The Minstrelsy of "The Arabian Nights"

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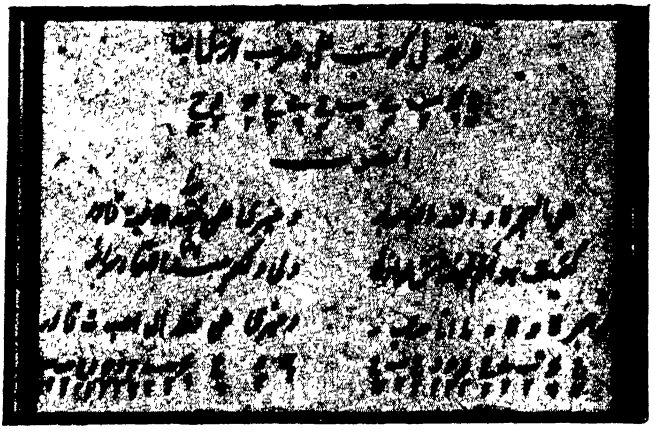
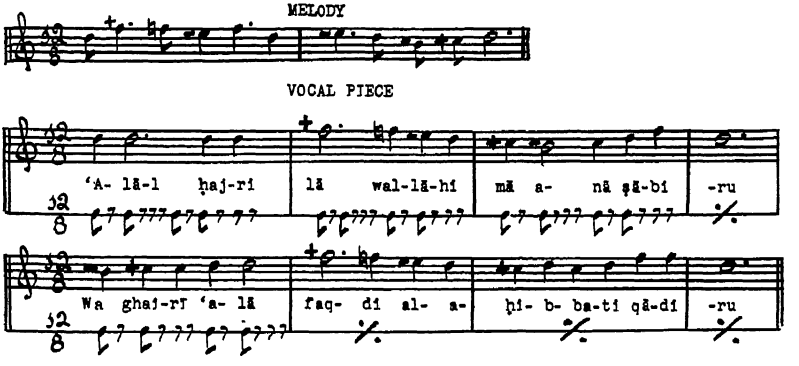


Musical tablature of a melody (*laḥn*) and a vocal piece (*ṣaut*) in the *kuwāsht* melodic mode (*ṭarīqa*) and the *ramal* rhythmic mode (*ḍarb*). From the *Kitāb al-adwār* of Ṣafī al-Dīn 'Abd al-Mu'min (d. 1294). British Museum manuscript (dated 1663) *Or.* 2361.



Transcription of the above.

THE MINSTRELSY OF "THE ARABIAN NIGHTS"

A Study of Music and Musicians in the Arabic "Alf Laila wa Laila"

BY

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The Organ of the Ancients : From Hebrew, Syriac, and Arabic Sources
The Sources of Arabian Music : An Annotated Bibliography.
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ERNEST NEWMAN

In Memory of Days that are Past

شرط المرافقة الموافقة

PREFACE

IT is to the late Sir E. Denison Ross (1871–1940) that I owe the suggestion that I should examine the technical passages in the *Nights* which, he said, were quite incomprehensible to him in the Arabic original. It was made to me in 1931, at the *Huis ter Duin* at Noordwijk, Holland, where, in the September of that year, the 18th Congress of Orientalists held its official banquet. In the cool of the evening, when talking casually with him about the *Nights*, he proposed that I should unravel the technical musical expressions in these " tales ". I can recall his smile when I warned him of the fate of those who meddled with " ludicrous stories ".[1]

On my return to Scotland, I immediately began reading the various texts and translations of the *Nights*, when I soon realized that there was much more than musical terminology that was of interest in these entrancing tales. It was then that I made the copious notes that have served as the basis for the present study which, to my great regret, Sir Denison did not live to see. Indeed, it was his death that reminded me of my unfinished and neglected undertaking.

It was in the pages of the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* that this work appeared in 1944–45, and it is to the Council of this Society that I owe permission to reproduce it, although it has been considerably altered and much fresh matter, as well as more illustrations, introduced. For the right to reproduce photos of designs of instruments on Saracenic brassware and the use of blocks I have to express my thanks to the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Glasgow Art Galleries and Museums, and the Glasgow Bibliographical Society. I also have to acknowledge my indebtedness to the Bodleian, Stambūl, Cairo, and Munich Libraries for the use of miniatures.

The Arabic texts used for this study are those of Calcutta (1839–1842), Beyrout (1888–1892), and Bulaq (1893–5—A.H. 1311–12). Unless otherwise specified the texts quoted belong to the Calcutta edition. The footnotes also refer to the latter. What follows in round brackets refers to Burton's *Arabian Nights* (London, 1886–7), which is Lady Burton's edition. This latter is used in preference to the scarce Benares edition because the references can be checked if necessary by the general reader.

HENRY GEORGE FARMER.

BEARSDEN,
SCOTLAND.

[1] *Sūra* xxxi 5–6

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Introduction

Introduction

اهتك ستور الشك بالسوال

"Tear away the veils of doubt by interrogation."—
An Arabic Proverb.

THIS study of the minstrelsy of the *Arabian Nights*, as the *Alf laila wa laila* is popularly called, has a rather censorious tone. This can be forgiven because animadversion is often a key to the truth. It was for this reason that the above proverb was inscribed on the portal. The subject has certainly been veiled too long. Not that interest in the topic has not been evinced until now, but what has shown itself in print on this particular theme has generally been misleading when it has not been erroneous. Even contributions to the periodical press on this special subject have given incorrect impressions of the music and musicians of the *Nights*. Nor are the writers alone in their capricious ways, since the illustrators of even some of the best known translations of the *Nights* have been equally as wayward in their romanticism, most of the characters, especially the minstrels, being portrayed in far too *afranjī* a pose, which has proved a source of amusement, when it has not given offence, in the Orient.

In the innumerable editions, in many languages, of the *Nights*, rarely is there to be found an explanatory note of any worth devoted to the music itself, save in the perspicuous Lane, of whom this country should be proud, in spite of the inordinate veneration which it too readily accords less worthy men beyond these shores. It is true that he is occasionally wrong in his notes on the music of the *Nights* and in the translation of some technical passages, but he did not profess to be a specialist in Arabian music and was content to follow those who were accepted as authorities, viz. Villoteau and others, whose blunders misled all and sundry, as did those of the German Kiesewetter later.

The earliest of the translators, Galland,[1] is far too free in his interpretation for us to take special heed of his unravelling of the technical passages on music. Indeed, it is generally admitted that he took great liberties and glossed over his material. The later French

[1] *Les Mille et une Nuits* (Paris, 1704–1717).

translator, J. C. Mardrus,[1] is almost equally as fanciful, and with such treatment textual fidelity can scarcely be expected in the subject under discussion.

The Germans are little better. Von Hammer-Purgstall, one of the first of the German translators,[2] had not that *Zuständigkeit* in music to interpret those intricate lines in the *Nights*, although he later helped his son-in-law Kiesewetter, who did not know Arabic, with his *Musik der Araber* (1842). Nor can Weil's translation [3] be said to give anything like a precise rendering of the original in the passages under discussion, whilst the illustrations in many instances are quite amusing. Dancing to the accompaniment of large military band cymbals instead of the small finger instruments (i, 173), singing-girls using music books (ii, 343 ; 14, 48), side drums and method of playing, both of Occidental conception (iii, 116), to say nothing of grotesque instruments which never existed (iii, 303) are stupidities.

On the whole the English translators, editors, and artists give far better results than any of the above on the special subject with which the present book deals, and in this appraisement I refer to Lane, Payne, and Burton. Regarding Lane's rendering of the passages in question I have already spoken. Of his work on the *Nights* as a whole, it has already been accounted as " admirably accurate " and " excellent " by so great an Arabist as M. J. de Goeje and so high an authority on the subject as J. Oestrup. Payne, from the aspect of this particular study, is not so reliable as Lane. His contemporary, Burton, who based many of his passages dealing with music on Payne's interpretation, is generally more perverse in his approach, yet his vigorous style and illuminating notes, only one of which by the way is devoted to music, are a saving grace. In the following pages, however, I have utilized the translation of Burton rather than of Lane because the former dealt with practically all the known material whereas the latter did not. Further, Burton used the Calcutta text (1839–1842), which was my sheet anchor, whereas Lane depended on the Bulaq text (1835).[4]

From what has been said above it ought to be palpable enough that there was a pressing *raison d'être* for this study although,

[1] *La Livre des Mille Nuits et une Nuit* (Paris, 1899–1904).

[2] *Der Tausend und einen Nacht* (Stuttgart, 1823–4).

[3] *Tausend und eine Nacht* (Bonn, 1897).

[4] I have chosen the Calcutta text as my basis, not because it is the best, but rather since it is fuller in some of the passages on music.

in presenting it, I have thought it advisable to consider more than one class of reader, and have aimed not only at satisfying the Arabist and musicologist but the general reader as well. For the first of these I have no qualm. Knowing the linguistic background of the *Nights* he will, I feel sure, be only too pleased to have the new technical Arabic clarifications. The second, being sufficiently equipped in the musicological domain, will also appreciate the technical side, especially chapters iv and v, but, not knowing the Orient, he may not see eye to eye with me in the earlier chapters. The third, i.e. the general reader, will be in a new world, and one can almost presage the reaction. Where the *rāwī* or storyteller deals with the ordinary occurrences of daily life his utterances will be accepted at their face value. Where they deal with less practical things, a complete scepticism will result, and in this I am referring to what is detailed in chapters i, ii, and iii. Indeed this incredulity might even be found in the musicologist, and so, lest these two classes of readers be prompted to raise the brow of dubiety at what is related therein, let me say that there is little in the *Nights* that is not applicable, *mutatis mutandis*, to the modern European West in regard to music.

The wide use to which music was put in the palmy days of the Islamic East, as shown in chapter i, may be found equally as varied in Western Europe to-day, for the simple reason that " in history ", as Combarieu says, " music has always been united to the manifestations of social life. . . . It has never been, as philosophers put it, ' an end in itself,' for we have always subordinated it to some important act of public life." [1]

Some people may even smile at the Arab's esoteric interpretation of music, or at his naïve belief in the efficacy of the art, as we see it in chapter ii, but dozens of passages could be quoted from authors in Western Europe which are on all fours with these conceits. Was it not Wagner who said : " The power of the composer is nought else than that of the magician. It is really in a state of enchantment that we listen to one of Beethoven's symphonies." [2]

The stories in chapter iii of the almost fabulous sums of money paid for and to minstrels in the times of the Khalifate, which are pooh-poohed by some historians, are actually within the bounds of credence. In Britain to-day more than one minstrel, be he

[1] *Music: Its Laws and Evolution* (1910), 14.
[2] *Gesamm. Schriften und Dicht.*, ix, 86.

a renowned composer or a popular music-hall artiste, has left a fortune of hundreds of thousands of pounds.

In the very nature of things chapter iv cannot occasion criticism, but in justification of my fairly lengthy treatment of these Arabian and Persian instruments mentioned in the *Nights* I may be permitted to quote from our own historian of instruments of music, the Rev. Canon F. W. Galpin, who says: "The study of musical instruments [which are] now no longer with us is necessary, not only for the musician but for the man of letters, the artist, and the chronicler, for many allusions to customs of bygone times cannot otherwise be understood." [1]

As for chapter v, on the theory and practice of music, it is possible that this may only interest the specialists, i.e. the Arabist and musicologist. Yet I hope that there may be a morsel here and there which is sufficiently edible to be digested by the long-suffering general reader who may well cry with Prince Henry: "Oh monstrous! but one half-pennyworth of bread to this intolerable deal of sack."

Finally I would like to point out that, even apart from the specialized aspect of this study, I believe that the clues which reveal themselves in the discussion will assist in solving other problems, such as the date and provenance of particular tales, a point which I emphasized in my contribution to *The Survey of Persian Art* (1938).[2] In any case the undertaking cannot possibly have been vain since an Arabic proverb tells us that even a seemingly useless thing can be turned to some account: قطعوها صحّت للطنبورة

"They cut it to pieces, yet it served for the pandore".[3]

[1] *Old English Instruments of Music* (1910), ix.

[2] p. 2794.

[3] Burckhardt, *Arabic Proverbs*, 155. The reference is to a worthless piece of skin which can be used for the face (*wajh*) of the pandore (*tunbūra*), a long-necked lute. Burckhardt calls this instrument "the drum", being misled, apparently, by the French word "tambour".

Chapter I
The Function of the Music

Chapter I

The Function of the Music

السماع لقوم كالغذاء ولقوم كالدواء ولقوم كالمروحة

"To some people music is like food; to others like medicine; and to others like a fan."—*The Porter and the Three Ladies.*

The musical interlude which adorns so many a story in *The Thousand Nights and One Night* is one of the most interesting features of that "wondrous treasury of Muslim folk-lore", as Burton dubbed the *Alf laila wa laila*.[1] Yet, strange to say, as I have already stressed at length in the Introduction, our translators and commentators have taken little cognizance of this fact. Indeed, beyond the brief and inadequate notices contributed by Lane[2] to his translation of the *Nights*, it can safely be averred that no serious attention has been devoted to the subject.

Almost everywhere in the *Nights* we see music in the predicament of being linked with Wine and Woman among the *malāhī* or forbidden pleasures against which the Muslim purists hurled anathema. Both Lane and Burton only touch the fringe of this subject, but by saying too little imply too much. Whilst Burton expresses the view that "Muḥammad objected to music"[3] Lane is more peremptory and states that "Music was condemned by the Prophet almost as severely as wine",[4] his sole quoted authority being the comparatively late *Mishkāt al-maṣābīḥ*, whilst the *ḥadīth* given by him is actually rejected as unsound by no less an authority than Al-Ghazālī (d. 1111).[5] The truth is that we have as much evidence that Muḥammad did not discountenance listening to music (*al-samā'*) as that he did, a point which I have emphasized more than once.[6] That is why Muslim society, both high and low, in spite of the fulminations of the moralists, have ever appreciated music, as the *Nights* prove conclusively.

[1] *Arabian Nights*, Lady Burton's edition (London, 1886–7), i, p. ix.
[2] *The Thousand and One Nights* (London, 1883).
[3] vi, 59.
[4] i, 200.
[5] *Ihyā' 'ulūm al-dīn* (Cairo edit., 1908), ii, 195.
[6] *History of Arabian Music*, chap. ii: *Music: The Priceless Jewel*, sect. 3 and 4.

As our *præludium* testifies, music was put to other uses than mere concomitance to the forbidden pleasures, and we see that to the *ṣūfī* and *darwīsh* music was "food" because it sustained them in their devotions. Does not the pseudo-dervish in the *Nights* say, "Our food is the remembrance of Allāh in our hearts and the listening to singers with our ears." [1] Unfortunately this usage of music is but rarely adverted to in the *Nights*, and even then merely *en passant*, such as the reference to the *tallā'* of the Sublime *Qur'ān* [2] the *munshid* at the *dhikr*,[3] the *mu'adhdhin* at the minaret,[4] or the *nā'iḥa* at the funeral.[5] Yet there are scores of Arabic treatises on music as an aid to devotion.[6]

The above line also tells us that music was "medicine", a circumstance due to the fact that the art had its place in therapeutics. It was not the mere soothing effect of music on the mind that was held to have curative power, but rather a theory in which mathematics, astronomy, and music were linked together in an elaborate system which produced cures according to certain proportions.[7] The system was actually followed in the hospitals.[8]

Yet to the great majority of people music was, as we shall see, as refreshing as "a fan" on a sultry day although, to the hedonistic crowd as displayed in the *Nights*, usually to the accompaniment of Wine and Woman. The stories and verses testify this abundantly. "Drinking without music (*ṭarab*) is not pleasant," says the Shaikh Ibrāhīm,[9] whilst another urges that "drinking without listening to music (*al-samā'*) lacks its essential joy",[10] and a third admonishes with a saying of Baghdād that "wine without listening to music results in the headache".[11] The needs of the man who wished to drink in the tale of *Ibrāhīm and Jamīla* further illustrates the point. Although he merely "wished to drink" he says to the porter, "Buy us fresh fruit and wine . . . and dessert and flowers, and five plump fowls, and bring me an *'ūd* (lute)." [12]

Indeed it was to the drinking chamber (*majlis al-sharāb*) that

[1] ii, 88 (ii, 463).
[2] iv, 649 (vi, 124).
[3] i, 591 (ii, 112).
[4] i, 246 (i, 277).
[5] i, 244 (i, 275).
[6] Farmer, *Sources of Arabian Music*, 92.
[7] Farmer, *The Influence of Music*, 12.
[8] Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' (Bombay edit.), iii, 67: Farmer, *Sa'adyah Gaon*, 6.
[9] i, 304 (i, 336).
[10] iv, 259 (v, 291).
[11] ii, 163 (iii, 15).
[12] iv, 541 (vi, 30).

guests retired to hear the singing-girls.[1] Thus the second of the "forbidden pleasures", Woman, enters the scene, with the inevitable result. Hearken to 'Alī Nūr al-Dīn in the *Nights* chanting, "A lutanist to us inclined, and stole our wits bemused with wine."[2] Or, as another sings, "The fawn of a maid bent her lute in hand, and her music made us right mettlesome."[3]

Those who may recall the delightful fantasy of Al-Fashshār (The Boaster) in *The Barber's Tale of his Fifth Brother*, where "Wine, Woman, and Song" stand out in high relief, will remember how he bragged that he would have every singer and songstress in the city perform at his bidding when Dame Fortune smiled on him.[4] Yet this gratification in the witching charms of music was a costly affair in these days and small fortunes were gifted to the practitioners of the art, as we shall see. In the story of *The Man Who Never Laughed* the moral of spending to excess on music (*ṭarab*) and other delights is made plain.[5] The theme is an old one and is often discanted in Arabic literature, hence the proverb, "Man listens [to music], rejoices, spends money, reflects, grieves, and dies."[6] Yet despite the reams of moralizing the Arab still says, "Better a liberal sinner than a stingy saint."

In these diversions of the upper and middle classes, the art of music reached its apogee in Islamic lands, for it was in these surroundings that Arabian classical music was born and nurtured. Here the great vocal *qaṣīda*, *qiṭā'*, and *nufṭa* were cultivated as well as the vocal and instrumental suite the *nauba*. Yet all that was performed was no more than what we would term chamber music. Indeed, in the early tales of the *Nights*, it was generally the *'ūd* (lute), either alone or with some accompanying pulsatile instrument, a *duff* (tambourine) or *ṭabl* (drum), that was used to play with a singer or to perform an instrumental *divertimento*.

Sometimes we read of the *nāy* (flute) being used with the *'ūd*, or even the *nāy* or *shabbāba* (fife) alone,[7] although there would invariably be a *duff* or *ṭabl* added for the rhythm. Then we see the *jank* (harp) and *sinṭīr* (dulcimer) complementing each other,[8] and

[1] i, 274 (i, 307).
[2] iv, 264 (v, 296).
[3] i, 309 (i, 341). The Arabic is much plainer.
[4] i, 265 (i, 297).
[5] iii, 146 (iv, 96).
[6] Burckhardt, *Arab. Prov.*, No. 335.
[7] iv, 172 (v, 191).
[8] ii, 654 (iii, 428).

of the *'ūd*, *duff*, and *qānūn* (psaltery) in company.[1] The largest chamber music combination in the *Nights* is the inclusion of the *'ūd*, *jank*, *qānūn*, *nāy*, and *duff*, in what might be termed an orchestra,[2] but this was not usual, and certainly not in the days of the Umayyads and early 'Abbāsids, although we have several iconographic instances of such a " consort of instruments " later.

Although all this indulgence in the " forbidden pleasures " by the upper and middle classes, as displayed in the *Nights*, was railed at by the strict men of Islām, it mattered little, since the classes could point triumphantly to the Khalifate court as their example. The masses were no different, and even they set the fiats of the piously-minded at naught where the intriguing *qaina* (singing-girl) of the tavern was concerned. All and sundry were prepared to fritter away their *darāhīm* (silver coins) where a pretty face and alluring song prompted, for the " wanton one ", as the Islamic purists would say, expected her clients to be liberal. Others, it would seem, made their own music when they went wine bibbing, as did the hunchback who took his *duff* with him.[3]

Then there is the other side of the picture, for music could still be " as refreshing as a fan " without being associated with Wine and Woman, and it is thus that we see it amongst the folk, the people at large, as the *Nights* frequently record, like the bath-keeper with his drum (*darbukka*),[4] or the negro with his reed-pipe (*mizmār*),[5] or the corn chandler and scavenger who danced as they sang.[6]

At all private and public festivities, vocal and instrumental music were indispensable. Guests were frequently welcomed by slaves beating their tambourines (*dufūf*).[7] At births,[8] and marriages [9] the professional songstresses (*muġannīyāt*) could be heard singing their joyous lays to the beating of the square (*duff*) or round tambourine (*ṭār*), the latter also serving as the collecting box for the customary tips (*nuqūṭ*),[10] for it was said that " Singing without tips (*nuqūṭ*) is like a corpse without aromatics (*ḥunūṭ*) ".[11]

[1] i, 67 (i, 83). [2] i, 372 (i, 395). [3] i, 203 (i, 230).
[4] i, 244 (i, 274). [5] ii, 179 (iii, 30). [6] i, 244 (i, 275).
[7] i, 373 (i, 396). [8] i, 353 (i, 378). [9] i, 165 (i, 191).

[10] *Nuqūṭ* is quite a late word. Both Payne and Burton say that the root *naqata* means " to handsel, i.e. to mark or cross the palm of a singing-girl with silver ". *Naqaṭa* simply means " to let fall in drips ", hence the " drippings " or " tips " which fall into the *ṭār* of the songstress are called *nuqūṭ*.

[11] Burckhardt, op. cit., No. 464.

When outdoor music was required at private or public festivities it was the tambourine, drum, and reed-pipe that made the welkin ring,[1] for the cry was, "Gladden thine heart, drum thine drum, and pipe thine reed-pipe."[2] Indeed, some of the instrumental combinations which were used on public occasions may conceivably have been provided by folk-minstrels rather than by official bands, although more generally perhaps this was supplied by the military authorities.

In such a work as the *Nights*, where the martial throng creates almost as much interest as the love theme, it is only natural that military music should find ample mention. Although generally known as the *ṭabl khāna*, as I have explained elsewhere,[3] the military band is spoken of in the *Nights* as the *nauba*,[4] its chief function in times of peace being the performance of certain pieces of music at particular hours (نُوَب) of the day, hence the term *nauba*, as well as at official ceremonies.[5] Indeed the phrase *daqqat al-bashā'ir*, used in announcing glad tidings in the *Nights* and elsewhere, shows that it was the drum which was struck (*daqqa*) to announce these glad tidings.[6]

In time of war the *nauba* played an important part, as may be gathered from such stories as the *History of Gharīb and his Brother 'Ajīb* and the *Story of Jānshāh*. In battle array the *nauba* was usually drawn up away from the actual conflict, where it played unceasingly during the strife. So long as the music lasted the army fought on, and even a division forced to retreat would often return to the fray because its *nauba* was still playing.

Two definite calls or signals are mentioned in the *Nights*, viz. the "Battle" (*al-ḥarb*)[7] and the "Retreat" (*al-infiṣāl*),[8] both being sounded on the drum (*ṭabl*), although the former is sometimes announced by the cymbals (*kāsāt*).[9] We also read of the cymbals proclaiming the "March".[10]

The *nauba* or military band described in the *Nights* comprises various combinations. Generally it is simply the drum, or the

[1] i, 680 (ii, 196).
[2] ii, 32 (ii, 413).
[3] *Encyclopædia of Islām*, v, 217.
[4] i, 95 (i, 114); iv, 528 (vi, 65).
[5] i, 700 (ii, 202).
[6] iii, 617 (v, 7).
[7] ii, 282 (iv, 228).
[8] iii, 283 (iv, 229).
[9] iii, 298 (iv, 242). Probably "kettledrums" (*kūsāt*) are meant.
[10] ii, 57 (ii, 159). Beyrout edit. "kettledrums" (*kūsāt*) instead of "cymbals" (*kāsāt*).

kettledrum, or the cymbals which sound in civic or battle scenes.[1] Yet sometimes we read of horns and drums,[2] horns and cymbals,[3] drums and cymbals,[4] reed-pipes and cymbals,[5] or reed-pipes and drums.[6] Occasionally there are such groups as drums, horns, and kettledrums,[7] drums, reed-pipes, and kettledrums,[8] drums, reed-pipes, and cymbals.[9] The largest instrumental display in the *Nights* is seen in cymbals horns, drums, and reed-pipes,[10] although on another occasion *one* trumpet (*nafīr*) is added to the preceding array.[11]

With such material one can quite believe the *rāwī* of the *Nights* when he tells us that it "silenced all ears"[12] or that the sounds made "the very earth tremble".[13] The value of noise in battle as a consternator was well recognized by the so-called Saracens, and we read that even the mules and camels were caparisoned with grelots (*jalājil*), clinkets (*qalāqīl*), and bells (*ajrās*) so as to create dismay.[14] One recalls the description of Saladin's steed in the *Romance of Richard Cœur-de-Lion:*

"His crouper heeng al full of belles."

From what has preceded we can appreciate the many uses to which music was put in the *Nights*—as an inspiration to the dervish, as a cure for the physician, as diversion to the hedonist, as gladness to the steadfast, and as stimulation to the warrior. Yet music was something more. Although the art was developed in its highest form among the leisured classes, even midst the more proscribed *malāhī*, it was here that we catch a glimpse that it was sometimes appreciated for itself alone, although such an attitude of mind was forbidden by some of the *fuqahā*. We also know that as a science which engaged the minds of the greatest Muslim thinkers, an Al-Fārābī and an Ibn Sīnā, it was also given recognition in the *Nights*, where even the *qaina* Tawaddud boasted of her knowledge of the theory of music (*fann al-mūsīqī*).[15]

[1] iv, 45 (v, 84): iii, 271 (iv, 217).
[2] i, 559 (ii, 84).
[3] i, 403 (i, 420).
[4] iii, 150 (iv, 100).
[5] iv, 616 (vi, 95).
[6] ii, 32 (ii, 413).
[7] i, 80 (i, 97).
[8] ii, 96, Beyrout edit. (ii, 202).
[9] ii, 649 (iii, 425).
[10] ii, 656 (iii, 430).
[11] ii, 569 (ii, 432).
[12] ii, 569 (ii, 432).
[13] iii, 303 (iv, 246).
[14] iii, 293 (iv, 328). See my article in *Islāmic Culture*, xv, p. 240.
[15] ii, 493 (iii, 281).

Chapter II
The Effect of the Music

Chapter II

The Effect of the Music

سماع الغناء برسام حاد

"The hearing of music is a poignant pain."—
An Arabic Proverb.

The greatest praise that can be paid an Arab musician is to liken his performance to that of David the Prophet. The phrase often runs, as in the *Nights*, "as melodious as the psalms of the House of David,"[1] in which expression (*mazāmīr āl Dā'ūd*) we have "higher criticism" before its time. It was the Prophet Muḥammad who gave the lead in this respect when he likened the voice of Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī to David's performance in the saying: "Verily, he has been granted a pipe of the pipes of the House of David" (*Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*, ii, 185). It is strange, however, that not one of the many extant Arabic works in defence of listening to music refers to the mention of David in the *Qur'ān* (*sūra* ii, 252) in support of their thesis. The stock argument from the *Qur'ān* is usually *sūra* xxxv, 1, which says: "HE adds to creation what HE wills," the exegete claiming that "what HE wills" is "the beautiful voice". Yet the first named *sūra* gives greater force to this claim since it says of David: "And Allāh taught him *what* HE willed."

Another form of compliment paid to singers was to compare their singing to "warbling" (*gharid*),[2] or that its excellence "stayed the flight of birds".[3] According to the *Qur'ān*,[4] birds were the companions of David in singing the praises of Allāh, and so, with the psalmist, the warbling of birds was considered music *par excellence*, and the death of birds on hearing music was taken as proof of its "killing charm".[5] The expression "kills with delight" in relation to music actually became quite a commonplace in Arabic literature.[6]

[1] ii, 83 (ii, 485). [2] ii, 450 (iii, 253). [3] ii, 83 (ii, 485).
[4] *Sūrāt*, xxi, 79; xxxiv, 10; xxxviii, 16.
[5] *Aghānī*, v, 52; Sa'dī, *Gulistān*, iii, 28.
[6] *Aghānī* (Būlāq edit.), ix, 95.

Death at the hearing of music is not a rarity in Arabic tales,[1] and it occurs in the *Nights* in the story of *The Three Unfortunates*, which is said to have been related by Al-'Utbī.[2] Swooning at music is a more general casualty, and in the *Nights* it happens in the stories of *The Lovers of Al-Medīna*[3] and *The Ruined Man of Baghdād*.[4] Music as the cause of violent or sudden actions, such as the rending of garments, or taking horse to a distant place, are too prevalent in Arabic literature to warrant comment. Probably only those who have witnessed the reaction of auditors to music in the Islamic East can fully appreciate the truth of the many recitals of the potency of this art.

It is only by taking the fullest cognizance of what has been detailed above that we can understand the extravagant language used in the *Nights* and elsewhere in relation to the effect of music. It is averred that one performer's music would "deaden the quick and quicken the dead": of another's that "it made the unintelligible intelligible". Delightful anagogues. Yet when we are told that "it made the hardest stones dance for glee",[5] or that "the very room danced with excess of delight",[6] it is not mere verbal imagery or metaphor that prompts the storyteller but rather anthropomorphism. The literature of Arabian music reeks with this doctrine, as the *Nights* so often reveal, and perhaps the most delightful of the anthropomorphic fantasies is that which invests the very instruments of music with human attributes.

As its name indicates, the lute (*'ūd*) itself was made of wood (*'ūd*), and the Arabs deluded themselves into the belief that the resonance of the instrument was due to the fact that the wood had absorbed the warbling of birds that had once perched on it when it was a branch of a tree. So the poet of the *Nights* chants[7]:—

"A tree whilere I was, the bulbuls' home,
To whom for love I bowed my grass-green head:
They moaned on me, and I their moaning learnt
And in that moan my secret all men read:
The woodman felled me without offence,
And slender lute of me (as view ye) made;
But, when the fingers smite my strings, they tell
How man despite my patience did me dead":

[1] *Al-'iqd al-farīd* (Būlāq edit., 1887–8,), iii, 198.
[2] ii, 439 (iii, 242). [3] iii, 412 (iv, 344). [4] iv, 360 (v, 375).
[5] ii, 88 (ii, 402). [6] i, 793 (ii, 291). [7] iv, 262 (v, 294).

Or as it says elsewhere, "[The lute] moaned and resounded, and after its older home yearned; and it remembered the waters which gave it drink and the earth whence it sprang and whence it grew."

The very names given to the various parts of the lute expose this anthropomorphic confidence, as we see in Al-Mas'ūdī's *Murūj al-dhahab* (*Les Prairies d'Or*, viii, 89). The sound-chest of the lute was the *ṣadr* (upper part of the human trunk), the "belly" was the *wajh* (face), the convex part was the *ẓahr* (back), the neck-fingerboard was the *'unq* (neck), the "nut" was the *anf* (nose), the sound-holes were the *'uyūn* (eyes), the strings were the *maḥābiḍ* (media of pulsation), being likened to the throbbing veins (*'urūq*), whilst the tuning-pegs (*malāwī*) were often called the *adhān* (ears). It was similar with the *ṭunbūr* or pandore in which the above nomenclature obtained with the addition of the term *zubaida* (penis) being given to the lower peg to which the strings were fastened at the base of the instrument.

Music being part of the macrocosmic system of the Arabic scientists and philosophers, the strings of the lute were linked up with that entertaining conceit known as "the four-fold things", of which the singing-girl chants in the tale of *'Alī Nūr al-Dīn and Maryam the Girdle Girl.*

"Seest not how four-fold things conjoin in one?"

The notion was hoary with antiquity, but in Islāmic times it was developed into a comprehensive system by Al-Kindī (d. 874).[1] It is merely hinted at in the *Nights*, but there is sufficient material in the story of *Abu'l-Ḥusn and his slave-girl Tuwaddud* to enable us to draw up the conspectus on p. 14 which shows how music was irrevocably bound up with cosmic things. The classification of the constellations is inconsistent in the *Nights*, which is rather amusing in view of Tuwaddud's vaunted knowledge of the subject.[2]

Out of this conceit an ethoidal system was developed and every melodic and rhythmic mode had its particular *ethos*. It also governed the musico-medical practice already mentioned, but from the many contradictory tables which have come down to us the number of failures in treatment must have been high.

[1] Farmer, *The Influence of Music*, 12: *Sa'adyah Gaon*, 8–9.

[2] ii, 493, 523, 526 (iii, 281, 312, 316).

THE FOURFOLD THINGS

[STRINGS OF THE LUTE	*Bamm*	*Mathlath*	*Mathnā*	*Zīr*]
ELEMENTS	Water	Earth	Air	Fire
HUMOURS	Cold-moist	Cold-dry	Hot-moist	Hot-dry
PLANETS	Moon	Saturn	—	Sun
CONSTELLATIONS	Cancer Scorpio Pisces	Taurus Virgo Capricornus	Gemini Libra Aquarius	Aries Leo Sagittarius
PERFUMES	—	Rose	Myrtle	—

Chapter III

The Makers of the Music

Chapter III

The Makers of the Music

عاشر المصلّي تصلّي وعاشر المغنّي تغني

"Live with him who prays and you pray; live with him who sings and you sing."—*An Arabic Proverb.*

This placing of prayer and music in juxtaposition is due, obviously, to the professionally pious of Islām. Because of this, saint and sinner, for that is the implication, are placed poles asunder so as to better the instruction. Yet the lands of Islām were full of the purveyors of the *malāhī* or "forbidden pleasures", including singing.

The practitioners of music, as found in the *Nights*, are usually professionals, and these may be divided into four classes—the male minstrel, the instrumentalist, the songstress, and the singing-girl. At court they attended at specified hours known as their *nauba* or turn,[1] and generally played behind a curtain in a special apartment as described by Lane.[2] One of these curtains mentioned in the *Nights* was of brocade with tassels of silk and rings of gold.[3]

The minstrel (*mughannī*) of the *Nights* was a highly skilled singer and instrumentalist who, like the Medieval European minstrel, was also expected to have other accomplishments, including all that was desired of a "boon companion" (*nadīm*). Most, if not all of those introduced into the *Nights* held positions as court minstrels, which brought them not only a regular stipend but the usual *largesse* which was often a small fortune in itself.

The instrumentalist (*muṭrib*, *ālatī*) was so named in Arabic because he performed on an "instrument of emotion" (*ālat al-ṭarab*), or "instrument of diversion" (*ālat al-lahw*), these particular terms being often used so as to distinguish the musician who was primarily an instrumentalist.[4] He also was to be found at the courts and the

[1] ii, 439 (iii, 242). I have shown in the *Ency. of Islām*, iii, 885, how the Arabian art form known as the *nauba* (*suite*) had its origin in this system of the court minstrels taking their "turn" at court.

[2] i, 203. This apartment (*mughanna*) was still to be found in Egypt in the time of Lane (*Modern Egyptians* [1860], 355), but there was lattice work as a screen instead of a curtain.

[3] iv, 559 (vi, 47).

[4] ii, 654 (iii, 428).

palaces of the nobility, but the name was also applied to the humbler type, whether urban or strolling, who supplied outdoor music with drum (*ṭabl*) and reed-pipe (*zamr*) at festival time.

The songstress (*mughannīya*) was frequently a matron or other freed-woman who had acquired her art as a singing-girl or had picked it up otherwise. She was the mainstay of private and public rejoicings, whether social or religious, when her tambourine was invariably in evidence.

The singing-girl (*qaina*) was also a songstress, but she was a slave. Rarely is she called a *qaina* in the *Nights*,[1] the more frequent terms being *mughannīya* or *jāriya*. She was usually specially trained for her profession and found her way, either by private barter or the slave market, into the families of the nobility and wealthy class, the price demanded for her being usually determined by her accomplishments and physical charms, although one recalls a saying of Sa'dī that "a sweet voice is better than a beautiful face".[2]

Fabulous sums were often paid for some of these singing-girls as is testified by both the *Aghānī* and the *Nights*. They were also held in high esteem, especially those who did not come as full-fledged *artistes* from the slave market but had been reared in the owner's household.[3] It is asserted in the *Nights* [4] and elsewhere [5] that portraits of these girls adorned the houses of their masters, in spite of the ban of Islām.

The lives of some of these professional musicians are of extreme interest, since they reveal the intimate part which they played in the domestic and social life of the Arabian East. For that reason a few details from their lives as recorded in the *Nights* have been culled for insertion here. All the male musicians mentioned in the *Nights* were historic characters when the stories were compiled.

Yūnus al-Kātib (d. *c.* 765) is the subject of the story of *Yūnus the Scribe and Al-Walīd ibn Sahl* [6] in which he and his singing-girl, who was his pupil, sing before the Prince Al-Walīd. Yūnus asks fifty thousand silver pieces for this girl and receives it together

[1] ii, 439 (iii, 242); iv, 172 (v, 191).
[2] *Gulistān*, iii, 28.
[3] ii, 402 (iii, 208).
[4] iii, 142 (iv, 97).
[5] S. L. Poole, *History of Egypt*, v, 74.
[6] Burton writes: "Khalif Al-Walīd," although the story distinctly states that the incident took place in the Khalifate of Hishām.

with a substantial tip.[1] When the Prince became Khalif in the year 743 Yūnus sang at his court at Damascus.

Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm al-Mauṣilī (d. 804) was at the courts of Al-Hādī and Hārūn, and appears in the *Nights* in the story of *Ibrāhīm al-Mauṣilī and the Devil*. The latter, who is called Abū Murra (Father of Myrrh),[2] visits Ibrāhīm and plays and sings to him so wondrously that it seemed as if " the doors and the walls and all that was in the house answered and sang with him, for the beauty of his voice ". Ibrāhīm went to the palace immediately and repeated the music which he had heard to Khalif Hārūn.[3] In the *Aghānī*, where the story is also told, the uncanny visitor is given his proper name Iblīs.[4] We read of Ibrāhīm elsewhere, notably as the author of the story of *The Lovers of Al-Medīna*,[5] in the story of *Nūr al-Dīn 'Alī and the Damsel Anīs al-Jalīs*,[6] and as Khalif Hārūn's emissary in the story of *'Abdallāh ibn Fāḍil and His Brothers*,[7] which reveals how highly this court minstrel was esteemed.

Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī (d. 839) was the younger brother of Khalif Hārūn. In spite of the fact that it was not considered good form for a Muslim of such high standing to indulge seriously in music, Prince Ibrāhīm had been specially trained in the art. We read of his adventures in the story of *Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī and the Merchant's Sister* where, lute in hand, he demonstrates how faultily a singing-girl performs a particular mode (*ṭarīqa*).[8] The story of his arrest and pardon for his attempt to seize the Khalifate is contained in *Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī and the Barber-Surgeon*.[9] Here, however, Ibrāhīm al-Mauṣilī is wrongly credited with the arrest of the Prince in 825–6, since the great minstrel had been dead for twenty years.[10]

Isḥāq ibn Ibrāhīm al-Mauṣilī (d. 850) was the greatest musician that the Golden Age produced, and even the *Nights* aver that " he was excelling in this art ".[11] He is featured in the story of *Isḥāq al-Mauṣilī* which tells us of an escapade with Khadīja, a singing-girl

[1] iii, 379 (iv, 315).

[2] The author of the *Tāj al-'arūs* tells us with all seriousness that this name given to the Devil, was due to the fact that his daughter's name was Murra.

[3] iii, 388 (iv, 321). [4] v, 36. See also Al-Ghuzūlī, *Maṭāli' al-budūr*, i, 241.

[5] iii, 411 (iv, 344). [6] i, 305 (i, 337) [7] iv, 635 (vi, 108).

[8] ii, 298 (iii, 123). [9] ii, 138 (ii, 511).

[10] The *Nights*, however, may be correct and history may be wrong.

[11] ii, 149 (iii, 8). Burton (iii, 6) says that Isḥāq was " the first who reduced Arab harmony [*sic*] to systematic rules ". See Farmer, *History of Arabian Music*, 105.

of Al-Ḥasan ibn Sahl, and the famous basket episode.[1] The same story is related of his father Ibrāhīm in the *Aghānī* [2] and the *Maṭāli' al-budūr*,[3] although Isḥāq retains the credit in Ibn Badrūn.[4] Another adventure, with Isḥāq and a singing-girl as the principal characters, is told in the story of *Isḥāq al-Mauṣilī and the Merchant.*[5] Finally there is the story of *Isḥāq al-Mauṣilī and his Mistress and the Devil*, which is another musical interlude with Iblīs.[6]

Other famous musicians mentioned are 'Ubaidallāh ibn Suraij (d. *c.* 726) and Ma'bad ibn Wahb (d. 743), both being noticed as composers of songs.[7] Two minstrels of lesser import also appear in the *Nights*, but only incidentally. They are Ṣadaqa ibn Ṣadaqa and Zurzūr al-Ṣaghīr. The former is named in the story of *Abu'l-Ḥasan of Khurasān* where Ṣadaqa is said to have been with Khalif Al-Mutawakkil and his *wazīr* Al-Fatḥ ibn Khāqān when the former was murdered in 861.[8] His name does not occur in the *Aghānī* or similar books, but he was probably a grandson of Abū Ṣadaqa Miskīn, a minstrel at the court of Hārūn, and brother of Aḥmad ibn Ṣadaqa who was a minstrel favoured by Al-Mutawakkil.[9] Zurzūr al-Ṣaghīr is also not registered in the *Aghānī*, but since there is a Zurzūr al-Kabīr mentioned at the court of Khalif Al-Mu'taṣim (d. 843) [10] there is some justification for accepting the historicity of Zurzūr Minor, who is only recognized in the *Nights* as the composer of a melody.[11]

The female musicians in the *Nights*, with one exception, are not credited in history. Yet there is no reason why they should not be mentioned here, especially as they furnish a fair picture of the varied accomplishments of these *artistes* and what was expected of them in these days. Indeed, it enables one to appreciate how the epithet *'ālima* (pl. *'awālim*), i.e. "learned female", came to be given to the singing-girl as in modern Egypt.[12] Here are the more outstanding of these female musicians of the *Nights*.

Nu'm (Blessing) was purchased as a babe with her mother in the slave market by a man of Al-Kūfa named Al-Rabī'a, who

[1] ii, 147 (iii, 6). [2] v, 41. [3] Al-Ghuzūlī, i, 243.
[4] Dozy edit., 272. [5] ii, 435 (iii, 238).
[6] iii, 408 (iv, 341). Cf. *Ency. Islām*, ii, 439.
[7] ii, 450 (iii, 252). Burton, in his usual froward way, writes Ma'abid.
[8] iv, 573 (vi, 60). Burton wrongly identifies this *wazīr* with the one mentioned by Ibn Khallikān (ii, 455).
[9] Farmer, *Hist.*, 158. [10] Farmer, *Hist.*, 96. [11] ii, 453 (iii, 255).
[12] Cf. Lane, *Modern Egyptians* (London, 1860), 355.

reared her with his own son Ni'mat Allāh (Boon of Allāh). She was carefully educated, " read (*qarā'*) the *Qur'ān* and the sciences, knew all kinds of games (*lu'ab*) and devices (*ālāt*), and surpassed in singing (*maghnā*) and in instruments of music (*malāhī*)." Eventually she was espoused to Ni'mat Allāh. Yet her exquisite beauty and inimitable talents led Al-Ḥajjāj, the crafty Governor of 'Irāq 'Arabī, to secure her by guile for Khalif 'Abd al-Malik (d. 705). Fortunately for her husband there is a happy ending.[1]

Al-Badr al-Kabīr (The Incomparable Full Moon) was another rearling, but, in this case, had been brought up in the palace of Ja'far the son of Khalif Mūsā al-Hādī (d. 786). She was " perfect in beauty " and there was not in her time anyone " more accomplished in the art of singing (*ghinā'*) and the playing of [instruments of] strings (*awtār* "). Being enamoured of her, Muḥammad al-Amīn (d. 813), who later became Khalif, abducted her under the very nose of Ja'far, who forgave his erring kinsman and sacrificed his beautiful *qaina*, accepting a boatload of gold, silver, and jewels as a solatium.[2]

Qūt al-Qulūb (Sustenance of Hearts), on the contrary, was acquired in the slave-market by a certain Ibn al-Qirnāṣ for five thousand gold pieces, although he sold her to Khalif Hārūn for twice that sum. She knew " all the arts and sciences, could string poetry, and play upon all kinds of instruments of music (*ṭarab*) ".[3]

Anīs al-Jalīs (Companionable Companion) was a singing-girl who cost a notional King of Al-Baṣra ten thousand gold pieces. She was probably worth every penny of it since we are assured that she was acquainted with " calligraphy, syntax, and lexicography, exegesis [of the *Qur'ān*], principles of jurisprudence and religion, [canons of] medicine, [computation of] the calendar, and playing instruments of music (*ālāt al-muṭriba*) ". Above all, she was the possessor of " dewy lips sweeter than syrup ".[4]

Tawaddud (Showing Affection), the last to be mentioned, outshone all others in her accomplishments, if we are to believe the *Nights*. She was the singing-girl of Abu'l-Ḥusn of Baghdād and her prodigious talents and marvellous erudition flabbergasted Khalif Hārūn. She claimed that she was versed in syntax, poetry, juris-

[1] ii, 38 (ii, 419).
[2] ii, 402 (iii, 208).
[3] iv, 163 (v, 183).
[4] ii, 489 (iii, 277).

prudence, exegesis [of the *Qur'ān*], lexicography, theory of music,[1] law of inheritance, arithmetic, division, geodesy, fables of the ancients, the Sublime *Qur'ān*, the Holy Traditions, arts of government,[2] geometry, philosophy, alchemy,[3] logic, and rhetoric. She could also "play on the *'ūd* (lute), and knew the construction of the melodic modes (*mawādi' al-naghām*) on it, and the rhythms (*mawāqi'*) of the beatings of its strings, and their *caesura* (*sakanāt*)", as well as being proficient in singing and dancing.[4]

Maḥbūba (Beloved), the one historical character among the songstresses and singing-girls of the *Nights*, belonged to Al-Baṣra. According to this source she was gifted to Khalif Al-Mutawakkil (d. 861) by 'Ubaidallāh [ibn 'Abdallāh] ibn Ṭāhir (d. *c.* 912), himself a first-rate musician.[5] It is more probable that it was 'Abdallāh ibn Ṭāhir (d. 844) who made the present, as the *Aghānī* states.[6] In the *Nights* we are told that she was of "surpassing beauty and loveliness . . . played well upon the lute and was skilled in singing and making verses and wrote a beautiful hand",[7] an appraisement which is confirmed by the *Aghānī*.[8]

[1] ii, 493 (iii, 281). The text has من الموسيقى which is obviously a slip for فن الموسيقى as in the Būlāq text (ii, 239).

[2] The text has علوم الرياضية which can scarcely be correct, since the *'ulūm al-riyāḍīya*, which included arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy, are already dealt with. The Būlāq text has *'ulūm al-riyāsa*, which is more likely.

[3] *'ilm al-ḥikma*.

[4] ii, 493 (iii, 281).

[5] Farmer, *Hist.*, 169.

[6] xix, 132.

[7] ii, 310 (iii, 135).

[8] Farmer, *Hist.*, 162.

Chapter IV
The Instruments of the Music

Chapter IV

The Instruments of the Music

النّاى فى كمّى والريح فى فمّى

" The *nāy* (flute) is in my sleeve and the breath in my mouth "
[i.e. " I am ready for anything "]—
An Arabic Proverb.

In the *Nights* the instrument of music is generally referred to as the *ālat al-ṭarab* or *ālat al-malāhī*. The types mentioned are fairly considerable, although in most instances the mere name occurs. In the case of the *'ūd* (lute), however, certain subsidiary details occur incidentally which are of value.

These instruments of the *Nights* can be grouped as follows :—
Stringed Instruments : *'ūd*, *ṭunbūr*, *jank*, *qānūn*, and *sinṭīr*.
Wind Instruments : *nāy*, *shabbāba*, *nāy ṭaṭarī*, *zamr* or *mizmār*, *būq*, *nafīr*, and *ālat al-zamr*.
Vibrating Membranes : *duff*, *ṭār*, *darbukka*, *ṭabl*, and *kūs*.
Sonorous Substances : *kāsāt* (*ku'ūs*), *jalājil*, *ajrās*, *qalāqil*, *khalākhīl*, *nāqūs*, and *qāḍīb*.

The *'ūd* (pl. *'īdān*) or lute was, and always has been, the instrument *par excellence* amongst the Arabs. Three kinds are mentioned in the *Nights*—the *'ūd 'irāqī*, the *'ūd jilliqī*, and the *'ūd min ṣan' al-hunūd*. Yet it is doubtful whether these names refer to distinctive types. It is more likely that they are fanciful additions made by *rāwī* or *kātib* to embellish the story. Indeed the *nisba* which betokens the provenance of the instrument only occurs in the Būlāq text,[1] and not in that of Calcutta [2] or Beyrout.[3]

The *'ūd 'irāqī* (Irāqian lute) may have a *raison d'être* since Al-'Irāq was considered the home of the Arabian lute,[4] and even in the fourteenth century the Persian poet Niẓāmī said in his *Sikandar nāma*, when praising the craftsmen of the world, " Al-'Irāq sends the sweetest lutes." [5]

The *'ūd jilliqī* [6] (Damascus lute) is an uncertainty. Since even the identification of Jilliq with Damascus is doubtful, and at best is only a poetic licence, we cannot place much reliance on the

[1] i, 27 (i, 83).
[2] i, 67.
[3] i, 55.
[4] Al-Mas'ūdī, op. cit., viii, 93.
[5] Delhi edit., ii, 198.
[6] i, 372 (i, 395).

'ūd jilliqī, unless the name preserves the old barbiton or mandore called the *barbaṭ* which was used by the old Ghassānids of this region.[1]

As for the *'ūd min ṣan' al-hunūd* [2] (Lute of Indian make), the incertitude of its existence is strengthened by the fact that the lute had long fallen into desuetude in India.[3] Of course it might have been an instrument made in Baghdād by Indian artisans, as one reference reads,[4] but other passages, such as "a lute of the handicraft of the land of the Indians",[5] seem to point to India itself. One can only suppose that the *nisba* of provenance was due to the needs of the *rāwī* who frequently had a cosmopolitan audience to entertain, and also to the circumstance that in his recitals the comparative and superlative were part of his stock in trade, since it was by such means that he could stretch the imagination of his auditors, and later ease their pockets also.

I have already dealt with the history of the Arabian lute elsewhere,[6] but the *Nights* supply us with additional information which deserves attention. As with most stringed instruments, age improves the *timbre* of the lute, and when we read in the *Nights* about a "well-worn lute" (*'ūd maḥkūk*)[7] or an "abraded lute" (*'ūd majrūd*),[8] we can be fairly sure that an old but well-mellowed instrument is meant.

On another occasion we find a rather ornately garnished lute inlaid with pearls and hyacinths, and fitted with tuning-pegs (*malāwī*) made of gold.[9] It must have been an instrument of this class that Abū Isḥāq [Ibrāhīm al-Mauṣilī] al-Nadīm used, since it had features which made it easily recognizable at a distance.[10] *Malāwī* (sing. *milwā*) is the recognized Arabic name for the tuning-pegs, but we find the phrase شددت طرفيه [11] ("screwed up its sides": Burton)[12] also used, but this last word seems to be a copyist's error for ملاويه. They are sometimes called *adẖān* (ears), but this is rare. We also have a lute with verses carved or painted (*manqūsh*) thereon,[13] a fashion of which we read in the *Aghānī*.

One story deserves special attention because of its utter

[1] *Aghānī*, xvi, 15.
[2] ii, 259 (iii, 105).
[3] *JAOS*., 50, 253.
[4] ii, 163 (iii, 16).
[5] ii, 83 (ii, 459).
[6] *Ency. of Islām*, iv, 985.
[7] ii, 536 (iii, 325).
[8] iv, 326 (v, 294).
[9] iv, 522 (vi, 10).
[10] i, 305 (i, 337).
[11] ii, 437; xix, 136.
[12] Burton, iii, 240.
[13] ii, 536 (iii, 325).

impossibility, although within it is enshrined one of those precious conceits in which the Arabs delight to indulge. It occurs in the story of *'Alī Nūr al-Dīn and Maryam the Girdle Girl*, where a slave-girl opens a lute bag and shakes therefrom *thirty-two* pieces of wood (*khushb*) which, when fitted (*rakkab*) together, became a lute ready for use.[1] We read of a similar, but much simpler, performance elsewhere,[2] where *one* piece of wood (*khashaba*) has strings mounted upon it and is played forthwith, a proceeding which is quite possible, whereas the two and thirty pieces mentioned in the *Nights* is rather a long bow to draw. Yet perhaps the circumstance is explicable.

The Arabs were firm believers in the "theory of numbers" and *thirty-two* had a special significance in their scheme of "the four-fold things". Indeed the verses which follow the episode of the thirty-two pieces specifically mention "the four-fold things". In the series of continued geometrical proportions—2 : 4 : 8 : 16 : 32 : 64, we see what these particular numbers meant in the system, and lute makers themselves held strong views on what they termed "the most excellent proportions".[3] If the depth of the lute was 4, then the breadth was 8 and the length 16. Even the makers of lute strings were influenced by the magic of numbers when they made the four strings, from low to high, of 64, 32, 24, and 16 strands respectively.[4] We can therefore appreciate why the lute in the *Nights* was constructed of *thirty-two* pieces of wood, although we can scarcely be expected to believe that these were detachable and capable of being fitted together *presto* so as to produce an instrument "ready armed" (*musallaḥ*) as one sometimes hears an Arab lutenist say.[5] Yet the story illustrates the argument that the *rāwī*, knowing of the occult value of *thirty-two*, gave this number to the pieces of the lute so as to create wonderment in his audience by verbal jugglery.[6]

The bag in which this wonderful lute was kept also deserves attention because we read so little about the encasement of instru-

[1] iv, 326 (v, 294).

[2] Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', i, 85.

[3] Ibid., i, 98.

[4] *Kanz al-tuḥaf*, B.M. MS., *Or.* 2361, fol. 261v.

[5] This bellicose phrase reminds us of a story of Isḥāq al-Mauṣilī who, passing a man carving a lute, said, "For whom are you whetting this sword?" *Al-'iqd al-farīd*, iii, 206.

[6] We often see the enticement of numbers, but the three hundred and sixty female slaves (the number of days in the Coptic year) of 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān disarms all criticism. i, 353 (i, 377).

ments from Arabic sources, although one recalls that Ṭuwais, the earliest minstrel of Islāmic days, kept his tambourine (*duff*) in a bag.[1] The bag alluded to in the preceding story was made of green silk-satin with golden brocade, but we also read of other designs. One of these was of red satin with tassels of saffron-coloured silk,[2] whilst another, also of satin, had green fringes and tassels of gold stuff.[3]

The strings (*awtār*) of the lute are frequently spoken of in the *Nights*, but nowhere is the actual number mentioned. Once there is an allusion to the "Persian string",[4] which, we may presume, refers to the *zīr* or highest string, the word, which is Persian, signifying "high, shrill". Yet four strings are congenial to the conceit of the "four-fold things" dealt with in the story of *'Alī Nūr al-Dīn and Maryam the Girdle-girl*.[5]

As I have frequently shown [6] the strings of the lute in the early days of Islām, i.e. from the eighth to the tenth century, were four in number. Later, five and six strings were the rule, the latter being introduced not earlier than the fifteenth century. That being so, the period of the stories in the *Nights* ought to determine the string mounting of the instrument. This has not been taken into consideration by Lane's pictorial artists. The best design of the lute by the latter is the tailpiece to the *Story of Nūr al-Dīn and Anīs al-jalīs* where a six- or seven-stringed instrument is depicted.[7] Elsewhere in the same story an eight-stringed instrument is shown.[8] In the *Story of Ibn Manṣūr and the Lady Budūr* it is delineated with five strings,[9] whilst in the *Story of the Porter and the Three Ladies of Baghdād* it has six strings.[10] As all these stories are set in scenes which belong to the eighth to tenth centuries, the lute ought to have been shown with four or, at most, five strings. Of course the very structure of the lutes drawn by Lane's artists reveals that they were all based on the design given in his *Modern Egyptians*.[11]

Another question worthy of consideration is the method of holding the lute. Both Lane and Burton say that the instrument was placed in the lap,[12] whereas the *Nights* say quite definitely that it was placed in the bosom (*ḥijr*,[13] *ḥiḍn*[14]), which, as I shall show,

[1] *Al-'iqd al-farīd*, iii, 186. [2] ii, 536 (iii, 325).
[3] i, 69 (i, 85). [4] iv, 173 (v, 191). [5] iv, 263 (v, 295).
[6] Farmer, *Studies in Oriental Musical Instruments*, ii, 45; *An Old Moorish Lute Tutor*, 25.
[7] i, 429. [8] i, 421. [9] ii, 434. [10] i, 130. [11] 361.
[12] Lane, ii, 343; Burton, iii, 16. [13] ii, 163. [14] iv, 264.

was the conventional position. It was held horizontally or with the sound-chest higher than the peg-box, the latter position only being conveniently possible when the sound-chest was in the bosom. This latter method also enabled the performer to see the fingers of the left hand in performance.

Lane's artists depict the lute with the sound-chest in the lap of the player, and the neck in an oblique direction at the performer's shoulder, in precisely the same position as we see it in his *Modern Egyptians*.[1] We have the fairly reliable evidence of iconography that it was only in Egypt and Spain that this latter method of holding the lute was practised, whereas in Al-'Irāq, Al-Yaman, and Syria it was the former method which obtained, and it is the way in which the instrument was held in the stories in the *Nights* which we have mentioned.[2] Indeed we are told that the performer " leaned over it as a mother would lean over her child ", a position scarcely in keeping with that shown by Lane's artists, but quite compatible with the 'Irāqī method and an 'Irāqī story.

The *ṭunbūr* (pl. *ṭanābīr*) or pandore, was a sort of long-necked lute, but with a smaller sound-chest. It was not generally favoured by the Arabs and was actually more popular in Persia, Al-Raiy, Ṭabaristān, and Al-Dailam. The above circumstance may account for the fact that the *ṭunbūr* is only mentioned once in the *Nights* and even then in connection with a Persian. It is one of the many whimsical things which the amusing 'Alī claims to have had in his comprehensive bag as told in the *Story of 'Alī the Persian*.[3]

Lane does not depict the normal pandore. What he shows in the scene of the bridal festivities in the *Story of Ma'rūf* [4] is a very large instrument, somewhat of the dimensions of the modern *ṭunbūr buzurk*. For the normal pandore of the period see my *Sources of Arabian Music*.[5]

The *jank* (pl. *junūk*) or *ṣanj* (pl. *ṣunūj*) was a harp with an upper sound-chest. In the *Nights* it is twice called the *jank 'ajamī* (Persian harp), probably because of its original provenance. Actually the name *jank* is but an Arabicized version of the Persian *chang*. On the other hand, the name may have arisen from the necessity of

[1] p. 362.

[2] For the two methods respectively see Arnold, *Legacy of Islām*, fig. 89, and Farmer, *Sources*, pl. 2.

[3] ii, 179 (iii, 30).

[4] iii, 364.

[5] Frontispiece.

distinguishing it from the *jank miṣrī* (Egyptian harp) which differed from the former in having a wooden face at the side of the strings as a resonator. Both types and their names were used in Egypt in the fifteenth century, and the above qualifying *nisbas* are not traceable earlier than this.[1]

In the *Tale of King 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān and his Sons*,[2] who is claimed to have ruled "the City of Peace [Baghdād] before the Khalifate of 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān"! the *jank 'ajamī* occurs with the *'ūd jilliqī* (Damascus lute), the *nāy tatarī* (Tartar flute), and the *qānūn miṣrī* (Egyptian psaltery), a combination which would certainly place the story later than the thirteenth century. Again in the story of *The Porter and the Three Ladies of Baghdād*[3] it is found with the *'ūd* and the *duff* (tambourine). This story deals with the days of Khalif Hārūn (d. 809) and the introduction of the *jank* at such a period is an anachronism. Even its appearance in the story of *Abu'l-Ḥasan of Khurāsān*, the scene of which is set in the time of Khalif Al-Mu'taḍid (d. 902), is suspect, although, being a Khurasanian, Abu'l-Ḥasan may have had a special fondness for such an instrument.[4] The *jank* again displays itself, with the *sinṭīr* (dulcimer or psaltery), in the Persian tinted *Story of Jānshāh*, which is certainly of late date.[5]

Lane furnishes a fairly good design of the instrument in one of the illustrations to the second of the tales mentioned.[6] He also includes two cuts taken from [Persian ?] manuscripts of the mid-fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries supplied by Sir Gore Ouseley, the latter saying that the strings on the *jank* vary in number from twenty to twenty-seven,[7] a statement which does not conform with Arabic or Persian theorists of music.

The *qānūn* (pl. *qawānīn*), or psaltery, has a history with the Arabs as far back as the tenth century, although it was not generally accepted until much later, and certainly not with this name. It presents itself several times in the *Nights*. In the *Tale of 'Alī ibn Bakkār and Shams al-Nahar*, a ninth century scene, we are told

[1] *Kashf al-humūm*, Cairo MS., fol. 145.
[2] i, 372 (i, 395).
[3] i, 67 (i, 83).
[4] Cf. Al-Mas'ūdī, viii, 91.
[5] ii, 654 (iii, 428). The term "harps" mentioned by Burton (i, 469) is not traceable in any of the texts. The *'ūd* is mentioned in the Būlāq text (i, 180).
[6] i, 127.
[7] i, 204–5.

that the Commander of the Faithful was so grieved at the death of Shams al-Nahar that he commanded the destruction of "all vessels and psalteries (*qawānīn*) and other instruments of diversion (*malāhī*) and music (*ṭarab*) which were in the room ".[1] In the Būlāq text the word is certainly *qawānīn*,[2] and it is the early edition of this which has been followed by Lane,[3] and Burton.[4] Yet the Calcutta text has *'īdān* (lutes),[5] which is the more likely word. Throughout the story it is the *'ūd* (lute) only that is mentioned, and there seems to be no reason therefore why, at the last moment, the *qānūn* should be introduced in this way. The most acceptable explanation of the use of the word *qawānīn* in the Būlāq text is that it was a copyist's slip due to his eye being momentarily impressed by the form of the preceding word in the phrase الاوانى والعيدان. There is certainly little evidence of the use of a musical instrument called the *qānūn* in the ninth century.[6]

Its appearance in the *Tale of King 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān and his Sons*,[7] who is claimed to have lived even earlier, is undoubtedly an anachronism. Here it is called, when first mentioned, the *qānūn miṣrī* (Egyptian psaltery), but when we observe that it is accompanied by the *'ūd jilliqī* (Damascus lute), the *jank 'ajamī* (Persian harp), and the *nāy tatarī* (Tartar flute), we can, perhaps, appreciate the reason for the adjective of provenance in the *qānūn miṣrī*.

Lane has supplied a note on the *qānūn*,[8] and his artists have limned it,[9] both contributions being based on the Egyptian instrument so fully described and shown by Lane himself in his *Modern Egyptians*,[10] which scarcely helps us to discern the instrument of the period of the *Nights*. Again it has to be objected that the method of playing the instrument, as shown by his artists, does not comport with history and iconography. The practice of holding the *qānūn* in a horizontal position in playing with the strings uppermost, as delineated by Lane's artists, is quite a modern departure. From the twelfth[11] to the fifteenth century[12] we know positively that the psaltery of the Arabs was held vertically with the back (*ẓahr*) of the instrument resting against the player's chest,

[1] A variation of Burton's translation.
[2] i, 326. [3] ii, 46. [4] ii, 306. [5] i, 810.
[6] See my *Studies in Oriental Musical Instruments*, i, 9.
[7] i, 372 (i, 395); i, 375 (i, 398).
[8] ii, 67. [9] i, 360; ii, 69. [10] 360.
[11] Bronze bowl (thirteenth century), Victoria and Albert Museum.
[12] Cf. *Kashf al-humūm*. See my *Sources of Arabian Music*, pl. 5.

and it was played with one hand. This was the position which Europe adopted from the Arabs when it borrowed the *qānūn* from them as the *canon*.[1]

The *sinṭīr* (pl. *sanāṭira*) was generally a dulcimer but sometimes a psaltery. This we know in the fifteenth century, when what was known in Egypt as the *qānūn* was called in Syria the *sinṭīr*.[2] Indeed the *sinṭīr* was but a kind of psaltery played horizontally with beating rods instead of vertically with a plectrum.[3] Even in the eighteenth century both words were used for the same instrument.[4] Yet that they were generally quite distinct from each other is shown by their mention in Egypt in 1520 when both the *qānūn* and *sinṭir* (*sic*) are quoted together by Ibn Iyās.[5] The history of the instrument has been dealt with elsewhere.[6]

The *sinṭīr* only shows itself once in the *Nights* where, with the *jank* and other instruments, it is used to entertain the love-sick Prince in the *Story of Jānshāh*.[7]

The *nāy* (pl. *nāyāt*) was a flute, and the name, which is Persian, came into use in the early days of Islām when it superseded the older Arabic name of *quṣṣāba*.[8] It manifests itself but twice in the *Nights*, once in *The Loves of Abū 'Īsā and Qurrat al-'Ain* in company with the *'ūd*,[9] and again in the amusing wallet of the funster in the *Story of 'Alī the Persian*, where the *ṭunbūr* is its companion.[10]

The *shabbāba*[11] (pl. *shabbābāt*) was a fife or small flute. It is given prominence in the story of *Khalīfa the Fisherman of Baghdād*, where that delectable singing-girl Qūt al-Qulūb performs successively on the *duff*, *shabbāba*, and *'ūd* for the Lady Zubaida, giving the *rāwī* of the story the occasion to liken the finger-holes of the *shabbāba* to its "eyes".[12]

The *nāy tatarī* (Tartar flute) has no existence in Arabian music save in the *Tale of King 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān and his Sons*.[13] Its

[1] Riaño, *Notes on Early Spanish Music*, 117.
[2] *Kashf al-humūm*.
[3] Niebuhr, *Voyage en Arabie*, 143.
[4] Russell, *History of Aleppo*, (1794), i, 152.
[5] v, 334.
[6] *Ency. of Islām*, iii, 530.
[7] ii, 654 (iii, 428).
[8] Farmer, *Studies*, i, 65; *Ency. of Islām*, iii, 539.
[9] ii, 448 (iii, 251). [10] ii, 179 (iii, 30).
[11] Burton, as usual, has his own spelling of *shibāba*.
[12] iv, 172 (v, 191). Cf. Robson, *Tracts on Listening to Music*, 99.
[13] i, 372 (i, 395).

identity therefore escapes us, although it may have been a recorder (beaked flute) similar to the Tartar *tūtik*. Yet since we see it in the midst of the *'ūd jilliqī* (Damascus lute), the *jank 'ajamī* (Persian harp) and the *qānūn miṣrī* (Egyptian psaltery), the special provenance given this *nāy* may have been a mere literary flourish.

The *zamr* (pl. *zumūr*) or *mizmār* (pl. *mazāmīr*) was a reed-pipe in its specific sense. Sometimes it was used with the *'ūd* in indoor music, but more often with the *duff* (tambourine) or *ṭabl* (drum) in outdoor music. It is prominent in the scenes of public rejoicings as in the *Tale of King 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān and his Sons* where the citizens greet his son Kānmakān,[1] and in the *Story of Jānshāh* where the army of King Taghmūs marches out to martial strains.[2]

The *būq* (pl. *būqāt*) was the generic name for any instrument of the horn or trumpet family, but specifically it referred to the conical tube group. Like the *zamr*, its place is in the warlike and procession scenes displayed in the *Tale of King 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān and his Sons*,[3] the *Story of Jānshāh*,[4] and other episodes.

The *nafīr* (pl. *anfār*) was the cylindrical trumpet. It was unknown by this name until the eleventh century.[5] Only once is it referred to in the *Nights* where a solitary *nafīr* plays with *būqāt* (horns), *kāsāt* (cymbals), *zumūr* (reed-pipes), and *ṭubūl* (drums) at the head of the army of King Taghmūs as he sets out to give battle to the hosts of Hind.[6]

One other wind instrument deserves notice here although it seems to be a mechanical contrivance of the automatic type described in my *Organ of the Ancients* as the *ālat al-zamr*.[7] The instrument is not named, but the description given in the *Tale of King 'Umar ibn al-Nu'mān and his Sons* leaves little doubt as to its identity.[8] We are told in the story that Prince Sharrkān entered a spacious saloon where he saw human figures, "in the interior of which instruments were set in motion by air pressure," so that the Prince thought that the figures were talking. No "talking appliances are mentioned by Arabic writers, but "piping appliances" were certainly known to them, the specifications for

[1] i, 690 (ii, 196).
[2] ii, 656 (iii, 430).
[3] i, 357 (i, 382).
[4] ii, 656 (iii, 430).
[5] Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqa, *Al-Fakhrī*, 30.
[6] ii, 656 (iii, 430).
[7] Chap. vi.
[8] i, 383 (i, 396).

which were made known to the Arabs by means of translations from the Greek of Archimedes, Apollonius, and Heron.[1]

The *duff* (pl. *dufūf*), in the specific sense, is the rectangular tambourine with a membrane on both sides of the frame. The term was also a generic one applied to any type of tambourine.[2] It was essentially an instrument of the folk and in the *Nights* is constantly in the hands of the songstresses and singing-girls,[3] although we cannot always be sure whether it is the rectangular instrument which is meant, save in one place where the *ṭār* or round tambourine is mentioned with it.[4]

The *duff mauṣilī* (Mosul tambourine) is spoken of in one place in the *Nights*, but this special name is not known elsewhere. The *nisba* or adjective of provenance occurs in the Būlāq text,[5] but it is missing from the Calcutta [6] and Beyrout [7] texts, and it is probable therefore that it is simply an adornment by a *kātib* or *rāwī* so as to harmonize with the *'ūd 'irāqī* ('Irāqian lute) and *jank 'ajamī* (Persian harp) mentioned with it.

The *ṭār* (pl. *ṭīrān*) is the round tambourine with one membrane and with metal plates in the frame of the instrument. It is found in the hands of the songstresses and singing-girls in the *Nights*,[8] with whom it served also as a collecting box for gifts as already mentioned. It was placed on the ground or floor with the membrane downwards so that money could be thrown into it.[9] With the professional minstrel the *ṭār* was the most important instrument of rhythm as the charming apostrophe in the *Nights* shows.[10]

Lane's artists give several delineations of the tambourine known as the *ṭār*,[11] although in the stories themselves it is simply the *duff* or *duff mauṣilī* that is mentioned. The best design is that which serves as a tailpiece to the *Story of the Humpback*,[12] the model being the instrument given in Lane's *Modern Egyptians*.[13]

The *ṭabl* (pl. *ṭubūl*) was often the ordinary cylindrical drum, but in the generic sense the term was applied to any type of drum. It is therefore difficult to determine in the *Nights*, where its mention

[1] Burton admits the Heron derivation of the novelty although his reference to "the motive force of steam" cannot be accepted. See Farmer, *The Organ of the Ancients*, 79.

[2] *Ency. of Islām*, v, 73.

[3] i, 165 (i, 191); i, 225 (i, 252); i, 353 (i, 378).

[4] i, 165 (i, 191). [5] i, 27 (i, 83). [6] i, 67. [7] i, 55.

[8] i, 165 (i, 191–2). [9] Lane, *Arab. Nights*, i, 317.

[10] iv, 172 (v, 190–1). [11] Lane, *Arab. Nights*, i, 227, 291, 296, 306.

[12] Lane, op. cit., i, 296. [13] Lane, 366.

is legion, to which type the word refers, although the scene of the story and the percussive verb may help sometimes to hazard a guess whether it is the ordinary drum or the kettledrum that is meant. If at a private festival or public rejoicing the former is more likely,[1] whereas in a martial or processional setting the latter seems more proper.[2] One of Lane's artists has shown the former, the ordinary cylindrical drum, where it appears in the *Story of Ma'rūf*.[3]

The *kūs* (pl. *kūsāt*) was the largest kettledrum used by the Arabs [4] until the Mughals introduced the *kurga*. In the *Nights* it occurs with other martial instruments in the *nauba* or military band, although the *kūsāt* of the Beyrout text [5] is sometimes changed to *kāsāt* (cymbals) in the Calcutta [6] and Būlāq texts.

The *ṭabli bāz* was a very small kettledrum of metal played by means of a leathern or fabric strap. It is not actually mentioned in the *Nights* by name, but there can be little doubt, as the perspicuous Burton has guessed, that the *ṭabl* mentioned in the story of *Ḥasan al-Baṣrī* was a *bāz*, to use the modern truncated name.[7] In this tale we read of "a *ṭabl* (drum) of copper and a *zakhma* (beater) of silk worked in gold with talismans".[8] Lane translated *zakhma* by "plectrum" which annoyed Burton because it was misleading. This is true enough if we merely consider the modern usage of the term *plectrum* for the implement with which the strings of a lute or similar instrument are plucked. Yet in its older Greek and Latin meaning the word stood for any striking implement, just as *zakhma* does in Arabic, since the latter is used for the plectrum of a lute, the bow of a viol, one of the beating rods of a dulcimer, or one of the sticks or beaters of a drum. On the whole, Lane had good reasons for using the word *plectrum*, although the present writer has avoided it.

This magic drum, with its talismanic *zakhma*, is just one further example of the close connection between magic and music, a notion so deeply cherished by the Semites.[9] Even to-day the *bāz* is the favoured instrument of the *musaḥḥar* (enchanted one) when he is collecting alms.[10]

The *darbukka* (pl. *darbukkāt*) is a goblet-shaped drum with a

[1] i, 700. [2] iii, 150, 274, 282. [3] iii, 364.
[4] Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', i. 91. [5] ii, 57, 96. [6] i, 650, 700.
[7] v, 57. See Lane, *Modern Egyptians*, 164, for a design.
[8] iv, 14 (v, 57); iv, 22 (v, 65).
[9] See my *Sa'adyah Gaon on the Influence of Music*, chap. i.
[10] Lane, op. cit., 365.

single membrane. It is only quoted once in the *Nights*, and even then the scribe has written دربلة instead of دربكة.[1] It has long been a favoured instrument of the Arabian folk, although here and there the professional minstrel uses it as a rhythmic accompaniment. In the *Tale of the Tailor* [2] it is the bath-keeper who sings to its notes, but since the name *darbukka* is quite a modern one, the date of the facture of the story cannot be very old, unless it is a copyist's slip for the Persian *danbala* دنبلة.

The remaining instruments, those classed as sonorous substances, are, with the exception of the *kāsāt* (cymbals), scarcely to be included among instruments of music as implied by the scope of this inquiry. Yet they are sound-producing instruments and as most of them are to be found among the impedimenta of modern European percussionists their inclusion here may not be considered out of place.

The *kāsāt* (sing. *kās, kāsa*) or *ku'ūs* (sing. *ka's*) were the large bowl-shaped cymbals, as distinct from the *ṣunūj* (sing. *ṣanj*) or plate-shaped cymbals. They figure in most of the martial scenes in the *Nights* as already noted.[3]

The *jalājil* (sing. *juljul*) and *ajrās* (sing. *jaras*) were bells, the former being usually the small spherical grelots, whilst the latter were large conoid or square bells with an interior oscillating striker. Both kinds were used as an adornment to the caparison of camels and horses,[4] and, during the Mamlūk period in Egypt, grelots were placed on criminals.[5] This latter practice reminds us that, in the *Nights*, when Mercury 'Alī, the artful one who " could steal *kohl* from the eye ", became a reformed man, he wore bells on his coat, although it is not too apparent that this was done as a proof of his honesty.[6] Of course there is the old Arabic proverb that a man who wears a *juljul* needlessly imperils himself. Mercury 'Alī even went so far as to string bells on the wallet which contained his well-gotten gains.[7]

The *qalāqil* (sing. *qalqal*) appear to have been what we would term jingles. Together with grelots and bells they were hung on mules and camels in the *Nights* so as to create fright and consternation in the enemy.[8]

[1] Calcutta edit., i, 244; Beyrout edit., i, 200. [2] Burton, i, 274.
[3] See *J.R.A.S.* (1944), p. 176. See *Ency. of Islām*, v, 196. *Legacy of Islām*, fig., 91.
[4] iii, 293 (iv, 238). [5] Al-Maqrīzī, i, 2, 106. [6] iii, 450 (iv, 379).
[7] iii, 461 (iv, 389). [8] iii, 293 (iv, 238).

The *khalākhīl* (sing. *khalkhāl*) and *aḥjāl* (sing. *ḥijl*) were the metal rings or anklets worn by women, the sound of which is often commented on. In the *Nights* there is an allusion to the delightful rhythmical gait of a slave-girl which even hushed the sound of her anklets.[1] There is also the advice that when a youth arrives at puberty he must no longer frequent the quarter [the *ḥarīm*] where the anklets (*aḥjāl*) tinkle.[2]

The *nāqūs* (pl. *nawāqīs*) is the wooden or metal percussion slab or plate used like a gong by Christians in Arabic-speaking lands. In the *Nights* it occurs in the story of *'Alī Nūr al-Dīn and Maryam the Girdle-girl* where it is sounded on the roof of the Chapel of the Lady Maryam [the B.V.M.], the Mother of Light, to call the Christians to their devotions.[3]

Lastly comes the *qaḍīb* (pl. *quḍbān*), a wand which, beaten on any sonorous substance, often supplied the rhythm in the music of early Arabia. It is one of the oldest Arabian percussive instruments.[4] The word occurs in the *Nights* but not actually in this connection. In the story of *The Mock Khalif* a *mudawwara* is struck with a *qaḍīb* so as to summon a servant.[5] Lane says that the *mudawwara* was "a round cushion",[6] but Burton replies that "one does not strike a cushion for a signal", and reverts to the original meaning of the word which, he says, is "'something round', as a circular plate of wood or metal, a gong".[7] Yet the gong of metal, as we know the instrument, does not appear to have been used by the Arabs except in the Christian *nāqūs*. It is true that in the chronicle of the Crusader Geoffroy de Vinsauf (Bk. i, chap. 23) we read of the *gongs* of the Saracens, but when we turn to the original Latin the word is *cymbala*. It would seem, however, that the beating of a cushion with a *qaḍīb*, as suggested by Lane, is actually within the bounds of probability, since such a proceeding did certainly obtain with the Arabs. We read of it in the *Kaff al-ra'ā'* of Ibn Ḥajar al-Haithamī (d. 1565), in the section entitled, "Concerning beating (*ḍarb*) with the *qaḍīb* upon cushions (*wasā'id*)."[8]

In conclusion I have to mention the *kamānja* (pl. *kamānjāt*) or viol, which is delineated by one of Lane's artists as an adornment

[1] iii, 404 (iv, 337). [2] i, 661 (ii, 169). [3] iv, 313 (v, 334–5).
[4] *Ency. of Islām*, v, 197. [5] ii, 163 (iii, 16). [6] ii, 343, 356.
[7] iii, 16 [8] Berlin MS., 5517, fol. 19v.

to the latter's version of *The Barber's Tale of his Fifth Brother*.[1] Yet, truth to tell, the *kamānja* is not mentioned anywhere in the *Nights*. Nor is its cousin the *rabāb* given recognition. Lane's coadjutor was obviously influenced by the great Arabist's *Modern Egyptians*, where the instrument is shown.[2] Yet, seeing that the Arabs knew of the viol as early as the ninth century [3] we can reasonably suppose that, in spite of it not being mentioned, the musical auditors in the *Nights* must have listened to its "drawn notes", as Al-Fārābī would say,[4] especially in those stories of Egyptian and Syrian facture. Certainly the musical auditors *of* the *Nights* knew of the viol, which has ever been *facile princeps* among the instruments of the *rāwī* and *shā'ir* at the café or camp-fire, as both Lane and Burton have shown elsewhere.

[1] i, 360. [2] p. 358. [3] Farmer, *Studies*, i, 101. [4] Ibid., i, 102.

Chapter V

The Craft of the Music

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The Craft of the Music

فى الزوايا خبايا

" In the corners are hidden treasures."

An Arabic Proverb.

Having discussed almost every other phase of the music of the *Nights* we must finally turn to the music *per se*. In this inquiry there are two aspects to be viewed, if we are to follow the accepted Arab procedure, viz. the theoretical (*naẓarī*) and the practical (*'amalī*), which give us, respectively, the science (*'ilm*) and art (*ṣan'*) of music, both of which have been considerably misunderstood by authoritative writers on the *Nights*.

Lane, who was perspicacious in most things, indulged in that ridiculous, but oft-repeated notion, that the Arabian music scale consisted of a " division of tones into thirds ",[1] a statement already made in his *Modern Egyptians*.[2] We cannot lay too much blame on the shoulders of the great Orientalist for this blunder, since even specialists like Villoteau [3] and Fétis,[4] to mention no others, had already subscribed to it. What all these writers had in mind was the theory of the Systematist School, which they did not comprehend.[5]

In the science of music three distinct schools of thought existed during the period covered by the *Nights*, and in each case the scale was basically Pythagorean. The three schools were : (1) the *Old Arabian School* (7th–10th cent. A.D.), (2) the *Greek Scholiasts* (9th–13th cent.), and (3) the *Systematist School* (13th–17th cent.). It was the scale of this last named which Lane and others mistook for a " division of tones into thirds ", whereas the tone (*ṭanīn*) was actually divided into three sequential intervals of 243 : 256,

[1] i, 204. [2] 354.

[3] *Description de l'Égypte* (*De l'état actuel de l'art musical moderne*), i, 613.

[4] *Histoire générale de la musique*, ii, 170.

[5] See *Encyclopædia of Islam*, iii, 749, *Recueil des travaux du Congrès de Musique arabe* (Cairo, 1934), 652, and my *Preface* to Baron D'Erlanger's *La Musique Arabe*, Tome iii.

243 : 245, and 54288 : 531441. Yet there is no mention of these schools in the *Nights*, and apart from the mere admission of the omniscient Tawaddud regarding the theory of music (*fann al-mūsīqī*),[1] this "most difficult of the mathematical sciences"[2] is ignored in its ample pages. It is not strange, therefore, that whilst the learned (*'ulamā'*) and the legists (*fuqahā'*) question this boastful singing-girl on almost all the sciences so as to test her vaunted knowledge, no attempt is made to catechize her on the theory of music. Therefore we need not trouble ourselves further with this intricate subject because, outside of Lane's notes, it is not discussed in the *Nights*, as we have seen.

What is of greater importance than scientific theory is practical theory, because the technicalities of this aspect of the music of the *Nights* disport themselves on so many pages of these tales, more often than not, to the utter embarrassment of the Arabic reader. It is true that in the European versions we are not disconcerted by any technicalities, for the simple reason that the translators gloss most of these quite plausibly if not speciously. On this account it is not too much to say that the whole question deserves fuller consideration than what has been accorded it, which is evidenced by Burton's rather immoderate applause for a solitary note on the subject made by Payne,[3] while Lane has not vouchsafed a single line of worth to this question which his deserved fame as a lexicographer ought to have compelled.

Yet it has to be conceded that the technical musical nomenclature of practical theory, as shown in the *Nights*, is difficult of apprehension. Much of the perplexity is due to the use of vague terms, but generally one can ascribe the following causes for the difficulties which are encountered:—(1) The technical expressions are not constant in meaning because of the diverse periods and places of facture of the tales. (2) In those tales translated from other languages the translator may have been unable to find the appropriate Arabic word.[4] (3) The ignorance of *kātib* or *rāwī*, as scribe or storyteller, would also account for some of the confused terminology.

Since Arabic theorists of music have, from the earliest times,

[1] ii, 493 (iii, 281).

[2] This was the opinion of Isḥāq ibn Sulaimān (d. *c.* 932), better known as Isaac Israeli.

[3] v, 376.

[4] This is inconsiderable. Most of the technical musical terms occur in tales of Arabic origin.

treated music as consisting of two basic divisions—melody (*laḥn*) and rhythm (*īqā'*), it seems advisable to follow this procedure. *Laḥn* is the general Arabic term for "melody", and it is used in this sense in the *Nights*,[1] although in two places such words as *ghinā'* [2] and *maghnā* (مغنى) [3] are given this meaning. The second of our divisions is rhythm, generally known as *īqā'*, although the term is not used in the *Nights*. Still, such words as *ḍarabāt* (beats) [4] and *ḥarakāt* (pulsations) [5] possibly refer to rhythms.

As elsewhere, music in the *Nights* was either vocal or instrumental. The term *ṣaut*, as used in the *Nights*, means a "vocal piece",[6] as it does in the *Kitāb al-aghānī*. *Ghinā'* is applied, as in Arabic in general, to "singing" or "song".[7] This, however, is a generic term, whereas specific words like *anshūda* and *tartīl* connote "rhythmic song" and "unrhythmic song" respectively. We read that a vocalist "sang" (*ghanna*) [8] or "chanted" (*anshada*).[9] Of an instrumentalist it is usually stated that he "played" (*ḍaraba*),[10] or "performed" (*ṭarraba*),[11] or "executed" (*'amila*),[12] or "manipulated" (*qallaba*) [13] upon an instrument which, in the *Nights*, was generally the *'ūd* (lute).

One must admit, however, that the use of the words *anshada* ("chanted") and *ghanna* ("sang") is often confusing, although I have suggested that the latter is generic and the former specific. Indeed sometimes it would appear that two distinct types of vocal music are implied. Take, for example, a passage from the *Tale of 'Alī ibn Bakkār and of Shams al-Nahār*:—

امر جارية من الجوارى ان تغنى فاخذت العود واصلحته وجسّته وضربت به ثم انشدت تقول شعر.

"He commanded one of the slave-girls to *sing*, so she took the lute, and tuned it, and fingered it, and played on it. Then she *chanted* saying poetry." [14] Here it would seem that chanting was the same as singing. On the other hand we have it stated in the same story that slave-girls "sang *and* chanted poetry",[15] implying,

[1] ii, 450 (iii, 253).
[2] ii, 450 (iii, 252).
[3] ii, 149 (iii, 16).
[4] ii, 438 (iii, 240).
[5] iv, 266 (v, 297).
[6] ii, 149 (iii, 8).
[7] Throughout.
[8] i, 809 (ii, 305).
[9] i, 69 (i, 85).
[10] ii, 54 (ii, 434).
[11] ii, 37 (ii, 419).
[12] ii, 87 (ii, 462).
[13] ii, 163 (iii, 16).
[14] i, 809 (ii, 305).
[15] i, 762 (ii, 263).

seemingly, that chanting and singing were not the same. Once again this contrariety may be due to the ignorance or carelessness of *kātib* or *rāwī*.

Arabian music of the period of the *Nights*, which stretches over many centuries, was modal, just as it is to-day. This qualification covers both melody and rhythm. The general term for a mode, whether melodic or rhythmic, was *ṭarīqa* (pl. *ṭarā'iq*) or *ṭurqa* (pl. *ṭuraq*).[1] Lane was of opinion that *ṭarīqa* in this sense was a post-classical word,[2] but against this statement is the fact that it is employed in the *Kitāb al-aghānī*[3] and elsewhere,[4] where it is used of both melodic and rhythmic modes.

We find mention of twenty-one and twenty-four of these *ṭarā'iq* or *ṭuraq* being performed one after another,[5] although we cannot determine whether the reference is to melodic or rhythmic modes, except in one place, in the story of *Isḥāq al-Mauṣilī and the Merchant*, where of a singing-girl we are told that "she sang various *ṭuraq* to rare melodies (*alḥān*)".[6]

Then we have the term used in reference to musical "form", i.e. the order in which, or the basis upon which, music was composed and performed. We are told that an artiste "played (*ḍaraba*) upon twenty-one *ṭuraq* and then returned to the first *ṭarīqa*".[7] A procedure, perhaps, much like our *rondo* form.

Looking around for clues so as to surmount the obstacles of identification, one is inclined to classify the mode which is "performed" (*ṭarraba*) as melodic, and that which is "played" (*ḍaraba*) as rhythmic, but there is no certainty in this distinction because طرب and ضرب can so easily be misread by a careless copyist. Yet here and there we can probably discern where melodic modes are intended even when the term *ṭarīqa* is not present. One example in the story of *Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī and the Barber-Surgeon* shows that a musician "enlivened with *naghamāt*" اطرب بالنغمات.[8] Another passage, in the story of *Muḥammad*

[1] iv, 262 (v, 294); iv, 265 (v, 296).
[2] *Lexicon*, 1849.
[3] Introduction. Yet this really depends on the date of the Introduction, which might be later than the time of Abu'l-Faraj (tenth century).
[4] Al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*, ii, 188.
[5] ii, 163 (iii, 16); ii, 259 (iii, 105).
[6] ii, 436 (iii, 239).
[7] ii, 267 (iii, 111); iv, 362 (v, 294).
[8] ii, 140 (ii, 513).

al-Amīn and the Slave-girl, runs : " She sang with pleasing *naghamāt* " غنت باطيب النغمات.[1] A third reference, in *Abu'l-Ḥusn and his slave-girl Tawaddud*, is to Tawaddud who " played upon it [the lute] in twelve *nagham* " ضربت عليه اثنى عشر نغما.[2] All of these tales are pitched in the " Golden Age " of Islām, at a time when the term *naghamāt* (sing. *naghma*) stood for " notes ", whilst *nagham* (sing. *naghm*) meant " melody ". It was only much later, certainly after the fourteenth century A.D., that *naghamāt* came to stand for " modes ", although we must not forget how closely the two terms are bound together, as we know from the Greek *τόνοι*, which meant both notes and modes.[3] It seems to me that, in these tales and others of their kind, the *kātib* or *rāwī* used older material, but touched it up with more modern terms.

As for the rhythmic modes, it is not improbable that in the *Tale of King 'Umar ibn Nu'mān and his Sons* the reference to the instrumentalist who " changed the *ḍarb* " غيرت الضرب,[4] or another, in the story of *Isḥāq al-Mauṣilī and the Merchant*, who " consummated the *ḍarabāt* " احكمت الضربات,[5] or the lady, in *'Alī Nūr al-Dīn and Maryām the Girdle-Girl*, who " played upon it [the lute] with the best of her *ḥarakāt* " ضربت عليه باحسن حركاتها,[6] applies to rhythmic modes.

The question now arises, " Why the several terms for the same thing ? " The answer has already been partly indicated, although it must be insisted that, in spite of Lane's opinion to the contrary, *ṭarā'iq* and *ṭuraq* are early and not late words. These occur in what may definitely be considered to be early tales, and we know that the term *ṭarq* (pl. *ṭurūq*) had a similar meaning as early as Al-Laith ibn al-Muẓaffar (eighth century A.D.), and it persisted until the time of the *Tāj al-'arūs*. On the other hand, *naghamāt* and *ḍarabāt*, in the sense of melodic and rhythmic modes, are later, and are still current in Egypt.[7]

All these melodic and rhythmic modes had special names, lists

[1] ii, 403 (iii, 208).
[2] ii, 427 (iii, 240).
[3] Cf. my *Historical Facts for the Arabian Musical Influence* (London, 1930), 238.
[4] i, 372 (i, 395).
[5] ii, 437 (iii, 240).
[6] iv, 266 (v, 297).
[7] Darwīsh Muḥammad, *Ṣafā' al-awqāt* (1910), pp. 10, 20.

of which may be found elsewhere,[1] yet, with the exception of a passing verse reference to the *thaqīl* and *khafīf* rhythms in *Khalīfa the Fisherman of Baghdād*,[2] we have no mention of them in the *Nights*. Here is what we read :—

> " Ho thou o' the tambourine,[3] my heart takes flight
> And love-smit cries while thy fingers smite.
>
> So say thou word *thaqīl* or *khafīf*:
> Play whate'er thou please it will charm the sprite

Yet the words may not actually be the names of rhythmic modes, but may refer to the heavy or light beats in rhythm, or as the modern Arab tambouriner has it, the *tumm* or *takk* beats.

The forms of vocal music in the *Nights* are not many. It is generally the *qiṭā'* that is used, generally two or three verses, often designated a *nufṭa*, being employed. That two verses were used may have been due to the fact that two musical phrases were the rule at this time in vocal music. Of course, longer forms were occasionally used. With most of the vocal pieces there was generally an instrumental prelude (*bashrau*) as well as a postlude (*khatm*), although the *Nights* do not mention them. This, of course, only refers to the accompanied song.

In instrumental music, no particular forms are alluded to in the *Nights*. The only definite reference to anything of this sort is in the *nauba* which is frequently mentioned. This was, and still is, the classical vocal and instrumental *suite* (*nauba*) of the Arabs. We have already noticed the term being used to signify a military band, because it was this combination which performed the five daily time signals (*naubāt*). The *nauba* of chamber music received its name in much the same way.[4] Under the early 'Abbāsid khalifs, the court musicians had a particular hour and day for their performances,[5] and this is adverted to in the *Nights* where a songstress is appointed to a Thursday *nauba*.[6] It was this taking turn (*nauba*) that gave rise to the term for the music played on these occasions.

In the *Nights* we read of a " complete *nauba* " being sung,[7] and similarly of a " merry *nauba* ".[8] These references are taken

[1] See my *History of Arabian Music*, pp. 71–2, 179, 20–5, and *Sa'adyah Gaon on the Influence of Music*, p. 21.

[2] iv, 172 (v, 190).

[3] *Ṭār*. Burton says : " Ho thou o' the tabret."

[4] *Encyclopædia of Islām*, iii, 885. [5] *Kitāb al-aghānī*, iii, 177.

[6] ii, 439 (iii, 242). [7] iv, 173 (v, 191). [8] ii, 300 (iii, 125).

from early tales, *Khalīfa the Fisherman of Baghdād* and *Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mahdī and the Merchant's Sister*, and indeed those references which follow from the story of *'Alā al-Dīn Abu'l-Shāmāt* and *Ni'mat ibn al-Rabī'a and Nu'm his Slave-girl*, are also early tales. The word was also used of an instrumental suite, as we have record of a performer who "executed a *nauba*" on the lute,[1] whilst in another story we read of a performer who "played a *nauba*" on this instrument.[2] Although it is not specifically mentioned these references show that the various movements, vocal and/or instrumental, of the *nauba*, were given. Yet only once is there a direct implication of the actual movement performed, and that is when we are told that a performer "took the lute and executed a *nauba* . . . and [afterwards] began the *dārij* of the *nauba*".[3] This *dārij* is apparently one of the movements of the *nauba*, and it takes its name from a rhythmic mode with this label which does not appear to be mentioned earlier than the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries A.D. The modern *naubāt* of Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria contain a movement named *darj*, the rhythm of which is identical with the *dārij* rhythmic mode.

A final word concerning two further technical terms used in instrumental performance seems desirable. In the story of *The Ruined Man of Baghdād and his Slave-Girl* there is a passage in which the terms *ṭuraq* and *ṭarīqa* are used in a sense rather different from that which has been accepted. Here is the passage in question[4]: اخذت العود وغيرت الطرق طريقة بعد طريقة وضربت على الطريقة التى قد تعلّمتها. It is quite evident that *ṭuraq* طرق (sing. *ṭurqa*) in this place means "tunings", or, as musicians would say, *accordatura*. *Ṭarīqa* طريقة (pl. *ṭarā'iq*), as we have seen, means "mode", but whilst each string could be said to give, by fingering, a "mode", or, more strictly speaking, a genre (*jins*) of a "mode", we must, for the sake of clarity, translate the term differently where it first occurs in this passage, and render it as "note". The version would then read: "She took the lute and altered the accordatura (*ṭuraq*), note (*ṭarīqa*) by note (*ṭarīqa*), and played in a mode (*ṭarīqa*) which she had learned from me."

Another word of technical importance is *jassa* جسّ which means

[1] ii, 98 (ii, 471).
[2] ii, 87 (ii, 462).
[3] ii, 54 (ii, 434).
[4] iv, 361 (v, 376).

" to finger " or " to thrum ". According to the *Mafātīḥ al-'ulūm* (tenth century), the derivative noun *jass* specifically means " the striking (*naqr*) of the strings [of the lute] with the forefinger and the thumb underneath the plectrum ".[1] An example in the *Nights* runs: " He took the lute and thrummed it " اخذ العود وجسّه.[2] Burton mellifluently says: " He took the lute and swept the strings." [3] In another passage we read: " He thrummed the lute " جسّ العود,[4] which Burton renders: " He turned it [the lute]." [5] A further, and more pointed, case is: " She took the lute, and supported it upon her robust bosom, and thrummed it with her finger-tips (*anāmil*) " اخذت العود واسندته الى نهديها وجسّته باناملها, [6] which Burton shortens into: " She took the lute and swept the strings with her fingertips." [7]

As a frontispiece I give the earliest piece of recorded music from Arabic sources. It is taken from the *Kitāb al-adwār* of Ṣafī al-Dīn 'Abd al-Mu'min (d. 1294) and serves as a specimen of the type of melody and song favoured in the *Nights*. As the plate shows, the music is written in an alphabetic and numeric tablature. These I have transcribed into European notation. The mensural values of some of the notes in this manuscript are incorrect. The first mensural figure in line 2 should read ٢ instead of ١٢, and the last six mensural figures of line 9 should read ٢ ٢ ٢ ٢ ٢ ١٢. Here is a transcription of the melody and vocal piece which are in the melodic mode *kuwāsht* and the rhythmic mode *ramal*. The scale is the Pythagorean and the accidentals marked with *plus* (+) and *minus* (−) signs indicate the sharpening and flattening of a note by a *limma* and *comma* respectively.

[1] p. 239. [2] iii, 389. [3] iv, 322. [4] iii, 410.
[5] iv, 343. " Turned " is possibly a printer's slip for " tuned ".
[6] i, 70. [7] i, 86.

Epilogue

Epilogue

قيمة كل انسان ما يحسنه

"The measure of every man is [in] what he does well."
An Arabic Proverb.

THERE is a story in the *Nights* which deserves a place here as a *khātima* or epilogue to these studies on the music of those precious nocturnes, more especially because I alluded to the subject in my earlier remarks. It concerns the hostile attitude of some of the Islamic legists towards music, a feeling which was particularly bitter during the period covered by the *Nights*. We see it in the story of *Abu'l-Ḥasan the Wag*, who was so immoderately addicted to music and other pleasures that the *imām* of the mosque and the *shaikhs* of the district complained to the *wālī* of his conduct. The result was that fines were imposed on the offender for having annoyed *his* neighbours. Abu'l-Ḥasan was wroth at this treatment, and one day he confided to the Khalif Hārūn al-Rashīd, of whose identity he was completely unaware, that if the power ever came his way he would have these complainers whipped with a thousand lashes. It so happened that his wish was granted and, as the "Mock Khalif", he had the *imām* and the *shaikhs* whipped as he had yearned. After their punishment he dismissed them with these words: "That is the recompense of those who annoy *their* neighbours."

It is an amusing story, and one which doubtless gained the plaudits of the crowd in café or market place. Yet from the story itself it is clear that in this instance the *imām* and *shaikhs* were right on legal grounds. Abu'l-Ḥasan was an obtrusive fellow, and his indulgence in music and other pleasures was evidently so blatant that there can be little doubt that he did annoy his neighbours and that he deserved his punishment. Had he been a good Muslim he would not have obtruded on the rights of others for verily الحياء من الايمان "Modesty is a part of Religion".

To some extent one can appreciate the attitude of the men in sober habit towards music when they saw it in company with wine and women. The Jew Isaiah cried: "Woe unto them . . . the harp, the lute, the timbrel, the pipe, and *wine*, are in their feasts, but they regard not the word of Yahveh." It was the same with the Christian

St. Clement of Alexandria, who thought that "if people occupy their time with pipes and psalteries, they become immodest and intractable". The Muslim Ibn Abi'l-Dunyā' was even more pointed in his censure when he said that "all dissipation begins with music and ends with drunkenness".

Yet music, *per se*, cannot be evil, although it might accompany that which is evil. Indeed, one is sometimes compelled to wonder whether there was not some jealousy of the minstrel's success at the back of all this protest from the puritans? Note the attitude of the Christian St. Chrysostom, who had been preaching for a whole year against the *ludicrae artes*, only to see the churches empty during Holy Week, although the *spectacula* were packed with dense crowds. Observe the mien of the Prophet Muḥammad, who poured out the vials of his wrath against the Pagan poets whose *ludicrous stories* were receiving more attention than his *revelations*. See the later Muslim divines or *fuqahā'* gravely shaking their heads in reproof of those who poured countless gold into the laps of the *mughannī* singing and playing at the Khalifate court. They are not a whit different from the Christian cleric Langland as he hurled invective when he saw the English nobility lavishing gifts on the minstrel class.

Human nature is much the same whether East or West, and we cannot be sure that righteous indignation was always the urge with prophets and priests against this indulgence in music. Even so, it was only the few who could afford to "sin" in this way, and fewer still were the minstrels who reaped *dīnār*, *shekel*, or gold in aiding or abetting this sinning. The bulk of the people could not afford to indulge in "wine, woman, and song", and the huge majority of the minstrel class were relatively as poor as the proverbial church mouse. Indeed, the truth is to be found in a line in the *Alf laīla wa laīla* which says: واما حرف اولى الصناعات فغير فاضلة عن الاقوات. "For those who follow the arts, there is little beyond mere subsistence."

Finally, this puritanical objection to music is quite untenable, since it would be just as unreasonable to condemn fruit or viands because of their concomitance with wine or woman, as Maimonides would have argued. Indeed, music is less deserving of condemnation because, *per se*, it is neither good nor evil. Music cannot be categoried nor submitted to predicament. It defies all such resolu-

tion, and he who would seek this would have to be, as Glaucon says, a God. We know not how or why music affects us. Indeed we are still far distant in knowledge of the real causes of emotion itself. The great Muslim philosopher, Al-Fārābī, very astutely steered clear of an explanation of the phenomenon, but at least he did expose the fallacy that music inspired a passion or soul-state. *Per contra*, he insisted that music whether in the performer or in the listener, was itself inspired by a passion or soul-state, although the logician might reply that this is a distinction without a difference. Indeed, Schopenhauer, seems to have guessed the riddle when he said that the world is but realized music. To him, music exists in the core of things, and subsists on their essence. Perhaps, if we could only peep behind the veil we might find that music is the key to existence itself.

LUTE (*'ūd*). REEDPIPE (*Zamr*). TAMBOURINE (*Ṭār*)

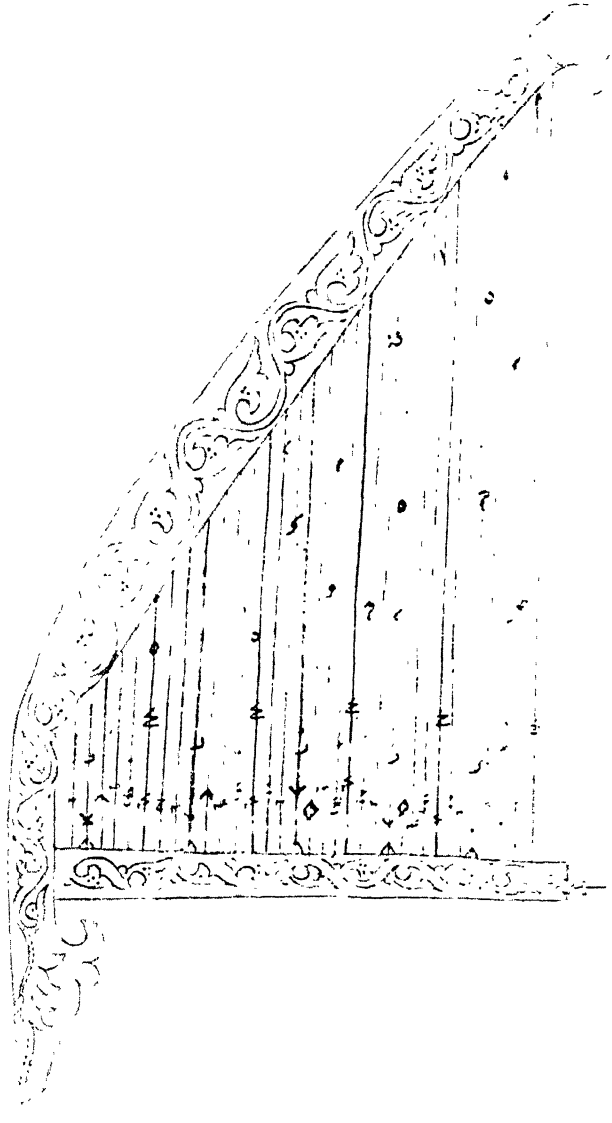
From the *Maqāmāt* of Al-Ḥarīrī (d. 1122). British Museum MS. (Fourteenth Century).

LUTE (*'ūd*)

From a Damascus writing box (A.D. 1281). British Museum.

PANDORE (*Ṭunbūr*)

From a Persian bowl (Fourteenth Century). British Museum.

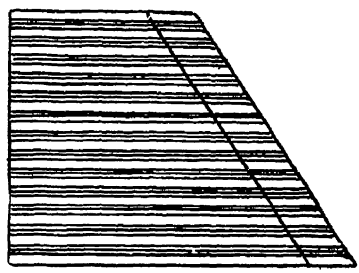


HARP (*Jank*)

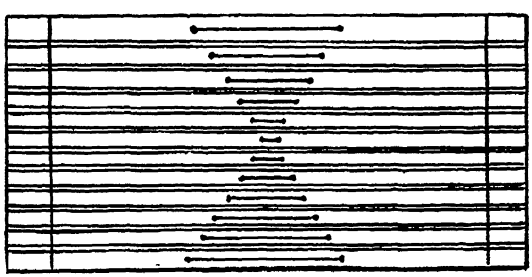
From the *Kitāb al-adwār* of Ṣafī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Muʾmin (d. 1294). National Library, Cairo (dated A.D. 1326–7).

HARP (*Jank*)

From a Mesopotamian candle-stick (Thirteenth Century). Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



TRAPEZOIDAL PSALTERY (*Qānūn*)



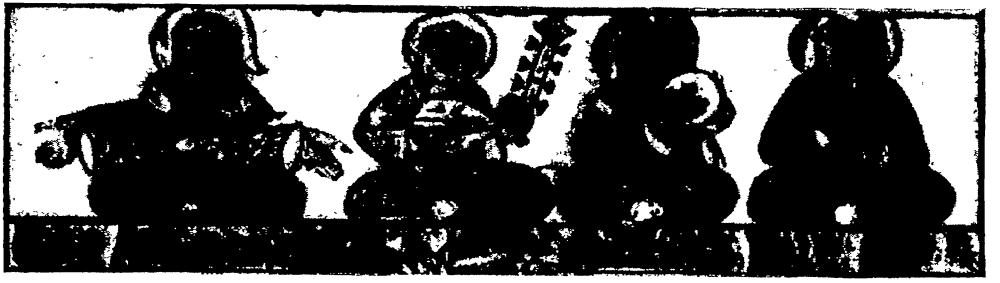
RECTANGULAR PSALTERY (*Nuzha*)

From the *Kanz al-tuhaf* (A.D. 1346–1362). British Museum MS. (Seventeenth Century).

CLAPPERS (*Shuqaifāt*). PANDORE (*Ṭunbūr*). FLUTE (*Nāy*).

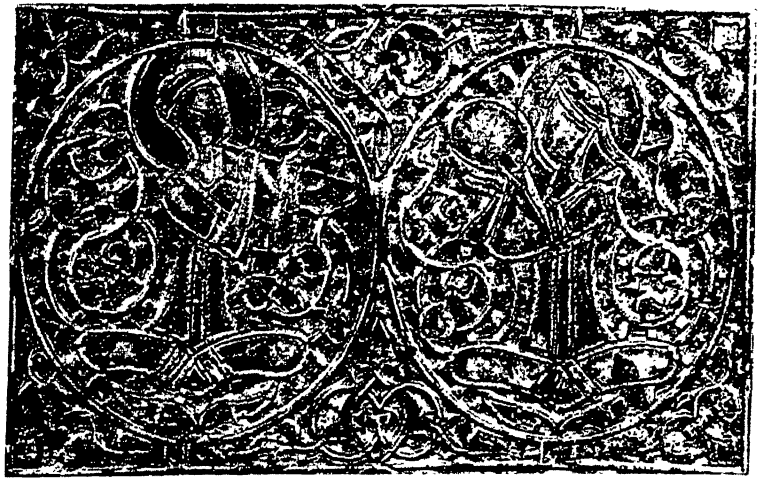
From the *Kitāb al-buldān* of 'Abd al-Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad . . . al-Iṣfahānī. Bodleian Library MS. (Fifteenth Century).

PLATE 7



Drum	Lute	Tambourine	Flute
(*Kūba*).	(*ʿūd*).	(*Ṭār*).	(*Shabbāba*).

From the *Kitāb fī maʿrifat al-ḥiyal* of Badīʿ al-Zamān . . . al-Jazarī (fl. A.D. 1206). Stambul manuscript (dated A.D. 1354).



REEDPIPE (*Zamr*). TAMBOURINE (*Ṭār*)

From a Mauṣil casket (Thirteenth Century). British Museum.

REEDPIPE (*Zamr*)

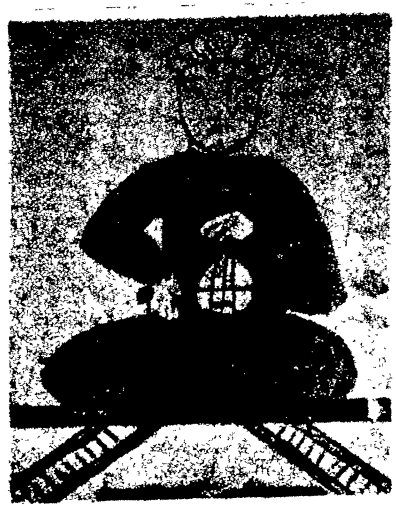
TAMBOURINE (*Ṭār*)

From a Mauṣil casket (Thirteenth century). Art Galleries, Glasgow.

TRUMPET (*Būq*) KETTLEDRUMS (*Naqqārāt*)

From the *Kitāb al-buldān* of 'Abd al-Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad . . . al-Iṣfahānī. Bodleian Library MS. (Fifteenth Century).

PANPIPES (*Shu'aibīya*).



VIOL (*Kamānja*).

PSALTERY (*Qānūn*)

From the *Kashf al-humūm* (Fifteenth Century). National Library, Cairo.

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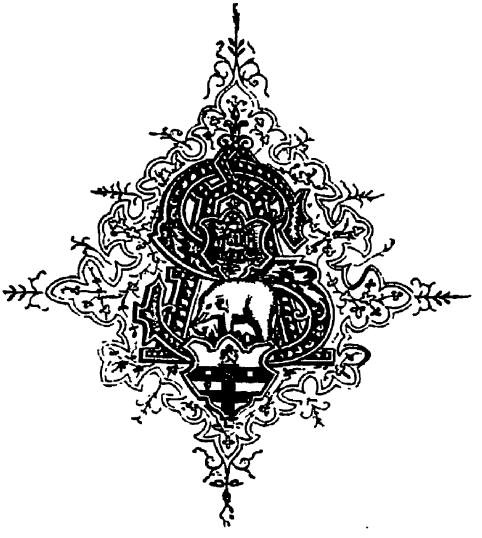

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