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tradition which developed into 'Abbāsīd court music, although as will become clear it is not exhaustive. Thus, for instance, it only names certain musicians in passing but does not accord them individual treatment. Some of these lacunas may be explained by the fact that it is unfinished.

Ibn Khurdādhbih's (c. 211–300/825–911) *Mukhtār min kitāb al-malāhī*,⁴ while a pygmy in comparison to the giant *Aghānī*, adds some names of other early singers, though some of his information is unreliable or too incomplete to be useful.⁵ The Fātimīd court musician Ibn al-Fahhān's (d. after 449/1057) *Hāwī l-funūn wa-salwat al-mahzūn*⁶ also has information about individual performers not found elsewhere in works about the history of singing; by contrast, al-Ḥasan b. Ahmad al-Kātib's (early fifth/eleventh c.) *Kamāl adab al-ghinā'* only mentions singers sporadically in the course of illustrative anecdotes.⁷ Some *adab* works of a general nature, such as Ibn 'Abd Rabbih's (d. 328/940) *Al-'iqd al-farīd*, accord space to music, while scattered references to singers and singing may be found in al-Ṭabarī's and other histories. Al-Jāhīz's (c. 160–255/776–868/69) *Risāla fī l-qiyān*, despite its promising title, says nothing about music as such.

In what follows, I shall sketch the evolution of music from the Jāhūliyya to the 'Abbāsīd era, concentrating on the musicians' social origins, and then present the authors of books on the theory and practice of music. In conclusion I shall try to estimate the importance of the role of different social groups in the development of Arabic music up to the end of the third/ninth century. It should be pointed out that the term *maulā*, when applied to musicians, is not further specified, and rarely do subsequent *akhbār* about the person in question shed any light on whether "freedman," "ally," or "non-

⁴ Ibn Khurdādhbih (d. 300/911), *Mukhtār min kitāb al-lahw wa-l-malāhī*, ed. Ighnāyīs 'Abduh Khalifa (Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1969).

⁵ For instance, he claims an 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Awf al-Zuhri was a composer with the nickname Ibn Abī Qabāha (Ibn Khurdādhbih, *Mukhtār*, 52). Abū l-Faraj is generally skeptical about his information; cf. the criticism of Ibn Khurdādhbih's claims about the musical activities of the caliphs (*Aghānī*, IX, 250).

⁶ Ibn al-Fahhān al-Mūsūqī, *Hāwī l-funūn wa-salwat al-mahzūn*, ed. Eckhard Neubauer (Frankfurt am Main: Institute for the History of Arabic-Islamic Science, 1990).

⁷ Al-Ḥasan b. Ahmad b. 'Alī al-Kātib, *Kitāb kamāl adab al-ghinā'*, ed. 'Abd al-Malik Ghaffās Khashaba (Cairo: al-Hay'at al-Miṣriyya al-'Amma li-l-Kitāb, 1995/1975); id., *La perfection des connaissances musicales*, trans. Annon Shiloah (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1972).

MAWĀLĪ AND MUSIC

Hilary Kilpatrick

In the epistle which prefaces his *Akhbār Abī Tamīm*, al-Ṣūlī (c. 260–335/873–946) makes a fleeting reference to vocal music. He calls it "the science of princes, of which they have almost the monopoly" and goes on to outline what it includes: "the poems set to music, the attribution of the lyrics to their authors, the reason for their composition, [the names of] those who have composed settings for one or other verse and the mention of the [settings'] melodic and rhythmic modes and genres."¹ Most references to musicians in the pre-Islamic and early Islamic period which have survived treat of those who contributed to the courtly tradition of music which al-Ṣūlī describes or else to its forerunners. About other forms of music, such as work songs, children's songs, music accompanying the important moments of human life, or music related to religious ceremonies, hardly any information is extant.

The major source for the study of musicians² and musical practice up to the end of the third/ninth century is Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī's (284–c. 363/879–972/73) *Kitāb al-aghānī*. The *Aghānī* starts out with the aim of providing correct information about the list of the Hundred Songs drawn up by Iṣhāq al-Mawṣilī (155–235/772–850) for al-Wāthiq (195–232/811–847),³ covering the topics listed by al-Ṣūlī. But it branches out into all kinds of information connected with the poets and composers of the songs, later instances of their performance, occasions for which they were composed and so on. It offers a wealth of information about the musicians working in the

¹ Al-Ṣūlī, *Akhbār Abī Tamīm*, ed. Khalīl Muḥammad 'Asākir, Muḥammad 'Abduh 'Azzaam and Naẓīr al-Islām al-Hindī, repr. 3rd ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Āfaq al-Jadīda, 1400/1980), 8.

² The term *mughannī*, rendered here generally by "musician," in fact denotes the activities of composing, singing and accompanying oneself on an instrument.

³ Abū l-Faraj 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Iṣbahānī (d. c. 363/973), *Kitāb al-aghānī*, 24 vols. (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub and al-Hay'at al-'Amma al-Miṣriyya li-l-Kitāb, 1927–74), I, 5–6.

Arab convert to Islam" is meant.⁸ I cannot do otherwise than follow the sources in their imprecise use of the term.

The references to pre-Islamic musical practice are sparse, and no clear picture of it can be formed. But on the basis of the terms used, two different types of music can be distinguished.⁹ One, referred to as *ḥudā'*, appears to denote a simple type of singing, associated with the journeying of the camel-drivers. The other, designated by *naṣb*, *ṣinād* and *ḥazaj*, is more evolved. While *naṣb* was performed by men, and in some accounts appears to be close to *ḥudā'*,¹⁰ *ṣinād* and *ḥazaj* were performed by women for entertainment, associated with urban centers and found in palaces, rich men's houses and taverns. The *ṣinād* appears to have been a more ornate, "heavy" style, the *ḥazaj* a lighter one, but it may be that later writers have projected back into the pre-Islamic period distinctions they were familiar with from their own time. Ibn al-Fahhān gives a short list of singers, both men and women, of the pre-Islamic period and the time of the Prophet, and from the names it appears that the men are free-born Arabs, while the women are usually slave-girls, *qaynāt*, sometimes only referred to as "the slave-girl of So-and-so."¹¹ One or two women are, however, described as *mawālīh*.¹²

Two other forms of music are known to have existed, even if they are not referred to in discussions of early singing. Both are associated with women. One, which has its own term, is the *naḥḥ* or ritual lament. The other, a much more unusual occurrence, is the battle chant, which appears to have had no special designation; it is only to be inferred from a reference to Hind bint 'Utba and her

⁸ *EP*, art. "Mawlā" II, 1-3 (P. Crone) makes clear how fluid the term was and traces how it developed.

⁹ See for the whole subject the discussion in Wright, "Music and Verse," in A.F.L. Beeston et al., eds., *Arabic literature to the end of the Umayyad period*, The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 435-41. Wright also suggests other interpretations of the terms here and in the *EP* article "Mūsīqī," but the basic distinctions remain the same.

¹⁰ The term *nabḥāt* is also encountered; it may have been a synonym of *ḥudā'*. Cf. Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Asad, *Al-Qayn wa-t-ghinnā' fi l-'aṣr al-jāhili*, 3rd ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Ḥī, 1988), 95.

¹¹ Ibn al-Fahhān, *Ḥawā'ij al-Jamān*, 33-35; 'Alas Dhī Jadān, 'Alqama al-Fahl, Jadhīma b. Sa'd, Rabī'a b. Hārūn, al-Nadr b. al-Ḥārith b. Kalāda, Rabāh b. al-Mughṭanif, Ibn Abī Dubāki; the two singing slaves of Hudhayfa b. Badr, Hind and Fartāna the singing slaves of Ḥujr b. al-Ḥārith, the singing slaves of 'Abd al-Maṣūh, in Najrān, Zābaya and al-Rabāb, 'Abdallāh b. Jud'an's Two Cricketers and others.

¹² Al-Asad, *Al-Qayn*, 87-88; Sāra the *mawālīh* of 'Amr b. Ḥāshim b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib or 'Amr b. Abī Sayfī b. Hāshim b. 'Abd Manāf, and 'Azza the *mawālīh* of al-Aswad b. al-Muṭṭalib.

women companions urging the Meccans on at Uḥud with poetry accompanied by tambourines.¹³ The picture that emerges of pre-Islamic music is of free men and unfree women performing different genres, with free women's singing in public¹⁴ being confined to performing in the exceptional circumstances of campaigns or else, quite possibly, to lamenting their deceased.

The early Islamic conquests, which introduced so much change into social and cultural life in Arabia, affected music profoundly. The flow of wealth to the Hījāz and other urban centers encouraged the Arab aristocracy in the practice of maintaining singing slave-girls, while the foreigners who arrived in the Hījāz as slaves brought their own music with them. The stories of some of the early Umayyad musicians' innovations being sparked off by the Persian music they heard from the workmen singing as they repaired the Ka'ba during Ibn al-Zubayr's rule (64/683) may not be true in all their details, but they are perfectly credible as an indication of one of the impulses behind the development of music at the time. And the workers did not only sing, they brought their own instruments, in particular the lute.¹⁵ Those Arabs who had taken part in campaigns will also have encountered different kinds of music, so that their artistic horizons will have been widened.

This is the context in which the existing style of entertainment music evolved to become *al-ghinnā' al-muṭṭan* ("perfect," "precise" or "accurate" singing).¹⁶ Several names are associated with the pioneering stage: the Persian Nashfī, a shadowy figure who is simply said to have come to the Hījāz and to have sung there, Sā'ib Khāthir (d. 63/683),¹⁷ also a Persian, who is recorded as the first to have

¹³ *Aghānī*, XV, 190, quoting Ibn Ishāq.

¹⁴ Genres sung in private, such as lullabies, are never referred to.

¹⁵ Ibn Mīṣjāh was influenced by the singing of the Persians (*Aghānī*, III, 278) while Ibn Surayj copied their use of the lute as an accompanying instrument (*Aghānī*, I, 250).

¹⁶ Cf. the discussion of the term in Wright, "Music and Verse," 442. This sketch of music in the Umayyad period is based mainly on his chapter in *Arabic literature to the end of the Umayyad period*, 441-49.

¹⁷ The dates given for singers are drawn either from the relevant *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (2nd ed.) articles, or in the case of some 'Abbāsid ones from Neubauer, *Mūsiker am Hof der frühen Abbāsiden* (Ph.D. diss., Frankfurt am Main, 1965), which is an invaluable source. Determining exactly when musicians lived is often very difficult; sometimes only the names of their teachers and of those before they performed (and in the case of slaves of their owners) enable them to be situated roughly in time. Where the information is too vague I have not given dates.

sung *al-ghinnā al-muṭān* in Arabic, accompanying himself on the lute, and Ibn Muhriz and Ibn Miṣjah, both of whom, having familiarized themselves with the singing of Mecca and Medina, are said to have traveled to Iran and then Syria to learn the Persian and Byzantine traditions of music.¹⁸

Al-ghinnā al-muṭān evolved out of the combining of elements from the Persian and Byzantine musical systems with the older Arab tradition of entertainment music, as emerges both from the *Aghānī* and from theoretical writings.¹⁹ Whatever elements were introduced from abroad, they had to be compatible both with this tradition and with lyrics in Arabic. The new, "accurate," singing had a codified system of modes, eight in number, and of rhythmic cycles; these latter were evidently more important for identifying a setting, since often they are given alone.²⁰ The distinction between "heavy" and "light" styles noted for the pre-Islamic entertainment music persisted, *ramal* and *hazaj* being used for the latter. The Persian wooden-bellied lute gradually established itself as the main instrument accompanying singing, rather than percussion instruments which seem to have been traditional in the Hijāz.²¹ At the same time composers took to using two lines of poetry, rather than one, as the basis for their songs.²² Accompanying all these changes was a growing awareness of the subtleties of vocal technique and of skill in playing instruments.

It is possible to form an idea of the social background and status of those who took part in this development of Arabic music, even though information about musicians' lives is sketchy and dating them precisely is usually out of the question. The great majority of Umayyad

male musicians whose status is mentioned are *mawālī*. This applies not only to leading singers, such as Ibn Surayj (d. 96/714 or after), al-Gharīd (d. c. 98/716–17), or Ibn 'Ā'isha (d. before 125/743), but also to lesser performers such as Budayhī or Ash'ab (1st half second/eighth c.).²³ Furthermore, most were apparently born *mawālī*; only Ma'bad (d. 125/743 or 126/744) and Yahyā Qayl are described as having started life in slavery.²⁴ They are drawn equally from Mecca and Medina, the exceptions being Ibn Miṣ'ab, who came from Ṭā'if but settled in Mecca and 'Umar al-Wādī, the founder of a tradition of music in Wādī l-Qurā who trained in Mecca.²⁵ Many of them are stated to have been of at least partly non-Arab descent, Persian (Sā'ib Khāthir, Ibn Muhriz, 'Umar al-Wādī, Yūnus al-Kātib), African (Ibn Miṣjah, Ma'bad), Turkish (Ibn Surayj) or Berber (al-Gharīd).²⁶ Occasionally their original occupation is given; al-Gharīd was a tailor to start with, Sa'ūd al-Hudhalī a stone-cutter and maker of jars, Ma'bad was in the livestock trade, 'Umar al-Wādī engaged in irrigation works (*muhandis*).²⁷ Yūnus al-Kātib's (d. c. 147/765), Sinān al-Kātib's (mid second/eighth c.) and Khalīl al-Mu'allim's titles speak for themselves; they show that by the end of Umayyad era singing did not only attract men from the lowest points of the social scale.

The custom of Arab tribesmen becoming musicians did not die out entirely. Aḥmad al-Nasbī (d. 83/702), of the Banū Hamdān and closely related to A'shā Hamdān, was a very fine pandore player. Another achievement of his is harder to interpret. He is said to have been the first to sing *naṣb* songs and to have introduced them into *al-ghinnā*.²⁸ Unless another meaning of *naṣb* is intended, it is wrong to attribute the creation of this genre to Aḥmad.²⁹ But the second part of the statement is less problematic, if it is understood to indicate that he adapted one of the pre-Islamic styles performed by men

²³ *Aghānī*, I, 248; II, 359; III, 203; XV, 174; XIX, 135.

²⁴ *Aghānī*, I, 39; III, 110.

²⁵ *Aghānī*, IV, 321; VII, 85.

²⁶ *Aghānī*, VIII, 321; I, 378; VII, 85; IV, 398; III, 276; I, 36, 250; II, 359. Here, too, the information is usually imprecise, in particular because only the father's side of the family is mentioned.

²⁷ *Aghānī*, II, 360; V, 65; I, 39; VII, 85.

²⁸ *Aghānī*, VI, 63.

²⁹ But cf. Iṣḥāq al-Mawṣilī's remark that the general style of singing in al-Ḥīra was somewhere between *naṣb* and *hazaj*, and closer to *naṣb* (*Aghānī*, II, 352). In that case Aḥmad could have been the first in Iraq to sing proper *naṣb* settings.

¹⁸ *Aghānī*, VIII, 321–22 (Sā'ib Khāthir, with a passing mention of Nasīb); I, 378 (Ibn Muhriz); III, 276 (Ibn Miṣjah). Here, too, it is unlikely that both men followed the same itinerary. But there is nothing strange in musicians traveling *fi talāb al-ghinnā*, as the biographies of many European composers show. An example of the traveling music student from the early 'Abbāsid period is Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī, for whom see below.

¹⁹ The early development of Arabic musical theory is discussed in detail in Neubauer, "Die acht Wege der arabischen Musiklehre und der Oktoechos," *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der arabisch-islamischen Wissenschaften* 9 (1994), 373–414; and id., "Al-Halīl, die Töne und die musikalischen Metren," *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der arabisch-islamischen Wissenschaften* 10 (1995–96), 255–323.

²⁰ This is the rule in Ibn Khurūdādhbih's *Muḳhtār min taḥzīb al-malāḥī*.

²¹ Al-Walīd b. Yazīd, who was a versatile instrumentalist, accompanied himself either on the lute, on a hand-drum, or walking up and down beating a tambourine "in the Hijāzī fashion" (*Aghānī*, IX, 274).

²² This is another innovation ascribed to Ibn Muhriz (*Aghānī*, I, 379).

to the evolving "art music" of the Umayyad era.³⁰ Slightly later than Ahmad al-Naṣībī is Ḥunayn b. Balū' al-Ḥirī, a member of the Christian 'Ibādī (Nestorian) community. Ḥunayn is said to have been in the business of renting out camels, which suggests he would have been familiar with the primitive camel-drivers' songs, even though his own style apparently resembled that of his Ḥijāzī contemporaries.³¹ Two other tribesmen were Sa'īd al-Dārīmī and Mālik b. Abī l-Samh, of Tamīm and Tayy respectively, whose families had sought refuge from conflict and drought in the Ḥijāz. While Sa'īd is better known as a poet, Mālik became a prominent singer in the later Umayyad period. The most socially eminent musicians were members of Quraysh, the caliphs 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz (c. 60-101/680-720) and al-Walīd b. Yazīd (90-126/709-744). During his time as governor of the Ḥijāz (87-93/706-712) 'Umar is said to have interested himself in music to the point of composing songs for his wife.³² Whereas music making appears to have been a private matter indulged in by 'Umar during a short period of his life, it was a consistent trait of al-Walīd, who not only invited many musicians to his court but himself sang in the presence of his courtiers.³³

While *mawālī* generally supplanted members of Arab tribes as performers in the Umayyad period, the latter played a crucial role as patrons and, on occasion, protectors of musicians. No-one is recorded as regretting that one of his *mawālī* was musically gifted; after all, a *mawālī* who could sing well was not only a pleasure to listen to but might bring in an income from teaching. Some *akṭabār* set in the Ḥijāz portray a group of wealthy young men with time on their hands who were never happier than when listening to a singer's latest composition. A few well-connected members of Quraysh, such as 'Abdallāh b. Ja'far and Ibn Abī 'Atīq, were known for their appre-

³⁰ If this interpretation is correct, it provides the only evidence of musical innovation outside the Ḥijāz in this period.

³¹ There is no firm information about Ḥunayn's manner of singing, but the fact that one of his settings was included in the Top Hundred as well as the anecdotes which portray his contacts with the Ḥijāzī musicians suggest that he was working in the same tradition as they were; cf. *Aghānī*, II, 260, 333-36.

³² Abū l-Faraj has submitted this information to critical examination before including it in the *Aghānī*; cf. his remarks IX, 250-51.

³³ *Aghānī*, IX, 274-75. Among Arabs Ibn Khurādādhbih adds not only 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf al-Zuhri but also 'Abdallāh b. Mu'awiyā al-Bahlī, who accompanied Qutayba b. Muslim to Khurāsān and settled in Kayy (*Mulḥazā*, 26).

ciation of music³⁴ and could be relied on to defend singers from the attacks of philistine governors.³⁵ Against this background Yazīd b. 'Abd al-Mālik's (68-105/688-724) interest in music and particularly in singing-girls appears simply as a further stage in an already well-established development. In the Umayyad period an influential section of society was well disposed towards music, and the development of the art owes much to this.

Unlike those of men, the social origins of women singers did not change markedly between the pre-Islamic and Islamic periods, as far as can be seen. At most it could be argued that *mawlayāt* became relatively more important in the Umayyad era, although given the extremely fragmentary character of information about the jāhiliyya this is little more than speculation. The first to acquire the techniques of *al-ghunā'* *al-muṭqan* was a *mawlāh* of the Anṣār, 'Azza al-Maylā'. But she also represents a link to pre-Islamic entertainment music, since the names of several of her teachers are given. While not an innovator herself, it was she who made the new manner of singing widely popular.³⁶ Like 'Azza, Umm Ja'far, a *mawlāh* of 'Abdallāh b. Ja'far,³⁷ and Jamīla, a *mawlāh* of Banū Sulaym, were Medinans. Jamīla, in particular, enjoyed great prestige, as is reflected in the account of the music festival she organized following her pilgrimage, at which all the singers of Mecca and Medina performed. The account, which ignores chronological considerations and is evidently apocryphal, seeks to provide a panorama of musical activity in the Ḥijāz during the Umayyad period, but the fact that Jamīla

³⁴ 'Abdallāh was the nephew of 'Alī b. Abī Talīb; he died in or after 80/699-700 (*ET*?, s.v. (K. Zetterstéen)). Ibn Abī 'Atīq's full name was 'Abdallāh b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Abī Bakr. He was a contemporary of 'Umar b. Abī Rabi'a and Kuthayyir (*ET*?, s.v. (Ch. Pellat)) (i.e., late first/seventh and early second/eighth c.).

³⁵ Cf. *Aghānī*, VIII, 341-42, where Ibn Abī 'Atīq prevails upon the new governor of Medina, 'Uthmān b. Ḥayyān al-Murrī, not to expel the singers; XVII, 176-77, where 'Abdallāh b. Ja'far persuades a governor to rescind the order that 'Azza l-Maylā' should stop performing.

³⁶ *Aghānī*, XVII, 162. Among 'Azza's teachers was Sirīn, very likely the same who is mentioned as belonging to Ḥassan b. Thābit and singing to her own accompaniment on the *mizhar*, probably a zither-like instrument (XII, 67). The observation that none of 'Azza's teachers is mentioned elsewhere in the *Aghānī* would then be incorrect (Everett K. Rowson, "The Effeminate of Early Medina," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 111 (1991), 679). The lack of reference to these singers may be explained simply by the fact that none of their settings survived; consequently they did not qualify for an article of their own in the *Aghānī*.

³⁷ *Aghānī*, VI, 253, as the composer of one of the Top Hundred songs.

is the festival's director is significant. Jamīla had many pupils, both men and women, which brought her patrons a considerable income.³⁸ Another *maulānā* was Shahīyya, like al-Gharīd and Yahyā Qayl connected to the 'Abalāt.³⁹

From the end of the Umayyad period the name of Khulayda, a Meccan *maulānā* of partly African origin, has been preserved. Khulayda's reply to an offer of marriage from Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh, the caliph 'Uthmān's great-grandson, is worth quoting for the glimpse it gives of the standing and character of some women singers of this period. She answered Muḥammad's messenger: "You have related my master's genealogy and made it clear, so now listen to mine, my dear. My father was not sold according to an Islamic contract or covenant, he lived as a slave and died with his feet in fetters and a chain round his neck. He was a runaway and a thief. My mother bore me out of wedlock and died while she was on the run. So now you know who I am. If your master wants a legal marriage or an affair which is public knowledge, let's go. I'm his woman." "He will never embark on anything illicit." "And he must not be ashamed of anything licit. A secret marriage is out of the question. I shall never go in for that and bring shame on the singing-girls." Muḥammad abandoned the plan, but asked Khulayda if he could just take a look at her to console himself, to which she agreed.⁴⁰

Among singing slave-girls in the early Umayyad period are Ṭawrā' and al-Baghūm, specialists in the ritual lament.⁴¹ Somewhat later are Sallāmat al-Qass and Ṭabāba, who were trained in Medina before Yazīd b. 'Abd al-Malik bought them and took them to Syria. Sallāma, in particular, evidently enjoyed wide popularity, for the whole city turned out to take leave of her when she set out for Damascus.⁴²

³⁸ *Aghānī*, VIII, 208–20 for the festival and 186–87 for Jamīla's career. She refers to her earnings as follows (187): "*wa-ḡad kasabtu li-mawālīya mā lam yakhtir lahanna [kadhā] bi-bāl*." The biographies of many later musicians mention Jamīla as one of their teachers.

³⁹ *Aghānī*, VI, 100, as the composer of one of the Top Hundred songs. The 'Abalāt refers to a clan of 'Abd Shams b. 'Abd Manāf (Ibn Hazm, *Jamharat anasīb al-'arab*, ed. 'Abd al-Salām Muḥammad Harūn, 5th ed. (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1982), 74). The individuals concerned were Thurayyā, 'Umar b. Abi Kabī'a's beloved, and her sisters al-Kudayyā, Qurayba and Umm 'Uthmān (*Aghānī*, II, 359).

⁴⁰ *Aghānī*, XVI, 190, 191–92.

⁴¹ They took pity on al-Gharīd when Ibn Surayj dismissed him as a pupil, *Aghānī*, II, 361.

⁴² *Aghānī*, VIII, 344 (Sallāma); XV, 122 (Ḥabāba).

she appears to have been the better musician. Yazīd's son, al-Walīd, is known to have possessed two singing-girls, Shuhda and al-Nawār.⁴³

Besides these male and female musicians about whose origins and careers something is known, the *Aghānī* includes the names of many others. It is likely that the obscure composers of songs from the Top Hundred date from the Umayyad period. In other cases one can sometimes infer from the context when a musician lived. A geographical designation is often attached to men's names, so that certain conclusions about these otherwise forgotten artists can be drawn. The most striking feature is the number of singers, ten altogether, associated with al-Ḥīra⁴⁴ and Kūfa.⁴⁵ As a nursery of obscure performers Wādī l-Qurā rates next, with four names,⁴⁶ while Mecca provides two⁴⁷ and Ṭā'if and Jadda one each.⁴⁸ Given these figures, and bearing in mind that the Kūfan singers between them furnished seven of the Top Hundred settings, the question arises whether the contribution of Iraqi musicians to music in the Umayyad period has not been underestimated in the sources.⁴⁹ Another noteworthy feature of these names of unknowns is that they may include the designation of a trade. Qafā the Carpenter, the Jeddān Date-seller: these performers, like some of the *mawālī* mentioned above, were of humble origin.⁵⁰

⁴³ *Aghānī*, VI, 260; VII, 69.

⁴⁴ 'Abādīs, Zayd b. al-Ṭulays, Zayd b. Ka'b, Mālik b. Tumama (*Aghānī*, II, 352). Their singing is said to have been closer to *nasīb* than to *hazajī*.

⁴⁵ 'Azzūr (*Aghānī*, III, 50), Māsā b. Khārija (IV, 133), Bābawayh (IV, 213; VIII, 266; XIII, 125), his brother Sulaymān (VI, 340), Dukayn b. Yazīd (VI, 159), Muḥammad Na'ja (VII, 228).

⁴⁶ Sulaymān al-Wādī, Khulayd b. 'Atīk, Ya'qūb al-Wadī (*Aghānī*, VI, 280); al-Afrak (Ibn Khurdādhbih, *Mukhtār*, 52).

⁴⁷ Yahyā b. Wāsil (*Aghānī*, IV, 300, 366; V, 259); Faẓẓār (VII, 113).

⁴⁸ Ibn Zurzur (*Aghānī*, III, 267; XIII, 199); al-Raṭiāb (XIX, 314).

⁴⁹ In a discussion of the metrical tendencies discernible among pre-Islamic and early Islamic poets, Dimitry Frolov argues that the poets of al-Ḥīra show preferences different from those of the Bedouin poets, but that this is not reflected in the anthologies made in the 'Abbāsīd period, apart from the *Aghānī* (Frolov, "Metrical dimensions of medieval poetical anthologies: the case of al-Ḥīra," in W. Mädelung *et al.*, eds., *Proceedings of the 17th Congress of the UEM* (St. Petersburg: Thesa, 1997), 80–94). It is possible that a distinct musical tradition in al-Ḥīra has also been neglected by later sources, with the *Aghānī* again forming something of an exception.

⁵⁰ Qafā l-Najjār (*Aghānī*, III, 18, 44); al-Raṭiāb al-Jiddī (XIX, 314). If the form Marzūq al-Ṣarrāf given in the *Aghānī* (IV, 366; V, 259) is correct, it would indicate another tradé, money changing, but I am inclined to see *al-ṣarrāf* as a corruption of *al-darrāb* (lutenist).

The names of lesser-known women singers are uninformative. At best they include the indication of an owner or patron. Ibn Shammās, for instance, is described as the *mawlā* of Khulayda, Rubayḥa and 'Uqayla, who were therefore known as *al-Shammāsīyyāt*.⁵¹ That there were many more singing-girls is suggested by the list of names of participants in Jamīla's festival as well as those given by Ibn al-Ṭahhān.⁵² But unlike the women to whom the *Aghānī* accords some space, they were presumably just performers and not composers.

One group of music-making *mawālī* of the Umayyad period remains to be mentioned, the Medinan *mukhannathūn* or effeminate.⁵³ Their contribution to the development of Arabic music seems to have been less important than is suggested by the fact that Jamīla allotted them the second day of her three-day music festival. Only two of the seven *mukhannathūn* who performed then, Ṭuways and al-Dalāl, appear to have enjoyed real standing as singers. Ṭuways, in particular, is credited with having been the first to perform songs in the rhythmic modes and introduce the "light" modes of *ramal* and *hazaj* into Arabic music.⁵⁴ Two other musicians, the Meccans Ibn Surayj and al-Gharīd, are reported to have behaved in an effeminate fashion,⁵⁵ but they are not reckoned among this group. Ibn Surayj began his career as a singer of laments, a genre performed by women, and when he quarreled with his pupil al-Gharīd the latter's patrons (*mawlayāt*) invited him to set their elegies to music in the style of the *nawāḥ*.⁵⁶ Musically speaking, then, both men were close to women. The ambiguity of this situation is reflected in Ishāq's reply to a question about the best singer; among the men he names Ibn Muhriz and among the women Ibn Surayj⁵⁷—but whether he is referring to the genres Ibn Surayj excelled at, his voice, his style of singing or his behavior in general cannot be determined. At all events, as Rowson has shown, the *mukhannathūn* cannot be regarded as representing a transitional phase in the evolution of Arabic music from an art dominated by women to one dominated by men.

⁵¹ *Aghānī*, XVI, 190.

⁵² *Aghānī*, VIII, 209; Ibn al-Ṭahhān, *Hāwī l-funūn*, 36–37.

⁵³ They have been discussed in detail by Rowson in "The Effeminate of Early Medina." Ibn Khurdādhbih also names one Meccan *mukhannath*, Madār (*Mukhtār*, 45).

⁵⁴ *Aghānī*, III, 29; IV, 219.

⁵⁵ *Aghānī*, I, 249, 274; II, 359–60.

⁵⁶ *Aghānī*, I, 254–55; II, 360.

⁵⁷ *Aghānī*, I, 252.

The early 'Abbāsīd period appears to have been one of developing further and refining the discoveries made during the Umayyad period. Few major innovations are mentioned; one such is the *mākhūzī* rhythmic cycle introduced by Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī (125–88/743–804).⁵⁸ The popularization of the *ṭunbūr*, pandore or long-necked lute, which had two or sometimes three strings,⁵⁹ is also an 'Abbāsīd phenomenon. It is probable that the melodic modes were clearly defined at this time; Ishāq al-Mawṣilī may well have been responsible for the final codification of the system of eight melodic modes and eight rhythmic cycles, as they were used by performers.⁶⁰

After the establishment of the 'Abbāsīd caliphate the centre of musical gravity gradually moved east. While al-Saffāḥ (r. 132–36/750–54) was not averse to Ḥijāzī singing, al-Mansūr (c. 90–158/709–775) was a conservative, preferring the uncouth camel-drivers' *ḥudā'* to it.⁶¹ But members of the 'Abbāsīd clan in Baṣra, the Banū 'Alī and al-Saffāḥ's son Muḥammad, were more open-minded, and several singers frequented them.⁶² With al-Mahdī's (c. 127–69/745–85) accession music acquired a firm place at court. Already as a prince al-Mahdī had acquired singing-girls,⁶³ and as caliph he summoned singers from the Ḥijāz to perform in Baghdad. From then on until al-Muhtadī (r. 255–56/868–70) there was an uninterrupted series of music-loving caliphs, and high officials and courtiers shared their enthusiasm.

The earliest male performers at the 'Abbāsīd court show the same social profile as in the Umayyad period; in some cases they were the same people. Most are *mawālī*, such as Ibn 'Abbād al-Kātib, Yazīd Ḥawrā' (d. c. 185/801), Siyāt (c. 122–69/739–85), Fulayḥ b. Abī l-'Awrā', Yahyā al-Makkī (c. 110–218/728–833) and Ibrāhīm

⁵⁸ *Aghānī*, V, 231–35, where Ibrāhīm ascribes this rhythm to Iblīs's inspiration. For an explanation of the term, see Sawa, *Music Performance Practices in the early Abbasid Era 132–320 AH/750–932 AD* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1989), 52–53.

⁵⁹ Sawa, *Music Performance Practices*, 81–83.

⁶⁰ Wright, art. "Mūsīqī," *Et*, For the details of his system, see Neubauer, "Die acht 'Wege,'" 384–94.

⁶¹ Pseudo-Jahiz, *Le livre de la couronne. Kātib al-izāg fī aḥlāk al-mulūk*, trans. Charles Pellat (Paris, Société d'édition "Les belles lettres," 1954), 60–61; al-Mas'ūdī, *Murāj al-dhahab wa-ma'ādhīn al-jawhar*, 7 vols. (Beirut: Publications de l'Université Libanaise, 1966–79), § 2334; *Aghānī*, XV, 30.

⁶² Ḥakam al-Wādī (*Aghānī*, VI, 284), 'Aṭarrad (III, 303), Daḥmān al-Ashqar (VI, 21), Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī (V, 159).

⁶³ They included Maknūna, 'Ulayya's mother (*Aghānī*, X, 149).

al-Mawṣilī.⁶⁴ It is noteworthy, however, that while the Arab tribe to which they are affiliated and often the place they come from are named, details of their ethnic background are seldom given. One exception is Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī, whose parents fled from the exacting of a harsh Umayyad governor of Fars to Kūfa.⁶⁵ A few are Arabs, including the already mentioned Mālik b. Abī l-Samḥ, Muḥammad b. al-Ash'ath b. Fajwa al-Kūfī, and Ismā'īl b. Jāmi' (d. before 188/804).⁶⁶

Even fewer are slaves by origin. One such is al-Mu'allā b. Tarīf, and his biography is interesting in another respect too. Of partly Arab and partly Persian origin from Kūfa, he was bought by al-Manṣūr and given to al-Mahdī, who freed him. He had a career in the administration, being in charge of the post and luxury textile production in Khurāsān and then briefly governor of Baṣra and adjoining regions. He studied singing and the lute with Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī, Ibn Jāmi' and Ḥakam al-Wāḍi' (d. before 193/809), and appeared as a performer before Hārūn al-Rashīd (149–93/766–809).⁶⁷ He seems to have been the first example in the 'Abbāsīd period of a man who, having had a career in public life, was prepared to appear at court as a singer.

From the time of al-Rashīd on a new social group engages in singing—the princes. The first and most eminent of the music-making 'Abbāsīds was Ibrāhīm b. al-Mahdī (162–224/779–839), who emerged as the rival of Iṣḥāq b. Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī and the leader of one of the two musical factions at court. The picture of Ibrāhīm in the *Aghānī* reflects Abū l-Faraj's bias in favor of Iṣḥāq al-Mawṣilī, but it is none the less clear that Ibrāhīm played a very important part in musical life, having his own style of performance, training young singers and putting forward his own system of terminology for the rhythmic modes.⁶⁸ Ibrāhīm and Iṣḥāq disagreed on many matters, but one source of tension was precisely the fact that Iṣḥāq regarded

himself, and was regarded by Ibrāhīm, as a professional, obliged to earn his living as a musician, while Ibrāhīm considered himself an amateur.⁶⁹ Two 'Abbāsīd caliphs were committed musicians; in the case of one, al-Wāthiq (194–232/810–847), this seems to have been his main claim to fame,⁷⁰ while the other, al-Mu'taḍid (c. 245–89/860–902), who was a very competent ruler too, earns Abū l-Faraj's admiration for his skill in composing and grasp of musical theory.⁷¹ Other musically gifted princes mentioned in the *Aghānī* are Abū 'Isā b. al-Rashīd (d. 209/824), 'Abdallāh b. Mūsā al-Hādī, 'Abdallāh b. Muḥammad al-A'mīn, the prolific composer Abū 'Isā b. al-Mutawakkil and 'Abdallāh b. al-Mu'tazz (247–96/861–908); the last two in particular Abū l-Faraj holds in high esteem.⁷²

Where the ruling family showed the way, their courtiers followed. Al-Ma'mūn's general and later governor of Khurāsān 'Abdallāh b. Tāhir (182–230/798–844) was an accomplished composer, although because he was unwilling to be known as a musician he did not set his name to his settings. But when hearing one of his songs, which he had ascribed to Mālik b. Abī l-Samḥ, being performed before the caliph, he admitted that he was the author; evidently the temptation to show that he had fooled all the court musicians with his composition was irresistible.⁷³ The audience at which he gave the show away occurred after he had returned from Egypt, and it may be that having established himself as a commander and administrator he felt he could afford to admit to his musical hobby without it affecting his standing. 'Ubaydallāh (223–300/838–913), 'Abdallāh's son, inherited his father's love of music and also his reluctance to talk about his activity as a composer, attributing his settings to his slave-girl Shāji. He was knowledgeable about music theory, even if Abū l-Faraj dismisses his claim to have composed a melody combining the ten tones.⁷⁴ Another member of the same family, 'Alī b. al-Hishām, who was al-Ma'mūn's commander of the expedition against

⁶⁴ *Aghānī*, VI, 171; III, 251; V, 152; IV, 359; VI, 173; V, 155.

⁶⁵ *Aghānī*, V, 154–55.

⁶⁶ *Aghānī*, XV, 55; VI, 289.

⁶⁷ *Aghānī*, VI, 239; XVIII, 308; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, ed. M.J. de Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1879–1901), III, 518, 521.

⁶⁸ Ibrāhīm's role as a musician is discussed in J.E. Bencheikh, "Les musiciens et la poésie," *Arabica* 22 (1975), 123–26. The significance of the changes he introduced in performance practice is set out in Sawa, *Music Performance Practice*, 187–88. His influence is shown by the fact that in the fourth/tenth century one of the two schools of singing in Baghdad still claimed him as its founder (*Aghānī*, X, 70).

⁶⁹ *Aghānī*, X, 142–48 quotes a correspondence between the two men which reflects the points of disagreement between them.

⁷⁰ Cf. Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates. The Islamic Near East from the sixth to the eleventh century* (London: Longmans, 1986), 168: "No other caliph of the period has left so little trace on the history of his times and it is impossible to form any clear impression of his personality."

⁷¹ *Aghānī*, IX, 344–45; X, 41–42.

⁷² *Aghānī*, X, 201–202, 276.

⁷³ *Aghānī*, XII, 106, 111–12.

⁷⁴ *Aghānī*, VIII, 374–75; IX, 40–41, 43.

Bābak until his fall and execution in 217/832, not only owned singing-girls and followed Ishāq al-Mawṣilī's writings on music, but was also an occasional composer.⁷⁵ Abū Dulaf al-Qāsim b. 'Isā al-'Jīlī (d. c. 225/840) and his brother Ma'qil were also composers, and seem to have had less hesitation in admitting the fact than the Ṭāhirids 'Abdallāh and 'Ubaydallāh, quite possibly because they were associated with al-Wāthiq.⁷⁶

The number of male singers of slave origin seems to have remained steady as time passed. Ma'bad al-Yaqtīnī, who was of partly African origin, had his early training in Medina before being brought to Baghdād. He performed before Hārūn al-Rashīd, as did Muḥammad b. Ḥamza b. Nuṣayr the Attendant (*wasīf*), who is described as a *mawlā* of al-Manṣūr.⁷⁷ The career of 'Aqīd, a *mawlā* of Ṣāliḥ b. al-Rashīd, spanned the period from al-Rashīd to al-Wāthiq.⁷⁸ Another musician, Yanshū, recounts how he and his companion Mahmūm were purchased by Abū Aḥmad b. al-Rashīd, sent to Baghdād to be trained by Ishāq, and later introduced to sing before al-Wāthiq.⁷⁹ Undoubtedly the most successful of the singers of servile origin was Mukhāriq (d. 231/845 or 232/846), the Kūfān butcher's son, who after attracting 'Ātika bint Shuhda's attention because of his fine voice received his first musical training from her. He then had several owners and teachers before being acquired by al-Rashīd, who freed him after a particularly successful performance; he later described himself as the *mawlā* of the song he had sung then.⁸⁰

As for those musicians who started life neither as slaves, nor as princes, nor belonged to an Arab tribe, their designation as *mawālā* becomes less frequent and seems to change its meaning. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥārith b. Buskhunnar (d. after 232/847) came of a family of the Persian nobility and his father was one of al-Ḥādī's governors;

⁷⁵ For 'Alī's career, set out by al-Ma'mūn to explain his execution, see Ibn Abī Ṭāhir Ṭayfūr, *Kitāb Baghdādā*, ed. 'Izzat al-'Aṭfār al-Ḥusaynī (Cairo: Maktab Nashr al-Thaqāfa l-Islāmiyya, 1368/1949), 146. 'Alī was the owner of Mutayyann al-Hishāmīyya, the subject of the article in *Aghānī*, VII, 293-306 and of the younger Badhl (VII, 297-98). The *Aghānī* quotes Ishāq's letter to him about "work in progress" (XVII, 111-12). His setting of 'Abdallāh b. Jaḥsh's poetry introduces the article on the latter (XIX, 211).

⁷⁶ *Aghānī*, VIII, 248, 251-52; XXI, 92.

⁷⁷ *Aghānī*, XIV, 116; XV, 356.

⁷⁸ *Aghānī*, XVIII, 69; V, 394.

⁷⁹ *Aghānī*, V, 293-95.

⁸⁰ *Aghānī*, XVIII, 336-38; 340-41.

they are described as *mawālā* of al-Manṣūr, which Abū l-Faraj understands as a relationship of service, nor emancipation.⁸¹ The tendency of the caliph to attract all relationships of *walā'* to himself can be seen in an exchange between al-Rashīd and Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī, when the caliph asked the musician how he came to be a *mawlā* of Tamīm. Ibrāhīm, whose father died when he was very young, explained that he had been taken care of by members of Tamīm who were his foster-kin, and they had looked after him well. Al-Rashīd commented: "In that case you must be my *mawlā*."⁸² The assimilation of *walā'* in all its forms to *khidma* can be sensed on another occasion. Al-Rashīd suddenly heard that 'Abdallāh b. al-'Abbās al-Rabī'ī (d. c. 247/861), the great-grandson of al-Rabī' b. Yūnus, al-Manṣūr's freed slave and chamberlain, was a budding composer, and ordered his grandfather al-Faḍl to bring him to court. "Damn you, Faḍl," he reproached him, "you have a grandson who can sing and is a good enough musician to compose two songs which Ishāq and the other singers admire and the singing-girls teach each other, and you haven't told me about it. It looks as though you thought he was above serving me in this matter." 'Abdallāh b. al-'Abbās is not introduced as a *mawlā* at the beginning of the article on him, but everyone must have been aware of his inherited status. Poor Faḍl could not refuse, although he considered it a social disaster that his grandson should appear at court as a singer.⁸³

The designation of *mawālā* continued to be used for some musicians, but as time passed and ties of loyalty diversified it became less meaningful. 'Allīya (d. 236/850), who was born during al-Rashīd's caliphate, was of Soghdian origin, his forefather having been among those taken prisoner by al-Walīd b. 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, which made him a *mawlā* of the Umayyads. But he himself stood in a relationship of *walā'* al-*khidma* to the 'Abbāsids.⁸⁴ No *walā'*, however, is mentioned

⁸¹ *Aghānī*, XII, 48 (*wa-ahsabuhu walā' a khidmatin lā walā' a 'ūq*).

⁸² *Aghānī*, V, 155-56 (*Fā-mā awāka idhan-illā mawālaye*). This presumably means that because al-Rashīd, too, had been a generous patron to Ibrāhīm and looked after him well he now had the right to his *walā'*. Whereas the bond of *walā'* between Muḥammad b. al-Ḥārith's family and al-Manṣūr can be understood as a tie of loyalty between men with political power (the title came to be used as an honorific; cf. Crone, *art. cit.*), this can scarcely be the case with Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī.

⁸³ *Aghānī*, XIX, 222-23.

⁸⁴ *Aghānī*, XI, 333; IV, 354, where he rashly points out to al-Ma'mūn how unfavorably his own situation as a *mawālā* of the 'Abbāsids contrasts with that of Ziryāb, originally a *mawālā* of the 'Abbāsids who has moved to Spain to serve the Umayyads.

for the Kūfān Sulaym b. Sallām, whose father was a *dā'ī* and confidant of Abū Muslim, nor for the later 'Abdallāh b. Abī l-'Alā' from Sāmarrā', a pupil of Ishāq's, the fuller's son Sulaymān b. al-Qassār (d. c. 255/869) who performed before al-Mu'taṣim (c. 179-227/794-842) and al-Mu'tazz (231-55/846-69), or 'Umar al-Maydānī and al-Masūdī (d. before 279/892) the butcher's son, both of whom were from Baghdad.⁸⁵ They were not *mawālī*, just men of the people.

In this period, as under the Umayyads, the status of women singers does not evolve entirely parallel with that of men. The phenomenon of the *mawālīh*, whether in the sense of "freedwoman" or "attached to an Arab clan" who otherwise lived an independent life almost disappears. An example of such a figure from the beginning of the period is the Medinan 'Ātika bint Shuhda, daughter of al-Walīd b. Yazīd's singing-girl, who settled in Baṣra and is said to have discovered Mukhārīq.⁸⁶ Much later 'Ubayda, a highly regarded pandore-player whose father was a *mawālā* of one of 'Abdallāh b. Ṭāhir's companions, picked up singing from a frequent visitor to her father and then pursued her career independently, only turning to her father's patron for help in a difficult moment.⁸⁷

Most 'Abbāsīd women singers, like many of their colleagues earlier, started their lives as slaves, bought by men who were attracted by their appearance and believed they were gifted enough to justify the investment required for their training. The Medinan Baṣbaṣ, the best singer among Ibn Nufay's slave-girls, who failed to win al-Manṣūr over to *al-ghinā'* *al-muṭānān* and Sallāma al-Zarqā' and Rubayḥa, bought from Ibn Rāmīn by Ja'far b. Sulaymān b. 'Alī and his brother Muḥammad respectively, are among the earliest 'Abbāsīd examples of this type.⁸⁸ But two of the most famous singers, 'Arīb and Shāriya, despite being first slaves and later freedwomen, claimed to have been free at birth. 'Arīb maintained that she had been sold by her nurse after the execution of her father, Ja'far b. Khālid al-Barmakī, while Shāriya had either been stolen from her parents, not recognized by her father, a member of Quraysh, and so relegated to the slave status of her mother, or else sold by her own mother.⁸⁹ Whether these

⁸⁵ Aghānī, VI, 164; XXIV, 1; XIV, 112; XXIII, 140; XX, 228.

⁸⁶ Aghānī, V, 260-61; XXVIII, 336.

⁸⁷ Aghānī, XXII, 208-209.

⁸⁸ Aghānī, XV, 27, 29-31, 63, 71.

⁸⁹ Sigelbauer, *Die Sängerrinnen am Abbasidenhof um die Zeit des Kalifen al-Muwāwakkil nach dem Kitāb al-Aḡānī des Abū l-Farag al-Iṣṭahānī und anderen Quellen dargestellt* (Ph.D. diss., Vienna, 1975), 89-90.

claims were true or simply invented to enhance the prestige of the singer in question, they suggest that such things could happen, and so perhaps some of the singing slave-girls had been born free.

When al-Mahdī integrated music into court life the best singing-girls gravitated to the capital, ending up after several moves in the palaces of the courtiers and often finally those of the caliphs. In the early 'Abbāsīd period some of them came from the Hijāz, receiving their early training in Baṣra before going to Baghdad.⁹⁰ Danānūr and Badhl were two such musicians. Their careers also illustrate another aspect of the situation of *jawānir* at the 'Abbāsīd court, the idea that the ruler had a right to the most gifted girls. There is a suggestion of this in the story of al-Rashīd's repeated visits to Yahyā b. Khālid al-Barmakī to listen to Danānūr; fortunately for Yahyā, Zubayda complained to the rest of the family about her husband's behavior, obliging him to declare that he was only interested in the girl's singing.⁹¹ The idea becomes reality in al-Amin's case; having heard about the accomplishments of his cousin Ja'far b. Mūsā al-Hādī's slave-girl Badhl, he went to see her and offered to buy her. Ja'far refused either to sell her or to give her away, but al-Amin got him drunk and went off with Badhl, later compensating him with a large sum of money.⁹² The ruler could also appropriate the singing-girls of his predecessor; al-Mu'taṣim took over those of al-Ma'mūn, and al-Mutawakkil those of al-Wāthiq.⁹³ When a caliph died, those who left the palace might either make advantageous marriages, such as Duqāq and the older Fārida, or refuse all offers and live on the presents they had received and what they earned as performers, as Badhl did.⁹⁴ Badhl is an example of a singer who after the death of her protector, the caliph, remained an important figure in musical life.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ Sigelbauer, *Die Sängerrinnen*, 86-87, notes the importance of the Hijāz as a source of singing-girls.

⁹¹ Aghānī, XXVIII, 65, 67.

⁹² Aghānī, XVII, 75-76. This is one of three singers called Badhl in the Aghānī, the other two, Badhl al-Kabīra and Badhl al-Saghīra, ending up in al-Mu'taṣim's palace (VII, 297-98).

The only sure way to keep a singing-girl was to have a child with her, and this is how 'Alī b. Hishām resisted al-Ma'mūn's demands to buy Mutayyam—which according to some was what prompted al-Ma'mūn to cause his downfall and execution (VII, 296).

⁹³ Aghānī, VII, 298; IV, 115.

⁹⁴ Aghānī, XII, 282; IV, 113; XVII, 75.

⁹⁵ Aghānī, XVII, 77-79 mentions her performing at court, discussing with leading musicians, and compiling a book of songs.

Like their male relatives, 'Abbāsīd princesses took to singing and composing. The only one whose activities are known in any detail is 'Ulayya bint al-Mahdī (160-210/777-825) who seems to have been at least as good a musician as her brother Ibrāhīm.⁹⁶ Another one mentioned *en passant* in the *Aghānī* is Khadija bint al-Ma'mūn.⁹⁷ Two daughters of al-Rashīd, Umm Abīhā and Ḥamda, Umm 'Abdallāh bint 'Isā b. 'Alī, Laylā bint 'Alī b. al-Mahdī and Fātima bint 'Abdallāh b. Mūsā are also described as musicians.⁹⁸ In a court as full of music-makers and music-lovers as the third/ninth century 'Abbāsīd one, one may assume that there were more singing princesses, but their names have not been recorded; when men of the standing of 'Abdallāh b. Tāhir and his son 'Ubaydallāh were reluctant to be known as musicians, it is hardly surprising if royal women, and even more their menfolk, considered that having their names linked to music harmed their reputation.

The history of writings on music starts with the song collection. Yūnus al-Kātib was the first to compile a song book; his example was followed by Ishāq al-Mawṣilī and his son Ḥammād, Yaḥyā al-Makkī and his son Aḥmad (d. 248/862), Ḥabash, Badhl, Danānīr, 'Amr b. Bāna (d. 278/891) and others. Authors of song books from the latter half of the third/ninth century are Jaḥza al-Barmakī (224-324/839-936) and Yaḥyā b. 'Alī al-Munajjim (241-300/855-912).⁹⁹ Apart from these general collections, the repertoire of individual singers was also noted.¹⁰⁰

Musicological questions appear first to have been addressed by al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad (c. 100-175/719-791), author of a treatise on musical metres where he proposes a synthesis between the theory of *'arūd*

⁹⁶ *Aghānī*, X, 162-85; 163 for this appreciation of her. Cf. Neubauer, art. "Ulayya bint al-Mahdī," *EP*. It is noteworthy that al-Ṣūlī arranged 'Ulayya's poetry which she had set to music not according to a conventional system for a *dūwān* but according to the rhythmic modes (al-Ṣūlī, *Al-ḥār awlād al-ḥalūfā' wa-akhbārūhum*, ed. J. Heyworth Dunne, repr. 3rd ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Maṣra, 1401/1982), 64-76).

⁹⁷ *Aghānī*, XVI, 16.

⁹⁸ Ibn al-Tahhān, *Ḥawā'ij-ṣanā'in*, 118.

⁹⁹ Ibn al-Nadīm, *Al-Fihrist*, 157-62, mentions Ishāq al-Mawṣilī and his son Ḥammād, the Banū Munajjim, Ḥabash (whom he refers to as Ḥubaysh al-Ṣinī), Abū Ḥashīsha and Jaḥza. Abū l-Faraj also speaks of the song books of Yaḥyā and Aḥmad al-Makkī (the father's being as unreliable as the son's was valuable), Badhl and Danānīr (*Aghānī*, VI, 175; XVI, 311; XVII, 75; XVIII, 65). He draws on them all for performance indications.

¹⁰⁰ Neubauer, *Musiker*, 35-36, gives a list of these books, which he qualifies as *aide-mémoire*.

and that of *iqā'*.¹⁰¹ But the earliest significant contribution is that of Abū Yūsuf al-Kindī (d. c. 252/866). He has left treatises on several subjects, including the analysis of the scale, the structure of musical metrics, composition and the description of the lute. In general he was concerned to reconcile Greek philosophical thought with the practice and theory being evolved by Arab musicians.¹⁰² He put forward the idea of correspondences between the four strings of the lute and other tetradic phenomena, such as the seasons, the humors and the elements; this was taken further by later philosophers. His pupil Abū l-'Abbās al-Sarakhsī (c. 220-286/835-99), al-Mu'tadī's tutor and later *naḏīm*, also wrote on music, though all that has survived of his works are a few quotations and the titles given in the *Fihrist*.¹⁰³ The short text by another *naḏīm* of this period, Ibn Khurdādhbih, *Mukhtār min kitāb al-law wa-l-malāhī*, has already been mentioned; apart from giving names of singers, it discusses musical instruments and the place of music among different peoples. Another writer on musical instruments, especially the lute, is the lexicographer al-Mufaḍḍal b. Salama (before 215-90/830-903), author of *Kitāb al-'ūd wa-l-malāhī*.¹⁰⁴ Finally, Ibn Abī l-Dunyā (208-281/823-94) initiated the genre of condemnations of music, instruments and singing-girls with his collection of *ḥadīths* entitled *Dhamm al-malāhī*.¹⁰⁵

Apart from the compilers of songbooks, these authors are too late for the designation *mawālī* to be appropriate; what is important is that except for al-Khalīl they were all attached more or less closely to the court. As far as the early collectors of songs are concerned, they were practicing musicians and, like their fellows, mainly *mawālī*. The specifically Arab contribution is represented, very modestly, by al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad and significantly by al-Kindī.

¹⁰¹ How many works al-Khalīl devoted to music, and what their titles were, is uncertain. Cf. Neubauer, "Al-Halīl b. Aḥmad," 260-63.

¹⁰² For his method, see Neubauer, "Die acht 'Wege'," 381-82. Al-Kindī's musical writings are passed over in silence in the *EP* article on him. They are listed in Farmer, *The Sources of Arabian Music* (Leiden: Brill, 1965), 8-10.

¹⁰³ Rosenthal, art. "al-Sarakhsī, Abū l-'Abbās Aḥmad b. al-'Ayyūb," *EP*.

¹⁰⁴ "The Kitāb al-malāhī of Abū Tālib al-Mufaḍḍal b. Salama," ed. and trans. J. Robson, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 1938, 231-49.

¹⁰⁵ For his life and works, see Weninger, *Qanā'a (Genügsamkeit) in der arabischen Literatur anhand des Kitāb al-Qanā'a wa-l-ta'āffuf von Ibn Abī l-Dunyā* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1992), 61-71; for the text "Tracts on listening to music, being *Dhamm al-malāhī* by Ibn Abī l-Dunyā and *Bawāriq al-ilmā'* by Majīd al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī al-Ghazālī," ed. and trans. James Robson, *Royal Asiatic Society* (1938). According to Weninger (*Qanā'a*, 64, 67) this is an abridgement of the original text.

The above sketch will have demonstrated that *mawālī*, however the term is understood, made an essential contribution to the development of art music in the Umayyad and early 'Abbāsīd period. But it is clear that this development is not due only to the gifts and hard work of the individuals concerned. Two other factors must be mentioned too. First is the abandonment of a sexual division of singing and the involvement of men and women alike in the elaboration and transmission of *al-ghinā'* *al-muṭāqan*.¹⁰⁶ When men engaged in performing art music they raised its status and brought it further into the public sphere. According to the sources, they were more innovative and interested in questions of theory and codification. Women, on the other hand, provided continuity with the pre-Islamic tradition. Slave-girls (of unknown origin) had been the main performers of pre-Islamic entertainment music, and despite the emergence of some prominent *mawlayāt* under the Umayyads and music-making princesses under the 'Abbāsīds, most singing-girls continued to be slaves.¹⁰⁷ Nonetheless they made a recognized contribution to the preservation and evolution of the musical tradition. Two of them are named as authors of songbooks, and many more as teachers of both men and women. Women, just as much as men, were transmitters of the oral tradition which formed an indispensable complement to the songbooks with their summary noting of performance indications.¹⁰⁸ Abū l-Faraj mentions checking information about songs with *mughanniyāt al-qusūr* and turning to named singing-girls for other information.¹⁰⁹ It seems that music is the domain of medieval Arabic culture to which women contributed most, even if they tended to

¹⁰⁶ The realities (and images) of gender roles in early Islamic society have been examined recently by Julia Bray in a penetrating article, "Men, women and slaves in Abbasid society" in Leslie Brubaker and Julie M.H. Smith (eds.), *Gender in the Early Medieval World. East and West, 300–900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 121–46.

¹⁰⁷ The obvious reason for this is that to sing in public was considered incompatible with the honor of a free woman—and her male relatives. There is probably another reason too. Being a good singer was a full-time job, requiring keeping one's voice in training, practicing the lute regularly and learning or composing new songs. A free woman, expected to run a household and bear and bring up children, would not have had the leisure to devote herself to these pursuits.

¹⁰⁸ For this question, cf. Kilpatrick, "The transmission of songs in mediaeval Arabic culture," in U. Vermeulen and D. De Smet, eds., *Philosophy and the Arts in the Islamic World. Proceedings of the 18th Congress of the UEA, Leuven 1996* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 73–82.

¹⁰⁹ *Aghānī*, IX, 61; VI, 175; XIV, 114.

be transmitters rather than innovators, and where their contribution was most readily recognized.¹¹⁰ Al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad affirms that among the rare musicians combining the four qualities essential to their art, almost all are women. And he quotes a remark, attributed to Iṣḥāq al-Mawṣilī, comparing singing to a book which men compose (*taḥrīr*) and women write up (*nisḥā'*).¹¹¹ At all events the cooperation between men and women in this field was fruitful.

Second, singing would never have acquired the status it did under the early 'Abbāsīds without the involvement of the ruling family not only as patrons but also as performers. The caliphs may have derived their ideas about the place of music at court from the imperial Persian ideology, but they took them further. For the Sassanian emperors are not described as singing, only as listening to singers. If Ibrāhīm b. al-Mahdī and al-Wāthiq had not been enthusiastic (as well as gifted) composers and singers, music might have remained a kind of spectator sport for most courtiers—or at least an activity they would not admit to. Instead, music making was legitimized through the ruling family's involvement in it. Arabic music reached the level it did at the 'Abbāsīd court thanks to princes and female slaves as well as *mawālī*.¹¹²

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¹¹⁰ Stügelbauer, *Die Sängerrinnen*, 2.

¹¹¹ Al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad, *Kamāl adab al-ghinā'*, 119; trans. 166–67 (where *nuṣūḡ* is corrected to *nuṣūḡ*).

¹¹² The close connection between art music and the court (and the sums lavished on musicians, men and women) also fuelled opposition to this music in some religious circles, as can be seen from some *ḥadīths* in Ibn Abī l-Dunyā's *Ḍhamn al-Malāhī*, where it is assimilated to other kinds of luxury.

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MAWĀLĪ AND ARABIC POETRY: SOME OBSERVATIONS

Geert Jan van Gelder

The early Arab critics and anthologists used many different and often surprising criteria in their classifications of poets. Here are some titles:¹ *Man nusiba ilā ummihī min al-shu'arā'* (*Poets Called After Their Mothers*) by al-Madā'inī, similar works by Ibn al-A'rābī, Ibn Ḥabīb and al-Sukkārī, *Al-Mughṭāiān (Those [Poets] Who Were Killed)* by Ibn Ḥabīb, *al-Mu'ammariūn (Long-Lived [Poets])* by Abū Ḥatīm al-Sijistānī, *al-Muḥammadiūn min al-shu'arā'* (*Poets Called Muḥammad*) by al-Qifī, *Man ismuhu 'Anr min al-shu'arā'* (*Poets Called 'Anr*) by Ibn al-Jarrāb, similar works by Abū Daḥḍam al-Bakrī and al-Jāhīz, *Man 'ashīqa min al-shu'arā'* (*Poets Who Were In Love*), by a certain al-Jalūdī, and *al-Mu'tadhiriūn ([Poets] Who Apologized)* by Ibn Abī Ṭāhir Ṭayfur. There are books on the poets of a particular tribe or a particular region or country, books on poetesses, on slaves or slave-girls who made poetry, on leading people (*mulūk*) who were also poets, and on "mod-ern" poets (*muḥadithūn*).² What I have not found is a book, treatise or even a chapter entitled "Poets Who Were *Mawālī*" or "*Mawālī* Who were Poets," or "Persians Who Made Arabic Poetry."

Sezgin³ mentions as a possible candidate a *Kitāb al-mawālī* by al-Jāhīz; this work is lost, but Sezgin is surely right in supposing that it dealt at least partly with poets and poetry. Yet none of the references to it made by al-Jāhīz himself⁴ makes it likely that it was specifically about poets. He says that he was criticized because in that work he had given the *mawālī* less than their due and credited the Arabs with more than they were entitled to, although he himself had merely wished to put the *mawālī* in their proper place, stating

¹ All can be found in Fuat Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, Bd. II: *Poesie bis ca. 430 H.* (henceforward GAS, II) (Leiden: Brill, 1975), II, 98-101.

² On the last category, see GAS, II, 439-40.

³ GAS, II, 97, 99.

⁴ Al-Jāhīz, *Al-Hiyawān*, ed. 'Abd al-Salām Muḥammad Ḥārūn, 8 vols. (Cairo: Muṣṭafā l-Bābī l-Ḥalabī, 1965-69), I, 5; al-Jāhīz, *Rasā'il*, ed. 'Abd al-Salām Muḥammad Ḥārūn, 4 vols. (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khanjī, 1964-79), II, 22 (end of *al-Nābīa*).