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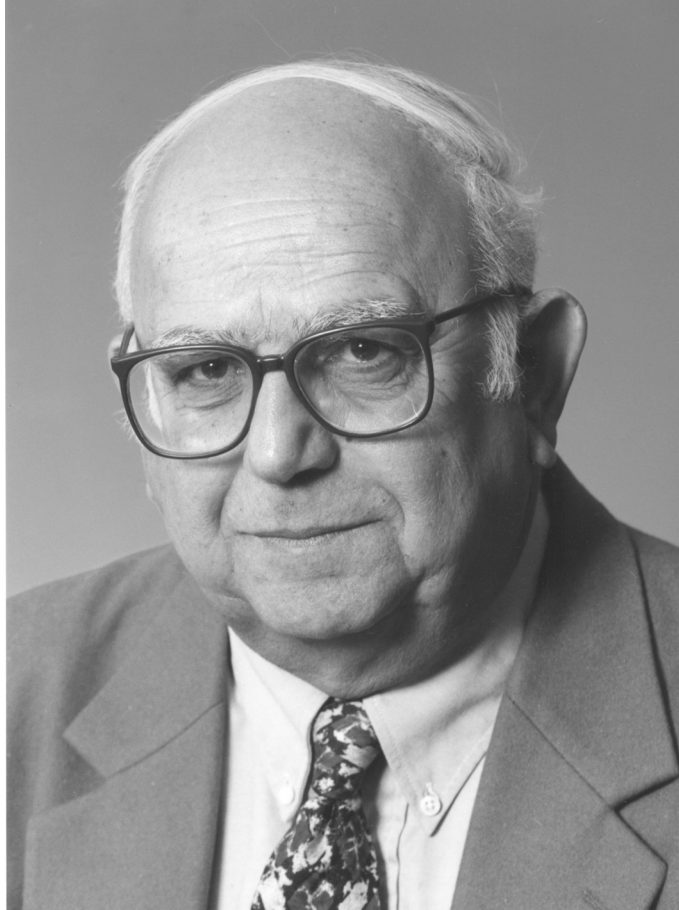
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Each article has been given a Roman number in order of appearance, as listed in the Contents. This number is repeated on each page and is quoted in the index entries.

PREFACE

In 1962 the French periodical *Cahiers des civilisations médiévales* published my first study on medieval Arabic musical culture “La danse artistique musulmane”, which I am happy to include in this collection of essays. Its appearance was due to my participation in a doctoral seminar on Latin medieval writings on music held at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes at the Sorbonne under the guidance of the late Solange Corbin, a great specialist of Cantus Planus. Stimulated by the discussions on aspects of western medieval theory which, in their broad way of looking at music, reveal points in common and parallels in medieval Arabic writings, I was led to follow Corbin’s suggestion and encouragement to put into writing some thoughts on medieval Arab theories on music.

My choice of the theme of art dance was determined not only by the scarcity of good work on this subject but also by my intention of dealing with the approach of most Arab theorists in their approach to the world of sound, particularly in the epoch known as the Golden Age of Muslim civilization. This was a global and interdisciplinary approach owing its strength to the great importance attached to learning, the study of music occupying a prominent place among the spheres of knowledge designed to mould the educated individual. One of the major ideas dominating this approach was that the pursuit of knowledge is the path to human perfection and happiness. Hence the themes of music and dance could appear in the context of a wide range of subjects belonging to various areas of knowledge.

I indeed found the material for my study on the art of dance mainly in certain chapters of two major sources that are basically historical works and not specialized treatises. These are the *Meadows of gold and mines of gems* by the historian and geographer al-Mas’ūdī (d. 956), and *al-Muqaddima* (=The Prolegomena) of the great historian, sociologist and philosopher Ibn Khaldūn (1322–1406), where he developed a philosophical conception of history. Among the multiple references to music and musicians in al-Mas’ūdī is an oration pronounced by the geographer Ibn Khurradadhbīh (ca 820 – ca 911), author of a book on music, in answer to the Caliph al-Mu’tamid’s question about the origin of the *ūd* and music. The context was a banquet attended by many learned and intellectual companions. Al-Mas’ūdī speaks of a subsequent oration presented the following evening, by an expert in matters of dance. This report provides us with the

most important document of the period about the art of dancing, mostly based on the technique and aesthetic of Iranian dance.

In his chapter on music Ibn Khaldūn gives a detailed description of a dance popular in Spain. He maintains that music is a matter of sophisticated art music alone, based on codified norms and practised by professional musicians in urban centres.

Both al-Mas'ūdī's and Ibn Khaldūn's treatises belong to the category of general works dealing with a wide range of topics. Music in these works is treated as an integral part of an encyclopaedia of information, and its place in human life is discussed. Whereas al-Mas'ūdī's text is more typical of the literary and anecdotal tendency, Ibn Khaldūn's definition of the musical art rather adheres to the trend endowing the study of music with a systematic character.

The science of music as a subject of significant intrinsic intellectual value in Islamic civilization began with the translation of non-Arab texts, mainly Greek treatises on music. Under the Caliph al-Ma'mūn (813–33), the accumulation and translation of Greek scientific and philosophical works became a well-organized process. The government-supported Institute of Science – *Bayt al-ḥikma* – established in Baghdad, became a centre of translation into Arabic.

The story of music scholarship as it appears in the sources moves between two poles that reflect the tension between reason and the religion of *nomos*, expressing the dichotomy between religious normative expectations and actual experience.

Conflicting views regarding music, its nature, effect and origin, gave rise to an abundant literature about whether or not music and dance are lawful or permissible in a religious context, and about the forms of the sophisticated art music in the courts of the rulers and houses of the nobility. Did objections to music aim to fight against and to uproot remnants of idolatrous beliefs and customs? Were they a response to the great emotional power of music, which subjects the believer to its magical impact, disturbing concentration on the Divine Grandeur and Majesty as taught by the sacred texts? One may ask further whether the reasons for objecting to music are inherent in its very nature, or are they to be found in extraneous factors?

The vigorous and enduring debate over the permissibility of music in Islam and Judaism is a subject of great interest. Reaching beyond the consideration of music in itself, it touches on a dense network of related areas of knowledge constituting a convergence of interlocked ideas and trends.

The present volume brings together twenty-two papers, exemplifying, I believe, the multi-faceted viewpoints on the world of sounds and its virtues.

AMNON SHILOAH

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I

The Beginning of Things: Theories of Origins in Arabic and Hebrew Sources

Zusammenfassung

Curt Sachs begann sein Werk *Die Musik der Alten Welt in Ost und West* mit einem Blick auf die sichtbaren Relikte und schloß daraus nach Art eines schönen Gleichnisses: „Aber es sind stumme Bilder“. Denn die wichtigen materiellen Zeugnisse vermitteln keine auch nur annähernde Vorstellung von der immateriellen, flüchtigen, lebendigen Musik der fernen Vergangenheit.

Des weiteren sei der Aspekt der Mündlichkeit (in der Überlieferung) der traditionellen Musik hervorgehoben, wie es eine hervorragende Definition im 10. Jahrhundert findet, in der die spirituelle Beschaffenheit und Zielsetzung der Musik eine große Rolle spielen: „Der Gegenstand“, den jede mit den Händen geschaffene Kunst darstellt, ist aus natürlichen Bestandteilen zusammengesetzt, und seine Ergebnisse sind allesamt von physischer Form, mit Ausnahme der Angelegenheit, der die musikalische Kunst bezeichnet. Sie besteht völlig aus geistigen Substanzen, die aus den Seelen der Zuhörer (ihren göttlichen Ursprung berücksichtigend) hervorgeht, und ihre Wirkungen sind vollkommen geistiger Natur (Brethren of Sincerity, *Epistel über die Musik*).

Sicher kennen wir die Klänge der fernen Vergangenheit nicht mehr vernehmen. Aber es ist anzunehmen, daß in vielen Fällen musikalische Traditionen nicht völlig verschwunden sind, sondern sich in Metamorphosen erhielten. In solchen Fällen kann man von mnemotechnischen Möglichkeiten Gebrauch machen, unser Wissen über die materiellen Relikte zu verbessern, zu bereichern, auch in gedankliche Bereiche und die Rolle der Träger (dieser Ideen) vorzudringen, die die Gesetze und die Praxis der Musik geschaffen haben.

Vor diesem Hintergrund setze ich mich mit Theorien über den Ursprung der Musik nach arabischen und hebräischen Quellen auseinander. Zwei Gesichtspunkte sind mir besonders wichtig nämlich 1. die allgemeine phänomenologische Frage nach dem Ursprung der Dinge, die eine anthropologische Konstante zu sein scheint; 2. die Tatsache, daß die Neugier nach dem Ursprung der Dinge im historischen Bewußtsein der alten Semiten tief verwurzelt war und auf die Araber durch literarische Medien wie die Bibel gekommen ist. Nach der Entstehung des Islam entwickelte sich ein besonderer

Zweig der arabischen Literatur, genannt *Awā'il* (Plural von *awwal* = zuerst, der erste), ein Terminus, der verschiedene Ideen wie das erste Vorkommen philosophischer oder physikalischer Phänomene bezeichnet; oder die 'Alten' vorislamischer Zeit; und die "ersten Erfinder" der Dinge (oder der ersten Durchführung der Dinge). Die *Awā'il*-Werke beschenken uns eine Fülle von Gedanken über die Musik und Musikinstrumente aus technologischer, historischer und philosophischer Sicht.

I

Curiosity about the origin of things is deeply rooted in the historical consciousness of many peoples, from remote past up to our own days; hence, the quest for the origin of things can be considered as a constant in human experience. In his book *Theory and Method in Ethnomusicology*, Bruno Nettl argues that explanation of the origins of various phenomena has been at the root of many developments throughout the field, and until recently it predominated over the study of change.¹ He suggests in this respect ways of approaching the problem of origin and some questions which might be of interest like the manner of origin of a given phenomenon such as polyphony, types of scales, instruments or their place of origin, as well as, the problem of the origin of music itself, which falls into this class. Then, Nettl remarks that the origin of music, as well as, the origin of individual musical phenomena, has usually been explained by reference to three possible processes: "It may be a coincidence based on the structure of a related phenomenon, it may be motivated by a non-musical need, or it may be inevitable through some process of evolution".²

The quest for the origin of music and its various components in Arabic and Jewish music as it shall be dealt with in this article, is quite different in its nature, terms of reference and approach. Indeed, due to the lack of past evidence and concrete musical documents, the ethnomusicologist has, generally speaking, to base his research on the issue on his and others observations of living musical stylistic features as well as on concepts drawn from social and anthropological theories. In turn, the scholar willing to study the question under discussion in Muslim and Jewish musical cultures has the possibility to take advantage of the wealth of available pertaining sources, which reflect to a large extent the peculiar and predominating viewpoints held in those cultures. However, in his comment

1 Nettl 1965, 225.

2 Nettl 1965, 228.

on those ancient sources, which, as a rule, belong to the intellectual realm, the researcher is hindered by the lack of pertinent musical documents. To illustrate this deficiency, I can quote the beautiful simile used by Curt Sachs concerning music relics (e.g. instruments or iconographical documents). In dealing with the visible relics of the ancient world in East and West at our disposal, Sachs wrote about the music relics: “They are dumb visions”. “This is”, he contends, “because these material important witnesses, give hardly an adequate idea of the immaterial and transitory living music of the remote past”.³ This underlined aspect of traditional music oral transmission, was eloquently described, in the Epistle on Music of the Brethren of Sincerity (10th century). In their definition of the nature and object of music they wrote: “The matter which is the subject of every art that is practised with the hands is composed of natural bodies, and its products are all physical forms, except for the matter which is the subject of the musical art, which is entirely composed of spiritual substances which are the souls of the hearers [implying their divine origin], their effects also being entirely spiritual manifestations”.⁴

II

The Arabic Literature of *Awā'il*

According to the definition of Franz Rosenthal, the great specialist of Arab history and culture: “The term *awā'il* plural of *awwal* ‘first’, technically used to denote various ideas such as the ‘primary data’ of philosophical or physical phenomena, the ‘ancients’ either pre-Islamic or early Islamic times; and the ‘first inventors’ of things (or the things invented or done first)”. Indeed, the first Arab historians attempted to establish chronologies dating back to individual ancestors, and later on, the *awā'il* writings became a branch of Muslim literature with affinities to *adab* (term applied to works dealing with ethical precepts, general education and guiding principles for members of the various professions), to historical and theological literature. Rosenthal adds that “With the growing interest of the Muslims not only in political history but also in the history of civilization and science, the question: who was first? was soon asked in connection with every conceivable subject and always answered, though often in a rather fanciful manner. Nevertheless, the *awā'il* works are brilliant expressions of the

³ Sachs 1943, 13.

⁴ Shiloah 1993, chapter III 12.

cultural outlook and historical sense of their authors, and they are full of valuable material and interesting insights”.⁵

Our oldest known representative of the Muslim *awāʿil* literature dates from the beginning of the 9th century. Writings of this period provide us with numerous references to the origin of music and instruments often based on biblical statements, or rather on Jewish exegetic sources comprising many legendary materials.

The reference to the ‘inventors’ or ‘initiators’ of primordial knowledge and practices is usually in the form of short statements. For instance, in the encyclopedia *The Affinities with the Primordial Knowledge* of the prolific Egyptian historian and writer al-Suyūṭī Jalāl al-dīn (1445–1505), we find such statements related to music and dance like: “Miriam, Moses’s sister, was the first to have used the drum, in the canticle of the sea”; or, “the dance round the golden calf is the first dance” or, “the *ṭunbūr* (a long-necked lute) was invented by the people of Lot to seduce with it young lads, or a ‘beardless’ young boy (*amrad*)”, or, “the first *muʾadhdhin* (the one who call to prayer) and the guild or association of *muʾadhdhin*’s were comparable to Levite’s watch in the Temple of Jerusalem”.⁶ To be noted that some statements like those referring to the golden calf dance and the *ṭunbūr* in relation to Lot and the young boy are tendentious and connotative of the attitude of radical religious authority’s opposition to music.⁷

Other biblical references concerning the antediluvian period, particularly those comprised in Genesis chapter four, are of significant interest; the interpretations of the events recounted in this chapter are shared, to a large extent, by representatives of the three monotheist religions and they were transformed to fit various ideological approaches. Indeed, this short chapter densely including a great number of events has been the main reference for all the stories and concepts woven on the beginning of all things related to man’s life and culture including music. Verses 1–26, which tell the story of Cain and Abel, comprise the following events: a) their birth and nature of their occupation; b) the murder of Abel by Cain and the sentencing of Cain to perpetual exile; c) the genealogy of Cain; d) the song of Lamekh whose poetic character clearly distinguishes it from the others; e) the birth of Seth and Enoch. It is in section four that we are told in simple statements about the ‘invention’ of music and instruments by the descendents of Cain. The latter section, which is comprised in the three verses 19–22, is of particular importance to our discussion because it implies according to some exegetes the linkage between the ‘inventor’ of music and his sinful ancestors. To better follow

⁵ Rosenthal 1986, 758.

⁶ Shiloah 1979, 341–342.

⁷ Robson 1938, 38–40.

the variants involved in the different interpretations and their significance, I propose to quote verses 19–22 at the beginning of the following section.

III

“And Lamech took unto him/ two wives;
The name of the one was Adah / and the name of the other Zillah.
Adah bore / Jabal
He was / the father of those who dwell in tents and have cattle.
His brother’s name / was Jubal;
He was/ the father of those who play the *kinnor* and *‘uggav* (lyre and pipe).
Zillah, she also / bore Tubal-Cain, the instructor /
of every worker in bronze and iron.
The sister of Tubal-Cain / was Naamah”.

The great biblical scholar U. Cassuto writes in this respect: “Now that we have reached Lamech, the seventh generation from Adam, Scriptures speak of him at length. The text not only mentions the names of his first-born son, but tells us who were his wives, who were the sons that each one bore, what these sons originated, and also the wording of a famous song that Lamech sang to his wives”.⁸

Concerning the two instruments mentioned in the verse relating to Jubal: “The father of those who play the *kinnor* and *‘uggav*,” there are various translations from the general one of string and wind instruments up to a variety of a particular string and a particular wind instrument; in modern Hebrew for instance, the terms are used respectively for violin and harp. It is nowadays commonly admitted by the specialists and particularly in light of Bathya Bayer’s studies, that the *kinnor* and the *nebel* as well, are two kinds of lyre.⁹ As to the *‘uggav*, it might refer to *abbuba* pipe, or reed pipe as suggested by the two ancient Aramaic Targum.¹⁰ On the other hand most exegeses agree that Jubal is the father, not only of the mentioned instruments, but of musicians and the originator of their art.

“As to *Na‘ama*,” Cassuto writes, “the Bible tells us nothing about her, save her name; but without doubt the ancients had much to relate concerning her. Possibly we may deduce from the meaning of her name, ‘the lovely’, that the ancient tradition already depicted her as the leader of the female players and

⁸ Cassuto 1961, 234.

⁹ Bayer 1968, 89–131.

¹⁰ *Targum* means an Aramaic translation of the Bible, or some part of it, usually supplemented by a commentary and often intermingled with various paraphrases and aggadic supplements.

singers (Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: ‘the mistress of dirges [*qinin* plural of *qina*] and songs’).¹¹ A propos the term *qina*, it is interesting to mention that the idea of *qina* (dirge), which originally meant a poetic composition, is suggested in a similar context by the historian and the patriarch of the Eastern Jacobite church Ibn al-‘Ibri known as Bar Hebraeus (d. 1286). In the Arabic version of his *Compendium of the History of Dynasties*, he clearly included Cain’s daughters among the biblical inventors of musical instruments in his comments on the Stories of Creation as follows: “The sons of God glided down from Mount Hermon, were seduced by women descended from Cain and married them. From these unions giants were born who distinguished themselves as warriors. It is said that Cain’s daughters invented musical instruments and played on them.” For this reason, adds Bar Hebraeus, “the Syrians call the *lahn* (melody) *qina*, designing dirge or lamentation in Hebrew, while the Arab reading of the word *qayna* corresponds to a slave-girl musician”.¹²

Verses 23–24 of chapter four include the wording of the famous song that Lamech sung to his wives:

Lamech said to his wives:

Adah and Zillah, / hear my voice;

You wives of Lamech / give ear to my speech;

For a man I slew, / as soon as I wounded (him)

Yea a young man, / as soon as I breezed (him)

If sevenfold / Cain shall be avenged,

Then Lamech / seventy-sevenfold.”

IV

Further to the few traditions mentioned above, there are endless fantasies woven around the characters and occurrences depicted in the Holy Writ. A great deal of them are to be found in the literature of the *midrash* (Hebrew: exposition or investigation; plural *midrashim*).¹³ A comprehensive work of Louis Ginzberg entitled *The Legends of the Jews* is essentially based on the numerous separate bodies of commentaries on the Scriptures using the interpretative model.¹⁴ In his enlightening introduction to Ginzberg’s compendium of the same work, Shalom Spiegel makes the following remarks: a) “In a multitude of tales the biblical text

11 Cassuto 1961, 238.

12 Salihani 1890, 10.

13 *Midrash* is a particular genre of rabbinic literature; it is a kind of anthology and compilation of homilies consisting of exegeses and public sermons.

14 Ginzberg 1968.

has become disengaged from its first intention, and revised or enriched by the faith and fantasy of innumerable readers throughout the ages”; b) “Along with the Bible, legends and tales of the Bible current among the Jews, spread far and wide and traveled to the nations East and West who adopted them, and left their imprint in many a celebrated center of art and literature and gained at times a surprising hold upon popular imagination”.¹⁵

V

The Hebrew and Arabic Tales Concerning the Family of Lamech

My first example, which in all probability drew upon a Jewish midrashic tale, refers to one of the most frequent Arab versions of the story concerning the invention of music and instruments, which in all its variations astonishingly shifts the invention by Jubal to his father Lamech. For a better understanding of this Arab version and its particularities, it is important to familiarise oneself with the version found in the *midrash*.

Here is how the Jewish tale runs: “The end of Cain overtook him in the seventh generation of man, and it was inflicted upon him by the hand of his great grand-son Lamech. This Lamech was blind, and he went to hunting, he was led by his young son, who would apprise his father when game came in sight, and Lamech would then shoot at it with his bow and arrow. Once upon a time he and his son went on the chase, and the lad discerned something with a horn in the distance. He naturally took it to be a beast of one kind or another, and he told the blind Lamech to let his arrow fly. The aim was good, and the quarry dropped to the ground. When they came close to the victim, the lad exclaimed: ‘Father, thou has killed something that resembles a human being in all respects, except it carries a horn on its forehead! Lamech knew at once what had happened: he had killed his ancestor Cain who had been marked by God with a horn. In despair he smote his hands together, inadvertently killing his son as he clapsed them... In bitter remorse Lamech wept: ‘I killed a man to my wounding’”(Gen. IV, 24 - cited above). “Lamech, sightless as he was, could not go home; he had to remain by the side of Cain’s corpse and his son’s... The two wives of Lamech, Adah and Zillah bore him each two children. Adah two sons, Jabal and Jubal, and Zillah a son, Tubal-Cain, and a daughter Naamah. Jabal was the first among men to erect temples to idols, and Jubal invented the music sung and played therein. Tubal-Cain was rightly named, for he completed the work of his ancestor Cain. Cain committed murder, and Tubal-Cain, the first who knew how to sharpen iron and

¹⁵ Ginzberg 1978, XI.

copper, furnished the instruments used in wars and combats. Naamah, 'the lovely', earned her name from the sweet sounds which she drew from her cymbals when she called the worshippers to pay homage to idols".¹⁶

The historian and geographer al-Mas'ūdī (d. 956), reports in his monumental work *Meadows of Gold and Mines of Gems* that the geographer and musicologist Ibn Khurradadhbīh (d. 911) was asked by the caliph al-Mu'tamid about the origin of music. He replied: "Prince of believers, there are many opinions concerning the origin of music. The first to have invented the 'ūd is Lamak (Lamech)". The story he told in his oration is in fact but a short version of a detailed tale attributed to the great historian Hishām al-Kalbī (d. 819) and reproduced by his contemporary the grammarian al-Mufaḍḍal ibn Salāma (d. 905) in his work *Book of Musical Instruments* as follows: "Hishām ibn al-Kalbī mentioned that the first who made the 'ūd and played on it was a man of the sons of Qābil (Cain) the son of Adam, called Lamak. He had a long life; and as he had no children he married fifty wives and two hundred concubines. Then two girls, one of whom was called Tsila and the other Yamm ('Ada in the Bible) were born to him (these two girls were Lamech's wives according to the Scriptures). Afterwards a boy was born and he was extremely pleased. But the boy died when he was five years old, and Lamech grieved sorely for him. So he took him and hung him on a tree and he said: 'His form will not depart from my eyes until he falls in pieces, or I die'. Then his flesh begun to fall from his bones till only his thigh remained with the leg, foot and toes. So he took a piece of wood, split it and arranged one piece on another. Then he made a sound chest to represent the thigh, a neck to represent the leg, a peg-box the same size as the foot, and pegs like the toes; and to it he attached strings like the sinews. Then he began to play on it and weep and lament until he became blind; and was the first who sung a lament. What he made was called an 'ūd because it was made from a piece of wood. Tsila, one of his two daughters, [probably Naamah] was the first who made stringed instruments and drums."¹⁷

As we can see, in opposition to medieval Jewish and Christian traditions which concentrate on the figure of Jubal "the father of them that play upon the lyre and pipe", the privilege of the invention recounted in this widespread particular version, is transferred to Jubal's father Lamech and it is said to imply music as a whole. Of all instruments primacy is given here to the 'ūd - an instrument with major importance in Arabic music. Curiously enough, the name of Jubal, known in all other tales, is not mentioned, but perhaps he is assimilated with the beloved son who died prematurely. He became thus the cause of the great invention of

¹⁶ Ginzberg 1968, I, 116–117.

¹⁷ Shiloah 1993, chapter II 400–401.

music. I tend to believe that this causality is behind the tendentious attribution of the invention to Lamech. This can also be explained by the claim that Lamech's blindness was due to his deep sorrow and weeping while lamenting on his beloved son. As we mentioned above, his dirge was sung to the accompaniment of the lute he made. Furthermore, there is no evidence in this version of Cain's sin or crime and punishment; hence the hunting scene, which concretizes Cain's punishment, is absent. However, the fact that Lamech was descended from Cain is already put forth in the first sentence. All this, and particularly the recourse to the motif of relationships between human body and musical instruments, which prevails in many myths of creation,¹⁸ allude to a particular Arabic arrangement of material drawn from Jewish tales, whose aim is to single out the beginning of vocal music performed to the accompaniment of the *ʿūd*, which is characteristic of Arab music.

VI

The Link Between Music and Depravity and Satanic Delusion

The *midrash* claims that "Cain became a great leader of men into wicked courses... Like unto Cain were all his descendents, impious and godless, wherefore God resolved to destroy them".¹⁹ Independently of the story reported above, many other Muslim traditions representing the views of radical religious authorities underline the evident correlation between Cain's posterity and the invention of music considered as part of their impious doings and depravity. This invention is quite often identified with satanic delusion. Satan as promoter or inventor of music, and one who endows music with a quality of charm and magic is a frequent motif in this literature.

As late as the 19th century, the theorist of music Shihāb al-dīn reports in his historical survey on music a variant of the story we mentioned above. Here is how it runs: "It is said that the first who made the *ʿūd* is *Iblis* (the devil). This happened when Cain the son of Adam murdered his brother Abel— he was the first murderer on earth— he then carried him and turned around without being capable of deciding what to do with the corpse. God sent him a raven to show him how to hide the corpse. Then came *Iblis* and made a *ʿūd* to represent his brother's leg and to help him find consolation. So he made a sound chest etc...".²⁰

According to Shalom Spiegel, *The Apocryphal Testament of the Patriarchs* from the last pre-Christian century, speaks of Cain as the first among men to

¹⁸ Shiloah 1993, 405–406.

¹⁹ Ginzberg 1968, I, 116.

²⁰ Shihāb al-dīn 1892, 465–466.

draw the sword, “the mother of seven evils”.²¹ Not a few of those ideas are found in Jewish legends and also in some Christian writings such as the Ethiopian Arabic work *The Book of Adam and Eve*, which was probably written in Egypt by some pious Christians during the fifth or sixth century. All the motifs regarding the identification of music with depravity, with Satan’s evil powers and with the descendents of Cain are combined in it in a very fanciful manner. The invention of instruments is ascribed to a certain Genun, possibly the Arabic *Junūn* (folly or Demon) son of Lamech the blind. Satan came into him in his childhood; and he made sundry trumpets, horns, stringed instruments, cymbals, psalteries, lyres, harps and flutes. And when he played on them, Satan entered them too so that from among them were heard beautiful and sweet sounds, that ravished the heart. They pleased the children of Cain who inflamed themselves and sinned with one another. Satan taught Genun to bring strong drink and drink out of a horn, increasing thus his understanding, until he took iron and with it he made weapons of war.²²

David and the Devil

A colorful *ḥadīth* (Traditions of the Prophet) describing the invention of *Iblīs* (the Devil) as a counterpart to divine music, tells that when prophet Dāhūd (King David), raised his voice and sang psalms, birds came to rest on his head and listen, domestic animals and wild beasts were drawn together peaceably; they all succumbed to the charm of his singing. Witnessing those tamed and untamed animals that yielded to the magic of David’s singing, Satan summoned his hordes and ordered them to devise something equally powerful. They then invented the reed-pipes and lutes modeled on David’s 70 melodies or modes.²³ It is noteworthy that reed-pipes and lutes were banished by radical religious authorities. The famous Iranian mystic al-Hujwīrī (d. between 1072 and 1077) reported in his extensive treatise on mysticism *Kashf al-mahjūb* (The uncovering of the veiled) an elaborated variant on the “encounter” of David and the Devil. His version is conceived as a kind of contest between David who represented divine music for the followers of the truth, and the Devil whose music displayed his trickeries destined to be listened to by the blest and damned. This interpretation is in harmony with a concept prevalent among the Muslim mystics, considering music as polygenetic and polyvalent. Thus, its meaning and influence are determined by the values of its listeners.²⁴

21 Ginzberg 1978, XXIII.

22 Shiloah 1993, chapter II 399.

23 Shiloah 1979, 224, 229, 402, 426.

24 Nicholson 1970, chapter 25.

Conclusion

To conclude this excursion on the multifarious sayings and legends regarding the beginning of music and its instruments, I can only repeat Rosenthal's statement about the Arabic *awā'il* writings which can be applied to the whole of this presentation: "They are brilliant expressions of the cultural outlook and the historical sense of their authors, and they are full of valuable material and interesting insights."²⁵

25 Rosenthal 1986, 758.

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II

A Passage by Immanuel ha-Romi on the Science of Music

This contribution deals with a passage on music by the poet and Biblical exegete Immanuel ben Shelomo ha-Romi (1261–after 1330). It is included in his unpublished commentary on Genesis IV, 21 about Yuval “The father of them that play upon the harp and the organ”. This passage is quite significant for the elucidation of Immanuel’s views regarding the science and art of music, and also it enriches our knowledge of the study of music as science by Jewish authors before and after Immanuel’s time. It should be noted that we are concerned with a transitional period during which the Jewish center of cultural activity was in the process of moving from Spain to Provence and Italy. Thus, Immanuel’s commentary that goes beyond the simple exegesis of the verse on Yuval, presents us with broader ideological views that bridges over former development in Spain and Provence and the future advent of a flourishing Jewish culture in Italy that save prominent place to music and its related science.

In the realm of music, the name of Immanuel is particularly connected with a well-known distich included in his sixth *maḥberet* whose subject is a polemical debate regarding the merits and excellence of Spanish Provencal and Italian Hebrew poetry. A pretentious and “fool” Provencal poet claiming the supremacy of Provencal poetry is being challenged by Immanuel who accepts to commit himself to a huge quiz porting on various areas of knowledge. One of the questions in line 341 is the following: “What says the science of music (*hokhmat ha-niggūn*)”¹ to the Christians? The answer was: “I was stolen from the land of the Hebrews”.² This answer that expresses a concept according to which music, like other

1 Immanuel uses the term *hokhmat ha-niggūn* to designate both the art and science of music. In doing so, he probably follows in the footsteps of ibn Falaquera; see *infra*.

2 See: Dov Yarden, *Maḥbarot Immanuel ha-Romi*, Jerusalem 1957, vol. I, p. 120.

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human accomplishments, originated in Biblical time, stands at the background of our commentary and becomes like a motto in musical writings of the subsequent generations, particularly in Portaleone's *shilte hag-giborim* (the shields of Mighty Men).³ Abraham ben David Portaleone (1542–1612) wrote this work at an advanced age and with a feeling of repentance on the sins of his youth, exactly like did Immanuel in writing his commentary after 1320, that is to say in his sixtieth, for expressing regrets on the writing of his lust poems. Interestingly, this also happened to the Spanish poet Shem Tov ibn Falaquera (1225–after 1290) whose work *reshit hokhma*⁴ is the major source of the passage we are dealing with. *Reshit hokhma* also marks the shifting to Hebrew in the writing of scientific works that until then were written in Arabic. In the introduction to the second part titled: *be-mispar ha-hokhmot*, Ibn Falaquera wrote about the study of sciences: “It is better to study them in our language than in the language of other people”.⁵ This opinion became the slogan for the musical literature in the 13th and 14th centuries.

As for the idea that all human achievements, including music, are rooted in Biblical texts that come to the fore in Immanuel's approach and in that of the subsequent generations, it can be found in earlier period. Moses ibn Ezra (1055–after 1135) writes in the musical passage of his *kitāb al-ḥadīqa* (Book of the Garden): “Doubtless, this great science and its noble inherent meaning are anchored in the fundamental laws of Moses the prophet, peace be upon him. This explains the nature of the particular function assigned to the sanctified tribe, a function called by him: Levites' service...” After long development on the art of the Levites, ibn Ezra adds: “Undoubtedly the revelation of those prophets (e.g. the heads of the Levites Assaf, Yedutun, Heiman) is due to what God concealed in their nature of the noble science; consequently, they expressed it in word and demonstrated it in practice. With David, peace be on him, the science of music reached high esteem and obtained increasing respect...”⁶

In conclusion, it should be noted that Immanuel, as one of the pioneers

3 See: Israel Adler, *Hebrew Writings Concerning Music*, Muenchen, 1975, pp. 243–283.

4 *Ibid.*, pp. 166–168.

5 *Reshit hokhmah*, ed. David Moritz, Berlin 1902, p. 21.

6 See: A. Shiloah, “The Musical Passage in ibn Ezra's *Book of the Garden*, Yuval IV, Jerusalem 1974, pp. 211–224.

of the rising of Hebrew Italian literature on music, presents us with views that are in affinities with both his Jewish predecessors and the Jewish Italian writers on music in the following centuries.

The Content of the Passage

The point of departure of the passage is Genesis IV, 21. The commentary begins with three introductory sentences that lead to the major part that consists of a borrowed extensive definition and classification of the science of music; then comes a last concluding sentence.

Explaining the meaning of “The father of them that play upon the harp and the organ”, Immanuel advances that Yuval was the first inventor of *ḥokhmat ha-niggun*, a term used here by him to designate music, but later it is also used for the science of music. The question of Yuval’s right of being the first inventor of music is frequently discussed in many Medieval Christian treatises in dealing with the question of the origin of music. In her article: “Yubal in the Middle Ages”,⁷ Judith Cohen analyses important sources on the matter in which parallelism between Yuval and another claimed inventor — Pythagoras — is being established. She writes in the epilogue: “The later Middle Ages endowed Yubal with the halo of an ancient *auctor* who, in laying down the functions of the art of music, enable future generations to add to it new achievements, never forgetting their indebtedness to him”. It seems that this evolutionistic approach was adopted by Immanuel and the Jewish writers of subsequent generations, namely Abraham ben David Portaleone (1542–1612), yet confining the evolution to biblical time, or more precisely to the achievements attained in Temple’s music as it was practiced by the Levites. Art music culminated by then and what happened afterwards is a process of decline and degradation. The debasement of this magnificent art and its corruption by the Christians is due, according to the statement made by Immanuel in the third sentence, to the misuse of music in taverns and in singing lust songs. This opinion concords with the harsh attack against Troubadour’s music led by the Provençal scholar Ya‘aqov ben Abba-Meri in his book

7 Judith Cohen, “Yubal in the Middle Ages”, *Yuval* III, Jerusalem 1974, pp. 83–99.

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Melammed ha-talmidim.⁸ Before introducing his remark on the degradation of the art of music, Immanuel complains bitterly on the total absence of this art among his contemporary correligionists. The same statement with almost the same wording occurs again in Immanuel's commentary on the Book of Proverbs, written after that on the Torah.⁹ We find a confirmation to this opinion, in a similar statement made by Immanuel's famous cousin Yehuda Romano, who was the Hebrew teacher of King Robert II of Anjou (Naples & Avignon, 1309–1347). Romano said that he was to quit the Synagogue for quite a long while because the worshippers used to scream and could not sing properly; as a result he was not able to grasp the prayer's words.¹⁰ The major portion of the commentary consists of a passage borrowed textually from the second part of Falaquera's book: *Reshit hokhma* (The beginning of wisdom) titled: *be-mispar ha-hokhmot* (Enumeration of the sciences) which in itself is a Hebrew translation of al-Farabi's *Ihṣā' al-'ulūm* (Enumeration of sciences).¹¹ This latter work of the great Arab philosopher, Abu Naṣr al-Fārābī (d. 950), who was accorded the highest respect by medieval scholars, enumerates all the known sciences and defines their nature and object. The sciences are grouped in five chapters: I — the sciences of Language: morphology, lexicography, syntax, art of writing, art of reading, poetry and metric; II — Logic; III — Mathematics: arithmetic, geometry, optics, astronomy, music, weights, mechanics; IV — Physics and Metaphysics; V — Political Science, Jurisprudence and Theology. This work became known in medieval Europe through its several Latin translations.¹² Before Falaquera, the Jewish philosopher ibn 'Aqnin

8 Cited by Hanoah Avenary, in: "Science of Music and the Jews of the 13th and 14th Centuries", *Proceedings of the World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Jerusalem 1973, vol. IV, p. 5 (in Hebrew). This commentary that knew great popularity, was published in 1487.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 55.

10 Jehuda Romano, "Introduction to Commentary on Kaddish and Kedusha", Cod. Vat. Hebr. no 91, Col. 1r–2v (quoted in G. Sermoneta, "Prophecy in the Writings of R. Yehuda Romano", *Studies in Medieval Jewish History and Literature*, vol. II, Cambridge Mass. 1984, pp. 351–352).

11 See: A. Shiloah, *The Theory of Music in Arabic Writings*, Muenchen 1979, pp. 102–103.

12 See: H.G. Farmer, *al-Farabi's Arabic-Latin Writings on Music*, London 1934, second edition, 1960.

(1150–ca 1220) integrated the section on music in his ethical work: *Ṭibb al-nufus* (Hygiene of the soul).¹³ The section on music also occurs in Falaquera's other book *ha-Mevaqqesh* (The Seeker).¹⁴ Another Hebrew translation was made by Immanuel's friend Kalonimos ben Kalonimos,¹⁵ and a poetic adaptation of it is included in the didactic poem *Miqdash me'aṭ* (A Little Sanctuary) by Moses ben Isaac Rieti (1388–after 1460).¹⁶

It should be noted at this point that neither Falaquera acknowledges the material derived from al-Fārābī,¹⁷ nor Immanuel the material derived from Falaquera. This phenomenon was not unusual. In medieval writings there was often considerable latitude in the use of citations or quotations, and sometimes proper acknowledgement of borrowed material is omitted altogether. As Franz Rosenthal notes: "The fraudulent omission of the proper acknowledgement of material derived from the works of other authors was no uncommon phenomenon. It is, however, difficult and often impossible to determine where permissible literary usage ends, and fraud begins".¹⁸

As for the last concluding sentence, Immanuel reiterates the fact that the science of music "is missing in our nation", but he adds that because of that he considers the writing of a comprehensive discourse in order to eliminate the gap. Did he really fulfill the project, or it just remained a wishful matter? We are not in a position to answer this important question, since such a work is not in the number of the writings known to us. Needless to say that if it does exist, its disclosure would bring significant contribution to the study of Jewish music.

13 See: Adler, *op. cit.*, p. 284.

14 See: A. Shiloah, "Meqorotav shel Shem Tov ibn Falaquera...", *Fourth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Jerusalem 1968, pp. 373–377 (in Hebrew).

15 Idem, "Qalonimus ben Qalonimus *ma'amar be-mispar haḥokhmot*, chap. III, par. 6 (la musique)", *Yuval II*, Jerusalem 1971, pp. 115–128.

16 Adler, *op. cit.*, p. 284.

17 As a matter of fact, in the introduction to the work, ibn Falaquera writes: "The bulk of my material concerning the sciences derive from the leading philosophers and the erudits among them. Nothing is invented by myself; I have just compiled material scattered in the books".

18 Franz Rosenthal, *The Technique and Approach of Muslim Scholarship* (= *Analecta Orientalia* 24), Rome (Pontificium Institutum Biblicum) 1974, p. 46.

*Commentary on the Torah, Ms. Sulzberger,
Jewish Theological Seminary, p. 36*

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| <p>1. He was the father of them who plays upon the <i>kinnor</i> and the <i>'uggav</i>.¹⁹</p> <p>2. Its meaning is that he was the first inventor of the art of melody (=music).²⁰</p> <p>3. It should be noted that the art of music is a wonderful art which is at present missing and abandoned in our dwellings,²¹ yet in the remote past it was practised by the sanctified fathers in the Temple, e.g. the heads of the Levites such as Assaf, Heiman and Yedutun.</p> <p>4. Nowadays, this art is being crushed by the impures who corrupted its magnificence by using it in taverns and for singing lust songs,²² modifying thus its status from the highest degree of distinc-</p> | <p>1. הוא היה אבי כל תופש כנור ועוגב.</p> <p>2. עניינו הוא היה המחדש הראשון לחכמת הנגון.</p> <p>3. ויש לדעת כי חכמת הנגון היא חכמה נפלאה ונעלמת היום מחומתינו היו כשכבר משתמשים בה האבות הקדושים בבית המקדש והם ראשי הלויים כמו אסף והימן וידותון ודומיהם.</p> <p>4. ועתה שבה החכמה הזאת לרגלי הזונים אשר השחיתו תפארתה וישתמשו בה בבתי המשתאות ובשירי עגבים עד אשר שבה</p> |
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19 The most common translation of these instruments is: harp and organ. According to Bathia Bayer the *kinnor* belongs to the family of lyres, while the *'uggav* could be either a reed instrument or a harp. See: "Neginah ve-zimrah" in: *Encyclopedia Miqra'it*, Jerusalem 1968, vol. 5, pp. 756–782. A few lines beforehand Immanuel explains the literary sense of *tofes* by "to play upon them with his hand", adding that *kinnor* and *'uggav* are a sort of musical instruments; in the commentary he introduces the idea of Yuval being the first inventor of the art of music.

20 See *supra*, note 1.

21 See *supra*, note 10.

22 *Shirei 'agavim* (lust songs) often appear in the rabbinical literature regarding the lawfulness of music as a cause presiding over the prohibition of music.

- tiveness to the lowest degree of disgrace and abjection.
5. However, little of this art has remained among the Christians;²³ this involves the general science that comprises two parts:²⁴ one of them is the science of practical music, and the second is the science of theoretical music.
 6. And as for practical music, its concern is the production of various kinds of melodies (Arabic *alhān*) that are perceptible in the instruments adapted to them, whether natural or artificial.
 7. And as for the natural instrument, it is the larynx, the organs of the mouth and the adjacent parts of the nose.²⁵
 8. And the artificial (instruments) are like the *kinnorot*, *nevalim*²⁶ and the like.
 9. And the master of practical music depicts the rhythms²⁷
- מתכלית המעלה לתכלית הבזיון והשפלות.
5. אמנם נשאר קצת החכמה הזאת בין הנוצרים והיא חכמה כללית נחלקת לשני חלקים, החלק האחד חכמת הנגון המעשית והשנית חכמת הנגון העיונית.
 6. וחכמת הנגון המעשית היא אשר דרכה שתמציא מיני נגונים מורגשים בכלי זמר אשר להם בטבע או במלאכה.
 7. והכלי הטבעי הוא הגרון ואברי הפה ומה שהוא סמוך להם מהאף.
 8. והמלאכותי כמו הכנורות והנבלים וזולתם.
 9. ובעל חכמת הנגון המעשית יצייר הנעימות והניגונים וכל השגותיהם

23 Dealing now with music as science, this indication might refer to famous treatises such as Guido of Arezzo's *Micrologus*.

24 With the last words beings the borrowed passage from ibn Falaquera's *Reshit hokhmah* that extends to the end of sentence 17.

25 Al-Fārābī's text reads: "The larynx and the uvula, and what is in them, and then the nose".

26 Al-Fārābī's text reads: "*mazāmīr* (reedpipes) and *īdān* (lutes)". It was common among Jewish writers to weave Biblical terms into the description of musical instruments.

27 The term *ne'imot* (sing. *ne'imah*) is equivalent to the Arab *naghmah* under its signification of rhythm. However, the same is used in sentence 14 as equivalent of note,

and melodies as well as all their adjuncts in so far as they are in instruments upon which it is customary to perform them.

10. And the theoretical provides the scientific definition of them; it depends on the faculty of reasoning which gives the causes presiding over all the elements out of which the melodies are composed; not by way of material representations, but in the abstract, irrespective of any particular instrument, or any particular material; it takes them as they are generally heard from any available instrument and from any available body.
11. And this science is divided into five major parts.
12. The first of them is the discourse about the principles destined to be used in deducing of what is in this science, the method of application of these principles, the way in which this art is established, and from what things this art attains its perfection, and

מצד שהם בכלים אשר הורגלו ללקחם מהם.

10. והעיונית תתן ידיעתם והם סבות מושכלות ותתן סבות כל מה שיתחברו ממנו הנגונים לא מפני שהם בחומר אלא על דרך כללי ומצד שהם מופשטים מכל כלי ומכל חומר; ותקח אותם מצד שהם נשמעים על דרך כלל מאי זה כלי שיזדמן ומאי זה גוף שיזדמן.
11. וזאת החכמה היא נחלקת לחמשה חלקים גדולים.
12. האחד המאמר בהתחלות אשר דרכם שישמשו אותה בהוציא זאת החכמה, והאיך הדרך בשמש אילו ההתחלות ובאיזה דרך תחודש זאת המלאכה ובאי זה דבר מהדברים ומכמה דברים

and the arab term *iqā'āt* (rhythms) in sentence 16 is rendered by the Hebrew *neginot*. It should be noted that certain inconsistency in the use of terminology in texts of a technical nature was common in both Arabic and Hebrew literature.