THE FUNCTION OF MUSIC IN ISLAMIC CULTURE.

(in the period up to 1100 A.D.)

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Certain facets of Islamic culture have been the subject of extensive studies, namely, Muslim law and theology, Islamic philosophy and history in broad outlines and in detail. The efforts of the scholars in such fields, have not been equally directed, and the humanitarian and artistic aspects of the Islamic culture have not received sufficient attention, either in the modern Islamic East itself, or in the oriental studies conducted by Western scholars.

The artistic side of this culture, although subtle and elusive - especially in the case of music which does not exist in recorded examples - is absolutely essential to the real understanding of this great civilization, in its past. Such studies are not of purely academical value, but have a direct bearing on the present situation in Islamic countries, as providing the essential background to the correct diagnosis of the present problems and guidance for the future.

Having studied music, I have always felt the necessity of a study of its function and place in our culture, and/to go to the roots of that artistic heritage.
which is so peculiarly Islamic and Eastern. The deplorable lack of studies in this field in the East, is one of the symptoms of the present bewilderment which the East is experiencing now, as to whether it should hold on to its own age-old traditions fanatically and thus resist the dangerous and inevitable trend of Westernization, or to indulge in studying Western science, thought and art and reject altogether its own culture. However, the first step seems to me to be the assiduous study of our Islamic artistic heritage, a study approached with an analytical and critical spirit, and/as far as possible, unbiased and impersonal. True, science can be borrowed, but arts and music particularly, can never be borrowed, for then they would cease to fulfill their natural role of expressing emotions and feelings. It is impossible to borrow the medium of expression of a nation's feelings and emotions from another. Yet it is possible that with the encounter with other styles and other idioms, a modification could be effected. Thus, the first step to me, to face, the present emotional and spiritual crisis, the East is now undergoing, is to adopt the western critical approach and method and to apply it in extensive studies to our Islamic culture.
and arts of the past. Such a serious attitude will inevitably result in an enlightened guidance for our problems of the present.

Such a study should necessarily start with the broad outlines, overlooking matters of detail, for later and more specialized research. This thesis is based on these lines, and only hopes to reconstruct a comprehensive picture of the whole. Its inadequacy in matters of detail and in points of purely historical value, could be justified perhaps, as the field is so vast that it absolutely had to be restricted, geographically and historically, if any positive results were to be achieved.

Historically, it has been limited to the end of the twelfth century A.D. The first six centuries of Islam, have witnessed a period of speedy growth and expansion, in all spheres, and although social changes are elusive and do not lend themselves, like historical events, to exact dates, yet the twelfth century seems to mark a different mood in Islamic culture. It has been conveniently chosen, as being the point of culmination of creative efforts, which just precedes the period of political, cultural and social disintegration and stagnation, that were to cast their dark shadows over the Muslim East for centuries to come.
Geographically, it has been limited to the Middle East, thus excluding two essential elements in the Islamic World, the Indian in the East, and the Spanish or Andalusian in the West. Both, having their own ancient civilizations and cultures, where the Islamic culture was mellowed and tempered, and hence assumed a remarkably local character which calls for a special approach, which was not possible in this limited survey.

The middle Eastern countries, with their different racial and cultural elements, seem to form a unity which has been mutually influenced and interrelated.

The natural chronological order, has been followed in the classification of the parts of the study. The Islamic culture appears to have evolved in cycles or phases, such cycles were not clear-cut, and overlapped in some cases. The first cycle, was the "religious", since the new religion formed the core of that culture, this was followed by a phase of "military" operations. The new conquests imposed the necessity of "administrative" and political organisation. These were superseded by a cycle of marked "intellectual" activities. The "social" aspect of that civilisation provides the necessary background to the previous movements or phases.
Then for practical purposes, the military and political phases were amalgamated in the social, and hence the classification of the work into three main parts: Music and the religious life, Music and the intellectual life, and Music and Social life.

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PART I (a)

MUSIC AND THE RELIGIOUS LIFE.
MUSIC AND THE RELIGIOUS LIFE.

Any attempt to study an aspect of Islamic culture, whether material or spiritual, must take into account the fundamental and determining factor of Islam as a religion. It is this religious element that had united under Islamic polity a wide variety of races and cultures, over a considerably extended part of the globe, all centred around the common creed. All the heterogeneous elements of Aryan and Semitic, Arabian, Persian and Mongol, were merged together under Islam and formed what is essentially an Islamic culture, unified through the common faith. The positive attitude of Islam towards the various departments of life, gave it command over the temporal as well as the spiritual aspects of life. Indeed Islam, has almost revolutionized the beliefs, customs and traditions of the various countries that have professed it. The religion of Islam has, to a great extent, shaped and moulded the life of the Islamic world and has ultimately resulted in a complete change of ideology.

Such a drastic change in the spiritual environment, as that wrought by the advent of Islam, must inevitably have its repercussions on the arts of that culture, being the best channel through which human nature
usually expresses its inner feelings and emotions. Fine arts are the spontaneous emotional outlet for human nature, whatever its degree of civilisation. Hence the importance of a study of the arts, especially music of the Islamic culture, as affected by religion and on the other hand, as affecting the religion and its practices.

Islam has its special outlook regarding the elementary forms of art known in pre-Islamic times, mainly music, poetry and *taswîr* (that is the fashioning and forming of images and pictures). There are some points of similarity in Islam's attitude towards the arts, an attitude which reveals prohibition, with varying degrees, although not directly derived from Qur'ânic teachings. Some scholars believe that the religious factor alone is responsible for the limited scope of artistic creation in the Islamic culture, while others attribute it to a natural lack of the artistic impulse which was being hidden.

2) *Taswîr*: Encyclop. of Islam IV, 561.
under the façade of the religious ban.

Whatever the real factors for the restriction or limitation of the scope of Islamic aesthetics, which generally refers to the representative arts and does not include music, the religious justifications of Islam's aversion to *taswīr* are worth mentioning, if only to provide the background relevant to Islam's attitude towards music, and serve to contrast the degree of prohibition applied to both arts, and also to help to analyse the underlying motives in the religious restrictions on them respectively.

The ban imposed on *taswīr*, the forming and shaping of images in Islam, has been strictly observed throughout the Islamic world, during the period covered by this study, with rare exceptions only, which accounts for the advanced standard of Islamic architecture, being the only channel for artistic creation that is in keeping with the religion. The close association of *taswīr* with pagan idol-worship – which Islam sought to eradicate for its contradiction with Islamic fundamental ideas – is one of the strong reasons for the success of the Islamic ban on that form of art. The traditions

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given by Bukhārī concerning this question are much more specific and decisive than in the case of music.

As Sir Thomas Arnold illustrated, in his book "Painting in Islam" that there was unanimity in Shi'a and Orthodox doctors' views on this question, this added to the weighty authority of well authenticated—and not conflicting—tradition, as well as the religious motive that made this form of art makruh i.e. disapproved, all these make the case against taswīr in Islam, much stronger, more definite and straightforward, than that against music. The jāma'i consensus, that taswīr is disapproved, is absent in the case of music, a factor which led to a division of opinion and an endless controversy which did not, however, hinder the progress of music under Islam. It seems that music did not fulfill any special religious function in pre-Islamic pagan worship like that of taswīr.

The legal attitude of Islam towards music has many interesting features, since it reveals a constant clash among the religious authorities themselves, and between the strict orthodox dogmas, and the liberality

1) Bukhārī: Sahīh IV, 30-2.
of the practical realities. Yet it is an essential to a correct assessment of the function of music in a culture that was essentially Islamic, that is to say governed by the religion of Islam. It is very important to establish two main points in the interrelation between music and religion, that is how religion affected music and on the other hand how, if at all, music served religious purposes in Islam. In order to do so, we must attempt first to reveal how Islam regarded music.

The Qur'an, the primary source of Islamic jurisprudence, does not reveal any positive attitude towards music, neither of approval nor of censure. Had it been a question of major importance to the cult, some decisive attitude would have been taken probably. Yet according to the Qur'an alone, where no actual prohibition is specified, a kind of tacit approval should be assumed. But this was not the case apparently, since as early as the Prophet's time and during his life (according to tradition) the question whether music was religiously allowable or not did arise. Although the factual history of Islamic music has long ago provided an answer to that question, in the flourishing state of music and its unhindered progress under the patronage of Islamic rulers, yet
theoretically the objection - to put it mildly - to music has always been present in the Islamic countries, if in varying degrees, an objection which forms an integral part of the history of Islamic music and its course of development.

The verses of the Quran are most indefinite on this subject, yet according to the advocates of the lawfulness of music, they afford some inferential data in support of their views. In the first instance, the beautiful voice is considered a blessing which God increases in his creatures, the second is a negative praise of the beautiful voice and the third is based upon the Quranic description of Paradise "And they in a garden shall be glad, " where the faithful shall be "listening" which Al Qushayrī gives in his Risāla as the meaning of " The opposite side to the question also applies to the Quran for supporting its views, and mainly relies on inferential evidence of the same nature, which is equally vague and indefinite. The verses

1) XXXV, 1.
2) Sura XXXI, 18. cit: Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī, 'Id al Farīd IV, 82
3) XXX, 14.
4) p. 178.
quoted from the Qur'an, on both sides, are sometimes quoted on the slightest resemblance of bearing on the subject. Philologically the word sama means hearing (or listening) but ever since the introduction of the practice of Sufi listening to music to induce religious ecstasy, the word al sama has acquired a special meaning and became established as the generic term for that type of mystical practice. Thus many quotations from the Qur'an - in support of both sides - are based on the mere mention of the word al sama which did not acquire that specific meaning in Sufi terminology till centuries later. Most of the Quranic verses, are merely quoted on account of that word sama or any other derivative from the root sma, as in the following example.

"Give glad tidings to my servants, who listen to the word and follow the best of it" (alladhina yawtim unal gawla...etc.). This is cited by Al Qushary in support of the lawfulness of al sama.

This was the only ground for Quranic quotation on this question since the word ghina or inshad have not occurred in the Quran. Both sides to the question, when turning to the Quran for evidence chiefly rely

1) XXXIX, 19.
Indirect allusions and the verses quoted are indirect and non-committal and in this case it turns out that the authority invoked is the special interpretation of the exegete, rather than the Quran itself.

As to tradition, the position is almost unchanged, yet let us turn to tradition and *summā* where we can adduce from *gawl*, *fil* or *taqrīr*, that is from the Prophet's speech and action, the evidence to the contrary. The following brief summary may shed some light on this thorny question, although it involves the repetition of points and agreements which have long ago been thoroughly investigated, in the extensive Arabic literature dealing with that problem of *al sama*. The same material has also been translated into English and other languages. The same evidence, pro and con, has been featuring in every work concerned with this problem, whatever the author's views, and both sides would cite the opposite views in order to discuss them. From the earliest extant treatises on the subject, that of *Ibn Abīl Dunyā* (d. 281-394) to *Ibn Taymiya's Risāla fil sama wa l-rāqṣ* (eighth century A.H.) there seems to be a steady accumulation of all the evidence that could have any bearing on that question.

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1) Ed. by J. Robson: *Tracts on listening to Music.*
Al Bukhārī quotes 'A'isha, the Prophet's wife, who relates how on the occasion of the wedding of a Muslim woman to a man from the ānṣār, the Prophet asked her if there had been any jollification, lahw, as the ānṣār delighted in the same. The Ḥād al Farīd has a different version in which the Prophet asked his wife: "and did you not send someone who could sing? The ānṣār are people who delight in ghazal (love song).

There are other traditions favouring music on joyous occasions, such as weddings, circumcisions and the like. A tradition states that the duff (tambourine) is played on such occasions and to publish and celebrate marriage - although it does not specify whether it should be played by a man or a woman. Ibn Taymiya however, objects to such an explicit approval on the grounds that the Prophet only permitted women to do so, since during his life men did not play the dūruf or clap their hands, these practices being peculiar to women only and

1) Bukhārī: Saḥīḥ, III, 169.
2) N: 91.
3) Farmer: History, 27.
4) A. Al Nabulsi: Ḥād al dalālat. fol.7 - Ibn Taymiya: Risāla

284.
unworthy of men. Thus a man who imitates women, in so doing, should be called (mukhammath). Evidently, his mention of this mukhammath class, which was regarded with contempt and disfavour in early Islam, was meant to strengthen his point of view.

Another well authenticated tradition relates how Abū Bakr expressed his disapproval at finding two girls playing two tambourines and singing the songs of the day of Buāth in Aīsha's house and in the presence of the Prophet, who then turned to Abū Bakr and asked him to leave them alone. Other sources attribute to the Prophet the specific remark of: "let them alone,

(1)

this is our festival.

It is worth mentioning that the severe orthodox Ibn Taymiya attaches great importance to the last remark - concerning the festival - and interprets it, not as an explicit approval of the Prophet, but conditioned by two exceptional factors. The first is that those concerned were only two young girls, the second that some pleasure and enjoyment could be allowed them on festive occasions only. He winds up this argument by citing a tradition to stress the idea of tolerance in Islam. (3)

1) Al Ghazali: Ḩawādith Ilī, 245.
3) op. cit: 235.
Bukhari and Muslim tell us how, on a festival day (Id, the Abyssinians (Al Nabulsi has the "Sudanese" instead) were playing in the mosque with shields — darag — and darts — hirab. The Prophet made 'A'isha go behind him, where she could watch them at it, and waited patiently there for her. Although this incident is not directly relevant to the point in question, yet it is generally given by the advocates of the lawfulness of music, in defence of Islamic tolerance of pleasure (unessential sport) — lahwa, and play, la'id, and to emphasize that the Prophet allowed them.

It is also related that the Prophet used to listen to ikht or caravan song, and on one occasion Al Bara' ibn Malik the brother of Anas ibn Malik sang it (ikht) for the men, while Anjasha sang for the women. It was on that occasion that the Prophet warned Anjasha, "to drive gently for the gawarir. The point being that the hadji must not rouse the camels with his song too much, lest they should run wild and hurt their women riders.

4) Al Ghazali: ibid, 242. QawarIr here is a colloquial word for women. Prof. D. Macdonald translates it as the big glass bottles. J.R.A.S. 'Ghazali on music.'
On another occasion, the Prophet was present, at 'Aisha's house where a girl was singing, but on 'Umar's entrance she ran away and the Prophet smiled. So 'Umar asked him "what has made thee smile" and he said, a slave girl was singing here, but she ran away as soon as she heard thy step." "I will not depart, said 'Umar, until I hear what the Apostle has heard." So he called the girl back and she began to sing, the Apostle listening to her.

The advocates of the positive side of the debate, always refer to the famous occasion of Mohammed's arrival at Madīna, when the women on the housetops chanted their famous song, to the beating of their ḏurf, to manifest their joy and greetings on his arrival.

Rajas verses, the object of which is to inspire valour and courage at the battle, have also been chanted in the presence of the Prophet by his "companions" while digging the khandaq. Other forms of poetry have been chanted, either to the Prophet's request or in his presence and with his consent.

1) Al Marṣafī: Al Ajwība al muskita, fols. 4 & 5.
   Al Ḥuṣnī: al mahjūb, 401.
2) Al Ghaṣālī: op. cit., 244.
3) Ibn Taymiya: op. cit., 293. Al Ghaṣālī: op. cit., 242
4) Al Quṣayrī: ibid: 197.
Al Ghazālī relates how the Prophet listened to a hundred lines from the poetry of Umayya ibn abī Ṣalt. His enthusiasm for poetry, notwithstanding the Quranic condemnation of poets, is clearly exhibited in the Prophet's encouragement to Ḥassān ibn Thābit, whose aid he enlisted against the unbelievers, even to the extent of allowing him a minbar (pulpit) in the mosque from which to recite his poetry in glorification of the Prophet. A tradition also reveals the Prophet encouraging and inciting Ḥassān to defend the sacred cause of the new religion, through the effective and impressive medium, poetry, in which he says: "God aids Ḥassān with the ṭūḥ al-qudus, so long as he defends and vies in glory the Apostle of God." In another tradition, the Prophet describes the effect of Ḥassān's poetry on the unbelievers Banū 'Abd Manāf as more potent than arrows in the darkness of night. Ibn Abd Rabbihi adds that the greater part of Ḥassān's verse was usually chanted.

2) *XXI*, *XXVI*, 224-6.
4) *Iqd al Farīd*: IV, 90 - Ibshīḥī: op. cit. 201.
From this summary of the material provided by Islam's primary sources, in favour of the permissibility of music, let us now attempt a fair view of what the opponents of music have against it, always falling back on the authority of the Qur'an and the Prophet's sayings and actions.

Quoting the Qur'an for evidence against the lawfulness of music, Ibn Taymiya refers to the sura, spoken to satan "And excite those of them whom you can with your voice," (1) which according to him, meant the "voice of singing."

Rejecting the quotation from the sura which speaks of the beautiful voice that God "adds" or "increases" in his creatures, Ibn Taymiya bases his view on the ground, that God's blessings are numerous and beauty of the face, one of them, is also an addition giyāda in creation, but that does not at all imply the lawfulness of enjoyment of such blessings. To the argument derived from the unpleasantness of one type of voices, that of asses, he answers that it does not necessarily need to be interpreted as the permissibility of another type. As to singing being allowed in paradise (yahbīrūna XXX, 14), he compares it with wine khamr, which is allowed.

1) I III, 59-61.
there, but is definitely prohibited in this world. (1)

In discussing tradition, in favour of listening, we had already alluded to some of his versions of the interpretations of these traditions. To this he adds fresh evidence, such as an incident revealing the Prophet putting his fingers in his ears to avoid listening to a shepherd's pipe. On this same incident, Al Ḥāshāṣṣī bases his argument to the contrary, on the grounds that the Prophet could have ordered Mārūf, who accompanied him to do the same, had he found it essential to the preservation of his faith.

Al Ḥāshāṣṣī quotes 'A'isha's authority, in a tradition which condemns the singing-girl, her price, the selling of her and teaching her as unlawful. There is another saying to the effect that Iblīs was the first who wailed, and the first who sang. The Prophet is said to have denounced two voices sawtān a lament in a moment of disaster, and a pipe mizmar, in a moment

1) Ibn Taymiya: op. cit. 302-3.
3) Idān al dalālāt, fol. 12.
4) op. cit., 244.
5) Ḥāfa, 251. Suhrāwardī: 'Awārīf, fol. 60.
of joy. There are also other traditions relevant to this point in the Sahih of Al Tirmidhi.

The Companions, Al Sahaba, the contemporaries of Mohammed who occupy a prominent place in Muslim law, in view of their shared experiences with the Prophet, were also brought into the discussion and have contributed some more conflicting data, yet without any success in settling this much debated problem.

Proceeding still further, in a survey of Islam's legal attitude towards music, let us outline the respective views of the four legal schools of law madhahib as expounded by their original founders and in their development of the later writings of their disciples.

Imam Abu Hanifa pronounced his decided dislike for singing, to the extent of making it a major sin kabira. According to the Hidaya, a hanafi law book, the testimony of a wailing woman - naiha - and a songstress - mughanniya, should be rejected, for the sins they commit, i.e. wailing and singing, since the Prophet condemned the two voices of the naiha and mughanniya.

1) Al Qushayri, 198.
2) I; 241 - II; 33. For more traditions on this point c.f. Al 'Iraqi: Al mughni printed with the Thuya II, pp. 239-240 - also Thuya II p. 251-2.
4) loc. cit.
Listed under the same category, is anyone who plays
the pandore, ṭunbūr and is a singer or gathers people
around him to listen to his singing, as such gatherings aim at committing a major sin kabīra.

Malik ibn Anas proscribes singing and commands Muslims to return a slave-girl if after buying her it is discovered that she is a singer. Ibn Taymiya tells us that Malik on being asked what form of singing was permissible according to the people of Madīna, replied, "among us, it is only the dissipated - al fussaq - who sing. The section of the Mudawwana, on testimony, reveals Malik's view that the testimony of a nallah, songstress and singer should be rejected, if they are reputed among the people as such (i.e. singers). In this Malik is generally considered to represent the prevailing outlook at Madīna, with the exception of one only of its learned men: Ibrahim ibn Sa'id.

Imam Al Shafi'i, proves a little more liberal-minded on this question, if only in placing some

1) Hidayat. loc. cit.
2) Ghazālī: op. cit. II, 237.
3) AV: 79.
4) Ghazālī: loc. cit.
reservations on the legal dislike of music, and attaching it to certain conditions. He adopts a cautious course, he states that although music is not categorically prohibited, yet it is unworthy of a good Muslim to indulge in listening to it nor make it his profession. Thus people who do not actually indulge in it, but show an occasional inclination towards it, should not be rejected as witnesses. He thereby diverges from the traditional course and considers it a question of degree and association rather than an absolute unconditional prohibition. He also shows his approval of al ḫudār caravan song, which is soundly based on authentic tradition and sunna. His disciple Al Nawawi as well as other later doctors of the same legal school, proscribed all musical instruments, with the exception of the tambourine duff, in celebration of a wedding, circumcision or banquet only. Such unlawful instruments could be destroyed without any liability.

The imām Ibn Ḥanbal, who is the head of the strictest and most rigid of all madhāhib naturally dislikes music.

Yet in trying to adduce material from the biographies of these great imāms, relevant to the

1) Al Shafi’ī: Kitāb al Umm Ⅶ, 214-5.
3) Al Qazwīnī: op. cit. Ⅶ, 238.
subject under discussion, we are confronted with the clash between their theoretical teachings and the realities of their lives. A story reveals Abū Hanīfa as not altogether insensitive to music's appeal. A neighbour of his used to sing, while drinking, a certain air, every night regularly. Then, one night Abū Hanīfa missed the man's song. On asking he was informed that the man was taken to prison. The next morning and contrary to his custom, he made for the palace of ʿĪsā ibn Mūsā, the governor, who welcomed him with due respect and on hearing his appeal on behalf of his singing neighbour, he set free, not only the singing kavyal, but all who were taken into custody on the same day.

As to Imam Mālik, there is no escaping his reputed fondness of singing about which so much has been written. It seems to have had an early beginning, as one of his teachers ʿUrwa ibn ʿUdhayna, a learned jurisconsult and an authority on tradition, was also a gifted lyrical poet, and used to compose the music for his own poems and sing them. Ibn ʿUdhayna's influence, in this sphere, must have been remarkable, as

2) ʿIqd al Farīd IV, 96.
the kitāb al Aghānī reveals Malik correcting a mistake that a passer-by made in his singing. (1)

Ibrahim ibn Sa‘d (a learned man of Al Madīna who Medina) was once asked by the Calif Harūn al Rashīd about the learned men of Al Madīna who disliked singing, cited Malik, but vowed to the Calif that he has heard Malik, with his own ears, sing at the wedding of a man named Abu Ḥanzala. Such reports, especially of the K. al Aghānī, are often subject to serious objections to their reliability, but the song that Ibn Sa‘d vowed that he heard Malik perform on the above mentioned occasion, i.e. "Sulaymā azma‘at bayna"... etc., happens also to be attributed to his music loving teacher Ibn Udhayna, and is a composition of his. This fact might give some weight to this account, which, no matter how questionable, still has its social significance. There is also the possibility that Abu‘l ‘Alā’ al Ma‘arrī referred to Imam Malik, some centuries later, in a passage from his Risālat al Chufrān which alludes (disapprovingly) to men, who in their youth were dissipated (sing. khalī), but were

1) Aghānī IV, 39.
2) ibid: II, 75 - 'Iqd al Farīd: IV, 93.
3) p. 175.
later chosen to lead and teach, and singers with pandores and lutes, who were destined to ascend the pulpit and preach." Ibn Khordādbeh, suggests that the author must have looked into the ranks of singers and was astonished to find among them such personalities as 'Umar ibn Abdel Aziz and Malik ibn Anas. However, a close look, at the spiritual factors that formed the special rational character of Al Hijāz at that time reveals how natural and inevitable it must have been for Malik to be appreciative of music and singing. At that time Mecca and Madīna, had become, since the beginning of the second century A.H. the centre for training and producing the professional musicians required for the court at Damascus. There the echoes of song and melody were fused with those of prayer and supplication, a state of things which had its inevitable repercussions on Malik in spite of his rigid teachings, and notwithstanding Ibn Taymiya's vigorous denials of any truth in such accounts about Malik.

Al Shāfi'i showed his open appreciation of music when on one occasion he was listening to singing, he asked his companion, "how do you like that,

1) A. El Kholy: Malik; II, 261
2) Also c.f. Al Sarrāj - K. Al Luma; 276.
3) Ibn Taymiya: 294.
does it please you?" And, to the negative answer, Abu Ḥanīfa replied, you have no feeling." (1)

To emphasize the conflict between the theories and the actual sociological realities, there is some evidence that even, where the specific qualifications that render a man unworthy of giving witness were present, that is to say, in the case of a man being known as a singer, even then some singers' evidence was accepted contrary to the letter of the law. Aṭrad, a man of sound legal and religious education was also a singer, and the fact that his testimony was acceptable in Madīna, is expressly referred to by his biographers. Duḥman Al Ashgar, also gave witness, in spite of his profession, as he was a musician and singer.

Perhaps, the most concise and straightforward comment on this controversy among the authorities themselves and between the theory and reality as well, is that which states that anyone who commits something on which there is disagreement between

1) Al Marsafī: Ajwiba al muskita, fol. 5.
2) This vocalization is given in Masālik al Absār, a different version is ʿAtarrad given in Farmer: History, 85.
3) Al ʿUmarī: Masālik al Absār, IX, 10.
4) Ibid., 9.
the jurists, will not be punished for it.

It could be concluded from the preceding survey of the primary sources that Islamic law took a distinctively "disapproving" view of music, that is if such an understatement could convey the actual legal outlook. Singing, singers, musical instruments and those who indulged in listening to them, were all subject to severe strictures, with perhaps the exception of \( \text{huda} \) alone.

Yet out of this labyrinth of conflicting theories and the constant clash of the letter of the law, with the sociological reality, the first element essential to a real understanding of this problem, would be to attempt to specify that on which the ban was imposed, what was the conception of music in relation to this question? Was it, vocal, instrumental, religious or secular?

The quotations from the Qurān and sunna, reveal some inconsistency and vagueness. There is no mention of the word \( \text{ghina} \), or for that matter its early pre-Islamic counterpart of \( \text{inshād} \), which was generally associated with poetry, nor \( \text{huda} \) in the Qurān. The only word which has the nearest bearing on music in it is \( \text{sama} \), which as referred

1) Risāla fī ibābat al sama\textsuperscript{1} (Paris MS. No. 1156)
to before, did not acquire that specific sense as a term of Sufism, till some centuries later. Thus there is no ground for any direct views based on the Qurān and hence the shallowness and superficiality in the legal basis of the theologians’ arguments against music, which the exegetes tried to remedy by their special and somewhat arbitrary interpretations.

Tradition and sunna’s authenticity is generally open to questioning. In these, music is dealt with both instrumentally and vocally. Vocal music seems to fall into two distinct categories, religious and secular. The religious vocal music, that is chanting of poetry on a sacred theme, as well as the cantillation of the Qurān, seem to have been equally acceptable and permissible, if with certain reservations. So is instrumental music, associated with any religious ritual or other occasion. Vocal and instrumental music of a purely secular nature, is almost unanimously viewed with disapproval by the orthodox of Islam.

Thus music, in itself, was not prohibited, since it was elevated to the sphere of the sacred, (1)

1) For legal view on this, see p. 46 of this chapter.
and its great moral influence in aid of religious sentiments was not ignored in Islam. Then how did the opposition to music originate under Islam?

There are two theories on this question, the one attributing the germ of that opposition to music, to the Prophet himself, while the other suggests a later period and credits the 'Abbásid theologians with fabricating the evidence so as to counteract the immoderate love for music prevailing at that time.

In order to examine closely the theory of the Prophet's responsibility for the germ, or the whole of the censure of music, it is necessary to establish, very briefly, the function and the role that music played in pre-Islamic life, with its secular and religious aspects. It seems that the prevailing attitude towards life as a whole, among the pre-Islamic Arabs, was not what could be safely described as religious, in fact, they seem to have been all for worldly pleasures. Music in their life, fulfilled its normal function by expressing their emotions in moments of joy and festivity, as in celebrating marriage and similar family occasions,

1) Farmer: *History*, 22.

2) Lyall: *Ancient Arabian poetry* p. XXVII also

or in sadness and adversity as in the elegies and laments for the dead, women also sang their battle-songs. The hadif whiled away the time and tried to overcome the fatigue and hardships of his monotonous desert life by his simple hadif. The mother would lull her baby to sleep to the strains of a simple tune. Poetry, the Arabs best beloved art, was generally associated with music which seemed to come naturally to the aid of poetry with its strong accents, making so natural the intoning of these verses verses in (tarnim), their taphbir was also a form of musical intonation of prose. In their worship, they practiced certain rituals such as the tahill and talbiya in the pilgrimage. At such a primitive phase of civilization, music is generally a social art, practiced by all. It was not a free independent artistic

1) At the battle of Uhad Hind biut 'Utba accompanied by the women belonging to al Lat, spurred the warriors on by reciting rajaz poems to the sound of tambourines. (K. al Aghani: X1, 126) Haldar: Association of the cult Prophets among the Semites, 184.


4) Haldar: op. cit., 185.

5) Farmer: History, 10.
activity sought for its own sake, but was invariably associated with poetic recitation or chanting, and (1) dancing. Pre-Islamic music was no exception to this rule, and their music was always associated with other activities, yet Arabian music, did not seem to have any particular sacred or religious associations, as in the case of other primitive cultures. A view which is justified by the thoroughly secular ideals prevailing in Jahiliyya. So much for the situation, before Islam, let us then examine the different theories on the origin of the ban on music, in the light of that brief picture of Pre-Islamic music.

The Prophet himself, as we have seen from some well authenticated traditions, was not totally indifferent to the beauties of the tonal art, even as simple as we have just seen, it could safely be said that he tolerated the *huda* at least, on some occasions. Even the popular view that he was strongly opposed to poetry, and to music as associated with it, must be refuted, on the ground that it does not conform to his appreciation of Hassan's poetry

and his consciousness of its influence on the unbelievers. Thus the association with poetry, could not, alone be at the root of his reserve towards music. The exploration of the Prophet's attitude on this question, on purely physiological grounds, is hardly worth discussion at all.

Another alternative expounded by Dr. H. G. Farmer, finds the root of the whole problem in Mohammed's aversion, even fear, of anything that savoured of paganism, or any association that was in any way suggestive of the heathen practices of pagan soothsayers and poets.

This theory, at its face value, seems to provide an adequate interpretation of the underlying motive in Mohammed's attitude. Yet on closer examination, even this theory conflicts with an established fact in the Islamic ritual practices of many centuries. Curiously enough, the almost principal function of music in pre-Islamic pagan worship, was that connected

1) See ante. p.13.
2) Farmer, ibid, 23.
3) ibid: 32.
4) ibid: 33.
with pilgrimage. And it was this pre-Islamic pagan practice that came to be adopted in Islam and "the erstwhile heathen tahlīl and talbiya actually became sacrosanct under the new dispensation," and we hear of the companions using tahlīl and talbiya during the Prophet's life, in pilgrimage. How then would this fact conform to the theory that the motive was to avoid anything suggestive of pagan ideals or worship? Surely the tahlīl and talbiya should have been banished and prohibited from all Islamic worship, being much more dangerous and threatening to the new faith, and more suggestive of paganism, than the mere sound of a duff or mizmar on a joyous occasion.

We must then seek another adequate justification or explanation of Mohammed's views concerning music. His reserve on this point has much in common with other religions, in similar circumstances as in the preaching of puritanism and unworldliness in early Judaism and Christianity. Thus, in the same spirit, Mohammed sought to divert his people's minds

1) G. Demombynes: Le Pèlerinage, 194.
3) Farmer: ibid., 61.
away from worldly pleasures which they loved and appreciated so much, before Islam. It was most probably in an effort to concentrate all resources in the service of the new creed. The founder of the faith must have been intent on keeping the believers in a serious integrated and exalted frame of mind, and to eliminate all weakening and enervating elements, including music that could have been detrimental to his great and constructive task.

Such a theory based on general principles seems to have much in its favour, especially in view of the prevailing ideas on the great influence of music. In fact, the outstanding feature of the Islamic censure of music, at its different stages, is the implicit awareness of music's power. The whole controversy reveals -although indirectly -a consciousness of the spiritual power of music, and a deep-rooted appreciation and love of the tonal art, of which so many exaggerated accounts abound in Muslim writings, and which even the strongest orthodox opponent to music Ibn Taymiya could not deny. Could the ban on music, then, have

1) Taq al Farīd: IV, 88.
2) op. cit. 304.
been originally, a protective measure, which was later elaborated and adopted by the theologians of Islam, to counteract the keen susceptibility of the Arab temperament, and all other Muslim nations also, to music?

Having discussed the theory of the Prophet's responsibility for the censure, from different angles, there remains the other theory suggesting its origin in the fabrications of the 'Abbasid theologians. This theory seems to have much in its favour, being more in accordance with the logical and historical evolution of the society. The Islamic society, which by that time - 'Abbasid dynasty - was enjoying an undreamt of social and economical stability and prosperity, was indulging in finery and luxurious living. One of the best appreciated pleasures of life in this opulent society was music and song, which incidentally were intimately associated with drink khamr, at the courts of Califs. It is probably under these favourable conditions, that music became closely associated with forbidden pleasures. The social background to Islamic music - especially in the life of the ruling aristocracy - made it savour of dissipation and frivolity, which gave some justification to the puritans' condemnation of it, as associated with the
neglect of religious duties. It is more than likely, that the legal ban dates from a late period in Islam, and was actuated by the flourishing state of music and musicians, and at the same time its closer attachment to evil associations, factors, which could well be considered as threatening to the moral code of the Islamic society. To ensure more attention and observance of the ban on music, it is likely that the theologians vested it with religious authority, since the moral and the religious, were not distinctly separate under Islam. However, we can safely presume that the actual ban did not directly originate from the teachings of the Prophet, as the problem, at that time was not dangerous. It also seems to have sprung later, from social, rather than religious considerations.

Music itself then was not the object of the censure in Islam, and we now have ample evidence of the permissibility - and approval - of music and musical instruments associated with any religious sentiment or ritual. Thus, it is not difficult to comprehend, how, in spite of the endless contro-


2) Robson: ibid, 4.
verses on music, Islamic worship reveals some interesting musical features and that music did contribute its share to the ritual practices of the same religion, which is supposed to have prescribed it. Even the orthodoxy of Islam appreciated the stimulating, unifying and exalting powers of music in the field of worship, and thus music — as simple and crude as it was — had a function to fulfill under Islam, which was unanimously sanctioned and approved.

Having endeavoured to assess the influence of religion on music, let us now consider the other side of the picture, that is to say, how music influenced worship in Islam. As in the previous part of this survey, the sociological nature of this study imposes the necessity of considering, not only the legal and theoretical aspects to the point under discussion, but also the relevant sociological realities of life, with their inevitable modifications to laws. The following survey of Islamic religious music, being chiefly descriptive, will occasionally refer to modern practice. This is to some extent due to the inadequacy of the material derived from legal works, in conveying a clear picture of the actual music of the older period,
and again to the total absence of any notation of the particular style of religious music. In recurring to the modern practice, allowance will be made of course, for the normal evolution of such practices over the centuries, although, being related to religious matters such evolution is bound to be rather limited in regard to the great care and preservation with which religious rituals have been cherished in Islamic countries. As J. Rouanet put it, the contact between muslim countries and other civilizations might have effected some modifications in the ancestral customs and traditions, yet what concerns the religion has always remained intangible.

The musical features in Islamic ritual are many and interesting, yet the scope of Islamic religious music is rather restricted as compared to that of the Christian sacred music, although, in matters of origin, the difference was not so sharply contrasted. The individual character of Islamic worship and its simplicity, with its direct communion between God and the faithful, is definitely one of the factors that have narrowed down the scope

of Islamic religious music.

The Qur'an, the sacred book of Islam, a constantly recurring feature in the daily life of a Muslim, provides some interesting aspects of a musical element, in its composition, its correct pronunciation and recitation - *tajawwad* - and its cantillation.

Every language has its music, so to speak, and this "music" of the language, lies more in the general intonation of the idiom, the accents and way of pronunciation and the timbre of the words, than in the special meaning of the vocabulary. This "music" of the Arabic language has found its ultimate expression in the composition of the Qur'an. This greatest masterpiece, the culmination of literary achievement in the Arabic language, has been and always will be the best model and source of the Arabic language at its purest and highest level. This outstanding example of *fasaha* had a strange appeal to the rough *badawi* Arabs in spite of their aversion to its ideals at first. Its influence and

  Lemmens: *Islam Beliefs and Institutions*, 105.
3) Grunebaum: "Apart from its theological content, it has even been admired by some Christians"
   op. cit. 97-99.
power over the Arabs, in the early days of Islam, belonged rather to the sphere of the aesthetic than the intellectual, it was more of an emotional response to the sound of the words, than any intellectual appreciation of the content. 'Umar ibn al Khatṭāb, known among the Arabs for his severity and strength, was among the many who were won over to the new faith, through the deep stirring influence of the sacred words. This emotional influence of the sacred book, could be chiefly attributed to its well-balanced, musical and strongly rhythmic composition. Its immediate appeal to the poetic nature of the Arabs - even the unbelievers - could be better understood on these lines, as distinct from the actual grasp of the sense of the verses.

According to the authorities in Arabic rhetoric, the conditions of fagāfa, in the one word among others are that its letters should be of distinct pronunciation, so as not to shock the ear, and its sound should be suggestive of its sense. Then the composition of the sentences should constitute a certain element of delicate choosing of words to convey the exact shade of meaning required etc.

1) M.S. Al Kaffī: Tafsīr al Qurān: 234.
2) Al Khazīṭ: Sīṛ al fagāfa, 62.
Of these examples abound, in the well balanced contrasted composition of the Quran, which fully conforms to such conditions, in its words, separately, and as a part of the sentence, indeed it is the perfect example of the "music of language".

The composition of the Quran itself is very elaborate and impressive. The early suras of the Meccan period are very rhythmical and have a distinct rhythmical cadence. "Recited in sonorous long drawn tones by a practised reader whose whole being is thrown into the effort of reproducing the words of Allah, they are undoubtedly impressive even to an outsider and on the faithful the effect is electrical." The predominance of a poetical element in the early suras is acknowledged, especially, as contrasted with the longer and more serious Madinan suras. The latter dealing with practical and legal questions, do not afford the same outstanding strong feeling for rhythmic impulse predominant in the Meccan suras. This dominant feature becomes clearer by comparing the suras from the Meccan

1) Stanton: The Teaching of the Quran, 14
2) Ibid., loc. cit.
3) Even Lammens thought them "lyrical" op. cit., 46.
4) Mursalat LXXVII - Muddathir LXXIV.
with those from the Madinan periods. The latter, are not so rhythmic in composition, or elaborate in construction, and are much longer, features analogous to the practical and legal nature of the content. (1)

On the whole, there is a marked feeling for symmetry and balance in the Quran, and its elaborate construction seems to take the definite form of a recurring "refrain" which heightens the effect of the words by stressing the recurrent ideas, in a musically effective and contrasted form and there are also examples where the sacred words fall into distinct strophes.

A modern Egyptian writer M. Sadegh Al Rafi has greatly contributed towards a better appreciation of the musicality in the composition of the Quran in his book "Jaz al Quran." Whatever the value of such a contribution to the vast literature on the Quran, it certainly has a claim to be mentioned here as introducing a new element to the sphere of research on the subject. The composition

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1) Lemmens: ibid, 47. Rodwell, preface to translation of Quran, p. 3.
2) Sura Mursalat LXVII, "Moon" al qamar LV and Al Rahman LV etc.
3) Although a madinan sura, is a good example. Al Ahzab, 33.
tion of the sacred book had always been studied by rhetoricians, and approached from linguistic and literary aspects before. This very brief and inadequate account is intended to touch on the interest of a specialized study of the musicality in its composition, and does not claim more than to point it out to those best able to undertake it.

The Quran has greatly contributed in another way, to the preservation of the purest form of Arabic. The sanctity with which the book was cherished among Muslims, over the centuries was, indirectly reflected on the language. Rules were later fixed to ensure, the correct pronunciation and recitation of the Quran, which was handed down orally from one generation of qurra to another. A singularly perfect system of the intonation of the Quran was devised. Thus the language in which the sacred book was revealed to the Prophet, shared some of the formal and almost fanatical affection which was always bestowed on religious matters in Islam.

This perfect system of intonation is known as tajwid which literally means perfection. Technically

1) Trend ibid, 22.
2) Ibn Al Jazar: Al Tamhid fi 'ilm al tajwid, 5.
cally it designates the art of reciting the Quran correctly, "giving to every consonant its full value as much as it requires to be well pronounced without exaggeration. The object of this art is to train the tongue to the correct vocalization and punctuation, essential to the perfect understanding of the sacred words.

There are three forms of tajwid: tartil is the slow recitation which enables the reciter to observe all the rules and to do justice to every vowel and consonant, and give just the right length to every pause or long vowel, (madd). Hadr is a quicker recitation, yet always with strict adherence to the rules of tajwid. The third is the recitation of medium speed, something between tajwid and hadr.

The long vowels (or the madd) have fixed rules which govern the exact length appropriate to each case. Failure to observe these is considered a grave error in recitation which would be strongly criticized.

Although the fundamental rules are fixed for the correct recitation of the Quran, yet there are seven different qiraat, and according to some sources ten, which do not,

2) ibid, 7.
3) ibid, 4.
however, differ fundamentally.

It is worth mentioning however, that the rules of *tajwīd* do not give any indication of the melodic cantillation of the *Qurān*, they merely deal with the punctuation and intonation of the words, yet these rules observed so strictly throughout the Islamic world, have greatly contributed to preserve that special music of the Arabic language against the process of time. The millions of Muslims who learn the *Qurān* by heart, ever since infancy, have had their tongues properly trained through the best of all phonetic methods, the *tajwīd*, which was preserved and studied in the numerous *Qurānic* schools throughout the Muslim world.

The cantillation of the *Qurān* is perhaps, the most interesting feature of Islamic religious music. The terms cantillation, and chant, denote the free art of chanting or monophonic recitation of prose texts, according to no fixed melodies or intervals, practices which are characteristic of the liturgical music of many Oriental cultures, such as that of the Jewish synagogue, and the Indian chanting of the *Rigveda*.

1) Al Jazārī: *Munjīd al Muqrīn* pp. 70, 57.
2) *c.f. Nuaymī: Dūr al Qurān fī Dimashq.*
Thus these terms seem the most appropriate for designating the style of chanting of the Qurān. This style is generally in free rhythm, and follows no fixed melodies or intervals. It must on no account be accompanied with musical instruments and with, of course, strict adherence to the above mentioned rules of tajwīd. The melodies of cantillation, usually flowing and slow, are limited to a few notes, and very seldom exceed the octave. But they provide a wide scope for individuals to exercise imagination, skill and initiative in cantillating it. This variety in style has now become sharply defined in the modern practice in different Islamic countries. The contrast can be easily grasped by comparing the existing styles of cantillation in Egypt, North Africa and Syria respectively. The elaborate and ornate style, with emphasis on the lyrical side in the melodic contour, has always been favoured in Egypt. In North Africa, the cantillation is nothing but the mere inflexion of the voice, on two or three notes only, which is just designed to relieve the monotony, without any definite shape or elaborate ornamentation of the melody. The Syrian style however is less elaborate than that of the Egyptian style, and is

1) Al Jazarī: Tajbīd, Qurtubī, ibid, 121.
simpler and taken at a quicker tempo.

Going back to the earlier days of Islam, it is difficult to determine the exact rise of this practice, but the usual theoretical debates on cantillation, similar to those on music generally - have arisen early. Side by side to the above mentioned controversy on the lawfulness of music, there arose also the questions of chanting the holy book, and whether it should involve the use of melodies. Here again the profusion of material makes it very difficult to sum up the whole coherently. However, we cannot exclude all mention of the trends of the debate, even if only for their

1) Prof. D. Prince (Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics III, 53) tends to stress the "rhythmic character of the chanting of the Qur'an and describes the melody as secondary to the rhythm of the language and used merely to avoid monotony. He describes also a roulade on five notes on the stress syllable of the most important word." It seems that the modern standards in the Middle East show a preference for the interval of the fourth, rather than the fifth. But the emphasis on the rhythm does not apply to the cantillation or the Adhan, which do not follow anything in the nature of the rhythmic modes, or sharp accentuated rhythms typical of oriental singing nor does it conform to a systematic recurrence of a strong beat.
academic interest.

In the Qur'an itself, there is one relevant verse which goes: "wa rattil il Qur'ana tartila." The literal meaning of tartil is the slow and deliberate following of one thing after another, and according to Al Asma'ī, is, the careful and slow pronouncing of words. 'Ali ibn Abī Talib is credited with the interpretation of this verse, as "the tajwid of letters and the correct pauses, while Ibn al Jazari gives us to understand that it means nothing but just to recite it slowly and carefully.

Another Bukhari tradition tells us that the Prophet on hearing 'Abdullāh ibn Qays or Al Ash'arī, chant the Qurān, with his delicate and beautiful voice, likened it to a pipe from the pipes of David.

Al Tirmidhī quotes Hudhayfa that the Prophet said, "Recite the Qurān to the melodies ḥudūn of the Arabs, and their airs aswātiha but never to the melodies of the dissipated (ahl al fīq). ... He then prophesies that there will come the time when people will be

1) Bukhari: Sahih III, 156
2) Tamhīd, pp. 6 - 7.
“singing” the Qur'an to the tardi\textsuperscript{(of singing shina)} and lament nawb, and they shall be cursed, as well as those who listen to them. \textsuperscript{(1)}

Another tradition to that effect goes: "Adorn (sayyinda) the Qur'an with your voices," and is cited by Ibn Davud, Ibn Maja and Al Nasa\textsuperscript{i}. Muslim's version differs in saying "He is not one of us, who does not sing (yataghanna bi\textsuperscript{l}) the Qur'an. \textsuperscript{(2)}

This saying has been the subject of one of those protracted arguments, which involved commentators as well as philologists. The latter's job was to establish the exact meaning of the words. Al Qur\textsubscript{u}ub\textsuperscript{I} dealt with this point at length and from every possible angle, in order to eliminate any possibility of using profane melodies in cantillation. One of his interpretations is founded on the inversion of the text i.e. adorn your voices with the Qur'an. Another tackled taghanni\textsuperscript{I} as derived from istighna or opposite of iftigar. \textsuperscript{(4)} However, after three different interpretations, the last

1) Qur\textsubscript{u}ub\textsuperscript{I}: ibid, 181.
2) Ibid, 112,114,117 - Al L\textsubscript{a}ghiq\textsuperscript{I}: Al Fathiyya, fol.18, in For more traditions: c.f. Al Mughn\textsuperscript{I}: IV(Margin of Ihya) 280 - 261.
3) Ibid, 117 also Sarraj: ibid, 280. Ibn.Salama: K. al Qur\textsubscript{u}ub\textsuperscript{I} malah\textsuperscript{T}, 5.
compromise arrived at, was that the "adornment" is the mastery of the different qira\textsuperscript{-}\textsuperscript{at}. Ibn Taymiya, however, takes a positive attitude in stating that it just meant chanting it (tah\textsuperscript{in} al sawt bihi\textsuperscript{T}). As typical of such controversies, we find Al Ṭabari\textsuperscript{T} and Ibn al Ḥar\textsuperscript{T} using the same tradition in favour of allowing melodic cantillation of the Quran with tahr\textsuperscript{ī}b and tarj\textsuperscript{ī}. This last example represents the bewilderment of theologians on this question, and their deliberate efforts to avoid the suspicion of associating profane singing with the Quran.

Of the doctors of the four legal schools Malik and Ibn Ḥanbal proscribe melodic cantillation (tahr\textsuperscript{ī}b) \textsuperscript{(3)} Abū Ḥan\textsuperscript{ī}fa allows it and Al Shār\textsuperscript{ī} approves of melodies in recitation and prefers it to be recited with hadr \textsuperscript{(4)} (quick recitation) and tah\textsuperscript{ī}n, in a sad voice.

The controversial evidence does not help, here again, to settle the question. Yet, there arose a class of eminent Muslim writers with a more liberal outlook

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Qurtubi  
1) \textit{Ibid}, 112.  
3) Al Shalabi\textsuperscript{T}: \textit{Commentary on Tanbih} by Zayla\textsuperscript{T}: I, 91.  
4) Shafi\textsuperscript{T}: \textit{K. al Umm VI}, 215.
like Al Ghazālī, Ibn Khaldūn and others who appreciated the great power of the holy book if chanted to appropriate melodies, and rendered with dignity and conviction with-
in certain limits. According to them ṭabāῑb and taṛjī were permissible on the condition that they do not interfere with the correct and proper pronunciation, nor with the sense of the words: The appropriate form of cantillation is that which inspires the listener with awe, piety and devotion.

Ibn Khaldūn the famous Andalusian historian of the eighth century A.H. tried to draw the line between the dignified appropriate chanting and the melodies of secular singing. The right musical intonation of the Quran, according to him, is that based on simple, spontaneous melodies, which are not the outcome of any musical training, as music has nothing at all to do with the Quran. This natural ability to which he refers, is called midmar and most of the qarrah whose chanting can be as sweet as the sound of pipes, have only got that natural spontaneous ability. However, if the melody of the cantillation would in any way conflict with the perfection of pronunciation, then the melody should be abandoned in favour of ṭilāwa recitation. The Quran

1) Ibn Kathīr: Fadā’il al Quran, 122 also S. Rashīd

Riṣā: commentary on same, 128-9.
is supposed to inspire awe, as it directs our thoughts to death and what follows it. It should be held above mere delight in the perception of pleasant sounds. If we add to this the statement of Ibn Qutayba to the effect that tartīl and taqhib of the Qurān are no different from singing and huda, also that Ḥāfs ibn Abī Rābah approved of using the melodies of song and huda in cantillating the Qurān. Later we have evidence again that definite secular melodies have found their ways to the cantillation, and a certain verse from sura XVIII was the first to be sung to the same melody of a certain popular song. Such things must have greatly perturbed the orthodoxy of Islam and it is likely that the strong strictures against tartīl, tā libr and taqhib were meant to check such profanity from cantillation, and as a measure to counteract a tendency which became clear in Al Hijāz, since we hear that the Calif 'Umar ibn 'Abdel Azīz, when heading the believers at Prayers melodized (tarraba) his recitation, to which the learned Sa'id ibn

2) Igāl al Fārid, IV, 92.
4) Using a capital "P" to denote the special Muslim practice after Demombynes.
al Musīb objected, the result was that it was never done again. This melodizing of the Qurān in Prayers is generally disapproved and the prevalent custom is to intone the verses with the usual inflexion of the voice, restricted to two or three notes only — while the ornate melodious cantillation has been restricted to independent recitation.

It would be rather difficult to grasp the full significance of such a dispute until we hear of certain dangerous practices that have been mixed with cantillation in later years. Al Jazārī (d. 1429 A.D.) a shafī'ite mentions devices such as tarīf, shaking of the voice, taftrīf, which makes the words ancillary to the melody, to the extent of distorting them, tahzīn, the affectation of sadness, all being devices of a profane character, not in keeping with the sanctity of the Qurān. They neither enhance the sense of the holy words, nor help to impress their meaning on the mind of the listener which is the aim of all reading of the Qurān. In North Africa hazzābin, that is professional cantillators chant the Qurān together (in a

1) Qurṭubī, 113.

2) Al Shalabī says that melodizing the Qurān in Prayers, if it changes a word invalidates the Prayer: ibid: 1, 91.

3) Al Jazārī: ibid, pp. 4-5.
chorus) at the mosques and, by the end of the month the sixty *ahzab* of the Qur'an must be finished by what is called a *khatma* or finale to mark the end. This however must have been a comparatively recent development, since we know that Ibn Jubayr who on travelling to the East and on hearing the Qur'an chanted (in chorus) was astonished. To sum up, the fundamental principle, which covers all the different views at all times, is that the melody of the cantillation should never be allowed to govern the words or take the upper hand, nor should it be considered as an end in itself. The chanting must be of a simple, dignified and impressive character worthy of the sacred book.

What is said of cantillation can be said of the *adhān* literally "announcement," that is the call to Prayer, which although it is only a *sunna* and not *fard* yet, failure to observe it, amounts almost to a breach of the faith, for which war can be declared by the believers, such is the importance of this institution to Muslim ritual.

According to the traditional account it was first instituted during the Prophet's life soon after

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1) J. Rouanet; *op. cit.*, 2321.
2) Ibn Jubayr - *Travels*, 152.
3) Al Zayla'i: *Tabyín I*, 89.
When the Muslims first came to Madīna, they suggested the use of a bell to summon them to Prayers, or the sounding of a bug (trumpet), both were rejected as Christian and Jewish practices. Umar suggested that a man should call to Prayers, whereupon the Prophet asked Bilāl to do so. According to a different version, it was Abdallāh ibn Zayd, who saw it in his dreams. Thus Islam has substituted the human voice for the Christian churchbell and the Jewish trumpet, and the cantillated vocal call to Prayers, which has developed into one of the most interesting features typical of its religious music.

The first mu'adhāhin in Islam was Bilāl the Abyssinian and it is related to the Prophet that he asked Abdallāh ibn Zayd to demonstrate it to Bilāl whose voice was more sonorous and his breath longer. The Prophet told Bilāl to put his fingers in his ears while cantillating the call, as it would help the production of the voice. We can thus appreciate the importance of the beautiful voice, as one of the qualifications to the job of mu'adhāhins who were

1) Bukhāri: Sahīh I, 80.
2) Al Zayla'i: loc. cit.
3) Al Kasāni: Bada' al Sanā'i: I, 149.
4) Al Șarakhši: Al Mabsūṭ, I, 130.
5) Al Shalabi: ibid, 89.
chosen with care and were well paid for this job.

An incident of some interest to this point tells how Abu Maṣḥūra, the muḥaddithin at Mecca, lowered his voice when he came to the Prophet's name, because the Meccans were not accustomed to hear it yet, on which the Prophet commanded him to return and say it loudly, which tells us definitely that the madd of the voice with the call was practiced then. The same problem of ṭabīb and ṭarīj and their permissibility presents itself in connection with the adhān as with cantillation.

Like the cantillation of the Qurʾan, the practice of adhān varies considerably from one country to another. Al Maqrīzī gives an interesting account of the evolution of this practice in Egypt, and the introduction of tasbīḥ which he suggests to be of Jewish origin. This tasbīḥ was first adopted there, when the 'arīf or chief muḥaddithin to the governor Maslama ibn Mukhālīd started the custom of cantillating the adhān from midnight to dawn, lengthening it with pious invocations and tasbīḥat, that is the pronunciation of subḥānallāh. Ṛmah ibn Ṭūlūn is credited

1) Shalabī: ibid, 129, madd i.e. prolongation.
2) The term tarjī has a distinct meaning in connection with adhān only, that is rujūʿ (return) to the shahadatayn and repeating them loudly commended by Shafiʿites but not the Ḥanafīs (Zaylaḥ: ibid I, 89.)
with introducing another innovation to adhan, since he had twelve mukabbirin divided into groups of four each, these groups would alternately spend the whole night in cantillating the Qur'an, pronouncing takbir, chanting religious gasaid and supplications, in addition to the adhan at the proper hour. One man must have been at the head of the group to conduct the cantillation which was always in unison. After him, his son Khumarawayh kept up the same tradition and hence the custom for the muadhdhin's beautiful nocturnal tasbih. This tasbih before dawn, still observed nowadays, is usually the most ornate, beautiful and awe-inspiring version of adhan from the musical and devotional point of view.

The differences in the adhan (and cantillation) in the Muslim countries are the reflection of the temperament of the people and is to some extent governed by the prevailing madhhab or legal school. Thus in the parts in North Africa where the maliki school dominates, we have a specimen of adhan simple and even stern within a very restricted range, and is almost in monotone throughout, and this rigid formula is preserved in Algeria and Morocco generally, especially

2) J. Rouanet: op. cit., 2819.
in the far reaches, where the first Islamic traditions are almost kept intact, we find the call of rudimentary simplicity with a slight inflexion of the voice on the last syllables. Then again, where the hanafi school is predominant, the musical style is brilliant, with more ornamentation and festooning of the melody, as is the case in Tunis which also applies to Egypt. J. Rouanet, even suggests an analogy between the intellectual character of each legal school, and the style of its religious music, so that according to him, the horizontal and stern style corresponds to the rigidity of the Maliki school and the ornate and elaborate call is appropriate to the spirit of rationalism characteristic of the hanafi teachings.

Professor J. D. Prince gives illustrations of the adhan from Yemen, and another from 'Iraq, both being modern versions in musical notations. They serve to give a rough outline of the style, but are not accurate representations. Melodically, they

1) loc. cit. (also cf. S. Hurgronje on its melodies in: Mekke, 69.
2) ibid, 2821
exclude the typically oriental intervals which the author just alludes to as deliberate flattening and sharpening of the notes. As to the rhythm of the illustrated examples, it does not convey the essentially free rhythm of this style, which does not lend itself to any fixed time signature at all, but is intimately connected with the rhythm of the words, in a recitative style. Two other illustrations, more satisfactory are those given by J. Rouanet of an adhān from Algeria and Tunisia.

There seems to have been some deviation from the principle of limiting the call to the human voice only in the adhān. There are parts in North Africa (Fez) where a banner was hoisted up on the minaret at the hour of the Prayer. In Indonesia, there spread the custom of using, in addition to the voice a certain drum called bedong, whose dull sound goes further under the thick tropical foliage, than the unaccompanied human voice alone.

The same features characteristic of cantillation and adhān rendering, also apply to another form of religious chant, which was, and still is, very


2) Bousquet: Grandes pratiques..., 42.
popular throughout the Muslim world. By this we mean, 
the chanting of religious mawālīd, poems in honour of 
the birth of the Prophet, which later became a general 
term applied to all chanting of religious verses (poetry) 
in the vocal unaccompanied and free style of adhān and 
cantillation. Musically, the most interesting feature 
about these mawālīd, is that they are performed in 
antiphony, i.e. a soloist or leader, sings a verse, 
then the chorus takes it up again after him. Such 
chanting is always by male voices, and generally in 
unison, the only departure from which would be the 
introduction of the octave.

Although the adhān must precede each of the five 
Prayers, there is one instance where it is abolished 
and that is the Prayers of the two canonical feasts: 
Id al fiṭr which marks the end of Ramadān and the id 
al adhā which comes after the wuqūf of pilgrims at 
Arafāt, which are both celebrated by special Prayers. 
The characteristic feature of these prayers is the 
takbīr (from Allahu akbar) which all the Muslim men 
must intone loudly, with appropriate inflexion of the 

2) Lane: Modern Egyptians, II, 171-3 also on various occasions.
3) Ibn Jubayr: describes the prayer at Mecca, 159.
voice, all through their walk from their dwellings to the mosque. Having arrived there, the believers all join in a spontaneously organized form of responsorial antiphony in chanting the takbir, until the moment of the Prayer comes. This consists of chanting the takbir and other formulae, alternated between each row of muslims successively and the whole congregation in turns. Abu Hanifa suggests that the pause between every two takbirs should be equivalent to the time of pronouncing three tasbihat.

The strongly rhythmic character, sharply marked by the rhythm of the words, intoned upon four notes only, with such religious fervour and strength, gives this practice a unique aspect in muslim ritual. There the music is only a means of uniting the faithful in one communal utterance and here it contributes to their communion in the same rhythm and the same expression of their common faith and belief.

This takbir, as well as the tahli and talbiya during the pilgrimage are striking illustrations of the universal function of rhythm, the principal element

1) Sarkhasi: op. cit., 39.
3) The kus, drum used to regulate the movements of the pilgrims' caravans. Mazahri: ibid, 25.
of music, in bringing about the unification of all those actuated by a strong religious sentiment, which must have a collective expression. There the mass has but one voice, which it neither tries to make beautiful nor correct, but is its only medium for expressing the shared feelings.

The Talbiya of the pilgrim consists of the enunciation of a certain formula, as the sign of ihram. This Talbiya, once it is pronounced by the pilgrim binds him to certain rules and rituals and transports him, or her, from a secular to a religious life. Like takbîr in prayer, the talbiya is pronounced by pilgrims at every stage. The talbiya is the more generally used formula, although the Companions were not strictly limited to it, and some said tahlîl or takbîr. On the moment, when the talbiya should cease, there is some divergence, but it is generally accepted that it is not part of the ritual of 'Umra. The words of this formula are labbayk allâhumma, labbayk, la sharîka laka, labbayk, innal

1) Belvianes: Sociologie de la musique, 97.
2) Ghazalî, op. cit. I, p. 223.
hamda wal ni mata laka wal mulk, la sharīka lak etc. (1)
The remarkable rhythm of these words impresses itself even without understanding them. Such words intoned loudly, with all the religious fervour and devotion of millions of Muslims are a perfect example of the function that music could fulfill in connection with Islamic rituals, in unifying and helping to voice their inner belief in their faith, and in diverting their minds from the physical fatigue and hardships.

Apart from the musical elements in the ritual practices themselves, there are diverse occasions of a religious nature which are celebrated with music. The month of Ramaḍān usually the occasion of social festivities, celebrated with the cantillation of the Qurān and of mawālid, and ṣaṣa’il. The beginning of the month was sometimes announced by drums and trumpets. Ibn Jubayr also tells of the part of the drum called kūs in organizing all collective movement during the pilgrimage. Its sound which he likens to that of thunder, was the usual signal to halt, and to proceed. Trumpets and drums were also used to announce the five hours for the Prayer to the pilgrims.

1) For variations on this c.f. Ḍhazālīf, loc. cit.
There are also the famous songs of the pilgrims, which are unanimously excluded from the legal ban on singing. These consist of poems describing the **Kaba** and **magām**, and all the other practices related to them. Such poems are chanted to the accompaniment of **drum**, **tabl**, **qāṭib** (wand) **ghirbal** or **duff** and **shāhin**. The greeting of the returning pilgrims, especially in countries far from **Al Hijaz**, were always celebrated with music and singing in view of the hardships of the journey.

All the above mentioned are instances of the manner in which music was brought into the service of religious sentiments.

Such examples can well be considered as representative of the oldest Islamic forms of religious music, the melodies of the **adhan** and cantillation are living examples of what was practised in the earlier centuries of Islam. Such traditions have been cherished, not with the absolute rigidity of a recorded text capable of


2) Yet there is another sphere, where music had a more inspiring and direct function to fulfill, that of **Sufism**.

3) Rouanet, *ibid*, 2826.
correcting the possible failings of the memory in the process of their transmission, but with relative persistence throughout the Islamic era, a fact which has its interest and significance to the present study in its reference to the past, as preserved in the present.
PART I (b)

MUSIC AND SUFISM.
The religious life in Islam presents two distinct aspects, those of: the shari'a and haqiqa. That of shari'a is the formal side of religion, which is based upon the observance of the external rituals, whereas, haqiqa, is the spiritual side, which is concerned with the divine reality. The latter is not restricted to the prescribed forms of worship, but has its specific way through which it is hoped to attain a closer approach to God. That mystical aspect of the religious life, came to be known in Islam as tasawwuf.

Mysticism, is a natural trend in man, an aspiration to achieve union with the Divine. Such aspirations are fulfilled through rigid ethical discipline, and the complete suppression and mastery over carnal desires and worldly passions.

This tendency is not peculiar to the adherents of one faith, but is of universal and perennial character. Man has always dreamt of it in all ages, in one or another form. Under Islam, however, it has assumed a positive aspect and had later developed and flourished, for many centuries, into a highly spiritual form of inner

religious life, with organized orders, and numerous adherents throughout the Islamic world.

To determine the origin of sufism and such foreign elements that might have collaborated to shape it, is by no means a simple matter. Modern research in this field refutes the theory of its direct derivation from any single definite source, be it Syrian, Persian, Greek, or Indian. The driving force actuating such an intense movement, could not be wholly imported, and sufism is generally acknowledged now, as being chiefly the outcome of internal forces in Islam, working within a Muslim framework. This does not exclude the possibility of certain foreign influences of subsidiary importance. It is of some interest to the present study to note, that in this sphere of sufism - where music had an essential and serious religious function - we are dealing with what is essentially an authentic Islamic movement, of great significance to that culture.

The first tendency in that mystical movement, took the form of *suhd* asceticism, which had its

2) Massinon: Encyclopaedia of Islam, "Taṣawwur"
   IV, 692.
earliest exponents among the sahaba companions, themselves. This early phase of mysticism was merely a rejection of mundane things and seclusion from the world. But that germ found favourable circumstances and later flourished and expanded in the form of several ṣūfī organisations, with their specific terminology, literature, and their prescribed rituals and practices, one of which was al same' audition.

How could music come to be a valuable asset to this aspect of inner religious life in Islam, in spite of all the strictures of orthodoxy against that art? What was it that the Muslim mystics achieved through music? Such questions are of the greatest interest to the present study and in order to appreciate fully the ṣūfī conception of music, we must summarily deal with the theory and practice of ṣuﬁsm.

A definition of ṭaṣawwur, is a complicated matter, since it is neither a religious sect, nor a dogmatic system. It could be described perhaps as a journey or a spiritual pilgrimage where the traveller advances, towards communion with God, through slow and

1) Abu 1 Tayyib al Makkī: Ṣūf al qulūb, II, 23
   Massignon: loc. cit.
difficult stages of asceticism and rigid moral discipline. That spiritual "religion of the heart has fully recognized the tremendous spiritual power of music in helping the mind and soul to concentrate on the idea of God, and in inducing the ecstatic state wa'ijd, and leading to the passing away from self fana which is the ultimate hope and desire of every pledged sufī.

The sufī text books describe certain stages which are to be attained successively, in the course of that spiritual journey towards the Divine. On these stages maqamat, there are some divergences, but Al Sarraj provides an adequate account, of seven stages which a sufī must acquire and master successively, through self-discipline and meditation, as leading through the "path" or ascent of his mystical call. In his work Al Luma, the author expounds seven stages in the following order: tawba repentance, wara abstinence, zuhd renunciation, faqr poverty, sabr patience, tawakkul trust in God, ridā satisfaction.

The elusive "religion of the spirit", with its grades acquired stages and its granted psychological

2) op. cit. 41 - 54.
conditions ḥallā, derives from music considerable spiritual benefit, and each one of the ṣūfīs, listens to it, and is affected by it, according to his stage and psychological state. Thus music which was frowned upon by the rigid theologians, became to ṣūfīsm an essential element in its ritual and practice, conducive to their ardently sought religious ecstasy.

These contrasting attitudes, is considered by some scholars to be mainly, the result of foreign influences on ṣūfīsm. According to some writers, the introduction of music to ṣūfī ritual, bears witness of Christian or Indian and Buddhist influences. Such a doctrine is not easily proved, and the mere affinity here, is not sufficient to settle this question. This paradoxical problem of the controversial attitudes of the external legal aspect of religion versus the mystical - calls for a different approach other than that advocating foreign influences alone to be responsible for music being used religiously.

The introduction of ṣama audition, as a spiritual practice is not considered by the ṣūfīs as an end in

1) Al Ḥujwirī: Kašf al Muhījub, 406.
3) Massignon: ibid.
itself, but it is only the means to the ardently desired ecstasy or wajd. The ṣūfīs did not adopt it for its aesthetic value, but only for its value in helping them to attain to religious ecstasy, and its use by the ṣūfīs, as a ṣūfī exercise is but another proof of its universally acknowledged power over listeners.

On the spiritual value of music there is ample evidence. Al Kalābadhi says, that music is the food of the spirit, when the spirit receives its food, it turns aside from the government of the body. Al Qushayri the author of the famous Risāla says that music leads one to have a keen desire to please God. Al Hijwirī, another eminent ṣūfī shaihk, expressed his own favourable opinion on that point. Dhu'l Nun, one of the early propagators of sama', the Egyptian ṣūfī, defines music, as a "divine influence", which stirs the heart to seek God. Al Ḥarīth al-Muḥāsibī, Abu'l Ḥussayn al Darraj Al Nawrī and Al Siblī are all credited with relevant words, expressive

1) Al Ta'arruf: 167.
2) op. cit., 179.
3) Kashf. 399.
4) Massignon: Lexicon, 183.
5) op. cit. 404.
6) Al Siblī: Luma'ī, 269.
7) ibid, 271.
8) ibid, 272.
of the spiritual benefit the ṣūfīs derive from sama'.
The views and sayings of these and all great ṣūfī shaikhṣ exclude any possibility of the use of music for the mere gratification of the senses.

Arabic writings are usually abundant with the most extravagant accounts of the effect of music on listeners. Such fantastic accounts of the exciting and overpowering influence of music, are sometimes described in naive terms, but throughout the relevant Arabic literature a dominant feature, is the physical or psychological power with which music is vested, such powers that are not exclusive to mankind, but are even extended to beasts and birds. The significance of this trend lies in its expression of the keen susceptibility

1) Such views have an ancient origin, and were expounded in Ḥabar. Haidar: Associations of cult Prophets among the Semites: 183.

2) Mas'udī: Murūj VIII, 82. Ḥad al Farīḍ, IV, 88. Ḥāsh. I, 20; VI, 156 etc. Al Ḥujwīrī: ibid, 407.


of the muslim temperament. (and the semitic generally) to music.

On this issue, we find the legal aspect of Islam in complete accordance with the mystical. We have explained before the disfavour shown by the Prophet towards music, as being based on moral rather than religious considerations. Considering how the emotional Arabs could be affected by music, their leader deemed it wiser to divert their attention from this dangerously moving entertainment, to more serious and constructive things.

The sufi outlook appears to be an application of the same theory, in a reversed form. They, who were so ethically and morally disciplined did not dread the effects of music on their hearts, full of divine love and hoping for gnosis. So building on the same premise and acknowledging the overpowering influence of music the sufi diverted it to a spiritual and religious channel for its very qualities that have caused it to be condemned and censured by the orthodoxy. Thus sufism seems to have adopted music for its influence, whereas the legists of Islam had rejected it, for the same reason perhaps.

The views of the Sufis on music are not always positive and in fact they have been oscillating between the legal orthodox view and that of the more liberal side of Sufism. Some of them consider sama a rather dangerous practice which should be better left alone. Others restrict audition only to Sufis who have acquired a certain stage. Al Hujwiri states that each Sufi has a particular grade in audition and that the feelings which he gains therefrom are proportionate to his grade. Such reservations show traces of the official attitude on the same question, both being based on its possible moral dangers, which might lead astray some of the uninitiated, as Al Daqqaq expressed it. Listening is not allowed to the commonalty on account of carnal desires remaining in them, allowable to the ascetics for the attainment of what they strive after, approved for the mystics for the life of their hearts. Al Hujwiri advocates that the permissibility of audition depends on circumstances and cannot be assented absolutely, if it produces a lawful effect on the mind, then it is lawful and vice versa. The same

1) Kashf: 406.
2) Al Qushayri: ibid, 199.
3) Kashf, 402.
worthy sufī states that the principles of audition vary with the variety of temperaments and auditors and are, either those who hear the spiritual meaning, (1) or those who hear the spiritual sound. Al Sulami advocates that the auditor must listen (to music) with a living heart galb and a dead spirit nafs. To Shibli, music is outwardly a temptation and inwardly an admonition, and he who knows the sufī sign ishāra may lawfully hear the admonition, otherwise he has invited temptation and exposed himself to calamity. (3)

Al Sarraj, Junayd, Hujwiri and Al Gha'zali recognize the possible dangers of a misguided indulgence in listening, and therefore attach certain conditions as to those among the murīdin novices, or advanced sufīs, who should be allowed to listen to music, since it could have more evil than good effects on those who have not yet mastered their passions, nor attained complete and true knowledge of God's attributes and names. Al Rūdhabarī takes a positive

1) loc. cit.
2) Subrawardi: Awarif al ma'arif: fol. 96.
   Al Qushayrī, ibid, 200.
3) Al Qushayrī, loc. cit. Hujwīrī, ibid, 404.
4) Luma', 277. Al Qushayrī: 193
5) Ghazalī: Iḥyā', 266.
attitude, in wishing to be rid of sama' altogether, as any fault in it, can be more dangerous to a sufi, than to other Muslims, and would amount to heresy.

The constant warnings of the advanced mystics, to the younger novices, are conspicuous of the dreaded effect of music on their natural susceptibility to music, which they considered as leading the weaker hearts into temptation, thus destroying their efforts in the path of God. sama', which in its ideal form, could be deeply spiritual and devotional exercise, of the highest benefit to sufi, could if unwisely approached be a danger and a threat. Thus it should be tackled with great caution and above all sincerity and seriousness, which are the essence of the mystic experience. Thus sufiism whilst accepting and adopting music, as an essential part of its ritual and practice, does not vest it with a complete or absolute sanction. The misgivings of the sufi teachers concerning sama', their warnings and reservations on that subject, bear witness to the influence of orthodox views and prove that the two attitudes, legal and

1) Al Hujwiri: ibid, 404.
2) Al Ghazali: ibid, 255. Al Sarraj: Luma', 272 quotes

Rudbari's words to the same effect, but with a different wording, cf. explanation op. cit., 137.
mystical, on that point are not altogether contradictory or opposed. The orthodox view which discourages music and even proscribes this dangerous art, on the grounds that it might divert the muslims' minds away from serious and constructive matters, that view is not altogether absent in *sūfī* writings. On this point, there is ample evidence of the mutual influence of both aspects of religious life in *Islam*, which could be interpreted, as the awareness of both sides of the overpowering influence of music as affecting the disposition of the muslims.

This interpretation then, tends to consider both attitudes, towards music, in *Islam*, as originating from one and the same view, that of acknowledged effect of music while also allowing for the reciprocated influence of both types of religious life on one another. The germ of the seemingly contrasting attitudes of the religion of *sharīʿa* and of *ḥadīṣ* seems to be one and common to both, and where the formal orthodoxy tended to adopt the safe course of discouraging a weakening and enervating trend in the *Arabs*, the development of *sūfī* practice seems to be only a step in the opposite

1) *cf. ante, p. 25.*
2) *Nābulī: ibid, fol. 7.*
3) *Muḥirī, ibid, 401. Nābulī: Idah, fol. 7.*
direction and probably partially based on the idea, thus it could be a development, but in two opposed directions.

This interpretation does not claim to provide a positive solution to this problem, but is merely an elaboration and a development on the views expounded before, that the formal censure of music under Islam, was more of a social precaution based on moral and social considerations, rather than religious.

The previous theory, however, does not exclude the probable infiltration of foreign ideas and influences on sufism, which have helped to mould its attitude towards the use of music. Some scholars find a close affinity between the Christian litanies of the monks and the dhikr of the sufis. Arabic literature on music, shows some allusions to the use of music in devotional and religious worship, by the adherents of various faiths.

1) *Music and religious life:* 32.
2) *Nicholson:* *ibid.*, 10.
3) The question is raised of the possible relation between sufī attainment to ecstasy through music, dancing and drinking of wine, (practised by certain orders, namely the Bektāshī) and the mystic rites of Dionysius the Thracian God, of wine and religious ecstasy. Birge: *The Bektāshī order of Dervishes*, 218.
The Pythagorean theory of the harmony of the spheres, was adopted and expounded by most of the muslim writers. The sufis advocate that music awakens in the soul, a memory of celestial harmonies, heard in a state of pre-existence - on the day of the mithag - before the soul was separated from God.

The powerful effect of music over the Hebrew Prophets and its value as an aid to worship and concentration, which is referred to in the Old Testament in the following words: "and by the aid of music, the hand of the Lord came upon him (2 k, 3,15), must have been common knowledge to the muslims. The famous legends built around the power of David's beautiful voice and his sweet chants in worship of God are abundant in Arabic literature.

1) Belvianes: Sociologie, 50.
4) Kalabâdhi£: Al Ta'arruf, 166-7
5) Nicholson: loc. cit. also by him, Rûmi£: Poet and mystic, 32.
6) Hastings: Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, IX, 40.
7) Ibn Khaldûn, deals with this point in his mucaddima.
any

Sufi works, do not provide/definite evidence, concerning the derivation of that practice sama' from non-muslim sources, and this field is still open to more specialized and extensive research.

The historical background to the Sufi practice of sama' is somewhat uncertain. One fact is definite, that listening was not practised by the early ascetics suhhaq, of the first and second centuries A.H. It was not till late in the third century A.H. that an organized form of sufism was established in Baghdad with audition sama', as one of its elements, yet it is not easy to trace back the first mystical concerts. However, before the term Sufi came to denote the whole body of muslim mystics, in all Islamic countries sama' had already been partially instituted, and had found a favourable place in the Sufi practice. This is made clear from a study of the development of Sufi terminology. The term Sufiyya applied to the mystics of Iraq, was contrasted for over two centuries, with the term Malamatiyya, the strict and active mystics of Khorasan, who reproached the Sufiyya, among other things, for their fondness of sama' and dhikr and their indulgence in them, as early as the fourth century A.H.


2) Massignon: Encyclopaedia "Tasawwur" IV, 668 and Lexique 85.
(which proves that the practice had already been established at that time). Thus it seems safe to adduce, that this liturgical service was not established before the second century A.H. by the ascetics, but that it was practiced by certain sufī bodies, even before the term sufī had embraced the whole of the muslim mystics, which is generally considered to have been applied to them in the fourth century. Sana, then, seems to have been adopted as part of sufī liturgy, between the third and fourth centuries A.H.

The task of giving a coherent and reasonably comprehensive account of the use of music by the muslim mystics, is extremely difficult, for although all mystical experiences ultimately meet in a single point, yet that point assumes widely different aspects according to the mystic's race, temperament and period. There exists an infinite variety in the line of approach towards that common aim. The custom and usage, varies, not only racially and historically but even between the different sufī orders within the one country. With all the variation in the practices of the different sufī orders and organizations, yet there are definite

1) Arberry: ibid, 35.
2) Nicholson, ibid, 2.
3) Massignon: Lexique, 36.
features in common and the broad outlines cannot be mistaken. Among the common traits and characteristics widely adopted by the suris is the use of music which is recognized as being specially favourable to the occurrence of an ecstatic trance 

(1) waiz.

The word sama-, generally covers three types of exercise, that of dhikr, the reciting of God's name, in a form of litany, and the chanting of religious poems, which is specifically called sama-, the third is that of the ecstatic dance rags, also forming part of the suri ritual. Thus the element in suri liturgy assumes, rhythmical - that of dhikr - and melodic - that of chants sama-, - aspects.

In dealing with sama- and dhikr here, a broad account of the nature of this type of devotional exercise, will be attempted, as judged through recent and modern practice. Such late sources, have to a great extent, preserved, at least the essence of the old practice, and recurrence to modern times might also be of some interest, that is, allowing for the possible distortions or changes, wrought by time in such modern versions.

1) Nicholson, ibid, 62.
2) Nicholson, ibid, 63.
Dhikr, is one of the essential elements in Sufi ritual and discipline, which is common to all orders, and unanimously acknowledged as the keystone of their practical religion. It is particularly essential to the ritual of the later dervish fraternities. The word dhikr is derived from the root Dh K R, and literally means recollection, or remembrance. However, the word came to be applied to what is essentially a Sufi practice, i.e. the repetition of God's name, or various devotional and pious formulae, such as the confession of faith "La ilaha illallah", or "Allah hāvy." This is distinct from the dhikr khafs or inward recollection, which is an inward silent meditation. This form of devotion or worship, is said by the Sufis to be based on the Qur'an.

Sufism is based on common life mukashara, and dhikr and sama', are therefore practiced collectively,

1) Nicholson, ibid, 45.
3) Arberry: ibid, 89. Macdonald translated it as "thought" in: Religious attitude, 241 etc.
Nicholson in his translation of Kashf al Mahjub, 37, 126, gives it as "praise".
4) Lane: Modern Egyptians, II, 180.
5) Massignon: Encyclopaedia "Tarika" IV, 667,
by a group or congregation of *surīs*. A spiritual
director, or *shaikh*, should direct the recitation of
these litanies. The function of this leader or
director, is to regulate the tempo and movement in
the recitation of these formulae.

This liturgical ceremony, consists of a loud and sharply rhythmical recitation of such words, with special stress and emphasis on certain syllables, which is somewhat related to the recurrence of a strong beat in the rhythm. Those accentuated syllables ensure a steady and uniform rendering by all the congregation. These recitations are usually practiced by *surīs* standing in a ring or circle. The form of this exercise, vary from one *tariqa* to another, as to the wording of this glorification to God, the length and stress placed on some syllables and also to the short pauses between them. For all such variants, the rhythmical element: plays the leading part in this ritual. Its unifying and regulative powers, fully demonstrated in *dhikr*, serve to knit together the heterogeneous elements taking part.

The recitation of these litanies, usually starts at a moderate pace, then the tempo of the performance is accelerated steadily, and it becomes quicker and more exciting. To sharpen the effect the words are also accompanied by a swaying from side to side of the head and body, movements which have an additional regulative influence. Differently pitched drums add to the excitement and prepare for the desired climax.

The monotony of this exercise, accentuated and helped by the movements of head and body and above all the regulated rhythmical respiration collaborate, to bring about a state of great nervous tension, which has an almost hypnotic effect on those engaging in it. The constant repetition of the words of dhikr, must always be accompanied, by deep and conscious concentration on their meaning. Sometimes this strenuous practice would induce some sufis in their elation and excitement to dance an ecstatic dance, as with the famous whirling dance of the Mawlawis which will be touched on later.

2) Massignon: Lexique, 42.
3) Macdonald: ibid, 164.
4) Massignon: ibid, 87. Lane, II, 153.
Whether such manifestations of ecstasy are artificial and self-induced, i.e. tawajjud or spontaneous and genuine, wa'ājd, it is difficult to judge and is left to each sufi to decide according to his special case. Sufis, whether advanced or novices are constantly preached to approach audition, with the utmost sincerity, and truth, which are the fundamentals of sufi moral discipline.

The influence of the rhythm in dhikr heightened by the beating of drums and the collective and communal and simultaneous utterance, breathing, movement, contemplation and meditation of the fellow mystics, must all have an overwhelming effect on their already alert spirits, and religiously suggestable frame of mind.

If kept free from any degrading elements and confined to the rules and limits laid down in detail by eminent sufi teachers, it should help to induce a sense of exaltation and spiritual ecstasy.

Such meetings also include recitation from the Qur'ān and a variety of offices, incantations and pious formulae, and the listener could attain to wa'ājd, through any of these mediums, according to his state. The

1) Ghazālī: Ḩiya, 253, on the meaning of wa'ājd in this connection
2) Ghazālī: ibid., 266. Marsafi: ibid., fol. 7.
3) Massignon: ibid., 87.
question has been widely discussed why ecstasy is more frequently achieved through sama' of chanted poems, than through the recitation of Qur'anic verses. The sufis shaykhs have contrived to justify this tendency in various ways.

The actual melodic aspect of music, is represented in the mystical concerts, in the form of chanted mystical and religious poems, sung either with or without instrumental accompaniment.

Tasawwuf, apart from its rich philosophical heritage, has inspired many oriental poets with devotional and mystical poems of great literary value, and thus sufism has produced a great wealth of poetry in various forms, such as qasida odes, ghazal, lyrics, ruba'iyat quatrains, and mathnawi rhyming couplets.

Atar, Jalal al-Din al-Rumi, Ibn al-Farid and Shirazi, and innumerable others, have bequeathed a great wealth of mystical poetry, some of which, have become classics in oriental literature and is cherished and preserved by sufis orders and fraternities to our day. Sufism has likewise inspired musicians to set such poems and lesser poetry to music, to provide for the sufis liturgy the important means through which union with

2) Arberry: ibid, 73.
God is aspired. *Sama* in this connection is the listening to mystical poems chanted by a singer, who is usually referred to in *sufi* books, as the *gawwal* (or reciter).

These mystical chants are performed at special meetings or gatherings, the *majalis al sama*, which are roughly the equivalent of the formal prayer meetings in the prescribed observances. The customs and method at such gatherings, like *dhikr*, vary considerably according to each *tarīqa*. Perhaps the greatest difference is that which exists between the various styles of the local music in various Islamic countries. The litanies (2) chants (and dances) of the Turkish Bektashis must necessarily have its own characteristics, as distinct from (3) (4) the Egyptian Shadhiliyya or Bakriyya or again from (5) the Persian Mawlawiyya the followers of Jalāl al-Dīn...

1) *Tusi*: *Bawārig*, 71
2) Although that order is of Persian origin, Arberry: *ibid*, 88. Massignon: *Encyclopaedia IV*, 670.
3) Which also is widespread in Tunis and Algeria:
4) Arberry: *ibid*, 37.
5) Also had a great influence later in Turkey.
   Massignon: *Encyclopaedia IV* "Mawlawiyya", 670.
al Rumi. Although dhikr and sama’ are common features to all aspects of the sufí ritual of various countries, yet, these—more than other types of secular music perhaps,—reflect the temperament and the style of the indigenous art of each country and thus comprise a great variety of style, as well as peculiarities in details.

Sama, in its wider sense, is like most of the other sufí exercises, a communal ceremony, which must have, the time, the place and the "brethren" as Al Junayd (3) said. The time, is that when their hearts are serene when they desire association, perhaps after the Prayer. The place, could be a mosque, a zaviya, or a religious convent tekke. (6) that is, the place dedicated to religious worship.

1) Birge: Bektashi order, p.15 on historical and ethnical differences existing between sufí orders, within Islam. Also 210, on local ancient customs in the practices of the darwishes.

2) The Turkish word sama, although literally means hearing, is the term for mystical dancing, which accompanies religious chants and the playing of musical instruments. Birge, ibid, 199.


4) Bawaríq, 123.

5) op. cit., 167.

6) op. cit., 125.
The brethren, however, are specifically fellow-ṣūfis, who aspire to the same "spiritual" listening, as only the elect, who have attained to a certain standard should be admitted to majālis al sama. (1)

When the right setting is there, the mystical concert, either begins with a recitation of the Qur'ān or with a dhikr. The leader of this ceremony (or rasim as he is known in some orders in Egypt especially), fulfills the role of the conductor of an orchestra, or perhaps a choir master in the case of dhikr. The singer or sawwal, would then chant religious qasā'id poems, expounding the mystical love of God which is sometimes expressed in sensual terms, but should be interpreted religiously. The eschatological nature of some of these poems, has also been dwelt upon by many ṣūfis. This explains, violent outbursts of weeping on the recollection of Death. On the style of the older chants performed at such ceremonies, there is little definite evidence. Again here there are no

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(1) Sarraj; ibid, 299. Al Hujwīrī; Kashf, 419. Al Ghazalī, 265.
(2) Taftazāni; Ma'rifat, 1951, "Sufiyya wa'l musīqa" 161.
(3) Sarraj; ibid, 233.
annotated examples of the melodies of sufi music, since during the period here in question, musical notation was not known yet. So in spite of the great care with which the sufi poems and incantations were preserved and handed down, through successive generations, and in spite of the prolific sufi works on the question of sama', either separately or in text books, we have little information as to that type of religious music, due to lack of examples in musical notation. The only information, which might throw some light on that subject is comparatively recent. A contemporary Egyptian writer himself a sufi, gave an interesting account of sufi music, as practiced in Cairo by the Laythiya order. According to him, the melodies, to which mystic poems were chanted, does not seem to depart fundamentally from those of profane songs. He cites a muwashshah in the melodic mode rahawi, and in the garb rhythm, magmudi which he was taught to sing by his own shaikh's masters. His account of dhikr, reveals a distinctly melodious approach. The leader skilfully leads the congregation from one magam mode, 

1) cf. Part II, 96
2) Taftazani: Al Ma'rifah 1931, ibid, 163.
to another, and these subtle modulations require a sound musical training from the congregation and also from the munshidin, singers, who take up these successively, chanting mystic poems to them during dhikr. This does not imply that all chanting is choral, as it is essentially a solo performance, by a specialized munshid or qawwal.

It seems that the rhythmically free song mawwal, has found its place in this type of ceremony. An interesting point here, is that the great majority of professional singers in Egypt, acquired their knowledge of music and attained fame as singers at sufí gatherings. It seems that the sufí convents have fulfilled to Islamic music, a rôle somewhat similar to that of the Christian Church in Europe. Many fraternities preserve certain works on the theory of music, especially that associated with their ritual, such works being perpetuated

1) Lane also mentions munshidin, ibid, 169.
2) Taftazaní: ibid, 161.
3) Such as 'Abdu al ḫamûlî Salâma al Hijazî, Sayyed Darwîsh etc., ibid, 162.
4) Ibid, 160.
by them through successive generations of adherents. The previous picture is a modern one, which dates from a period of general degeneration in sufism, and is only of some value, as representing an inadequate picture of that practice in one Islamic country.

The use of musical instruments in sama', has generally been regarded unfavourably by the early exponents. It seems however, that the Mawlawīs as well as other orders, have resorted to the use of instruments such as nav, reed flute and drums. The variety of percussion instruments, the tār and bandār large tambourines, baz a type of drum, are not as objectionable as the stringed instruments. There is some divergence on the number of instruments used by the Mawlawīs whose service is musically the most elaborate perhaps, but it seems that the three departments, string, wind and percussion, are represented. The Bektashīs use stringed instruments saqi'ēs. Al Tūsī gives a most interesting account of the symbolic meanings which

1) ibid, 162.
2) Al Sarrāj, ibid, 277. Al Tūsī, ibid, 175.
the sufis attach to the shape of their duff tambourine.

Recent examples of Turkish ilahıs, mystical songs or hymns, recorded in modern musical notation. Whatever divergencies and variations in this field, the basic fact remains the same, that almost all Muslim mystics have found in music the element most conducive to exaltation and ecstasy. Various nationalities breed various styles, but the mystical experience in Islam, has unanimously found in music the ‘food of the spirit,’ and has achieved religious ecstasy through that aesthetic channel.

With all the alertness of the sufı’s spirit and his absorption in the "Beloved" and concentration of his mind, and the nervous tension of dhikr, as well as the overpowering influence of religious chants and music, might occasion excessive outbursts of passion, weeping or dancing and various other ways, which are sometimes exaggerated. Sufı shaikhs have constantly preached

1) Bawarlı, 157.
2) A. Gulpınarlı: Yunus Emre, a poet of the 13th century A.D., whose mystical hymns are given at end. Also S. N. Ergun: Türk musikisi antolojisi, on religious music.
3) Ghauslı, 267.
4) Marsafı, Ajwiba, fol. 10.
self restraint and discipline as far as humanly possible at such gatherings but if such outbursts are spontaneous and inevitable, they could be tolerated. The likely dangers of sama' as well as the possible misinterpretations of their practices by the commonalty, have led many eminent sufis to lay down emphatically the rules of behaviour concerning sama', listening and wajd. Since the rending of garments tamaq and dancing are among the manifestations of the ecstatic state wajd and these two practices, especially dancing, have been condemned, thus most of the suf text-books contain detailed instructions and precautionary rules of behaviour concerning them, and sama' generally. Explanations of the suf conception of dancing are very interesting and edifying.

1) Al Hujwiri: ibid, 419. Sarraj, on Junayd's instructions to his disciple, 285.
3) Hujwiri, 418. Sarraj, ibid, 186. Ghazali, 256, seq. etc.
4) Massignon: Lexique, 87.
5) Ibn Taymiya, ibid, 299. Marzah: ibid, fol. 4. Ghazali, 266 advocates self control and advises sufis to refrain from movements and dancing as much as possible. Also cf. Margoliouth: Encyclopaedia, III, 418.
6) Kashf, 416.
"When the heart throbs with exhilaration and rapture becomes intense and the agitation of ecstasy is manifested and conventional forms are gone, that agitation is neither dancing, nor bodily indulgence but a dissolution of the soul. Such passionate words, radiating with exalted religious feeling provide an adequate picture of the psychological state of the (1)

\[\text{sufi}\] and the overpowering intoxicating influence of music over them. The best and most enlightened view of the nature of music's influence/that of "listening to sweet sounds produces and effervescence of the substance moulded in man, true if the substance be true, false if the substance be false."

The important place attached to music in \[\text{sufi}\] practice, has given birth to prolific writings on its legal permissibility and the text books of \[\text{sufism}\] are very edifying in their thorough and extensive discussion of that question. Various works have been composed separately to deal with that question from the legal official side, as well as from the \[\text{sufi}\] side. The general plan adopted in such works, begins with


Farmer: \textit{Minstrelsy}, 52.
the exposition of the arguments of the other side, then the writer would proceed to examine, refute or come to a compromising attitude towards them. As previously seen, the theologians and legists dealing with this question are chiefly restricted to legal interpretations as based on the Qur'an, hadith and the legislation of the four madhhab. Surī works, always following the same plan, differ in founding their views on all the previous authorities, enforced by sayings and opinions of venerated surī shaikhs. The most enlightened and genuine defence of music generally and as a surī practice particularly, is that expounded by Ghazālī, 505 who has been frequently quoted here. His authority as a great orthodox scholar and the conciliation he attempted between sufism and orthodoxy, have vested his opinions with great authority and value. The other side of the picture is perhaps best represented by Ibn Taymiya/the Hanbali scholar. His opinions concerning music are expounded in the thirteenth risāla which is entitled Risāla fi'l sama' wa'l rags. The same has also been referred to frequently, and the title of the work, and the previous references with all his arbitrary interpretations on music especially fully represent his attitude towards this

1) cf. ante p.10. 1) R. fi'l sama' wa'l rags wa'l surakh.
2) cf. ante p.10.
question. There is an abundance of innumerable (1) treatises on the positive and negative sides of this question, which do not depart fundamentally from the views represented by the two previous sources.

1) cf. Ḥajjī Khalīfa, Kashf al Zunūn, 229.

Farmer: Sources of Arabian music, 92-3.
PART II

MUSIC AND THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE.

(a) HISTORICAL.

(b) PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEORETICAL.
This part of the work proposes to deal with music in the intellectual life of the Islamic culture. Among the voluminous products of Islamic thought, a great deal is relevant to a study of music. A close examination and classification of this literature can serve a double purpose. First, it can help to reveal the place assigned to music in Muslim thought at different stages, and to what extent it was affected by the elements which have contributed to mould and develop the intellectual life under Islam.

Secondly, through such a survey of Islamic literature on music, we can form an idea of the nature of that music, since we have no examples of the actual music. Notation was not known to Muslim musicians for the greater part of the period studied, and when it became known, it was just an elementary attempt that found its place in theoretical treatises, but was not actually adopted by the musicians, who learnt their music aurally and completely relied on memory. Thus the extant examples of Islamic musical attempts at notation are very scarce and date from a later period than that to which this study is
Had there been any examples of annotated music, they would have claimed a detailed and independent study as distinct from that in relation to the intellectual life. But in the absence of such primary sources relevant to the nature of Islamic music, we have to turn to those writings dealing with music and, which are fortunately abundant.

The bulk of literature which has any bearing on music in Islam seems to fall into three main categories according to the method of treatment and the special approach to the subject: (a) Literary histories, (b) theoretical treatises, (c) religious or legislative works.

These three different approaches seem to belong to historically different periods, and represent the three angles from which music was discussed in Islamic writings. (a) By literary histories, it is meant such works as deal with songs and singers. Collections of songs, biographies of singers (and musicians), the social background and customs connected with music-making in general.

(b) The theoretical treatises present a scientific attitude of enquiry into the practical and theoretical fields of music as investigated with considerable application of physics, acoustics, mathematics, physiology and

1) The only existing example of actual musical notation is attributed to Safī al Dīn 'Abdel Mu'min of the thirteenth century A.D.
(c) The religious works deal with the question of the permissibility of listening to music, and have been touched upon in Part I. That this division is a natural one can be proved by the examination of the specific term for "music" used in the three cases. In the first case, the word for music was generallychina (singing) and a musician was called a singer and the whole plane was dominated by this conception of a "vocal art." The theoretical works on the other hand have a different wordmusīqa or musīqaI (derived from Greek) that meant "music" which is characteristic of works that deal with music as a "science", whereas the theologians mainly deal with (listening) al "sama" which is a ṣūfī term used in connection with the type of music used by the ṣūfīs, but had its origin in the early days of Islam as associated with the discussion of lawfulness or otherwise of listening to music.

These three different approaches to the same subject seem to illustrate the prevailing views of three different periods and to coincide with some trends in the current of Muslim thought, but the division is neither clear-cut nor static. In fact, the three categories have been concurrent throughout the period covered by the present study, but with one aspect taking the upper hand at one time. The last of the three - that dealing with the religious
dispute about listening to music - has had an early beginning, and had continued persistently over some five centuries or so, unhampered by the steady growth and development of music in theory and in practice.

LITERARY HISTORIES

The first category which offers a certain type of 'general' history of music belongs clearly to the earliest period. Arabic bibliographies such as Al Fihrist of Ibn Al Nadîm, Yaqût's Irshâd al Arîb, or Üyun al anba' of Ibn abî Ṣaybi'a, bear witness to the considerable number of works that come under this class. Yet the number of such as are available to us nowadays is rather limited.

Among the works cited are those of Yunus al Katib (765/1463) and who is generally accepted as the first to record Arabic songs in alphabetical order, together with indications of the appropriate mode and rhythm of each song, and historical and biographical information. The famous Qurashi singer Ibn Jami' (803/188) followed with a collection of the "Hundred" airs or songs chosen for Harûn al Rashîd, with indications of the melodic mode and rhythm of these songs. Yahya al Makkî (820/205) and

1) Ibn Abî'l Dunyâ: Dhamm al malâhî, one of the earliest works on this subject dates from the 3rd century A.H.
2) Dates quoted are those of death of authors.
some years later, Ibrāhīm ibn al Mahdī compiled similar collections of songs. Then came the famous singer and musician Ishaq al Maqṣili (850/256) who, according to the Fihrist and the Kitāb al Aghānī, is credited with a long list of books, including collections of songs and biographies of famous singers in early Islam.

By that time this type seemed to develop some degree of authenticity and signs of a more critical attitude were exhibited in the work of Ahmad al Makkī (854/240). This was a tashih or correction of a kitab al aghānī written by his father Yahya.

It would seem strange that a litterateur like al Jaḥīṣ should have something to add to our knowledge of the singing and singers of his time (869/256) a fact that has its significance in showing the literary approach to music which is consistent in the majority of writers of that period. Yet his works are perhaps the oldest that have come down to us, and to him we owe some of our information on the old Persian customs of listening to music at courts in Pre-Islamic times together with some interesting accounts of Muslim Khalifs and famous male and female singers at their courts. These were always given in the form of anecdotes or stories – akhbar –

1) Al Jaḥīṣ: Al Tāj fi akhlaq al mulūk.
characteristic of the type of books now in question.

Ahmad al Nasrī, 'Amr ibn Bāna, Abū Ḥāshīsha, Jaḥṣa al Barmākī and Ḥammād son of the famous Isḥāq al Maqīlī have all contributed to this field and are cited by Abūl Faraj al Isfahānī in his K. al Aghānī as authorities.

Of all the above mentioned works very few are extant, but we are justified in considering the works of the last named of them (Al Nasrī, 'Amr ibn Bāna etc.) as not altogether lost to us. In fact they have been preserved through the pages of the colossal Kitāb al Aghānī of al Isfahānī.

Strictly speaking the K. al Aghānī is not historically the last work of this class, Ibn 'Abd Rabbīhī's al 'Iqd al Farīḍ (946/329) Al Masūdī's Murūj al Dhahab (957/346) Ibn Nāqiya (1092/485) (or Dāqiya as given by Al 'Umarī in Masālik al Abgār, 127-182) are some of the best known works on much the same lines as the K. al Aghānī and dating from a later period. But that book Al Agh seems to be the climax of a certain trend in the history of Arabian music, which had achieved its end with the writing of this book and then subsided, giving place to works and treatises, on music, of a totally different nature, with the exception of the last mentioned books, which were written after it, and on its lines but were scattered over a long period. The fact that this type of history of music lagged after K. al Agh is proved by the negligible
number of works written after it and the long intervals of comparative silence, in that field, after the fourth century A.H., i.e. 10th century A.D.

It seems impossible here to give detailed consideration to the vast literature dealing with this subject as we can only afford to emphasize the broad outlines of the picture as a whole. For this practical reason one single work will be chosen as a model which could faithfully represent the characteristics of works of its type. And what would be a better choice than that of the Kitāb al Aghānī al Kabīr by Abūl Fāraj al ḡisfahānī, which ranks highest among the chroniclers of Islamic music for many reasons. This book, which is a fount of knowledge on Islamic music and singing, has preserved all the essential traits exhibited in preceding books on the same subject. It seems to incorporate and assimilate in its twenty volumes all the data provided by a great number of books written on the same lines. Such factors may, perhaps justify the choice of this work, and/singling it out as the culmination of a certain trend, peculiar to the first four centuries of Islam.

Having carefully chosen a model to represent this trend, let us try to define more clearly the characteristic approach of this work, its scope, and style, in recording the musical activities of that period.
This work dates from the fourth century A.H. — as Isfahani's dates are (897-967/284-357). Ibn Khaldūn in describing it as the dīwan, (register) of the Arabs was right, as it provides a great deal of information on general aspects of the Islamic civilization, apart from history of its music and literature. Excluding the material of purely literary and historical nature, we are left with abundant data belonging to the domain of music proper.

The most important theme of the book is the Hundred chosen songs, chosen for Hārūn al Rashīd (incidentally there are only ninety-nine and not a hundred in the book). It also contains old songs which have come to be considered as "classics" at the time the book was written. These have been preserved and handed down from one generation to another, and are given in the book, together with other and newer songs, with all the available information about them, on both the musical and literary sides. On the musical side, we have technical terms indicating the isba' (or finger) i.e. the melodic mode in which it is composed, and its rhythmic mode as well. These indications are mentioned but not described or defined by the author, and there is no example of musical notation at all. Musical notation was not known to the Arabs at the time, and they depended on these indications as a guide to their memories in retaining the melody. His accounts of
instrumental playing and song accompaniment are of great interest in helping to reconstruct a picture of the musical practice.

The literary side of the picture deals with the verse of the songs, the poet's biography, genealogy and any special story or anecdote attached to a song, or the circumstances that have inspired it. It presents also a vivid account of the social background to the musical activities of the time.

The musical side of the data provides three major problems worth discussion. The first is that of the "sources" of K. al Aghanī; i.e., the preceding books that are so often quoted and cited in it. The second is that of the theoretical indications used in the book, and the third, deals with the subsidiary information on instruments and accompaniment, singing and its different styles and schools, in short, descriptive material which helps to explain the special character of the "songs" under discussion. A fourth problem, of major importance to this study, the social background to the music as expounded in this extensive work, will be dealt with in the part dedicated to "music and the social life".

The sources of the K. al Aghanī comprise all the preceding collections of songs and books of famous
singers from Yūnus al Kātib to Ḥammād ibn Ishaq al Mawsilī, including works which have not reached us.

Al Isfahānī's biographers tell us that he often as copies from other books, Ibn al Nadīm said, and as he himself often confessed, indicating in several passages that he had copied them from other writers. The rest is usually handed down verbally riwāya through a long string of authorities. So, as far as it is a faithful representation of similar works there is some assurance. But did the compiler use any definite method in his quotations? Were these carefully chosen and authenticated before being quoted by him?

A comparatively late writer Ibn al Taḥān, an Egyptian musician and the author of an important work entitled Ḥawī al Funūn wa Salwat al Maḥsūn (probably from the sixteenth century A.D.) says: "Yūnus was the first to write down the songs ghina' and from him Ishaq al Mawsilī has taken (or quoted) and it is on Ishaq and his son Ḥammād, that Al Isfahānī entirely relies for the bulk of his information. Yet we know that the author did not derive his material only from the Mawsilīs, but from several others. Among the authors quoted by Al Isfahānī there are some whose authority has been questioned by him. Our author while quoting

1) op. cit. 19.
Ibn Khordadbeh hastens at the same time to add that he is unreliable. Jahza al BarmakI was treated in the same conflicting manner by him. While strongly criticizing Jahza's book on Al TumbiriyyIn and condemning it, the author of Al Agh quotes the same person verbatim on several occasions.

Another example of Isfahani's treatment of his sources and his method in writing, is that in connection with Yahya al MakkI. The latter's inaccuracy in his books of songs was strongly criticised and condemned as leading to all the mistakes made by later writers who quoted him, especially in the field of 'ajnâh modes. His son Ahmad who corrected the father's collection of songs is ranked much higher by Al Isfahani, considered much more reliable and praised for his efforts in that field. In another place he specifies that Ahmad's book is a major source on songs, and is second to none but Isfah al MawSili's. Yet, to the reader's bewilderment, we find him stating in \( V \), 52 that Yahya and his son have committed

1) Agh. \( X \), 121.
2) Agh. \( X \), 123.
3) Agh. \( VI \), 179.
grave errors in their indication of and that most of the mentioned by them are muddled up. That is to mention only a few examples which illustrate the method followed in compiling the book.

We are justified then in treating the information provided in the with some reserve, as it is not always well authenticated, nor very accurate. The author while openly confessing that he "copied" from certain books, yet does not always sift his information or treat it critically. Even his personal likes and dislikes, as regards some musicians, had been the underlying motive in some of his strongly expressed views. claims that had a strong feeling against , which is felt in his writings.

The value of the sources and the material provided by this work, is magnified in the field of the technique and theory of music, as in all the other non-musical subjects touched on there is ample information in other specialised works, being essentially a "book of songs," it is in the field of musical history that the book's real value should be determined.

In giving the technical indications as to the melodic mode and the rhythm of every song, the author has followed the classification and nomenclature fixed
by Ishāq al Maṣṣili, whom he holds as the highest amongst all musicians and singers. Abu-l-Faraj stresses his view of Ishāq's work in that field and considers him much more reliable than his pupil 'Amr ibn Bāna and his predecessors Yaḥya al Makkī and his son Ahmed.

In accepting the terms as fixed by Ishāq it is necessary to mention the fact that although he died in 350 A.D., i.e. after the movement of translation of Greek works had begun, yet he was the exponent of the "Arabian" art, and had not studied Greek works on the theory of music. Thus according to the author Ishāq's (and his follower’s) theory should be accepted as a version of "Arabian" (i.e. belonging to the Arabs of the peninsula) art, with a touch of Persian influence. The Persian element had been at work ever since the beginning of the Islamic era. It is also an established fact that Ibn Misjah and his pupil Ibn Muḥriz had long before introduced Persian and even Byzantine elements to the Arabian art. But such

1) Agth. V, 52.
2) loc. cit.
3) Ibid 53.
elements as were accepted were modified to suit the Arabian taste and ear. This deviation is meant to stress that the technical terms given in the K. al Aghānī are, on the whole representative of unadulterated Arabian character, before its encounter with the Greek theory of music.

Al ʿIsfahānī states enthusiastically, in the introduction to his work, that all the ainas are strictly conforming to the method of ʿIṣḥāq al Mawṣili. He also states that this method was generally accepted at the time of writing his book, and all other methods, like that of the opposing school led by ʿIbrahīm ibn al Mawdī, Amr ibn Bāna, Mukhārīq, Allawayh, Muḥammad ibn al Ḥarīth ibn Shakhīr and their followers, were wholly abandoned, and their views left behind, while ʿIṣḥāq's system prevailed. One of the points on which these two parties differed, is the elusive thaqīl awwal (rhythmic mode) called by one party thaqīl thānī and vice versa. Agreement was also lacking on other rhythmic modes and on the question of ṣabiʿ fingers, and mafarī courses as applied to the ʿud (lute).

ʿIṣḥāq's classification of the ainas (or genres) according to the different starting note (or "tonic") of each, bears witness to a methodical and reasonable approach. Unfortunately the K. al Aghānī offers no

1) I, 4.
precise definitions of the terminology used in it, and it even succeeds in conveying to the reader the impression that these theoretical questions have never been agreed upon. Although we are told that Ishāq had "laid down and (1) fixed definitely the theory, yet there is ample evidence in the book itself that this was not the case: The theory laid down by Ishāq has been questioned by his contemporaries as well as by the next generation. Musicians of the same rank as Ishāq i.e. Ibrahim ibn al Mahdi did not accept his notions on the subject, while later generations of Ishāq's own pupils such as 'Allawayh and 'Amr ibn Bāna (891/278) were strongly opposed to him and stated that on the pages of their books. Thus, the author of the K. al Agh. in his great enthusiasm for Al Mausili failed to give a lucid account of the theory and offered contradictory information, which makes his judgements - theoretically - questionable.

That applies to the period of Ishāq's life and after it, but let us see what was the case before that. Most of the songs of an older time were either handed down orally, through long strings of authority, or copied

1) Farmer, op. cit., 105.
2) As vocalised by Ahmed Zaki Pasha in Cairo ed. of K. al taj. by al Jāhiṣ.
from books. In either case Ishâq's classification had not yet fixed the theory, and his terminology was unknown, (in its entirety at least) to the musicians and chroniclers who lived before him. Did the author of the K. al Agh. then undertake to "transcribe" the theoretical indications into the new fixed method of Ishâq, in order to keep the uniformity of tainîs?(indication of sinâr modes). No evidence to this effect is provided by him, and it seems possible to assume that no such thing was done. Instead, to add to the confusion, he tells us that what was known to a generation as thaqîl awwal was known to another as thaqîl thânî and vice versa.

In view of all the conflicting and hazy treatment and the lack of definitions on theoretical questions as presented by this book – and roughly speaking – similar books of songs, it seems advisable and even necessary to give this type of history book a secondary place. We have to turn to other and more specific works for information on the theory of Islamic music. By doing so, we are not actually skipping such a long period (three centuries or so) in theory of Islamic music, since every innovation and development in that field, must inevitably bear its fruit in the long run. And the theory of music as discussed in the works of the greatest Muslim philosophers, is in no way independent
or isolated from the theory and practice in common use during the period now in question, and in some cases it is identical with it, and in others it is generally an advance on the same lines.

The one point, in which the K. al-Azhānī's value is unsurpassed is its representation of the details of the practical art of music, and the traditions attached to it. As its title suggests, the work is a fount of knowledge in the field of ghina (singing). "Music was known by the generic term ghina which primarily meant song, hence mughnī stood generally for musician, although in its specific sense it meant singer." What was here said of the Orthodox Califate, seems to have obtained throughout the period covered by the K. Aghānī and its predecessors, as absorbed in it. Here we find music treated as "a vocal art." The two other terms musīqī or musīqa and samā (i.e. listening) do not occur frequently in this work. These two terms were peculiar to two different aspects of "music" in the Islamic culture.

This prevailing conception of music, as ghina, brings music and poetry into a close and intimate relationship. Music was not divorced from poetry in the early decades

1) Farmers op. cit., 51.
of Islam, nor did it exist independently from it, as the K. al Agh. illustrates. Indeed the strongest point in Arabian literary life, that is the love of poetry is reflected in this "book of songs". In his method of exposition, the author gives the poet and his verse as much detailed consideration, as that accorded to the singer, and musician.

It is this love of poetry so deep and spontaneous in the Arab's nature that has paved the way for a steady growth and development of music, first as a handmaid to poetry, then as a sister- art to it. This major and significant trend, the K. al Agh. has recorded and illustrated faithfully. The very fact that the work is a source for the history of Arabic literature, has its significance, and although it is essentially a "book of songs," yet it is more in the nature of a collection of lyrical verses, than actual songs.

The poetry, the words held the first place, and we find the same gamida or certain verses of it given in two, and sometimes more, different versions, that is, composed in two or more different taraq by musicians who were either contemporary, or belonging to different periods. The author argues that the last mentioned fact prevented him from classifying his material according to the more logical chronological order of musicians, and their ranks, or
even according to the mode in which each poem is composed. A musician's competence would be judged by the degree of his knowledge of poetry. Ibn Jāmī was once asked by Harūn al Rashīd to "sing him something from the verses of a certain 'Abdullah ibn Mu'awiya ibn 'Ubaydallāh ibn Ja'far. His memory failing him, provided a good opportunity to 'Ibrahim al Mauṣilī, who was present, to show off. So he came forward with his own composition of lines from that same poet, for which he was rewarded. He boasted to his beaten rival that he had set to music "every line of poetry, from Jahiliyya to Islam, that could be sung," the argument being evidently, that a musician's merit, lay as much in his thorough knowledge of poetry, as in his musical abilities.

Musicians used to ask the Calif as a special favour, to be granted the exclusive right to set to music the verses of a certain favourite poet.

The liberal-minded Qurašī, patron of music, 'Abdullāh ibn Ja'far, succeeded in conveying the close relationship between poetry and music, dominant at this period, in the following incident. The Calif Mu'awiya, coming to his house, was shocked to find him sitting

1) Agh. I, 3.
2) op. cit. XL, 77.
listening to 'Azza al Maylā' singing and playing. On expressing his dismay Ibu Ja'far explained to him that she was singing verses by Ḥassān ibn Thābit (the Prophet's poet) adding: if a rough and unsightly Arab recites this poetry to you, you would reward him generously - as to me, I choose the best and most delicate among these verses, and give them to her.... to chant it, tunshiduhū in her beautiful voice.

These few examples help to underline the primary role of the poetic element in the Islamic vocal art. Instrumental music, at this phase, was merely an aid to singing. Musical instruments feature, even in the earliest works quoted in K. al Aghā, as a help in finding the appropriate rhythm ḫaqā' in composing a song, as well as in accompanying the singing. All the resources were directed in the practical channel of the vocal art, while very little has been recorded of instrumental art as such (except in the ninth i.e. 3rd century A.H. onwards.

Ma'bad, one of the most famous singers of the Umayyad dynasty (743/126) said that in composing his songs, he would beat time with his qadīb (wand i.e. a percussion instrument) while softly murmuring the words until the

1) IV, 35.
(1) air lāhm is moulded and shaped. Mabād’s wand could be replaced by any form of a duff or even by an ʿud (lute), but the same importance of the rhythmic impulse as directly derived from the poetry, persisted.

Although the notion of Ṯqāʾ (rhythm) as derived from the metrical structure of the verse, is believed to be restricted to a comparatively early period (orthodox Caliphate) K. al Ṭagh. offers conflicting evidence as to the beginning of Ṯqāʾ (rhythmic modes) as independent from the prosody. The credit of introducing the new element of independent Ṯqāʾ is shared, in the book, between ʿUwayṣ (3) ʿAzza al mailāʾ and ʿAllb Khāṭir.

Yet a musician’s great merit seemed to lie in his correct division qisma and just measures awzān more than

1) l, 21.
4) qisma is translated here as division, yet in Dr. H. G. Farmer’s History of Arabian music, this is not made very clear. The English word division is given for qisma in p. 107 - in another place of the same passage (p. 107) division is given as meaning basāt and also in p. 106 as ”basīt”. To complicate things more still, the word qasām, the plural of qisma, is translated as parts. It is difficult to decide whether qisma and qism deal with the same process. cf. Ibn al Tahhan definition of qisma fol. 11-12.
for his melody, an attitude which persisted through the period covered by the type of history book discussed here, which may lead us to conclude that it was in accordance with a general trend, in the musical standards of that period.

The three elements that have collaborated to it could be given as, the strong revival of poetry, the subsequent growth of the vocal art in music, together with a tendency to writing general histories, which prevailed in early Islam. These three factors are, to a great extent responsible for producing this type of book.

As this part of the study is intended to reveal music's place in Islamic intellectual life, as judged from extant writings, it should be borne in mind, that these writings, in their various aspects, are our only sources on the type of music practiced. Had there been any annotated music, it would have claimed a detailed study as distinct from that in relation to the intellectual life, but, unfortunately, our information on music comes either from histories of a literary character, or philosophical treatises, and in either case they offer some aspects of the intellectual life. As the second category of works, the theoretical works written by philosophers,

is directly concerned with the theory and practice of music, it is necessary to compare the two categories of writing on the same questions. In order to appreciate fully the great progress achieved in the philosophical treatment of music, a brief exposition of the actual state of music as presented by the K. al Agh. will be made.

Throughout the twenty or twenty-one volumes of the book, the whole progress of Islamic music, from its origin in Pre-Islamic times, is recorded. Indeed it offers a reliable presentation of the art of music in evolution, the main trends in the practice are easily distinguishable. It provides ample data on: the types of instruments in common use - the development of the musical sense - the practice of accompanying singing and the different styles and schools of singing.

In spite of the book's historical inaccuracies in details sometimes, yet it offers the most valuable information on the general tendencies in music. Through its pages it is easy to watch the growth of a musical art gradually merging from the crude folk music of Pre-Islamic times. Where there are special customs and observations attached to the practice of music, these

been carefully recorded, there were even some signs of a rising critical attitude in the appreciation of music, which is a marked sign of progress. The book reveals the change in the attitude of the Islamic community towards music, from the early cautious reserve of the Orthodox Califs, to the unashamed enthusiasm and patronage of most of the Umayyad and Abbâsid Califs.

Among all these interesting and significant aspects, we shall restrict this brief account to those that can supply an adequate background to the subjects touched on in philosophical works dealing with music, i.e. Instruments and accompaniment, musicianship, and different styles in the vocal art.

Instruments. Instruments, although featuring always as ancillary to the vocal art, had undergone a steady development. In place of the early percussion instrument often depended on for accompaniment by the earlier school of Al 'Gharîd, Ibn Surayj and Mabâd, we find string and wind instruments gaining in popularity. The "'ud" (lute) took its place as the favourite instrument in all Islamic countries. It was accepted as the best stringed instrument for accompaniment,

1) I, 21. VI, 17.
with reed-pipes featuring as second to it.

The role of the 'ud in the development of Islamic music cannot be overestimated. It is closely connected with the different phases in the progress of the scale, and is responsible for creating and intensifying the musical sense among the Muslim musicians. In tuning this instrument they had nothing to guide them but their ears. We have elaborate stories in the K. al Agh. illustrating the quickness and correctness acquired by the musicians, especially in the 'Abbāsid Caliphate, when the practice of music could be said to have reached a very high standard.

Musicianship The lute was not tuned according to a fixed note (of absolute pitch) but according to the range of the singer's voice. This procedure required a very good "musical ear" and a certain degree of technical skill and training. Even the drum tabl was once tuned by Jafar al Tabbāl according to the pitch of a singer's voice, to accompany the singing in the absence of the 'ud.

This same sharp ear was essential in detecting any mistakes, where more than one instrument was

1) VI, 76.
2) XIV, 54.
played. We are often told of many girls giyān-
jawārī playing simultaneously -(yet always in
unison.) Ishāq al Maṣīli, the leading musician
of his day, possessed the most accurate and well
trained ear, like his father Ibrāhīm al Maṣīli
before him. We find him discovering a string which
was out of tune, among eighty strings (twenty lutes)
and twenty voices sounding simultaneously.

This keen and sharp ear, which was the sign
of a progress in the standards of musicianship, was
just as quick in the field of rhythm. Al Manārī once
asked Ishāq al Maṣīli to give his opinion on two
artists performing for him and to the astonishment
of those present, he discovered and proved that
' Ağīd, the singer and his accompanist, ḍārib, were not
playing the same rhythm.

Accompaniment. This incident should not lead us to the con-
clusion that accompaniment was a haphazard business.
On the contrary, we hear of musician's who made their
name as skilled ḍurrāb, (players) only. Mulāhīz and
Zalzal were the great exponents of the art of lute-
playing, and are cited as the best lutanists of their
time. Barsāumā al Zāmir (the piper) achieved some

1) ٧٣, ٤١.
2) ٧٣, ٦٠
3) ٧٣١, ٥٦.
fame as an accompanist also. Ibn Jami' the famous singer at the court of Harun al Rashid and later of Al Hadi, had a marked preference for Bara'am's accompaniment, because, "he gave him no trouble by following his singing closely." (1)

The following incident provides the most critical test for the skill of an accompanist. At the court of Al Wathiq, discussing the merits of the lutanists, they singled out Mulahiz as the best, but Ishaq would not accept that, and decided to prove his choice of Zalzal, as their Chief, by a practical test. Mulahiz in his anger challenged Ishaq to play himself if he could. Ishaq took the lute of Mulahiz, after asking him to put all the strings out of tune, and to the amazement of all present, accompanied a song on that off-tune instrument with perfect correctness. (2)

Singing. The Islamic art of music has featured, ever since its earliest stages as an essentially vocal art, as has been pointed out before. From the simple huda' (caravan song) up to the elaborate and more sophisticated art developed in the third and fourth centuries, (A.H.) the vocal tradition was kept up. All the innovations in the field of instruments, and in singing itself, were directed towards the improvement and progress of

1) VI, 74.
2) V, 57.
the vocal aspect of music. What then were the outstanding features in this vocal art, and were there any rules for it, and what was the degree of artistry involved in it?

The K. al Agh. is not lacking in information on the style of singing narrated in it. We are supplied with considerably accurate descriptions of it - as far as words could go. As notation was not common then, it describes with success the different shades of voice, the characteristic style of each famous singer. Comparisons are attempted between the most illustrious of contemporary musicians sharing fame with the emphasis on the special merits of each. In the cases of Ibrāhīm ibn al Maṣūlīy versus Ibn Jāmī and Ishāq al Maṣūlīy versus Ibrāhīm ibn al Mahdī, the author has successfully conveyed to the reader the slight shades of differences in their voices and their respective styles. Barsauma al Zāmir (the piper) also succeeded in describing the voice and style of Ibn Jāmī and Ibrāhīm al Maṣūlīy, in such wording that justifies his claim to be considered a musical critic of his time.

There is ample evidence that the vocal art was not just a primitive attempt, on the contrary, sentiment and expression had their place in it, since

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we are told that Ibn Jami's performance was at its best when subjected to strong and deep emotions. Harun al Rashid made use of the fact, and to induce that state of emotional agitation, announced the false news of the death of Ibn Jami's beloved mother and his singing on that day was unsurpassed for beauty.

The famous Ishag al Mawil's style was described and praised on many an occasion and in spite of the mediocrity of his vocal qualities, his great fame was won by his skilful and artistic gradation of tone, "from a high note siyah to its low note isjaf... gracefully going from loudness shidda, to softness, that being the best and most difficult way of singing known."

The art of singing was taken very seriously by Muslim musicians, to the extent of their division to groups or schools, each defending and expanding its ideas in the interpretation of the well preserved traditional or classical songs handed down from preceding generations. The Mawil family; Idris and Ishag represented the classical and conservative school, based on the preservation of the old traditions of their predecessors. Another school, which sprang up among the leisurely class of musically-minded nobles (and princes)

1) VI, 75.
2) V, 102.
was headed by  İslâm ibn al Mahdî with Ibn Jâmi',
an impoverished nobleman of Quraysh - as its founder.
The latter school did not hold to tradition so strictly
in interpreting old songs handed down as classics  al gadîm.  İslâm ibn al Mahdî, allowed himself great
freedom in it, to the extent of distortion sometimes,
and that under the name of reforming and improving it.
Such attempts were fiercely rebuked and fought by 伊斯地
al Mawsîlî, the strongest advocate of preserving the old
art intact, and allowing no tampering with it.

To sum up, the major points of special significance
to the nature of Islamic music, are: the existence of
the three types of instruments (i.e. percussion, wind
and string), the somewhat advanced technique required
in tuning and playing the lute  and the scale in common
use, as applied to that instrument, a developed sense of
tune and rhythm, the introduction of intricate rhythmic
modes independent from the metre of the poetry, and

1) 63.
2) 61.
3) As given in the Brit. Mus. MS. by Yahya ibn 'Ali
   ibn Yahya b. 'Ali Mansur (912/300) in Farmer: Studies
   in Oriental musical instruments, II, 47.
elaborate technique in the vocal art, not devoid of feeling, expression and gradation of tone, with some degree of criticism applied to it, and strong views in questions of interpretation, resulting in two opposite schools. These very brief points could not but convey the impression that this music, known and played in Islamic countries in the first three centuries of Islam was by no means a crude or primitive art, but had achieved a certain degree of development, which we could have been able to judge at its real value, if we had any annotated examples of it.

All the last mentioned elements are healthy signs in the life and progress of an art, which had gradually evolved from the simple and primitive folk music of pre-Islamic times. This process of evolution has been faithfully, if somewhat inadequately, recorded in the K. al-Agh and the books belonging to its class. Through it, it is possible to reconstruct the broad outlines of a picture of the musical art of that period and its role in Islamic life.

In spite of the disorderly and unsystematic treatment of the book, its inaccuracy in the choice of reliable sources, and its inadequacy in providing precise definitions in the field of theoretical indications, yet, the K. al Agh's value should not be underestimated. It is still one of the most important sources
in the study of Islamic civilization, and a primary source in the study of the nature of its music. The book has, in its own way, greatly served research on Arabian (or Islamic) music up to the early fourth century A.H. (10th century A.D.) and still offers a vast scope for hitherto unsolved problems, which deserve great perseverance in a detailed study.

Considering it as representing a special aspect of the intellectual life in Islam, it combines many elements peculiar to that particular phase of culture, i.e., roughly before its encounter with Hellenic thought. The famous Arab love of poetry (and music) genealogy and history have all collaborated in producing the K. al Agh. and similar literature.

Fortunately, for the study of Islamic music, another aspect of the intellectual life, fully compensates for the shortcomings of this class of history book.

That trend in the history of Islamic music, could be said to have attained its peak in the fourth century A.H. About that time, or a little earlier, such works became rare and we find music studied and discussed from an altogether different angle. Instead of the general histories of music written in a literary manner, we find "music" featuring in the writings of the greatest Muslim philosophers, as a "science".
THEORETICAL TREATISES.

This new phase in Islamic intellectual life, could be considered as the result of the introduction of foreign cultural elements, namely Greek, as well as a steadily growing search for knowledge among the Muslims themselves.

From the early narrow concept of knowledge as directly attached to religion, which prevailed in the first two centuries of Islām, there evolved a much larger and more secular conception of knowledge in Islamic thought. The rise of the Mu'tazilah, the rationalists of Islām, seeking to establish their belief on a rationalist basis, (their rise) coincided with a general quest for knowledge extending beyond the facts supplied by the early Arabian sciences. These factors affecting a well-established opulent and prosperous Islamic society, led to the introduction of Greek methods and philosophy, thus bringing about a marked intensification in the intellectual pursuits of the Muslims of the third century (9th A.D.) (1)

A.H. /The Abbāsid Califs, Al Mamūn and his successor Al Mutaṣapīm, were responsive to this urge, and are justly credited for encouraging translations from Greek (and Hindu) into Arabic. The direct bearing of such an important trend on our subject, lies in the complete change in the approach of Islamic philosophers to music and its study. So when the Greek influences began to work upon Islamic thought, we find music featuring as one of the

1) Muir: Califate, 504  
2) Ibid, 508.
courses of scientific study, and part of the mathematical sciences ʿUlūm riyaḍīyyah. al Kindī, al Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā are all writers after the Greek school. The introduction of the Greek philosophy has greatly contributed to the maturity of Muslim thought in general, and it is our task now to trace its repercussions in the field of Islamic music.

In dealing with such an important phase of Islamic music, as that in which it became the object of scientific enquiry as part of the all-embracing system of philosophy, there are different angles to the problem, and different courses to pursue in their study.

The one is to concentrate on the foreign elements that have inspired this new attitude, and to trace the exact points borrowed or adopted from these sources, with special reference to foreign, namely Greek, influence in this trend of Islamic thought. Another course to take in dealing with this question, would be to endeavour to keep the unity of this study by (overlooking, passing such analysis and evaluations, in favour of a more integrated vivid account of the function of music in the different aspects of Islamic life.

The first of these two aspects of the matter has been the main interest of former writers on the subject, although, from opposite ends perhaps. One school, headed by the indefatigable scholar, Dr. H. G. Farmer, has contributed to the classification of the facts of the
history of Arabic music, and has persistently advocated, not only the Greek influence on Arabian theory, but also the Islamic influence on Mediaeval Europe. He has successfully pointed out the indebtedness of the Western music to the Islamic music, through cultural (1) and political contacts between the two worlds.

The opposite side of the question which is very (2) well represented by Miss K. Schlesinger takes an extreme view in denying that the Arabs had any influence over European music, and deprives them of any originality in that field. She believes that the Arabs have borrowed their theory from the Greeks and goes to the extent of calling it a "intellectualization of Greek theory".

The concrete evidence in favour of the Greek influence over Muslim musical theory, however, is abundant, (in terminology especially), so much so, that we can take it for an established fact, while leaving the discussion of the degree of that influence to those who are best able to do it. Once this basic principle is safely established, we can proceed to the second course, that aiming to keep the unity of the study, and try to give a clear and concise account of the contributions of each


2) C.f. her, Is European musical Theory indebted to the Arabs?
of the Muslim philosophers successively, with as little mention and discussion of the Greek influence, as would allow of a steady and straight-forward survey.

Al Kindī was the first Muslim philosopher whose writings mark the rise of Muslim Scholasticism, that was carried on by al Farābī, Ikhwan al Ǧafrā, and Ibn Sīnā. Their writings mark a remarkably high standard of scientific thought in Islam, which was still studied in the West some centuries after. To this school of thought hikma or philosophy embraced all sciences, these being generally classified after the Aristotelian method, with some modification.

The "philosopher of the Arabs", Abu Yūsuf Yaḥūb ibn Ishaq al Kindī lived in the third century A.H. (9th A.D.) The question of his date makes a word of explanation necessary here. The three main categories into which the literature dealing with music falls, have been taken to belong roughly to distinct periods. The first of these categories i.e. historical, overlaps with the succeeding phase of the philosophical or theoretical. The period of the general history extends approximately A.H. (10th A.D.) to the early fourth century, while the first scientific study of music, that by Al Kindī must have belonged to the mid-third century A.H. The movement of translation

1) His death is given by Massignon in Textes inédits sur le mysticisme de l'Islam as being 373-260H.
from Greek dates even earlier than Al Kindī, but the assimilation of such new ideas took some time before they began to work on Muslim thought. The first to show/influence was Al Kindī.

Al Kindī was well versed in the religious as well as the foreign sciences, i.e. Greek, (Persian) and Hindu, he had learned the Greek language also. But none of his biographies mentioned that he had any performing knowledge of music. Unfortunately it is difficult to form a definite idea of his system as a whole, in view of the loss of the greater part of his work. Yet, he has had a considerable influence over Muslim philosophy, and being a pioneer in that field, his ideas had their part in moulding the Islamic attitude towards the newly acquired sciences. It is to him that the establishment of Muslim Scholasticism is generally attributed. He is also thought to have directed Islamic thought to the course of reconciling Greek philosophical ideas to religion. This trend was observed and adopted by his successors, and we find in Rasāl

1) Ibn Abī Usaybiā; 'Uyūn al Anbā' and Ibn Al Nadīm; Al Fihrist, 257.
3) M. 'Abdel Rāziq Pasha Faylasūf 'al ʻArab, wal Muallim al thānī.
Ikhwan al Safa its direct bearing on their discussion of (1) music. This attitude relates every science to the religious ideas and beliefs.

In the field of the theory of music, Al Kindi's essential contributions can best be judged against the background of contemporary music (i.e. 865 - 252 A.H.). It should be borne in mind that the nearest attempt at a methodical systematisation of the rules of music, was that of Ishag al Maqili (850/236) who was only a practical musician, with no knowledge of the Greek speculative theory of music which was being translated into Arabic. Thus Al Kindi's treatment of the subject of music, should not be assessed for their intrinsic value, as much as in comparison with the prevailing standards of the time, and against its contemporary background.

Of all his works dealing with music, only three have survived. A Risala fi Khubr talif al Alhan, Risala fi Ajza' Khabarriyay al musiqc and a Risala fil Luhun, which are sufficient to enable us to understand his method of treatment.

In his account of the practical art of music, and its varying aspects in various nations, he gives

1) Rasali, 115-132.
2) Dr. Farmer believes he has found a fourth treatise by the same author. of: Facts for the Arabian Musical influence, 103.
a detailed account of the six rhythmic modes used by
the Arabs, and mentions differences between them and
those known to the Persians in the R. fī ajzā' khabariyya.
In his risāla 'fī khubr talīf al Alḥān' Al Kindī opens
fresh ground, hitherto unexplored in any musical treatise
in Arabic that we know of. The most interesting feature,
is his attempt at musical notation. There is an example
in that treatise of a scale of seven notes "jamʿī bil kull"
given in alphabetical notation in Arabic, which is cer¬
tainly the earliest attempt at musical notation that
has come down to us. (1)

In this octave scale, each of the notes is given
a designation in relation to the first note. It is
necessary here to mention that the range achieved
through tuning the four-stringed lute ʿud in fourths
was only an octave and a fourth or fifth. The two-octave
Perfect system of the Greeks, given by Al Kindī as
"jamʿ al Azām" was not in common use, as is evident
from a passage attributed to Ishāq al Maṣbili in the
K. al Aghānī. Through Greek influence, undoubtedly,

1) Hefni-Lachmann, Leipzig ed. R. fī Khubr talīf
    al Alḥān, 19.
2) Receuils de travaux de Congres de musique Arabe
    au Caire 1932, 649. Farmer's Studies in Oriental
    musical instruments, II, 47.
3) F, 53.
Al Kindī suggested the addition of a fifth string to the lute, in order to get the jam al azam. This was only speculative, and was not recognized by the practice (at least in the East. Ziryab added the fifth string in Al Andalus about the same time). The designations given to the seven notes of his annotated scale imply that the Perfect system was in his mind since he calls the first note of the scale Al Mafrūḏah and its octave Al wūstā. This mafrūḏah note seems to be his version of the Greek "Mese" or "dominant", middle note of the octave, yet it is given here in a different sense, nearer to the modern notion of the "tonic".

His classification of ajīnas (genres) is also new to Arabic terminology and again it bears concrete evidence of Greek, Aristoxenian theory. The three Talīfī, Lawnī and Tanīnī genres, affected the later writings of Al Farābī, al Khwarizmī (Marāṭīḥ al ʿUlūm) and Ibn Sīnā. In the Arabic terminology, in connection with intervals abād, sēnders or genres, (ajīnas, mutations intīgal) and composition talīf, Al Kindī has laid down the foundations, which were built upon by his successors, although with some modifications.

1) Grove's dictionary of music: "Greek modes."
2) Laborde: Essai sur la musique ancienne et moderne: "Musique Grecque."
His discussion of music includes the physical and physiological aspects of sound, as well as the mathematical question of ratios in fretting the lute. In the field of composition talif, he raises an interesting point not new in Arabic works on music at this period, but discussed on a higher level, and that is the "influence of music", an age-old system known in the Orient to the Semites. The Greeks knew it under the term the "Ethos" of music, a theory of the psycho-physiological effects of music on the State and man.

This question of the "influence of music" in the Islamic world and the "Ethos" of the Greeks, features in many of the treatises dealing with music coming under the present category, thus a word of explanation is needed. In the ancient complicated concept of the world, certain patterns of melodies, or even single notes, were connected with certain planets and hence with the ethical and moral qualities that these planets were believed to impart to man. In accordance with this old doctrine, we find Al Kindi suggesting special types of melodies and rhythms suitable for certain psychological conditions, and even helpful in inducing special moods. Although his

1) C. Sachs: A Short History of World music, 30.
Al Bayhaqī in Akhīr al nukāmī gave a strange story relating how Al Kindī (who was a physician) prescribed music to be played at the deathbed of a youth and succeeded through the special melodies played, to revive the patient for a short time. This half legendary account, is rather debatable, as it has not been mentioned by other biographers, but it helps to illustrate the growing belief in the "influence of music".

Al Kindī, seems to be, historically, isolated from the following protagonists of the same school, e.g. Al Farābī and the others, but his influence was clear over many writers on the theory of music especially, and two of his pupils achieved success in that field, namely Al Sarakhsi and Mansūr ibn Talha. Yet the full impact of his teachings did not bear fruit until Al Farābī, Ikhwan al Sa'fā' and Ibn Sīna carried on the study on much the same lines.

In surveying the course of development of Islamic philosophy, the most eminent figure is that of Al Farābī; in music, he occupies an even more prominent place still. Al Farābī holds an unchallenged leading place, and surpasses all the other philosopher-

1) 246, cited by Abdel Raziq op.cit. 2) Farmer: Influence of music, 12-18.
3) Farmer: history. 169.
teachings in this field are not very clear as compared with later writers (i.e. Ibn Sīnā and Ibn Zaila) but they had their effect in introducing this aspect as one of the branches of musical research in succeeding generations of Islamic writers.

The main point exhibited in his treatment of music, and of his philosophical work in general, is a lack of clarity in his style, which is perhaps due to the difficulty of finding the right Arabic words for the foreign philosophical terms and expressions. An example of his inaccurate translation is his use of the word māsūt to mean basīt.

This same word is used in his classification of tālīf into three main types according to their psychological effect: the extroverted basīf, the introverted qabdī and the moderate muṭtadī. Rhythms have also been given by him that would suit these moods, the three heavy slow rhythms ḫaṭṭāt go with sad and melancholic melodies, the light quick ones correspond to gaiety and vivacity, while the moderate rhythms suit the moderate melodies.

1) M. ‘Ābdal Rāziq, op. cit., 29.
2) R. fi ajza’ khabariyya, 20.
theorists of Islam, in view of his mastery of the practical art together with the theoretical.

This Muslim sufī thinker of Turkish (or Persian according to Ibn abi Uṣaybiya) origin, was credited with many exaggerated and even legendary powers over his audiences, through his virtuosity in performing on many musical instruments. His personality presents many interesting aspects, but his authority on musical subjects is that of an expert, who combines artistry with the logical and analytical mind of a scholar. As Al Kindī's pioneer efforts in the scientific study of music were noteworthy, in Al Farābī's case, his distinguished practical and theoretical knowledge, invest his writings with special weight and authority.

Al Farābī's accomplishments in performance, have almost become proverbial, a fact which won him the name of "Orpheus of Arabia". Ibn Khallikan gives an account of Al Farābī's arrival and reception at the court of Sayf al Dawla the Ḥamdāmid ruler at Halab on which occasion he produced an instrument

1) Ibn Faḍl Allah al ‘Umarī: Masālik al Abṣār, fol., 216
2) Laborde: op. cit., 176.
3) II, 77.
(no name of it mentioned) and arranged its parts in different positions with contrasting effects on his audience every time. First, he invoked laughter, then sadness, and at last, sending them all to sleep, by playing a certain melody, left them sleeping and went out.

Of Al Farābī's extant works on music, the introduction al mādkhāl and the first book only of his Kitāb al Musīqā al Kābir are the most important. There is a section dealing briefly with music in his Ḩusn al Ṣulūm, which is of secondary importance. Dr. H. G. Farmer mentioned in his History

1) This account must have been responsible for the almost magical powers attributed to Al Farābī. A Cairo M.S. entitled kāshf al humūm wa l kūram fī shārīf alāt al tarāb, has many pages devoted to the description of a stringed instrument which Al Farābī is supposed to have built for al Mamūn, with a view to the rules of the doctrine of the musical influence." (One detail here is certainly wrong as Al Mamūn, died in 833/213 and Al Farābī was born in 870/257, which is another proof that its information needs careful investigation.)
of Arabian music that only three copies of the Kitāb al Musīqa al Kabīr exist, he also mentioned that a work attributed to the same author, entitled Kitāb al Adwar (2) existed in the Library of A. Taymur in Cairo, as cited in al Hilāl XXVIII, 314. To this I should like to add the result of my investigation of this point while in Cairo. A series of articles dealing with the contents of the Taymur library, by Iekandar al Maluf was published in the majallat al Majma al 'Ilimī, Damascus 1923. The section dedicated to musical works, did not include any mention of a Kitāb al Adwar by Al Farabi. Building on this and on the fact that no work entitled k. al adwar was cited by Al Farabi's biographers (and the fact that "al adwar" was a term which became commonly used in a later period than that of Al Farabi), further investigation involved the consultation of the manuscript of the catalogue to the Taymur library, written in the hand of Taymur pasha himself. In the first page of this, there is cited a second copy of Kitāb al adwar fil Isā' by Sa'd al Din, 'Abd el Mun'im Al Baghdadi, which

1) p. 176
2) op. cit., 177.
3) op. cit., 66.
was wrongly attributed to Ibn Sabin. A third copy of the same work was again mistakenly attributed to Al Farābī, a mistake which Taymūr corrected in his own writing - after the appearance of the first article of Al Hilāl, and after consulting the first and older copy of Safī al Dīn's work, which proved to be identical. Thus the doubt about two manuscripts is removed.

To go back to Al Farābī's monumental work, we find it consisting of an introduction, a book of elements, a book of instruments and book of composition.

In the introduction, Madkhal Al Farābī exposes the reason for its composition, as the incompleteness and imperfection of the works treating of the theory of music, which he had studied. This imperfection he attributes rather to the loss of some works, or to the inaccurate Arabic translation from Greek than to any failing of their authors. It could be assumed that these works to which he alludes were Greek, usually called the "ancients" by Arabic writers.

The classification of the science to its primary elements, before indulging in discussions of the practical art, is a logical one, carried out with great detail and thoroughness. Al Farābī's systematic and orderly mind, as applied to music, resulted in a most valuable contribution to Islamic music. This work has

1) Cf. Farmer's Sources of Arabian Music, 47.
been held in high esteem in the history of Islamic thought, and is valued by such an authority as Dr. H. G. Farmer, to be equal, if not superior to treatises that have come down to us by Greeks. The logical and analytical method of Al Farabi in this work, led him to give a definition of the word *musiqi* (or *musiga*), in the manner of Arabic writers, who usually begin by a linguistic philological study of the subject involved. He then proceeds to distinguish the "theoretical" from the "practical" in music. The practical consists of composing an expressive musical phrase, and the theoretical deals with the rules of the composition and in an intermediary position he places the faculty, which through the medium of the "ear" enables us to discern a harmonious i.e. concordant (as distinct from the "modern art of chords") melody from one that is not so. These three aspects of the musical art he discusses in his work.

The philosopher in Al Farabi, trying to build up a system embracing all the cycle of sciences, and to establish logical relations between them, is ever present in his writings, even on music. The thoroughness

2) op. cit. fol. 8.
with which he exposes, the "first principles," and reasons out the place of the rational, and the imaginative takhāyyūl in the sphere of the musical art, are examples of the Platonic outlook, in which he must have been alluding to the great division of the faculties, into reason, imagination and senses.

This thoroughness in matters of detail, causes some deviation which makes it a little difficult sometimes to follow the train of thought. To him arts in general, are a natural disposition in man, which engenders a rational element. In music this natural disposition takes different forms, each exhibiting a different degree of imagination, and power to create melodies. A musical talent may be completely dependent on outward factors for its expression, so that a composer's imagination in itself is insufficient, and must be aided by either playing some notes, or humming them, of which class Mabad al Madīnī is cited.

A more advanced power of imagination is that which is not entirely dependent on sensual perception maḥsūs in its expression, under which class Ibn Surayj is cited, as he used to help his imagination by means of ḫalajīl, jingles, to attain the complete perfection of the air

1) D'Erlanger: La musique Arabe I, 308.
being composed. The highest form of the musical gift for composition, is that where the imagination is so highly developed as to need no outside help for its expression. This stage Išāq, son of Ibrāhīm al Maṣūli is said to have attained.

In dealing with different effects of music on the soul, the subject is studied on a much higher level, than in any previous work in Arabic. Music falls into three types, the pleasant: "al mulidhdhah" the passionate "al infī'aliyyah" and the imaginative "al mukhayyilah."

In order to illustrate his point, he compares the first type, that which provokes agreeable sensations to the ear, to decorative art, in its effect on the eye. Building on this classification he then explains the psychological function of music. Some people seek, by means of song, to forget their fatigue by whiling away the time. Others seek to intensify, or calm certain feelings or emotions, and its use with verse heightens its effect and is expedient in exciting the imagination of the listeners. On the origin of music, Al Farābī's views bear some resemblance to modern ideas on this subject. Karl Bücher in his book "Work and

1) The jalājil were hung on his robe, worn especially on the occasion of composing songs. op. cit., 14.
2) Ibid. p. 23.
"Rhythm" suggests that the origin of music is a natural tendency to express bodily labour rhythmically, as rhythm simplifies the work. Al Farābī mentions the effect of music in the case of bodily labour, and explains how men seek to overcome exertion and fatigue by means of song, and gives this as one of the innate tendencies in man, which drive him to express himself in music. (It should be noted that Al Farabī did not specify the priority of the rhythmical element like Bucher). Instruments were made to support the human voice, and elaborate the vocal phrase as their quality of tone is supposed to be inferior to that of the human voice.

A rather short survey of method for acquiring practical skill in music leads to the discussion of the "'ilm al nazari", the theory of music. The principle element of a musical composition is the note, al naghama, which Al Farābī very adequately defines. "The note, al naghama, is a sound of definite pitch dhu qadrin mahsus, sustained during a certain period of time". The same definition was adopted by later theorists of music such as Sa‘īd al Dīn’abāed Mūmin and Al Ladhīqī.

Al Farābī refutes the Pythagorean doctrine of the harmony of the spheres, treating it as merely hypo-
-theoretical, as the planets and the spheres could not create any sounds by their movements.

This is a brief summary of the problems touched on in the first discourse of al madkhal, intended to give an impression of Al Farabi's logical and analytical method in dealing with music.

The second part of the introduction treats of more theoretical details, such as concordance al ittifaq, and discordance al tanfur, intervals abad, and their groupings, the division of the interval of the fourth to three intervals, which leads to the question of simā. All these questions were again discussed, in greater detail in their proper places, in the books of: elements, instruments and composition of the same work (i.e. K. al musiqa al Kabir).

Of these three parts of the study, the book of elements is the most Hallenized, and there is some danger that it may not really represent Arabian or Islamic rules exclusively which problem will be given further consideration.

The book of instruments is a valuable contribution to the history of musical instruments in general and that of Islamic instruments and scales in particular. Even Miss Schlesinger could not withhold an appreciation of his scientific method of treatment of instruments expounded in that work.
Al Farabi gives the earliest account, of a scientific nature, on the construction of instruments and their measurements, stringed and wind instruments as well. He was not strictly limited to the lute ud being the principal instrument in the contemporary practice but, included the tumbur (pandore) baghdaḍī and mızānī or Khorassānī, the rabab and harps mazīf and muntij. In his treatment of this subject he mentioned the accordatura in common use, and also alluded to other possible ways of according and tuning such instruments. The wind instruments discussed were different types or flutes nayat and garunayat.

It is to his masterly exposition of the ratios and fretting of instruments that we owe our present knowledge of the type of scale/common in Islamic countries. The book of instruments and that of composition have their outstanding value, being of a purely Islamic character. The problems dealt with in them defy any claim of Greek inspiration or influence. That aspect of the work, which is essentially practical, is perhaps slightly inferior, if judged by purely intellectual standards, to the introduction and book of elements in style and exposition. Yet it provides the perfect answer to a question raised by D'Erlanger and also by C. de Vaux

1) La musique Arabe I, 314.
in his preface to the same work. They were both wondering, is this philosophical, analytical and so often abstract work, a representation of the actual music of Islamic countries? D'Erlanger is of the opinion that the framework of the Greek theory had priority in these works, and any characteristically Arabian problems must have presented all Muslim writers with a great inconvenience, in trying to fit them into that Greek framework.

The fact that a certain amount of what Al Farabi wrote was rather abstract and could be applied to a study of any musical system should not lead us to underrate the value of the more distinctly (Arabian) or Islamic parts of his work. The fret of the wusṭa with its elusive variants, the wusṭa Zalzal and the Persian wusṭa as well as the mujannab fret (anterior fret) could not be considered abstract or vague problems at all. Transcribed in cents by Dr. Farmer in his studies in Oriental musical instruments and studies by Land and Collangether and Rouanet and others, these intervals have preserved what is substantially Oriental

1) P.XI
2) D'Erlanger: Musique Arabe, I, 170.
4) Remarks on the earliest development of Arabian music
6) "Musique Arabe" in V, Lavignac, Encyclopedie.
or Islamic in musical scales. Thus Al Farābī's major contribution to the evolution of musical scales in the middle ages is essentially Islamic, and hence original, i.e. not borrowed or inspired by any foreign teachings. The "second Master" has indeed contributed to bringing the practical side of music into the sphere of intellectual study, subjecting it and its rules to a systematic and detailed research worthy of such a great thinker. The artist in him is responsible for solving, in the "book of composition", many a problem of great interest to the vocal art. Such terms as nashīd, istihlāl, radda (rain) and many others, as explained by him, have thrown some light on obscure passages in the Kal Anhangī, and have helped to enlighten us as to the style of singing, with its rules and its ornaments.

The rhythmic modes, which are typically Islamic, were also given detailed consideration, the six fundamental rhythms, in favour among the Arabs, form an interesting part of the book of composition, although with no remarkable advance over Al Kindī, perhaps, in this respect.

Before proceeding to a discussion of his successors, it is necessary to mention that Al Farābī, has been equally successful with both the speculative and the practical sciences Ilm of music, and the speculative
side has not led him away from reality, nor has it
effected a complete divorce of the scientific from
the practical aspect in his writings (at least).

A little after Al Farābī, or perhaps concurrent
with him come the Ikhwan al ṣafa. Their famous fifty-
two treatises rasā'il arranged in encyclopaedic form
are in four parts and deal with all the branches of
the sciences. Their identities, as well as their dates
are rather debatable, although they are generally accepted
as belonging to the fourth century A.H. (10 A.D.) which
represents the golden age of the intellectual life in
Islam.

The special significance of these treatises, and
the dominant theme in them, is the attempt at the re-
conciliation of their neo-pythagorean philosophy with
religious principles, since to them, the object of all
philosophy and of religion was to make the soul become
like God as far as is humanly possible.

This religious idea runs through the rasā'il
in connection with all the sciences, and in the intro-
duction, there is an interesting exposition of this view.

1) It should be borne in mind that there existed
inevitably a divergence between popular and artistic
music at that period. cf. Music and social life.


3) O. El Dosouqī, Ikhwan al ṣaфа, 73.

as applied to music: "the fifth is a treatise on music and an illustration of how the notes and melodies, with their harmonious and rhythmic grouping, can influence the soul of the listener, in a way similar to that of medicines and potions on the bodies of animals. It also explains how the rotary movement of celestial spheres and their friction ihtikak one against another, creates melodies as beautiful as those produced by lutes and flutes (navat). The aim of all this, is to create in the honest, loyal and intelligent human souls nafis, an ardent desire to be lifted up to these spheres, when they (souls) shall be separated from their bodies; which is called death."  

In spite of this prolix wording, the religious theme, which is the central point of the rasall, is evident, and its application to the musical plane, is clear throughout.

Some commentators on their treatises condemned their views regarding the harmony of the spheres and censured them as superstitious and fictitious. This unjust criticism, does not take into consideration the fact that this doctrine was not of the Ikhwan's invention. It is, in fact, of very ancient origin and

2) 0. El Dosq, op. cit., 30-1. 
3) Farmer: Influence, 8, 9.
had been traced back to Chinese/and other ancient (1) cultures. What they actually did, was to adopt this Pythagorlan doctrine to their religious purpose. 
The Ikhwan are among the greatest advocates of this doctrine of the harmony of the spheres, in which they find the "first cause" of all music. They endowed music with almost miraculous powers, in its influence over the human nature and temperament. According to them, music possessed the power to excite and invigorate. It could inspire courage and bravery, as in the case of the tunes used in warfare and to calm and (3) soothe passion and choler. In worship, it has been used in temples and places of worship, as a help to prayer, in inducing piety, as the Christians, in their churches, and the Muslims in their mosques use it. The miraculous powers of music have been extended to "dimarastanat" hospitals, where music is supposed to lighten the pains of the afflicted and even heal certain diseases.

3) op. cit., 116.
4) ibid, 133-8.
Apart from the ethical and psycho-physiological effects of music, the most edifying aspect in their treatise on music, is their study of acoustical and physical principles of sound. The second part of the treatise deals with the question of "sound" and explains in a clear and adequate style, the spherical propagation of sound, distinguishing between sound and noise, articulate and inarticulate sounds, explaining pitch, quality and force of sound as applied to the human voice and musical instruments. Their opinions on acoustical and physiological principles of sound, are definitely an advance over preceding Islamic writers over the Aristotelians themselves.

The discussion extends to the field of instruments, scales and rhythms, concordance *imtizaj* and discordance *tanaffur*, although with no remarkable contribution to the study of these questions as expounded by their predecessors. Their almost mystical explanation of the ecstasy experienced on listening to music, is based upon the idea that the spirit is reminded of its realm to which it constantly yearns and longs. Almost every aspect of the subject as discussed in the rasail.

2) op. cit. 131.
bears witness of this spiritual and religious outlook. It is on this account, together with their highly developed acoustical teachings, that the Ikhwan have a claim to be mentioned in this survey of the main currents of Islamic musical thought.

Last and not least, of this school of falasifa is Ibn Sīnā, one of the greatest figures in Muslim philosophy. Born in the year 980/370 A.H., he belonged to the late fourth century, when the intellectual activities throughout the Islamic world, had achieved the highest level.

Music, in Ibn Sīnā's division of wisdom hikma constituted a part of the middle science or the mathematical science, and has been studied in the Kitāb al Shīfā, and the Kitāb al Najāh. The section on music in the last work, is a summary of that in the Shīfā, a version believed to have been summarized by Ibn Sīnā's pupil al Juzjānī. (1)

Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'ā had cited among Ibn Sīnā's works a book of introduction to music, which is said to have contained different information on music, from that of the two well known works, but which has not come down to us.

The longest and most important of these, is the section on music in the Kitāb al Shīfā. Apart from the

1) Anawati: Mu'allafat Ibn Sīnā.
copies of that manuscript cited in Dr. Farmer's sources of Arabian music another copy of the same exists, in the library of Al Azhar university, Cairo. We are also told that seven complete copies of Al Shifa, including the section on music, exist in Teheran, as cited in Musica Ibn Sinâ, a lecture delivered by Zakariyya Yousof, on the occasion of the millenary of Ibn Sinâ and published in Baghdad, 1952.

That section on music falls into six discourses, each dealing with one aspect, the first is concerned with the definition and origin of music, the intervals, consonant and dissonant, the second is devoted to the taqif of intervals, the third, to ainas (melodic modes) and their different types, the fourth deals with systems perfect and imperfect and intiqalat. The fifth treats of rhythms, and the metre of verse, and the sixth of musical instruments.

There are evident signs in Ibn Sinâ's exposition of Al Farabi's influence in some instances, but his style is concise and clear as compared to his predecessor's.

On the origin of music Ibn Sinâ seems to approach the question from the same angle as Darwin, in his evolu-

1) The section on music in it is from fol. 348 to 356 only.
tionary theory. Ibn Sinā teaches that nature has endowed animals with song to help them in the natural process of preserving their species. This is certainly the nearest to Darwin's theory about musical notes and rhythms which he says were first acquired by the male and female progenitors of mankind, for the sake of charming the opposite sex. There is even a hint also of J. J. Rousseau's and H. Spencer's theory, that music is an intensified form of speech that exaggerates the natural language of passions, in Ibn Sinā's exposition of this question. His speculation on the problem of the origin of music exhibits a highly developed sense of observation.

Yet Ibn Sinā's major contribution to the course of musical development is the tarkīb or taqīr, which he describes as "produced by means of one beat which continues upon two strings, (i.e. of the lute), the note sought and that which is along with it upon the fourth, or fifth, and other than these, as if these two were falling in the one time. The taqīrāt or the doubling of notes; they are like the tarkībat (plural of tarkīb) except that they are in the octave (bud bil kull)."

1) C. Darwin: The Descent of Man, II, Chapter 19, although this same theory has little following now among scholars.


The tarkib or tadif could be considered as the forerunner of the Organum, an initial stage of harmony and the only polyphonic form of it known to medieval Europe.

Although harmony has never been characteristic of Oriental music in general, and Islamic music particularly, yet what Ibn Sina described both in the Shifa' and Majah (and even in the Persian Danish nama) under the name of tarkib or tadif is a crude form of polyphony. There are two possible theories for the explanation of this phenomenon; either, it could have sprung directly from the practice, or it could have been a speculative theory, based upon an elaboration of the previous discussions of consonance and dissonance. In Al Farabi's works, the question of concordance and discordance, was perceived of horizontally and in succession, that is two notes were consonant if agreeable to the ear when sounded one after the other. Ibn Sina’s tarkib might have been a further development of the same view but in a vertical direction, which he might have arrived at by pushing the same principle (of Al Farabi) a little further, and sounding

them simultaneously. There is little evidence in proof of this being just a speculative hypothesis, which Ibn Sīnā has thought out as he distinctly describes it in relation to actual performance, and in the chapter dealing with "māhāsin al lahn" or embellishments of tunes (i.e. "Ornaments"). The theory that this polyphonic idea has originated directly from the practice is more likely, as a keen faculty of observation could not fail to find some unintentional forms of polyphony in the practice of Islamic music. Heterophony seems to be the inevitable result in the case of two or more performers on the same or different instruments playing together, a melody which is not recorded (i.e. written down) and for which they rely chiefly on their memories. Occasional consonance could have been the result of any form of a "gloss" appoggiatura sounded simultaneously with the main note.

In trying to keep a neutral side, and to avoid the controversy of the Islamic influence on Western musical theory, I think it is only fair to state that in all probability the tarkīb of Ibn Sīnā did not have any harmonic function (in the modern sense of the word). It must have been conceived melodically, although it constituted the germ of harmony in its crudest form,

2) Daniel: ibid, 20 "on the gloss as leading to our system of harmony."
that of "organum". Any over-estimation of Ibn Sinâ's achievement in that field, should be carefully weighed against the facts: that although the modern sense is apt to consider it (tarkib) harmonically, yet as mentioned before, it seems to belong more to the melodic line, and also that the definite rejection of Islamic musical taste of experimenting with, or adopting this art of "simultaneous sounds" proves it to be alien to Islamic musical standards and ideals. Such comprehensive studies in the theory of music, by Ibn Sinâ's successors Ibn Zaila (Al Kâfî, B.M. Ms), Safî al Din abdel Mumin, and other anonymous treaties, did not take up the subject from that angle after him, nor did the practice adopt it up till now, (not to mention a tendency in recent years towards experiments with simple harmonies in Eastern music). The chief interest of that point in Ibn Sinâ's writings, lies in regarding it as a phase in the evolution of musical thought of the middle ages. That the Islamic world did not elaborate and develop this specific branch of music, is not deplorable, as some people in the East tend to regard it nowadays. As far as this study is concerned however, Ibn Sinâ had come across the principle which later evolved into the harmony typical of Occidental music, and thus established a kind of link in the chain of musical progress.

1) "The difference between music with and without harmony is not only historical, but racial: Wallaschek: ibid, 144."
of the two worlds on the whole.

The taqāf or tarkīb were discussed among other "ornaments" of melody in Al Shifa' and al Najah, as devices used in adorning and elaborating the original melodic line. An essential part of Oriental and Islamic music traditions, which has been characteristic of it, in the past and the present, is the comparative freedom of the performers to elaborate each in his or her individual style, on a given melody that is being performed. The devices used for that purpose at the time of Ibn Sīnā, as detailed by him are "tarkīb," which closely corresponds to the modern "tremolo" and the tawsil which apparently is a form of "trill" and tawsīl which is known in modern terms as glissando and the tarkīb mentioned before.

Ibn Sīnā's contribution to the purely Arabian culture, is his masterly discussion of rhythm as applied to the prosody of the verse, a study of great value to the understanding and appreciation of Arabian vocal music, in the past, and its development in that direction in future.

Ibn Sīnā is opposed to the relations established between music planets and human temperaments discussed by ancient (Greek) and Muslim writers before him. He

refutes this theory, protesting in quite a modern spirit against, relating musical ratios to the planets, or to mental states, since this is the habit of those who do not keep the various sciences apart, nor know what they directly or indirectly include. An attitude which conflicts with what his pupil Ibn Zaila advocates, with the authority of his master i.e. the preference for playing certain modes, at certain hours of the day.

The wide knowledge revealed in his treatment of the practical side of music, makes it difficult to accept Ibn Sīna's total unacquaintance with the practice of music. Yet his biographers offer no evidence to that effect, as in the case of Al Farābī and later of Ṣafī al Dīn ʿAbd al Mūmin.

From this survey of this new sphere of scientific study, to which music has been introduced by the Muslim falāsifā, it should be noticed that they were not always strictly confined to the rules of the contemporary practice. Their writings are of a dual nature, since they represent the abstract speculative aspect, as well as the practical. That the theory and the practice did not agree, is the natural order of things especially at that stage of social and artistic develop-

2) C. Lalo: L'art et la vie sociale, 139
ment. Indeed the function of theory is to attempt to systematize and legalize the vagaries of the singers and players. And this the Muslim Scholiasts tried to do within the framework of the Greek theories. But how far they have managed to do so, is quite evident in their detailed discussions of the elusive characteristics of their indigenous music, which refused to adapt themselves to Greek inspired theories. Rhythms and lute scales have defied any borrowing from foreign music. The successive treatment of the question of lute-fretting in the above mentioned writings reveals a keen consciousness of and respect for the rules of the practice, these rules which have been undergoing a constant evolution. Thus the evident result of the acquisition of (Greek) Ancient theories, was not a complete divorce of the two aspects, the Greek inspired speculative theory and the Arabo-Persian practice. The knowledge of the Greek theory, which is considered sometimes as a scholastic accomplishment, quite separate and distinct from the native practice, resulted in the end in a systematic and orderly treatment of the practice by means of the experience acquired through this accomplishment. This process of systematizing the rules of the practice

was undertaken with varying degrees of individuality, where there was scope for it. In the case of rhythmic modes, *Iqāṭ*, which did not lend themselves to such processes, we find a certain degree of conformity in the works just discussed.

As music was among the sciences studied at the *nizāmiyah* college at Baghdad and other similar institutes throughout the Islamic world, there must have been some form of text-book, or standard work in use. Such works must indeed be considered separately as they can provide, to some extent, the established standards acceptable to all. Among these should be cited the *Mafātih al-'Ulūm* by Muhammed Ibn Ḥamd al-Khwārizmī, which dates from the fourth century 10 A.D./10 A.H., that most fruitful century in the history of Islamic thought. This work and similar books of secondary importance, help to provide a concise account of the different sciences, by dealing with their terms, in some detail. To this class of book should be added the linguistic works, which deal also with musical terms, especially in instruments such as *Al Mukhassas* by the Andalusian Ibn Sīda. These two types of books which are in encyclopaedic, or dictionary form, provide a neutral version of the sciences dealt with, and as

1) A. Mazāharī: *La vie quotidienne de Musulmans de moyenn age*, 135.
free as possible from the individualistic approach dominant in the writings of the great philosophers.

It should not be understood that the survey attempted here is comprehensive, or covers the whole field of musical research in Islamic culture. It has only been devoted to the outstanding philosophers by whom music has been elevated to a branch of *hikma* philosophy, and thereby claim the attention of a survey of the music in the intellectual life of the Islamic culture.

Apart from such eminent figures there are many theorists of music, who have built upon the foundations laid by their great predecessors, some of these specialized works date as early as the third century A.H./e.g. Kitāb al *Naghām* by: Yahyā ibn Alī (9 A.H.) ibn Yahyā al Munajjim, al Sarakhsī and Mansūr ibn Ṭalḥa, Al Kindī's disciples, together with Abū al-*Hābit* ibn Qurra, Zakariyya al Razī, ibn Baja, Qusayr ibn Lūqa and Ibn al Haytham have all contributed their share to the development of Islamic music, in Arabia, Andalus and Egypt. The fact that they are not offered a more prominent place in this survey, is due to the limitations of the study and its concentration on

the place assigned to music in the intellectual sphere, as one of the sciences embraced by Islamic philosophy.

The previous brief sketch of the main currents in Islamic thought as applied to music, has inevitably assumed a historical character. This is partly because the Muslim philosophers writings in this field, are significant and relevant to the type of music, which is dealt with in this study. They provide us with concrete information which could not be found elsewhere, as there are no existing records of the actual music.

Yet the introduction of music to the intellectual sphere, and the place it has been assigned therein, are essential to the present study of its function in the Islamic culture.

Although this attitude could possibly be ascribed to foreign influences, namely Hellenic, yet some insight would reveal definite and conclusive evidence to the contrary. The tolerant attitude of Islam to foreign cultural material, and its powers of assimilation might create the impression of lacking originality, but Islam's originality consists exactly in its adopting the alien inspiration to its needs and of rejecting the rest (1)

1) Grunebaum: ibid, 324.
Islam did not readily accept the whole of foreign cultures which came into contact with it. Certain Greek artistic literary tendencies failed to gain any popularity among the Muslims.

Thus the treatment of music as a science which engaged the minds of Muslim thinkers, has its bearings on the function of music, by the fact of its appeal to, and popularity among, successive generations of philosophers.
PART III. (a)

MUSIC AND SOCIAL LIFE.

a) Music in the life of the aristocracy
private and public.
Although Islam has preached equality among all the Muslims as one of its main principles, having made piety and sincerity for the faith, its real criteria of honour, yet in spite of the emphasis laid on this principle in Islamic teachings, the analysis of the social structure of Islamic countries reveals an almost distinct stratification, which splits the society into two great grades or strata.

The Islamic doctrine of equality could not successfully eliminate so intangible an element in social organization, as that of pride in ancestry, which was the basis of the pre-Islamic Arabian society. So the claims of birth retained some of their strength after Islam, thus tempering its doctrine of equality, and there existed two distinct grades in Islamic society.

Having now contended, for purposes of study, that the Muslim society falls roughly into two main sections, i.e. the noble aristocracy, and "the people", let us proceed to trace the successive phases of change in the concept of aristocracy.

1) Von Grunebaum: Medieval Islam, 199.
2) R. Levy: Sociology of Islam, Chap. I.
Towards the end of the first century A.H., it appears that what constituted aristocracy was still the criterion of birth, that is belonging to Quraysh. Thus the pre-Islamic respect for birth and genealogy was diverted to an Islamic ideal, derived from the tribe of the Prophet. It was later extended to embrace all relationship with him.

The rise of the Umayyad dynasty, still kept the conception of aristocracy confined to those who were full blooded Arabs, not to the exclusion of the administrative functionaries, that is, the whole of the well-to-do ruling class. With the fall of the Umayyads and the rise of the half-Persian Abbasid dynasty, the Arabian monopoly of nobility was shattered and racial considerations ceased to occupy the first place. Persians were now holding the highest administrative military and social positions.

Coinciding with the Abbasid califate, there is another development of great cultural and artistic significance, namely the rise of small independent kingdoms, thus putting an end to the centralization of government (and court) in the one capital of the Caliphate. The social pattern of life of these states

1) Grunébaum: ibid., 211.
2) Levy: ibid., 1, 81.
3) Muir: Caliphate, 462.
was to a great extent modelled on that of the centre of the califate, and the same social structure held there. The subsequent rise of small capitals with their heads of the state and their courts, resulted especially in the encouragement of local cultures and arts, but the social function of music, in the independent Muslim states, east and west, remained the same as that in the metropolis, whether in the life of the aristocracy, or the masses.

Complementary to that class of ruling aristocracy, throughout its successive phases, there existed a class of subordinates entirely dependent upon it, but which played an important part in the social organization, as well as in the development of music.

The function of music, in everyday life of the two main sections or classes of the Muslim society, presents two entirely different aspects, a situation which is not uncommon at that stage of civilization, where economic factors result directly in a dualism in artistic life, corresponding to the duality of the social organization. We shall here attempt to trace the place assigned to music in the life of the nobility, public and private, and its counterpart in the life of the bourgeoisie, or the people generally.

(1) C. Lalo. L'art et la vie sociale, 140.
It should be of some interest here, to mention something about the function of music in the pre-Islamic social activities, in order to pave the way for a better apprehension of the succeeding stages.

In spite of the scarcity of reliable and definitive data on that point, yet it could be safely assumed that pre-Islamic music, as is characteristic of such an under-developed or primitive stage of civilization took the form of a collective social activity in which all the members of the tribe participated. It was more of a social art, composed and performed by the people themselves rather than an organized form of music, dependent on professional musicians. The hudâ, the nashb, and the nashp, the three main departments of music known and practised at that time, are forms of folk music, simple and crude, which do not require any special musical training and hence were available and accessible to the whole of the community. Another distinctive feature of pre-Islamic music which definitely places it in the domain

1) E. Dickinson: *Growth and development of music.* Wallaschek: *Primitive music,* Chap. 7, 8.
2) C. Sachs: *Short History of World music,* 3
3) Lalo: *ibid,* 150.
of "primitive music", is the magical power attached to it, traces of which have survived in Islamic writings on that subject.

Music, featured in all the different occasions of the pre-Islamic communal life, "music and song were with the Arabs from the lullaby at the cradle, to the elegy at the bier". The camel drivers chanted their unpretentious huda, the women their lullabies or laments, while accompanying themselves on the few instruments popular among them. The most highly organized form of their musical activity seems to have been the songs of the qiyān privately owned, or at taverns, although very few of them have possessed the talent that would make them worth mentioning by the chroniclers of Arabian music.

To sum up, pre-Islamic music seems to have been nothing but simple folk music practised as a collective

1) Farmer: ibid, 7, also c.f. Part II "Musical and intellectual life."

2) Farmer: ibid, 17.

3) Aghani: XIX, 37.

4) Farmer: ibid, 10.


social activity and in certain cases with some utilitarian purpose — especially magical — and whose ultimate aim was not purely aesthetic. Its nature could be to some extent judged from the absence of a distinct class of professional musicians, a fact which points to the simplicity and crudeness of music at that stage. Such a state of affairs contrasts sharply with music under Islam, where the annals of Islamic music abound with accounts of talented professional musicians and singers, even earlier than the Umayyad dynasty, although the change from the one phase to the other took place in the early decades of Islam, which constituted a transitory period in the development of music. It is generally acknowledged that the emergence of a distinct class of professional musicians, marks a definite step forward in the development of a society's music and such is its significance in the development of music, in Islamic culture, since the Kitab al Aghani and similar sources prove beyond any doubt that the rise of a class of professional musicians in Islam coincided with the flourishing of that art. It is not irrelevant however to this study, to treat of the rise and growth of a distinct class of professional musicians in Islam. Such a study is

1) Lalo: ibid, 139
complementary to that of the function of music in social life, as it determines the place assigned to music in the society, as reflected in the social status of the practitioner of the music. Thus a dual approach to the subject should embrace its two sides, i.e., the role which music played in the life of aristocracy and the people, as well as the place which that society as a whole, accorded to the purveyors of music.

Music in the life of the Aristocracy.

All cultural and artistic progress generally depends on social stability and material prosperity, and in the Islamic culture economical development seems to coincide with artistic development. The arts generally and music in particular, have always thrived and progressed (1) by the patronage of higher classes of society. In Islam the real value of the protection and encouragement of music by the aristocracy cannot be overestimated. The great enthusiasm of some of the venerated Sahaba and Qurashis in the dawn of the Islamic era is a landmark in the evolution of that art. Their patronage of music provided the necessary counterbalance against the stern religious views on music, which otherwise might have crippled its growth and development. The indebtedness

1) Lalo: ibid, 39.
of music to that early generation of Arabian and Qurashitan aristocracy is very great, since it was at their houses, and under their auspices that professional musicians and singers were tutored and encouraged, singers who had their unquestionable share in building the traditions of Islamic music, carried on by their famous successors in the late Umayyad and ‘Abbasid reigns.

Yet what did music mean to this class and why should they go to any length in their patronage of it, in other words what was the role it played in their life?

Taking into account the previous evolution of the conception of aristocracy, as viewed against the background of a constantly developing society, enjoying the most favourable economic conditions, we find that in the complex and many-sided life of the aristocracy, and in all times, music has not ceased to have a multiple function. This function of music was not only restricted to the private aspects of life, but extended beyond them to some public aspects also. While adorning their courts and palaces, and lightening their hours of leisure, it also became involved to some extent, in politics, inasmuch as it provided the suitable vehicle for the propagation of certain ideas, or merely for propaganda values, by helping to focus attention around the ruling class through that popular medium. Even at the battle
fields music and instruments found a place.

**PRIVATE LIFE.** Analysing the elements that constitute luxury in a society, some writers refer it to such factors as vanity and pride, (hence the ostentatious forms of luxury), sensuous pleasures, the ornamental instinct of man and finally the love of change which is expressed in fashion. Such are the factors that collaborate to produce that high style of living i.e. luxury. These four elements have a direct bearing on the existence and progress of art, and such elements existed in varying degrees in the Muslim society, and their respective influence on music in the life of the artistocracy is unmistakable, especially in the late Umayyad and 'Abbāsid eras, where traces of these simultaneously elements are evident. The Islamic culture could be safely termed a poetic culture, inasmuch as its aesthetic ideals were inseparably bound with the rhymed word. The deep rooted Arab love of poetry, should be taken into consideration in this connection, as imparting some of its popularity to music. To the Arabs, before and after Islam, poetry, and indirectly perhaps music, were among the highly prized pleasures life could offer. The excessive natural disposition of the Arabs, reveals their capacity for the

1) Laloi: *ibid, "L'art et le luxe",* 91.
full enjoyment of worldly pleasures. Music, which was to the Semitic temperament, since for centuries, part and parcel of the mundane pleasures (i.e. wine, women and song) was cultivated, not for its intrinsic artistic value but more perhaps as a suitable and enjoyable accompaniment, or even background, to such worldly pleasures.

This conception of music, as concomitant with the aforementioned pleasures, has been fully expounded in the primary sources of Islamic music and culture. The Kitāb al Aghāni, later the 'Iqd al Farīd or the half legendary "Alf Layla wa Layla" abound with anecdotes and accounts of fantastic gatherings at courts where the mughannī and qiyān singing girls as well as the wine cup, were essential elements.

Yet this hedonistic outlook, which is to a great extent, the outcome of material prosperity and social stability, was not present in the early decades of Islam. The early generation of Qurashi nobility does not present the same picture of excessive indulgence in mundane and forbidden pleasures. In fact, music did not come to be so closely associated with wine till later at the courts of some of the dissipated Umayyad Califs. To the early Quraysh and Arab aristocracy, music was chiefly the means to adorn and embellish their most beloved artistic

1) Farmer: Minstrelsy, 4-5.
expression i.e. poetry, as it provided the necessary background to the appreciation of good poetry.

The chief exponent of this view among that generation of nobility is ʿAbd Allāh ibn Jaʿfar ibn Abī Ṭālib, who is credited for success in overcoming the prevalent opposition to music of the official Muslim orthodoxy. His anecdotes with the Calif Muʿawiyah himself are of great value to the apprehension of the nature of the pleasure and enjoyment he and his class of early nobility, derived from singing. Whenever reproached, as the cousin of the Prophet and one of his companions, for his indulgence in the music which was generally frowned upon by the orthodox Muslims, he would retort that it was nothing but selected verses, adorned with selected melodies. In this connection Muʿawiyah, who was scandalized at hearing that such an eminent figure as Ibn Jaʿfar should be drinking (wine) and listening to music, discovered for himself that what he was drinking was not wine.

Judging from what has come down to us about this champion of music, as well as other keen protectors

1) Ḥaqāʾiq al-Farāḥ: 4 98-102
2) Ṭabāṣrī, XIV, 10. Ghazzālī: ibid, 4 237.
3) Ṭabāṣrī, 4 55 & 63. cf. ante Part 4 113
4) loc. cit.
among the early nobility whose later impropriety came to be so closely associated with music, was totally absent from their gatherings. Being chiefly regarded as an essential element to the better appreciation of good poetry, music was as yet independent of wine-drinking, due to the fact that its first enthusiasts and protectors, were among the most devout Muslims of Quraysh and near relations of the Prophet. Their exalted position in the society, and their social prestige, have all contributed to consolidate the growth and evolution of Islamic music. Imposing their personal example, as keen enthusiastic and sober patrons of music, and backed up by the authority of all the factors that constituted nobility, this early generation of Quraysh aristocracy has greatly influenced the development of music, especially by the unquestionable respectability and propriety of their musical festivities. Al Ghazālī in his ardent defence of music quotes the names of the early Ṣaḥāba, companions, who listened to music, an argument which carries special weight since their


2) ʻUkayna bint al Ḥusayn was the Prophet's granddaughter.
listening was not blemished by any impropriety, or
associated with forbidden things such as wine. Indeed,
by conforming in their concerts, to the religious
notions of behaviour, worthy of good muslims, this
generation of early nobility has the credit of fostering
and sponsoring the growth of Islamic music, which
without their protection, might have suffered greatly
by the unceasing strictures of the rigid muslims in-
dividually, or through state officials or in their
innumerable writings against it.

Thus we find in the function which music ful-
filled in the life of this generation of early aris-
tocracy some interesting points. It is likely that
the aesthetic element sought in singing, was poetic
rather than tonal, melodies essentially served to en-
hance the beauty of the verse. Thus we find that the
ornamental instinct inherent in man's nature, when
coupled with favourable economical conditions, resulted
in this spontaneous interest in music, common among
that early muslim aristocracy. This trend is of great
significance to the understanding of natural tendencies
in Islamic culture, since it is not necessary that such

1) I były; II, 237.
2) Ibn Abî 'Atîq, with the governor of Madîna: c.f.
   'Igd al Farîd, c.f. Agh. VIII, 10.
a combination of social circumstances should always
have the same results.

Another interesting aspect of some value to the
understanding of their enjoyment of musical performances,
is the material, physical, effect music was believed to
have on listeners. This evasive question of the almost
magical influence of music, which was later elaborated
in the doctrine of the "ethos" or  ti'thir was the subject
of many discussions at the period in question. The out-
ward manifestations of pleasure at hearing music, would
take the form of violent gestures and movements of the
head and limbs. Such an attitude, which is not uncommon
at that comparatively early stage of civilisation, was
the only way of giving vent to an overpowering emotion.
Ibn Ja'far on being questioned why he shook his head on
listening to singing, explained it as a certain gener¬
osity he experienced which would incite him to combat
if called up and to give liberally if asked.

Accounts abound of the strange physical and
emotional influence of music over the listener, which

1) Lalo: ibid, 92-3.
2) Al 'Umarî: Masalik, IX, 24.
5) Agbh. IV, 35.
6) For further references of music's influence; cf.
   Ibn Al Tahhan: ibid fo. 8, Lîdhiqi: Fathiyya, 15.
   Masûdi: Murûj, VIII, 88, Agbh. VI, 135, 143, etc.
might lead us to conclude that the utilitarian conception of music common in primitive civilizations, still held at that time. Music, although making for progress as an independent art, was still conceived of as the means of inciting certain feelings and inducing certain conditions, and it was still assessed in terms of its immediate physical influence, not as an art meant to please or edify. The vocal Islamic art however, at the close of that period under the patronage of the Arab aristocracy, was emerging gradually and slowly, from the pre-Islamic collective activity, into a higher form of artistic expression, with some intrinsic value, and sufficiently advanced to create a class of musicians expressly trained for that profession.

Considering the modest standard of life of the muslims in the first decades of Islam which did not permit of/leisurely cultivation of arts, the complicated issue of the religious attitude towards music, together with the immorality and defaming influence of the mukhannathun who constituted the majority of professional singers at that time, it is indeed, a wonder that the art thrived at all under Islam. It is against this

1) Sachs. loc. cit.
2) Agh. IV, 61
3) Farmer: History, 31
austere background that the full weight of the encouragement to music extended by that generation of Quraysh aristocracy, should be appreciated. Their patronage and love of music, paved the way for the subsequent phases of progress upon which music entered with the rise of the Umayyad and ‘Abbāsid dynasties.

With the rise of the Umayyad dynasty with its new capital, where all the wealth of the vast Muslim empire came pouring, we find musicians properly trained in singing and playing at Al Hijāz turning towards Damascus, where they were welcomed at the court of almost all the Umayyad Califs (there are some exceptions) who were only too eager to enjoy to the fullest measure, the luxuries of a settled life. Singers, male and female, trained artists, as well as improvisers, thronged the court, where their performances were rewarded most liberally, and details of these concerts and of the consequent prizes abound in Arabic literature.

The tone of these musical performances was diverting gradually from that prevalent in the previous period, the change took place gradually and seems to extend further through the ‘Abbāsid Caliphate.

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1) The period just discussed overlaps with the beginning of the Umayyad dynasty as Ibn Ja‘far was contemporary with Mu‘āwiyyah who died 680/61.

2) Hakam Al Wādī and others.
With the main difference of the shifting from a pure Arabian notion of nobility, to a more pronouncedly Persian aristocracy, the 'Abbasid Caliphate could be said to have developed - socially - the same attitude towards music.

Culturally, the 'Abbasid's reign, especially its peak, generally termed the golden age was the most fruitful period under Islam. The new elements Persian and Greek and Hindu, in a materially prosperous society, opened up new vistas for Islamic culture. This also made for a more advanced and critical outlook to art. Such circumstances accelerated by the material prosperity and luxury of the aristocracy's life, made a singer's job lucrative, but also demanded a greater measure of musical ability, a vaster repertory of songs, higher standards of performance as well as a diversity of other qualifications, in order to secure the admiration and approval of the elite, who were by now better acquainted with the arts of civilisation than their predecessors of the orthodox and early Umayyad periods.

The rise of the 'Abbasid dynasty coincided with the end of the "one-capital" period, which prevailed

1) Farmer: History, 90-1
2) G. Zaydan: III, 197.
with the Umayyads. Small and independent states
with their own capitals and courts sprang up all
over the Muslim world, from Andalus in the west to
Egypt and Syria, and as far as Khorasan, Transoxiana
and Jurjan in the east. The new states, whether
completely independent or professing nominal allegi-
ance to the Calif, provided the required conditions
for further progress of the art, since it is usually
the spread of urban life, and around the seat of
monarchy that the aristocracy is to be found. The
decentralization which took place during the 'Abbasid
reign, although a sign of political disintegration,
resulted in the encouragement of the local arts, and
the propagation of the same ideals and traditions of
the metropolis, which were faithfully copied there.
When studying the social function of music at this
period of decentralization, and several capitals, the
broad outlines, seem to hold for the seat of the
Califate as well as for the independent states.

In all the sumptuous festivities of the daily
life of the aristocracy, music has been gradually
elevated to a higher place; it became one of the most
cherished forms of entertainment. As has been made
clear, in the great Kitāb Al Aghānī and the Alf Layla
wa Layla, the mood of these gatherings reveals a new
and distinctive trend. Music was in the predicament of being linked up with such forbidden pleasures, malāḥī, (as wine and women) against which the Muslim purists raised their voices in protest and condemnation.

Indeed music was gradually diverted from a mere handmaid to poetry, and to something different, and yet on the same level perhaps. It was becoming gradually the best accompaniment to drinking. Replacing the early reserved musical gatherings of the Arabs, where the predominant note was that of exalted appreciation of the sung word, there prevailed at the courts of the Umayyad and ʿAbbāsid Califs a high note of impropriety, where music became "concomitant to the forbidden pleasures of the wine-cup and the harīm."

The most marked appreciation that a Calif or nobleman could show to a new song, was to "drink to it." On the other hand, the wine-cup seems to have accentuated the pleasures of listening and Arabic literature abounds

1) Farmer: The minstrelsy of the Arabian nights, 4.
3) Agh. V, 67, 91, 97, 93 VI 133, 144 etc. that is to mention only an example from the ʿAbbāsid and another from the Umayyad periods - Arabian Nights I. 304 - IV, 259, etc.
to overflowing with accounts of the most sumptuous and luxurious gatherings where music and singing, together with wine and qiyān were essential. In fact, such meetings became the vogue among the wealthy aristocracy as we can understand from the numerous works by Muslim theologians and purists in condemnation of the ungodliness of the nobility. True, some of the Califs did not indulge in such forbidden pleasures, such as the Calif 'Abd al Malik (705/63), 'Umar ibn Abd al 'Azīz (720/102) who nevertheless composed some melodies before his accession to the throne and Al Mansur (775/159) to name only the most prominent among them, yet with few exceptions the same high note of gaiety and frivolity prevailed at courts. In this connection the factor of the Califs' prestige led the rest of the community in its higher and lower classes to pursue their example, thus investing music with great popularity in the whole of the Muslim society. It even grew to be, as a show of wealth and prosperity, since it was unquestionably the favourite pastime.

1) Robson: Tracts, 4.
2) A. Mazāhārī: ibid, 93.
3) As early as the third century A.H. writings have come down to us, such as Dhāma al Malāhī, by Ibn Abī'l Dunyā condemning this attitude.
4) Agh. VIII, 149-50.
and entertainment of the elite. Noblemen of rank vied with each other as to who possessed the best trained singing girls, they had them sent for tuition to the ʿMawṣūla conservatory and their patrons would go to any length to have them taught new melodies, hence the great demand for increasing the current repertoire. Such seems also to have been the function and the place of music in the life of the local aristocracy of the petty kingdoms of ʿIslām.

Throughout this second phase of aristocratic life, such elements as vanity, sensual pleasure, love of change as well as inherent artistic tendencies are all collaborating to the continuous growth and evolution of music. There was a touch of showing off, in the sumptuous feasts and the liberal rewards to the singers. Again, it appears that music became fashionable among the nobility.

Yet in spite of this hedonistic and somewhat trivial tendency and in spite of all the indulgence in sensuous pleasures, there evolved gradually, among

1) ʿAgh. V, 9, etc.
2) Mukhāriq with the qiyān of the Waṣīr Yaḥyā ibn Khāhid. ʿAgh. V, 13, etc.
3) See ante, 175
the same class of aristocracy and upper middle classes, a keen appreciation of the beauty of music per se, and interest in it, as an independent art. Such an attitude found its early exponents among Quraysh or Arab nobility, its signs are apparent in the organization of musical (1) competitions, where liberal prizes were awarded to (2) the winners.

This trend evolving with time and favoured by the increasing popularity as well as progress of music, we find many princes and even Califa who were themselves composers, as well as gifted and able musicians. Al Ḥaţābi dedicates some pages to these gifted noblemen, citing their songs and the modes in which they (4) were composed.

1) There were even debates on music at court in the presence of the 'Abbasid Califa: Al Mawājī: ibid, 180. For further references of. Agh. I, 105-6. V 10-30. 52-131. 59-70.

2) Sulaymān ibn 'Abd al Malik's competition at Mecca, won by Ibn Surayj, Agh. I, 136 - another of Ibn Ṣafwān, won by Maḥbūd, Agh. ibid, 91, etc.

3) Even a royal lady 'Ulayya bint al Mahdī, who was noted for her piety and dignity, had a beautiful voice and was a talented musician: Ibn Shakir: Fawāt al wafayat: II, 124. Agh. IX, 49-53.

4) Agh. VIII, 149, 151, 184.
It is at the hands of this enlightened and exalted class of music-lovers that music came to be regarded as an independent art designed to please and edify. Although the Califs' own compositions were largely the creations of amateurs (as in the case of the songs of Al Wathiq as compared to his chief court musician's Ishaq al Mawsilī), yet their spirit certainly made for the progress of music in all its departments, as well as for the improvement of the standards of musical performances at court, where such critical judgement and sophistication existed. The significance of this trend is manifest in its result of elevating music from the domain of the sensual, to that of the intellectual and artistic, from a pleasant pastime to a cultural interest and an artistic expression.

Thus music emerged gradually, at the hands of this class, from being the object of protection and patronization, to the more positive phase where it became cultivated and assiduously learnt by the nobility. We may not be mistaken in assuming that the same phases and the same attitude were cultivated in the independent

\[\begin{align*}
1) & \text{ Agh. } \overline{V}, 95. \\
2) & \text{ The famous words of Al Wathiq in appreciation of Ishaq al Mawsilī's art are relevant to the different and conception of music/he considers it one of the greatest gifts of God and the adornment of his monarchy. } \\
& \text{ Agh. } \overline{V}, 60.
\end{align*}\]
kingdoms, with emphasis on the local traits of every country's music and the encouragement of its indigenous art.

PUBLIC: The aristocracy of Islam has played the difficult and exacting part of rulers, whether Qurashi, Arab or Persian, their capacity of governors was the central fact governing their lives. Political currents have divided the Muslims early, thus providing a driving force in their lives and activities. Although it might seem, at first, that music is far removed from any political conflicts yet saturating the lives of the ruling class as it did, it was inevitably involved in such issues, influenced by and influencing them simultaneously.

The earliest open association of music with considerations of political import, seems to be Mu'āwiya's deprecation of the indulgence in music, (1) of the Prophet's family, yet some writers contend that, at the same time, he was fully aware of the fact that such indulgence in pleasure served to divert their attention from resisting his claim to the Caliphate. (2) It was even thought that he provided them with money towards that end.

1) Agh. IV, 35, also Tad al-Farid, IV, 98-9.
2) Zaydan, V, 35.
The major political issue which directly influenced life under Islam, was the conflict of the Umayyads versus the 'Abbāsids. Almost all factions and parties were either supporting or opposing one or the other. Thus, music, especially the songs sung at the courts of the 'Abbāsids inevitably touched on this thorny question, with consequent complications and penalties to the unfortunate singers. On the other hand, the singers were patronized at court, to some extent, for their political use, since opinions could be effectively propagated by means of song.

It has been acknowledged that musicians played an important function in public life at such a stage, they, with the poets, were the journalists of their day. Their songs treated of the current events, the apologies as well as the satires. The singers journeying from town to town would pass on their songs and their news, which would consolidate the body politics. An incident which fully demonstrates this capacity of song as a propaganda medium is that of the poet Al Darimi who was approached by a merchant who came to Al Medina with some Iranian veils, and

2) Belvianes: *Sociologie*, 143.
sold them all except the black ones. Al Darimi, who had become an ascetic, and given up poetry and attended assiduously the mosque, thereupon threw aside his garments of asceticism and took up poetry again, reciting a poem about the beautiful one/the black veil. This he gave to a professional singer among his friends to sing; this song became so popular in Madīna, that all the black veils became in great demand and the whole stock was soon exhausted. Although of no political implication, the story reveals the efficiency of singing (and poetry) in influencing public opinion.

The annals of Islamic literature and music record many instances. A misguided choice of song could have many disastrous results. The blunder of a singer who chose objectionable verses, whether on political or social grounds, could incur heavy penalties. An interesting point, in this connection is the credit given in K. al Aghānī to Ibn Surayj the singer, for being an intelligent and wise man, who never sang to his listener a song praising his enemies, nor anything alluding to objectionable


3) *Allawayh with the Calif al Amin*. Agh. X, 124.
affairs. It was not merely tact and wisdom that would lead a musician to refrain from committing such offences, it was even self preservation, since the Calif's rage might well cost him his life, or at least cause him to fall into disfavour. 'Allawayh the once tactlessly sang in presence of Al Ma'mūn, some verses in praise of the Umayyads, upon which he was expelled from his court. A similar story is told of another musician, with the same Calif which would have had fatal results, but for some intervention and pleading, and that mentioning only a very few examples. Such severe penalties are only another proof of the consciousness of the ruling class, of the value of music in voicing certain ideas and opinions.

On the other hand, a cleverly chosen song would appease the wrath of the emotional Califs, as in the case of Ḥarūn al Rashīd who in his indignation, expressed his will to get rid of the line of Banī Abī Ṭalib, then a happy choice of song by

1) *ibid* I, 105.
2) Ṣαḥibī al Makkī although professing allegiance to Banī Umayya, was obliged to overlook the fact and state his clientship vaguely to Quraysh being in the service of ʿAbbāsid Califs. *Agh. VI*, 16.
Ibrahim al Mawsilī calmed down his rage.

Apart from music's influence on the emotional aristocracy, their keen love for it - together with other considerations - were used by opposing factions as a sign of degeneration and weakness, rendering a calif unworthy of his position, as was the case with the excessive Walīd ibn Yazīd (664/44) who was strongly criticized by the Abbāsids as well as by the people at large. Ibn al Athīr states that during the campaign in 743/131 the victorious Abbāsids found among the booty won over from the Umayyads near Isfahan, a number of lutes barābit and pandores tanābīf. It seems that their inordinate love for music (and pleasure) made them take their singers/instruments in their travels, as well as to the battle-front.

This should not be mistaken for the military music which had its origin in the most ancient civilizations and was known in Islam even during the Prophet's time. It seems that traces of the pre-Islamic traditions have survived in the practice of military chants.

2) Ṭabarī. II, 146, as cited by Farmer: History, 66.
3) The poem by Bashshār stresses music and drinking as his vices, also cf. ante p.20 for remarks to that effect made by Al Ma'arrī, see p.20.
4) V, 190.
and music. The women of the non-muslim Arabs fighting against the Prophet at the battles of Uhud and Badr spurred on the warriors, after the pre-Islamic famous fashion, by reciting rajaz poems to the sound of tambourines. Even the early Muslims during the Prophet's time acknowledged the influence of music in combat, and it is stated that such rajaz poems were chanted on several occasions, not to the exclusion of certain appropriate instruments. Certain drums tubul are recommended for use as inciting courage at battle. Not all drums though, since the enervating and weakening sounds of tabl al shahin was strongly prohibited at battle according to such military leaders as Ali ibn Abi Talib and Khalid ibn al Walid. Although this practice seems to have an ancient origin, since we are told that the Persian kings used some instruments of powerful resonance in war, such as the kus or kettledrum.

1) Haldar: Associations of cult Prophets, 134-5.
2) Agh. XI, 126; XIV, 17.
4) Al Nabulsli: Ildah, fol.7 - Ikhwan, ibid, 122.
5) Ghasal: II, 244.
6) Tash Qupri Zade, Mafatih, 346.
8) Ikhwan: ibid, 131.
yet military music in an organized form seems to have been instituted later in Islamic countries.

The more developed military band, which later became an essential element of military organizations in various parts of the Muslim world, Andalus, Syria and Egypt, had its special functionaries, such as the drum-commanders with their staff of administrative (i.e. mihter al ṭabl-khans) and technical officials (i.e. dibinder) in charge of drums, murafir, who plays the horn or bug, and the ṭusiyy, who plays the brasso. The name indicates that it is derived from ṭus, or drum). It also had its special quarters and hence the name ṭabl-khans. There were several instruments such as ṭubul drums, abwaq horns and reed pipes/became common especially under the Buwayhids, Saljuqids and Fatimids in various parts of Muslim countries.

However the study of the function of music in the life of the ruling aristocracy is more directly concerned with one aspect of military music, i.e. the

1) A. El Kholy - Al Jundiyyah fil Islam.
2) Al Maqrizi - Khitat, I, 94.
3) Qalqashandi: Subh al A sha, IV, 8-14.
4) Ibn Maskawayh; Tajariib al Umam, mentions buqat pl. of buq and dabadib, kettledrums I, 174.
(1) **nawba.** This consisted of a special piece of music performed at the five hours of prayer. The **nawba** was essentially the prerogative of royalty, which was guarded carefully as one of the attributes of (2) sovereignty, and a favour which was begged of the Calif by other petty rulers and lesser dignitaries. The details of the different classes (i.e. the five-fold and the three-fold ones) of **nawba** and its different instruments under several rulers have been elaborately dealt with by such historians as Al Magrībī (Khiṣṣ) Ibn Khaldūn, (Prolegomena) Al Qalqashandī (Shubh al Aṣḥāb) Al Maqarrī (Nafh al Tib) and several (3) us with others, who have supplied the necessary background and traditions to that institution. In touching on this practice here, it is chiefly to emphasize the social aspect of it, which found in music the symbol of power. The elements of vanity and pride are responsible for finding in music, the emblem of grandeur, wealth and power, so that music appears to have fulfilled a multiple function in the luxurious life of the Muslim aristocracy in connection with its various aspects.

1) In the Alf Layla, **nawba** is used for military band. Farmer: Minstrelcy, 7.


PART III (b) & (c)

MUSIC AND SOCIAL LIFE

(b) MUSIC OF THE PEOPLE

(c) THE SOCIAL STATUS OF THE MUSICIANS.
MUSIC OF THE PEOPLE: It is in the domain of popular and folk music, that the most prominent psychological and temperamental traits of a nation's character could be apprehended. By studying the types of songs it sang, the style of that singing, the social occasions for music and song, the customs and traditions associated thereto - we can really get to understand and feel the spirit of a nation. By trying to fathom the spontaneous emotions of the people, as revealed in their music, a better understanding can be achieved of one of the most delicate and significant aspects of Muslim life and culture.

Popular art has its peculiar features, and is quite distinct from that of the elite or the higher classes. That division of music into two distinct styles and schools, one appertaining to the aristocracy, and another to the bourgeoisie or the people generally - is not uncommon at that stage of civilisation. Such a duality in the artistic life is to a great extent

1) C. Lalo, L'art et la vie sociale, 139 - C. de Vaux introduction to Musique Arabe by D'Erlanger, p. XII.

2) In the west, the same division existed throughout the middle ages, between popular music and church music. Lalo: ibid, 140.
the result of economic differentiation of classes. The nature of the two distinct styles is ultimately determined by their respective audiences, as well as by their different techniques.

The general characteristics of popular forms of art could all be found in Islamic popular music. Such traits are: the absence of specialized and tutored professional musicians, the absence of an aristocratic and paying audience, ignorance of abstract theories on the technique employed therein, and the dependence on oral tradition, which alone transmits the rules accepted and adopted by all. A popular music exhibiting such traits existed in the Islamic culture, and was sung and played by the people, as quite distinct from that artistic and higher form of music which evolved under the auspices of the wealthy aristocracy.

In the Islamic culture, the first function of music is essentially secular, rather than religious. In spite of slight variations in the role played by music in the social life of different Islamic countries due to divergence in the pre-Islamic background and to various other considerations, political and national — yet the broad outlines of social pattern in the Islamic

2) *loc. cit.*
culture, provides a great deal of similarity. This makes possible, and practical, a general approach to the function of music throughout the Muslim countries in that period. The prestige of the musically-minded aristocracy must have accentuated the existing musical tendencies among the people. The capital and seat of the Caliphate must have radiated its enthusiasm for music to the various Muslim countries equally. However, such a study is bound to overlook many points of detail, in favour of a general and more comprehensive view.

The Ikhwan al Safa, give us their view on the different aspects of the social function of music. They point out its emotional influence in: rejoicing, as in celebrating nuptials, feasts, banquets and the like - or again in grief and adversity, as/the mourning songs. Music constituted a valuable aid to worship, as in the temples and churches of various faiths. In hospitals, the Ikhwan state that it is utilized in alleviating the pains of the sick and afflicted, and even in curing certain ailments. Labourers and craftsmen had their own songs, which helped to break the monotony and to while away the time. Mothers lulled their babies to sleep by their melodies, while even animals were susceptible to its influence, hence the camel-driver's song huda and the shepherds tunes. In war music was supposed to stimulate courage and valour.

1) Rasā’il, 115-7.
Al Ghazali, writing in a later period (1111/505) approaching the subject from a more positive and specialized angle, classifies all vocal music into seven categories which serve the double purpose of providing another account of the social function of music. According to him, songs were either pilgrim’s songs, war songs stimulating the faithful to holy warfare, or rajaz verses (which could really come under the previous category), lamentations, songs of joy, love-songs and songs expressive of religious ecstasy. (1) This classification was undertaken with one objective in mind, and that is the discussion of the varying degrees and conditions of lawfulness of such songs, from the religious point of view. (2)

According to the two previous sources, the function of music in the life of the people appears to fall into two main divisions: music attached to “social occasions,” which covers such celebrations whether of rejoicing or of mourning, the second division comprises “songs of labour” such as caravan-songs, shepherd’s tunes and the like. Such a classification seems to cover adequately the wide range of occasions where music featured. As to music-

1) Inga II, 243-6.
2) cf. also Al Akfani: Irshad al gasid: fol. 59-61.
therapy, or the use of music curatively in hospitals, it does not hold such a prominent and acknowledged place in social life as to call for detailed study here. It seems to derive largely from the elemental power attached to music in ancient civilisations and has been touched on previously. The music covers a wide field in everyday life of the Muslim society. All moments of joy were naturally and appropriately celebrated with music and song. Childbirth, circumcision, the success of a boy in learning the Koran, and nuptials, were all the occasions for music and merry-making. Banquets wa'ilma, convivial meetings were likewise adorned with singing.

3) Aga, 1, 96; Al 'UmarI: Masalik IX fol. 10. Mazahari ibid, 48.
4) Ghazali II, 244.
Religious festivals were celebrated socially, by the whole community, with playing and singing, such as the advent of Ramadan. The pilgrims departure and return are among the most important occasions for festivity, so is the Prophet's birth mawlid and the day of 'Ashura. The community's secular celebration of its religious feasts, is considered here as quite distinct from the purely religious aspect.

Strangely enough, Ibn Khaldūn, one of the greatest Muslim historians, states categorically, that music is not essential to society, its function being solely attached to leisure and joy. Such a generalisation is sharply contradictory to the fact, that mourning songs nawaḥ have always occupied a prominent place in Arab and Muslim life. Indeed such a practice goes further back to ancient civilizations and the pre-Islamic Arabs had their laments, and we have many reasons to believe that Islam did not change that age-old custom of voicing grief and sadness through music. Together, the ḫuda

1) Risāla fi'l samā' wa'l ghinā' (Anonymous) Paris Ms. 1156.
2) S. Nurgonje: Makka, 117, 118. Lane II, 172-3, 245.
3) Mugaddima, 361.
4) Belvianes: ibid, 107.
and nash could be considered as the precursors of all Islamic vocal music, being the most ancient and popular forms known to the nomadic Arabs.

This prominent place assigned to music in mourning, is very natural and death being the most deeply felt and dreaded event, it so strongly moved the emotional Arabs, and it is no wonder that their feelings should be expressed through music and song, and the women especially sang their elegies expatiating on the merits of their dead. Music, has since time immemorial not been confined to the expression of joy alone, but was likewise resorted to at moments of grief and sadness.

In the early decades of Islam, that practice of bewailing the dead by songs, was very common and widespread, and a great majority of the famous singers of that early period appear to have specialized in that type, although having deviated from it, at a later stage of their careers, to the domain of singing proper. Ibn Surayj was an acknowledged nā'ir, lamentor, who tutored other well known singers in it. It is recorded that the reason why he gave up singing

2) Agh, I, 99.
elegies and laments, was when his pupil Al Ghariq excelled him at it. Ibn Surayj forfeited his decision of giving it up on two occasions only, one of which was the obsequies of the Calif Yazid ibn Abd al Malik. The biography of Sai ib Khathir, another famous na’ip reveals him picking up the nawf from several women mourners, who performed their laments once weekly. Another well known singer, Atika bint Shuhda, was the daughter of a woman lamenter, Shuhda, of some fame in Mecca. In spite of men exercising that profession, the usage of the pre-Islamic and other ancient civilizations leads to the assumption that it was generally practiced by women. The muslim legists when laying down rules concerning the permissibility of that practice, usually mention a na’ip. The progress of other types of singing proper, have gradually taken the first place in the chronicles of Islamic music, thus giving this type a secondary place. This could be explained by the fact

1) ibid, 100.
2) Ash. VII, 133.
3) ibid VI, 57.
4) ibid, IV, 34, 5, also II, 129.
that the religious authority looked unfavourably upon that custom. We find instances where the nawāḥ was actually prohibited, but such measures are not of primary importance to this aspect of the study, which is confined to social customs as they existed, notwithstanding religious opposition. Al Ḥāzālī’s mention of this type, proves that it still existed at that comparatively late period of Islamic history (111/505). Al Farābī also cites it among the popular forms of song in his time. Details of music’s part in mourning ceremonies are not lacking. All the great legists and theologians mentioned it in their writings on music, and their struggle against it and their effort to stress the unlawfulness of certain types of it reveal that it must have been quite popular, in spite of the absence of religious sanction.

Several Arabic works expound the view that the first man who made the lute, was Lamak son of Qābīl (and the string of genealogy leads as far back as Adam).

1) cf. ante, pp. 16,17.
2) Ḥiyā, 244.
4) The Egyptian Ibn Al Taḥḥan, writing late in the 15thA.D./9thA.H., states in this connection that the melodies used in singing a lament nawāḥ must be sad and melancholic in mood. Ḥawāf, fol.10.
who made it to "lament with it, a dirge, over his son."

The very popularity of this Hebraic view among the Arabs, is of great significance in illustrating how natural and appropriate it seemed to them, that grief should be expressed in song. Thus music, was by no means restricted to the expression of joy and pleasure only, but had a rôle to play in every moment and in connection with all emotions.

The love-theme in Arabic poetry and consequently Arabian music, dominates every other theme. Such works as Alf Layla wa layla or Kitab al Aghani abound with innumerable verses and songs on that theme whether on the spiritual love of the mystic, or the sensuous earthly love. It seems to be so conspicuously evident that the function of music in this connection does not call for special attention here.


2) The reference in the Old Testament does not conform with the Arabian account, as it ascribes the origin of music to Jubal, one of the sons of Lamech. Genesis, 4, 21.

SONGS OF LABOUR: The Arabs inhabiting the peninsula, have, since ancient times been chiefly dependent on commerce. The nature of their country had imposed the necessity of commercial activities as the backbone of their economy, and the most important means of earning their living, corporately and individually. Commerce, was then of the most vital importance to the inhabitants of the vast barren deserts of Arabia, and commerce chiefly depends on communications, transport has always been essential to trade. Of all the animals, the camel, was the best suited to fulfill that task with its natural endurance and other accommodating qualities. It has been called the "ship of the desert" and indeed it fulfilled competently the role of the commercial fleets of the modern world. No wonder the camel, had always been such a central figure in the life of the Arabs, connecting them with the world which lies beyond the confines of their country, and being inseparably bound with their work and livelihood.

Against this background, the real value of the caravan-song or huda, comes in relief, not as a mere pastime, or an unpretentious form of vocal music, but as an essential element to the life and work of the Arabs. Its effect on the camel itself is remarkable,
and the Arabs tell us, how very susceptible it is to the charms of melody.

Al Ḥudā, is one of the oldest and most specifically Arab songs. The traditional account ascribes it to the bedouin who, when his arm was broken by the fall off his camel, uttered in his pain Ḥayyadāh, "Oh, my hand," the sound of which affected his camel. This account may not be historically verifiable, yet, it has its significance in showing the effect of rhythm in this sphere. The latter story is supposed to account also for the origin of the rajag metre which was the metre used in Ḥudā, conforming rhythmically, to the movement of the camels’ feet. It is likely that Ḥudā was used to quicken, or slow down the animals stride according to the driver’s wish.

A traditional account, common to most of the Arabic literature treating of music and its influence, relates how a driver used his sweet caravan song Ḥudā, to divert the camel’s attention from their heavy loads and their fatigue, so that they arrived at their destination, much sooner than expected, but the animals all

3) Encycl. loc. cit. also ‘Id al Farīd IV Ibn Salama, 19.
literally dropped dead after the journey. The close connection between ḥuda and the rajaz metre is another evidence to prove how old that form of simple chanting was. As is common and natural, all labour songs must conform to the rhythm of the work, so was the ḥuda, strongly rhythmical, inspired as it was by the steady and repeated camel’s stride. The melody applied to that type must have been simple with a great deal of repetition. However, it seems to have helped the camel drivers/beguile the tediousness of their long weary journeys. Such a form of song must have been arrived at by intuition, /there is some reason to believe that it required no tutoring but was the spontaneous utterance of all and sundry. True, that most songs of labour imply a group, where the rhythm of the song, derived from that of the work, has a unifying influence. In this case, the unifying influence, links together the driver to his camels, since we frequently read of one ṭādi (singer of ḥuda) for the caravan. Arabic literature

   Al Hujwīrī: Kasf, 400—Al Sarrāj, Luma, 270.
2) C. Bücher: Work and Rythm.
3) Ibn al Tahbān: Hāfi, fol. 16, on the style of its melodies.
4) Ibn Khaldūn: ibid, 359.
usually conveys the impression that huda is the oldest song the Arabs practiced, yet on the other forms derived from it, and its exact place as compared to ghina song proper, there are some divergences. However, the evolution of the more artistic songs which adorned the palaces of the Califs later in the muslim era, has waved aside the huda to a secondary place, although, it is almost certain, that it has never ceased to be chanted in the caravans of muslim pilgrims of various nationalities. In fact the ghina' al hajj, pilgrims' songs, to the sound of drums and fifes, ishahin, appears to be a survival and an elaboration of the same technique, though with the religious theme dominating the verses.

The huda also enjoys the unquestionable sanction and approval of the strictest theologians.

With the expansion of the economic prospects of the muslims and the spread of urbanization, the caravan-song was superseded by other labour songs, such as the songs of the masons, porters, qasserin, or

2) Ghazali, ibid, 243.
3) ibid, 242. Qushayri: loc. cit.
4) Ikhwan al Safa, Rasal, 116.
fullers and other craftsmen, doing collective and rhythmic work, where music served to ease the physical fatigue of such labours. Al Ibshīḥī raises an interesting point in citing some of the uses to which music was put by certain craftsmen. According to him, fishermen in parts of Iraq used to play certain sweet melodies near the water and on the fish approaching near the sound they would catch it. It seems that similar devices were used with other musical animals too. One case, of universal order, that of the shepherd's tune, proves beyond doubt that music had its function in all departments of Muslim life.

That music played another distinct part in the life of the people is revealed in the increasing number of professional musicians, who were tutored and trained especially for that art, which to them meant a profitable occupation. The practitioner of music, who had dedicated his life to a musical career, should be mentioned here. Chroniclers ascribe the origin of singing to the market towns of the Arabs. A later author assessed music

1) Farābī: ibid, fol. 25.
2) Mustatref, 198.
3) Hujwīrī, on music as used for hunting purposes:
   Kashf al-Mahjūb, 400.
4) Ibshīḥī, 199.
5) Farmer: Music the Priceless Jewel, 4.
in purely commercial terms, by stating that it constituted for the inhabitants of Mecca and Medina a livelihood and a speciality, and that each part of the Muslim world excels in one special art or craft, so that they were all interdependent, and that is how music and singing, according to him, spread from Al Hijaz to other parts.

THE SOCIAL STATUS OF PROFESSIONAL MUSICIANS:

Reviewing the whole of the period in question, from the early years of the new era, up to the peak of prosperity and stability, then to that period of decline, we can trace the social status of musicians through three distinct and successive and sometimes overlapping, phases. Such phases are influenced on the one hand by social and economic circumstances, and on the other hand, by the successive stages of evolution of music itself. Although the correlation of economic prosperity and a flourishing of art, is not always accurate, or consistent, yet the economic factor plays an important rôle here in

1) Ibn al Tabbān, Hawī al funūn, fol.12.
2) Farmer: History, 91 & 137.
3) Zaydān ibid, III, 197.
4) Lalo. ibid, 88.
determining, not only the status of the professional musician, but the very nature and style of his music as well. Thus a scrutiny of the material retribution for musical gifts, may be a valuable approach to this rather vague question of prestige or social position.

The emergence of music, from a stage where it was a collective activity practiced by all members of the community equally, to the higher stage of specialized professional musicians, is definitely a step in the progress of the art itself. But the qualifications of this professional class, its artistic and cultural standards, the social outlook to it, and the degree of respect or esteem assigned to such a class, are all landmarks in the course of development of the social function of music. The welfare, respect and appreciation, or otherwise, of that class of professionals has its bearing on the outlook to the art itself.

The development from the quasi-primitive stage of pre-Islamic music, to the further stages of progress on which Islamic music embarked, has not occurred suddenly, but took place gradually, over a transitory period. During that transitory period, that is roughly the first century A.H., we find music in the predicament of being practiced, by a servile and degenerate class
of social outcasts. The mukhannathīn, who constituted the earliest professional singers under Islam, have cast a dark shadow over the art by their inferior moral and religious standards, hence the prohibition of all their instruments such as the kūba (a kind of drum) peculiar to them, and associated with them. The public persecution, to which they were subjected intermittently, under several officials in the first century of Islam, is significant of the prevalent attitude of society towards them. The fact that the mukhannathīn dominated the sphere of singing and music at that period was accentuated by the restriction of this profession to the servile class of slaves or mawāli, (3) whether male or female. The social disrepute of that class of professional musicians had its impact on the religious proscription of the art, their association with music was far from salutary to its progress, as has been expounded in religious treatises dealing with that aspect. A certain degree of the measures taken by early Muslim officials in Al Ḥijaz were directed

1) Al Ghazalī: ibid, II, 240, also Tash Quprī Zade; Miftāḥ: 346
3) Farmer: History, 46.
4) Ibn Taymiya: ibid, 284.
5) Agh. 11, 130, 170 IV, 60-61.
against this class, rather than towards music per se.

Yet among that socially inferior caste, we find the exponents of Islamic music, who have contributed to build up its traditions. Such names as Ibn Surayj, Tuways, Al Dalal are credited with major innovations and contributions to music that have gained them an important place in its chronicles.

It seems that the female singers contemporaneous with this class, enjoyed a fuller measure of protection and patronage of the nobility, and occupied a better position in society than their male colleagues. Azza al Mayla (705/816) provides an interesting example here. Her great popularity which attracted the rich nobility of Al Madina to her concerts together with the protection extended to her by Ibn Ja'far, put her in a higher position than that of the male professional singers of her time. Another example occurring only a few years later, appears to justify such a view and that

1) Agh. I, 97.
2) ibid. II, 170, also Ibn Shakin Fawat al Wafyat, 252.
5) cf. ante p. 113-4.
is the case of Jamila (720/102), the famous songstress of the Umayyad period. Her famous pilgrimage to Mecca reveals the high esteem in which she was held by her fellow artists as well as by the community at large \(^1\) and especially by the famous contemporary poets, Al A'was and Al Arajî.

The musical careers of both Jamila and Azza al Maila brought them in direct contact with the Quraysh nobility, who treated them with deference and respect. This redeeming feature in the social attitude towards musicians compensates to some extent, for the bad reputation of the male singers of that class. Considering the positive and negative sides, it is safe to state that during the first century of Islam, which extends over the greater part of the Umayyad rule, musicians seemed to form a class apart. The factors responsible for this situation are rather complex. The economic factor restricted this profession to a servile class dependent on its masters, more than on their art alone. Even that servitude in itself is not as humiliating as it is considered now and is

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3) Lalo: \textit{iibid}, 60.
4) \textit{op.cit.}, 67.
not of primary importance to the inferiority of that class of early professional musicians. The bad reputation of the mukhannathīn was probably a little exaggerated by the rigid theologians. It seems to have provided such purists with just the right pretext for the proscription of the art which these men happened to be associated with, thereby earning their living. The very novelty of such a class of professional musicians, constituted a departure from ancient tradition, and could partially explain the inconveniences, which beset this early generation in Al Ḥijaz. Thus social and economical factors seem to favour the view that the first position assigned in the Muslim society to the professors of music, was none but modest, in spite of the scattered efforts of its nobility to counterbalance it. As compared to their successors who flourished under the 'Abbasid dynasty, the professional singers of the first century A.H., received but a modest remuneration for their musical abilities. Instances of the fabulous wealth bestowed on the Mawṣili family by several patrons, are lacking here, although the aristocracy itself, on which the professional musicians ultimately depended, grew richer and wealthier towards the 'Abbasid era.

Before proceeding in discussion of the further developments of the social status, from that modest servility of the first century to the peak of respectability
and prestige attained by the artists of the late Umayyad and 'Abbāsid period, it seems necessary here to attempt to analyze the factors which helped to determine the social position in this case. Such factors are of a complex nature and different aspects, religious, legal and economic. Although such factors are of fundamental interest to this study, yet the whole question is rather vague, any theories are of a conjectural nature deriving from fragmentary evidence in the biographies of the class here studied.

The legal position which renders the testimony of a singer or a musician invalid has its significance here. Although it was not strictly adhered to, yet the very emphasis placed on the isolated cases to the contrary, where a singer's testimony was accepted, should also be taken into consideration in this connection. Apart from positive legislative measures in this sphere, the rigid puritanism conspicuous in the abundant works condemning music and other malāh, could not but cast its shadow on the professors of the

1) cf. ante. 16-17.

2) The case of Attarad: Agh. III, 96, also 'Abadil: 5, 175.

Al 'Umari: ibid, fol. 9.
art, who were frequently alluded to as ahl al fisā (1) or in similar terms. Thus the religious attitude had the unquestionable effect of prejudicing public opinion against music and musicians, a situation which was justified and sometimes aggravated by the laxity and disrepute of some of the mukhannathīn. All the previous considerations, taken together, are accentuated by the fact that all the professionals of the first century especially, were either actual slaves or free-men, mawāli, with very few exceptions.

The clientship of the musicians, on the other hand provided them with some material security, in being protected and employed by rich masters, who could afford to reward their client artists. Although the economic factor alone does not determine artistic achievement, yet it certainly provides one of the necessary elements to its maintenance. In fact, the economic side alone is of the greatest significance in this type of organisation of society, and it has its far-reaching repercussions.

1) Tāshquprizade: Miftāḥ, 346
3) Malik ibn abī al Samh (754/137) was a Qurashi Agh. IV, 163. Farmer’s Encyclopaedia of Islam, III, 211.
4) Ibn Jami also Agh. VI, 68.
5) Lalo: ibid., 39.
not only on the social position of musicians, but also on the development of their art.

Considering the impact of the economic situation on the social status of musicians, we find that throughout the period studied almost every professional musician was employed by a nobleman or a Calif, so that to a great extent their livelihood was guaranteed. They were not subjected to the risks and hardships that beset an artists in the West regarding the publishing of their works, or ultimately awaiting judgement from the public that would decide the success or failure of such works.

This state of dependence is not peculiar to the Muslim orient alone, in fact it existed, in different aspects, in the West, (until the institution of artists rights in the 13th century). Such complete dependence on one wealthy patron, was not without its risks and inconveniences, however, we often read of famous musicians who suddenly fell into disfavour at court whether for a political or a moral offence or merely

1) Lalo: ibid, 67.
2) Ibrahîm al Mawgûlî was imprisoned more than once. 
   Agh. III, 162, V, 7.
4) Aghanî, XIII, 19.
because of the despotic whims and caprices of the
master. However, those fortunate musicians who were
lucky enough to keep their positions at court and at
the palaces of the late Umayyad and 'Abbasid nobility,
amassed considerable fortunes, only by their musical
abilities. The conspicuous case of Ibrahim and after
him, his son Isḥāq al-Mawsilī, prove beyond doubt,
that music has become a lucrative and rewarding job.
The fabulous sums paid to them and the great deference
and respect expanded to them, especially to Isḥāq by
the music loving Calif whom he served are quite in
contrast with the limited fortunes and modest position
of their predecessors of the first century. Although
such figures as Tuways, Ibn Surayj, Ibn Muḥriz al
Ghasid and others, had, on the whole, fared well under
the patronage of the Quraysh nobility, yet none of them
had acquired any degree of wealth from the profession,
comparable to the fortunes of those employed by the
prosperous late Umayyad and 'Abbasid Calife.

With all its possible disadvantages to the musicians,
such patronage from the aristocracy meant an easier life
and a more stable income. But the possible disadvantages
of this situation from the artistic point view are worth

1) Al Ḥadīt was a bad tempered and difficult Calif.

Jahiz: Al Tāj: 36.
dwelling upon, if only briefly. This dependence on
the aristocracy, diverted the ultimate aim of any
creative efforts, to provide directly and solely,
for the needs and tastes of that class. Such needs
and tastes could be in some cases fantastic or
mediocre and amateurish, and thus would influence
and orientate all further development of the art
in a certain direction. Had the musicians been
obliged to provide for the public at large, and had
there existed the circumstances leading to a democra-
tization of the musical art, such as public perform-
ances, attended by large audiences - the very character
and style of music would have changed fundamentally.
Thus the question of economic and social dependence
on one class is of great significance here, but on
the other hand, the encouragement of that class to
music, and the esteem in which it was held its pur-
veyors should not be underrated.

Having dealt with the two basic factors in
determining the social position of musicians, i.e.
their servility (or clientship) and their material
dependence on one aristocratic class, it is possible

1) Lachmann: *Receuils de travaux de Congres*, 707.
to distinguish within that framework, the evolution of their status at different stages. The modest and rather unfavourable inferior position of the earliest generation of professionals, changed with time, and with the comparative secularization of the mode of life of the ruling aristocracy, as well as with a higher standard of education and accomplishments among the musicians themselves. The great respect and appreciation with which the famous Ishaq al-Mawṣili was treated by successive califs, whether morally, or materially has become a platitude now. In his person music had attained the height of honour and esteem ever accorded to it in the Islamic culture, this might not be solely due to his wonderful musical gifts, but to other merits or accomplishments he possessed, yet it is still relevant here. He was elevated to the position of a boon companion nadīm, a cherished and exacting position. One of the Califs who patronized him declared his admiration for him in immoderate terms, stating that his admirable qualities were such that would befit a judge, and had he not been known amongst the people as a singer, he would have appointed him to that post. Al-Wathiq was more enthusiastic still, in

1) Agâh, V, 64.
2) V, 54.
confessing his admiration and appreciation of his chief court musician, so much so, that he wished he could bestow, youth and health on his favourite singer, whom he considered as a blessing نی ма from God. Ishaq enjoyed such privileges that were unknown to musicians before him, he was the only one who could afford not to obey an order of the monarch, he did not have to carry his {}ud lute, with him like the other singers, and he was frequently called by his kunya a privilege indicating that he was a favourite with the Calif. Ishaq was not dressed like his colleagues but wore the black robes of the theologians رقحا and took his place at court with the poets, رقاه and boon companions until he was called upon to perform.

Such prestige, such an exalted position could perhaps be attributed to other qualities besides his musical talent, for he was a learned man and a worthy character from every point of view. But Ishaq's is by

1) op. cit. 64
2) loc. cit.
3) ibid, 168.
4) ibid, 60.
5) V, 109.
6) V, 60.
no means an isolated case, and his father before him was highly respected and most liberally rewarded for his singing. Ma'bad, one of the famous singers from an earlier period (743/126) was equally honoured, on his death and the Calif Al Walid ibn Yasid his brother accompanied his bier, whilst one of his pupils lamented him. Thus, this trend of esteem and respect extended to the professional musician, as distinct from the inferior status of their predecessors of the first century, and was gaining steadily in momentum, until it reached its peak, in the golden age of the Abbasid period. From the fourth century A.H. onwards, music occupied what was perhaps a more exalted place, this time at the hands, not of professional artisans, but of philosophers and theorists, who in their capacity of learned intellectuals of that civilization, were greatly honoured and highly revered, if with some exceptions.

Going back to that fertile and prosperous period which falls between the modest status of the first century

2) Agh. I, 12.
3) Al Kindi's library was confiscated, Farmer: History, 139.
and the climax in the fourth century, to that intermediary period, where detailed evidence of the musicians's life and work exists in abundance. The emergence from one stage of civilisation — for the social status of musicians is largely dependent on the stages of civilisation — to another is a slow process which takes place gradually. The first unfavourable position with all the prejudices it created against music and its purveyors, could not have vanished suddenly, giving place to the rosy side of the picture, illustrated by the few inadequate examples from the lives of Ma'bad, Ibrahim, and Ishaq al Mawsili. Traces of that early disfavour still persisted, even during the golden age of music and musicians, and in spite of the greatly changed attitude to the whole question. The fact that a man earned a living by music or singing, seemed to have retained a shadow of the old inferiority and defamation. Ishaq expresses his views here, perhaps unconsciously, in strong terms, saying that he abhorred singing: And he resented the fact that he was known as a singer. Having attained the highest social position ever attained by any professional musician in Islamic culture, yet we find him asking permission to be admitted at court, not with singers, but with learned men. Such minor points of no apparent importance, should

1) Agh. 52.
2) ibid. 60, 64, 109.
direct attention to the fact that even the doyen of musicians, enjoying a great measure of respect and social standing, was not contented with his status and hoped for promotion from that grade, which he deemed to be beneath him to a higher place. Scattered incidents also point to the same attitude. Ibn Jami', who for one, was a professional musician of Qurashi descent, was often upbraided for his lowly occupation. He was also snubbed by a learned man, when he realized his professional calling.

The famous enmity between Ibrahim ibn al Mahdi, a musician of royal blood and Isa al Mawsili, who was a more talented artist, reveals that, although artistic equality existed, but it could not outweigh birth considerations, and the latter was often derided for practicing his art for lucre, such a profession not being held in very high esteem apparently. Even lesser persons than a prince, would make sharp remarks to this effect. An amateur once came to Ibrahim al Mawsili to ask his opinion on some airs he had learnt to sing. Isaq his son, who was present, could not help criticizing

1) *ibid*, VI, 74.
2) *VI*, 69-70.
3) *Agh*, V, 61.
4) 'Amr ibn Ban to Isaq. XIV, 52.
the bad singing of the nobleman. But his father intervened and explained to the visitor that his singing was quite good and he should not attach any importance to what Ishaq had said before. When they were left alone, Ibrahim explained to his son, "that if these people considered our profession as a low one, then let their ignorance of it be exposed, so that they should appreciate our talent. The expansion of some aspects of musical education among those noblemen, had a salutary influence on the social position of the professional, as it narrowed down the gap which separated them from their masters, as some of the patrons themselves took up singing professionally. Ibn Jamā' the Qurashi is an example, and his musical gifts compared favourably with the exponent of the professionals of his time Ibrahim al Mawṣili. The same trend of enthusiasm for appreciation of, music, increased the demand for professional musicians, resulting in prosperity and better standards of living for them. In that intermediary phase, we hear of singers who lived in sumptuous dwellings owning gardens and estates and keeping their own ḍiyān singing girls and

1) *Arb.* VII, 19.
2) *Arb.* VI, 69.  3) VII, 6, 11, 12, 15, etc.
4) VII, 58, VI, 19.
slaves. Even the female singers, owned their songstresses who, were restricted to singing the melodies of their mistresses.

The last point leads to an interesting aspect of the social status, and that is the existence of different ranks and classes among the musicians themselves. Such ranks were determined by the musicians' general education and upbringing, his or her manners and looks (especially in the case of songstresses) as much as by their musical gifts or the standard of their performances. The position of a court musician required many qualifications other than those purely musical. Many famous musicians were well versed in the religious sciences, such as tradition and Qur'an, some were good poets and possessed the qualities of boon companions or mudama. To attain such a high standard of culture and education, professionals had to spend considerable time and money on their education and training. Yet

1) Shariyya and ‘Arib had their own singing girls:

ibid XIII, 30-1.


Halbat, 107.

3) Ishaq al Nawsili, V, 52. ‘Afrad III, 96. Ibn Jami’

V, 63 etc.

4) Ishaq: V, 55. etc.
only a few among the professionals attained such high positions and there were among the players qurrab and singers other and lesser figures who occupied a secondary position.

The customs of listening at court, regulated to a great extent the classification of the artists into higher and lower ranks. The old Persian Sasenid customs of placing a curtain between musicians and audience, and granting remuneration to the artists each according to his class or rank, persisted with some variations after Islam. Al Ḥajīz relates something about the strict etiquette of the old Sasenid monarchs regarding their musicians. An instrumental player from one rank should only accompany a singer of the corresponding rank, and it seems that the Calif Al Ḥāshid was strict in adopting this Persian custom, which had been followed so implicitly before him. It seems that promotion to a higher rank was considered a great privilege and the occasion of celebration. All prizes received were shared among

1) Al Ḥājīz: 24.
3) As in the case of Barṣama al Zaʿim, al Ḥājīz, ibid.
all ranks of musicians present there, proceeding from the highest to the lowest, so that those of the first rank would share their gifts with their minor colleagues but not inversely. It seems that there was a certain official in charge of musicians' affairs, as was Masrur for Harūn al Rashīd. In the Kitāb al Aghāni we frequently read of elaborate preparations for listening, including the spreading of curtains, and of a ḍāḥīb al sītāra, the man in charge of the curtains, who apparently was the link between the two sides of it and was in charge of passing on the Calif's instructions to the musicians. We also read of certain clothes for such gatherings at court, and Ibn al Athīr relates that califs had a certain order for admitting musicians to court. Such details have some interest to this study, especially in helping to reconstruct the social setting to music and singing at the courts of the ruling aristocracy.

1) op. cit. 33.
2) Aḥrār, VI, 74.
3) ibid, I, 27.
4) VI, 77 also Ibn al Athīr: VIII, 61.
5) Ḫāshīḥ Mustaṭraf, II, 203.
6) One Ash ab Ibn Jubayr, used to sing to the Calif Walīd Ibn Yazīd while disguised as a donkey VI, 123, 124.
7) loc. cit.
This very brief and quick account only hopes to point out some prominent evidence of special significance here. However, an extensive collection and classification of evidence of this nature is a preliminary step towards a detailed and specialized study of such an interesting aspect of Islamic life and culture.

Thus the Islamic culture's appreciation of music, as judged through the social status of its professors, has evolved from that modest position prevalent in the first century A.H. to a better and higher status under the reign of the opulent and well established caliphate, from the second to the fourth century A.H. roughly.

Although no such classification could possibly be clear-cut or sharply defined, yet judging by the evidence we possess on this point, there seems to have been a recession in the place occupied by musicians concentrating mainly on the practical aspect of the art. As mentioned before the volume of works the dealing with/theoretical aspect of music illustrates that the interest was partially shifting from the

1) cf. ante, 127.
pursayers of the actual music, to the scholars in their sphere of intellectual activities. The position of the latter class with its positive and negative sides should not be considered as an evaluation of music as symbolized in their persons, since music constituted but one minor problem in the wide scope of their *fikra*. However, the culmination of the Muslim society's love and enthusiasm for music, conspicuously evident at the courts of the Califs and the mansions of the nobility, seems to have subsided with political and economic adversity.

The process of disintegration of the Muslim civilization did not have its full impact on music till some time after the so-called decline.


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