhri vegam arvi. Lifnay gedu’latkha e’emod ve’ebahel, ki ei’nekh ta tir’eh kol makh’shavot libi. Ma ze asher yu’khul halev ve’halashon la’asot, u’ma ko’akh ru’khi be’tokh kirbi. Hineh lekha ti’tav zimrat enosh, al ken ode’kha be’od nishmat Eloha bi.

At dawn I seek you, Refuge Rock sublime; My morning prayers I offer, and those at evening time. I tremble in Your awesome Presence, contrite, For my deepest secrets lie stripped before Your sight. My tongue, what can I say? My heart, what can I do? What is my strength, what is my spirit too? But should music be sweet to You in mortal key, Your praises I sing so long as breath’s in me.

Kakhasheka Kaora and Dolap Niçin İnlerisin

A Jewish maftirim song alternates in a dialogue with a Turkish devotional song in the same makam or melodic mode. The similar structure and rhythm of the two songs suggest that they draw upon the same musical paradigms.

Text: Psalm 139, verses 1-12, adapted and arranged by Noam Sender. Music: Based on the maftirim song entitled Azkir Hasdei El Ne’eman by Avraam (date unknown)


God, you have scrutinized me and you know / You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thoughts from afar / You encompass my path and my repose. You are familiar with my ways / For the word is not yet on my tongue, behold, God, You know everything I am about to say / You have shaped my past and my future, Your hand gently on my shoulder / Awareness of you is beyond me; it is beyond my skills to fathom / Where can I withdraw from Your spirit? And where can I flee from Your presence? / If I ascend to heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in the lowest depths, behold, You are there / were I to soar on the wings of dawn were I to dwell in the distant west, there too, Your hand would guide me and Your right hand would hold me in safety / Would I say, “Sure darkness will shadow me,” then the night would become as light around me / Even darkness obscures not from You; and night shines like the day Darkness and light are the same.

Text: Yunus Emre (d. 1321) Music: Anonymou

Dolap niçin inlerisim / Derdim vardir inilerim
Waterwheel, why do you cry out? / In my suffering, I cry out
Ben mevlaya aşık oldum / Annin için inilerim
I am in love with my Lord / I groan because I remember
Benim adum dertli dolap / Sayım akan yalap yalap
My name is the waterwheel of suffering / I draw the water,
Böyle emreylemiş çalap / Annin için inilerim
Working this way as I have been commanded / I groan...
Sayın alcakta çekerken / Çeker yükseğe dökerim
I draw water from the depths / I draw it up and spread it
Ben mevlaya zikredirim / Annin için inilerim
I sing the praises of my Lord / I groan because I remember.

Hüseyni Nefes

Text: Şemsi (1795-1884) Music: Anonymou

Mescit ile medreseyi
Ismarladık zahitlerle
Hakka ibadet etmeye
Yeter bize meyhaneler

The mosque and the medrese
We’ll gladly give them the ascetics
To pray to God
The tavern is enough for us
PART III. MEVLEVI SUFIS AND MAFTIRIM

In the maftirim tradition it is common to find piyutim by well-known Jewish poets like Abraham Ben Meir Ibn Ezra (1092-1167) set to instrumental compositions by members of the Mevlevi dervish order, known as “whirling dervishes” in the West. Since instruments were not allowed in the synagogue, the maftirim choirs would simply convert the Mevlevi compositions to vocal pieces with Hebrew texts, often performing them on Shabbat morning before the start of the service proper. This final set offers examples of well-known Mevlevi music in dialogue with examples from the maftirim choir repertoire.

*Segah Kaside* (vocal improvisation on devotional poetry in Turkish)


Yeheme levavi biroti, tsari yiltosh einav negdi / Shinav yakharok gam yisaar, lehafitz hamon gdudi / Khish aneni Norao, Elohei ha'Tsvaot / Ad matai ketz plaot, esmakh yagel kvodi / Shama leshama samani, vegila avnei yesodi / Ömar amar levala, eer nakhalat tzvi hodi / Khaletz nah eved shadood, yartiakh kesir vadood / Tsur be'Kha arutz gdood, le’Kha azamer beodi.

My heart fills with terror, when my enemy stares at me. Gnashing teeth, working up a storm to scatter my companions. Lord of hosts, I beg, respond swiftly with your awesome miracles. How long must I wait for them? How long for that joy and glory? My enemy destroyed me, till the foundations were laid bare and will bring down the glorious city that I long for. I cry out for redemption, a tormented slave, burning in his pain You are my strength; with you I can defeat an army, My song is for you as long as I live.

*Rebab Taksim* (improvisation)

**Segah Peşrev**

Music: Neyzen Yusuf Paşa (1821-1884)

**Segah İlahi** (sufi devotional song) Text: Anonymous, Music: Anonymous

Dinle sözümü sana derim özge edadır / Derviş olana lazım olan aşkı Hüdadir / Aşṭik nesi var ise Maṣuṭa fedadır / Sema safa cana şifa ruha gudadır

Listen to what I’m saying, it is about another way / What a dervish needs is the love of God / Whatever the lover possesses is sacrificed for the Beloved/ The sema is joy, and it is good for body and soul

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**Panelists and Musicians**

**Benjamin Braude** is an historian who teaches courses on the Middle East and on European-Middle Eastern relations at Boston College. In addition to those interests his research also focuses on religious, racial, and ethnic identities in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim culture.

**Robert Labaree** is chair of the NEC Music History Department, director of the NEC Intercultural Institute and co-founder and Vice President of DÜNYA.

**Cem Mutlu** plays jazz and a variety of world musics with groups in the Boston area and is a member of the DÜNYA board.

**Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol** is a composer and jazz pianist with a doctorate in composition from NEC, and is co-founder and president of DÜNYA.

**Noam Sender** performs with a variety of ensembles in the Boston area and is member of the DÜNYA board. He was also a past board member of Temple Beth Zion.

**Chris Veilleux** is currently playing in multiple Boston-based creative music ensembles. He also teaches saxophone, clarinet and jazz ensembles at the Joy of Music Program in Worcester, MA.
DÜNYA (the Turkish, Arabic, Persian, Greek word for "world") is a non-profit, tax exempt educational organization founded in Boston in 2004. Its goal is to present a contemporary view of a wide range of Turkish traditions, alone and in interaction with other world traditions, through performance, recording, publication and other educational activities.

DÜNYA seeks to work with a wide range of cultural and religious organizations and musical groups, but relies on no particular political, governmental or religious affiliation or support of any kind.

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