

EGYPT - Jade Stagg

I. Zaar Rituals

A. Evil in Islam

1. Iblis/Sheitan

- a) tempts people with evil
- b) no free will

2. Jinn

- a) made of smokeless fire
- b) possess free will
- c) live in a world alternate to humans
- d) good, bad, or neutral

B. Women

1. Vulnerable to jinn possession

2. Possession

- a) psychotic outbreaks, physical conditions, neurotic outbreaks, psychosomatic symptoms

3. Zaar ritual can convince the jinn to depart

4. Faith healing in place of modern medicine

C. Zaar

1. Ancient healing ritual with pre-Islamic roots

2. Possession and trance

3. Officially banned, but still practiced

4. Baladi - folk cultural heritage

5. Celebrated as part of baladi

D. Zaar ceremony

1. Usually run by women

- a) men may partake as musicians

2. The leader negotiates with the asyad ("master")

- a) strikes a drum throughout the ceremony

3. Lasts multiple days

4. Religious traditions

- a) incense
- b) animal sacrifice
- c) Quranic recitation
- d) dressing as a bride

E. Zaar music

1. Different asyad require different songs

2. Percussion - drums, finger cymbals, rattles of goat hooves

3. Rhythmic experimentation

F. Zaar dance

1. Violent, unrestrained, convulsive

2. After collapsing from exhaustion, the jinn may be released

3. YOUR observations of dance:

II. Umm Kulthum

A. The Bloodless Revolution

1. Egypt in 1950
 - a) dissatisfaction with monarchy, Britain, formation of Jewish state
2. 1952 revolution
 - a) Led by al-Nasser, military commander

B. al-Nasser and baladi

1. Supported national culture
2. Entertainment genres were discouraged
3. Since dance was frowned upon, music became very popular

C. Musicians

1. al-Wahhab and Kulthum prospered
2. Like al-Nasser, they emphasized their rural roots and the virtuous peasant idea was romanticized
3. Umm Kulthum was enormously popular
 - a) Radio broadcasts
 - b) Films
 - c) Represented pan-Arab ideas and the best of Egypt

YOUR observations of Umm Kulthum: