

STUDIES IN THE SOCIAL HISTORY
OF THE Umayyad Period AS REVEALED
IN THE KITĀB AL-AGHĀNĪ

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ABSTRACT

This is a study of some of the aspects of the social life of the Umayyad period. Its general subject is the life of pleasure and amusement and its main characters are those whose conduct and deeds were not in complete harmony with the strict teachings of Islam. Kitāb al-Aghānī provided most of the material for this study.

The introduction deals with the life, cultural background and works of al-Isbahānī. The material and sources of the Aghānī are discussed in a separate section in this introduction.

Chapter I is concerned with the origin of Arabian music, the general position of music and musicians in the Umayyad period, the factors that helped music to flourish, the social status of some of the musicians, and the houses of public entertainment and the slave-girls who worked in them.

Chapter II deals with matters relating to wine-drinking and, in it, an examination is made of some of the wine-poetry of the period in order to draw a picture of the scene and etiquette at wine-parties.

In Chapter III khunth, homosexuality and prostitution are discussed, and an attempt is made to indicate the factors that were responsible for the appearance of mukhannathūn, pederasts and prostitutes in society.

Chapter IV describes the attitude of the pious and the authorities towards the life of pleasure and amusement. The contrast that existed

between the spiritual and ethical foundations of pre-Islamic Arab life and the teachings of Islam is demonstrated in this chapter in the motives that inspired the opposition of the nobles on the one hand, and the pious on the other.

Chapter V is devoted to the study of the attitude of each Umayyad Caliph towards pleasure and amusement, the life at his Court and the Umayyad Court-etiquette generally.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<u>Agh.1</u>	<u>Kitāb al-Aghānī</u>	Būlāq edition
<u>Agh.3</u>	<u>Kitāb al-Aghānī</u>	Dār al-Kutub al-Misriyya edition
<u>E.I.1</u>	<u>Encyclopaedia of Islam</u>	1st edition
<u>E.I.2</u>	<u>Encyclopaedia of Islam</u>	2nd edition
<u>R.S.O.</u>	<u>Rivista degli Studi Orientali</u>	

TRANSLITERATION

ā	ا
th	ث
h	ح
kh	خ
dh	ذ
sh	ش
s	ص
d	ض
t	ط
z	ظ
'	ع
gh	غ
q	ق
u	و
i	ي
,	همزة

I N T R O D U C T I O N

A Survey of the Source

ABŪ'L FARAJ AL IṢBAHĀNĪ AND KITĀB AL-AGHĀNĪ

Abū'l Faraj al-Iṣbahānī (or al-Iṣṣahānī), 'Alī b. al-Ḥusain b. Muḥ. b. Aḥmad, b. al-Haytham b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān, b. Marwān, b. 'Abd al-Lāh b. Marwān b. Muḥ. b. Marwān b. al-Ḥakam b. Abī al-'Aṣ b. Umayya b. 'Abd Shams b. 'Abd Manāf, al Qurashī, was born in 284.¹

Contrary to all expectations, the date of his birth does not raise any problem. All sources agree that he was born in 284, whereas the date of his death is a subject of dispute among the different sources. Ibn al-Nadīm states that he died after the year 360,² Abū. Nu'aym gives the year 357 as the year of his death,³ and Ibn Abī'l Fawāris states that the 14th of Dhu'l Hijja 356 was the exact date of his death.⁴

We can start our examination of these different statements by paying little attention to the statement of Abū Nu'aym because he never had any personal relationship with Abū'l Faraj,⁵ and concentrating on the other two statements. Ibn al-Nadīm and Ibn Abī'l Fawāris could be considered more reliable in this connection, because Ibn al-Nadīm was

¹Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Tārīkh Baghdād, Ed. Cairo (1931), Vol. XI, p.398; for his birth date see also: Yaḳūt al-Rūmī, mu'jam al Udabā', Ed. Margoliouth (1911), Vol. V, p.149.

²Al-Fihrist, Ibn al-Nadīm, Ed. G. Flugel (Leipzig 1871), Vol.1, p.115.

³Al-Khaṭīb, Vol. XI, p.400.

⁴Ibid.

⁵See Akhbār Iṣbahān, Abū-Nu'aym al-Ḥāfiẓ, Vol. II, p.22.

a contemporary and a friend of Abū'l Faraj,¹ and because Ibn Abī'l Fawāris was his pupil,² and both of them related narratives on his authority.³ To that might be added the fact that Abū Nu'aym was a resident of Iṣbahān, whereas Ibn al-Nadīm and Ibn Abī'l Fawāris lived in Baghdād where Abū'l Faraj lived and died, as we shall see later.⁴

The only reason that made Abū Nu'aym write a biography of Abū'l Faraj was that the latter had the Nisba Iṣbahānī attached to his name. All he wrote about him, however, was no more than a few lines of no great value.⁵ Moreover, Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, after citing the narratives of Abū-Nu'aym and Ibn Abī'l Fawāris, comments on the last one by saying: "This is the true date of his death".⁶

Thus, Ibn al-Nadīm and Ibn Abī'l Fawāris were better qualified to know about the death of Abū'l Faraj than Abū Nu'aym. With the exclusion of Abū Nu'aym's narrative, there remain two statements to be examined: one says that Abū'l Faraj died after the year 360, and the

¹See al-Fihrist, Vol. I, p.141.

²Al-Khaṭīb, Vol. XI, pp. 398-399.

³Al-Fihrist, Vol. I, p.141 and al-Khaṭīb, Vol. XI, pp.398-9.

⁴See the biographies of Ibn al-Nadīm and Ibn Abī'l Fawāris in: Yāqūt, Udabā', Vol. VI, p.408 and: al-Khaṭīb, Vol. I, p. 353.

⁵See Akhbār Iṣbahān, Vol. II, p.22;

⁶Al-Khaṭīb, Vol. XI, p.400.

other that he died on Wednesday, the 14th of Dhū'l Hijja, 356 A.H.

The fixing of the day, the month and the year in Ibn Abī'l Fawāris's narrative was, no doubt, of great importance in making it more acceptable to writers on Abū'l Faraj later on. Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī,¹ Ibn Khallikān,² Yāqūt,³ Ibn Taghrī Birdī⁴ and Ibn al-'Imād al Kātib⁵ all state, however, that Abū'l Faraj died in 356. After stating that Abū'l Faraj died in 356, Yāqūt remarks: "This date arouses one's doubts, and needs more consideration, because Abū'l Faraj says in his book Adab al-Ghurabā' that a friend of his told him that he read on the palace of Mu'izz al-Dawla in al-Shammāsiyya the following inscription: "Al-Harawī says: in this place I attended a Simāṭ given by Mu'izz al-Dawla when he was at the peak of his power, and I returned to it in the year 362, after it was demolished." On another occasion in this same book (Adab al-Ghurabā'), Abū'l Faraj, in telling of an event which happened between him and a boy he loved, speaks of the death of MU'izz al-Dawla and the succession of his son Bakhtiyār in the year 356. In this last story, Abū'l Faraj

¹Khaṭīb, Vol. XI, p.400.

²Wafayāt al-A'yan, Ed. De Slane (Paris 1843), Vol. II, pp.250-251.

³Yāqūt, Udabā', Vol. V, p.149.

⁴Al-Nujūm al-Zāhira, Ed. Dār al-Kutub al-Misriya (Cairo, 1933), Vol. IV, p.15.

⁵Shadharāt al-Dhahab, Cairo Ed., Vol.III, p.19.

alleges that at that time, he had the vigour of youth."¹ The quotations from the book Adab al-Ghurabā' contained in Yāqūt's remark, coupled with the fact that Ibn al-Nadīm was a contemporary of Abū'l Faraj and a resident of Baghdād when the latter died, as we have already seen, weakens one's belief in the authenticity of Ibn Abī'l Fawāris's statement.

Meanwhile, we must not fail to remember that:

1. Ibn al Nadīm's statement on the death of Abū'l Faraj was recorded by him in a book he himself wrote, whereas Ibn Abī'l Fawāris's theory was recorded for the first time one hundred years after the death of Abū'l Faraj by Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī in his Tārīkh Baghdād.
2. When Abū'l Faraj died Ibn Abī'l Fawāris was still a young student, travelling from one place to another for the study of hadīth.²
3. Al-Khaṭīb does not mention in his book Ibn al-Nadīm's statement on the death of Abū'l Faraj, which might not have reached him. Had he known of it, his attitude could possibly have been different.

¹Yāqūt, Udabā', Vol. V, p.150.

²Al-Khaṭīb, Vol. I, p.353.

All these facts make Ibn al-Nadīm's statement more acceptable, and the present writer is of the opinion that Abū'l Faraj did not die until after 360. Thus, the life of the author of al-Aghānī began in the year 284A.H. during the Caliphate of al-Mu'taḍid bil-lāh Abī al-'Abbās Aḥmad b. al-Muwaffaq, and ended during the Caliphate of al-Muṭī' after the year 360 A.H.

The second point to be discussed in this short biography of Abū'l Faraj is his birthplace. Brockelmann, in his article on Abū'l Faraj in the Encyclopaedia of Islam, says that Abū'l Faraj "was born at Iṣbahān".¹ Huart in his "A History of Arabic Literature",² M. Sadruddin in "Saif al-Dawla and his times",³ Aḥmad Amīn in "Zuhr al-Islam",⁴ Khayr al-Din al-Zirkly in Al-A'lām,⁵ Sayyid Ṣaqr in the foreword to his edition of Maṣā'il al-Tālibiyyīn,⁶ and M. Nallino in her article on Abū'l Faraj in the new edition of the Encyclopaedia of Islam,⁷ all agree with Brockelmann in stating that Iṣbahān was the birth-place of Abū'l Faraj.

The first source to mention this fact was Yatīma al-Dahr of al-Tha'ālibī. Al-Tha'ālibī, in his account of the life of the author of

¹E.I.I, Vol. I, p.35.

²Ed. London 1903, p.184.

³Ed. Lahore 1930, p.179.

⁴3rd Ed. (Cairo, 1945), Vol. I, p.240.

⁵Vol. II, p.666.

⁶Cairo ed. (1949), p.9.

⁷Vol. I, p. 118.

al-Aghānī, says: "Abū'l Faraj, the Iṣbahānī by origin..."¹ Later on, Ibn. Khallikān copied that,² whereas al Khaṭīb al Baghdādī was more cautious and said: "Abū'l Faraj, the Umayyad and scribe, known as al-Iṣbahānī..."³ Thus, the origin of the theory of his birth in Iṣbahān, was the phrase "the Iṣbahānī by origin" in al-Tha'alībī's statement. There is no reason why the phrase "The Iṣbahānī by origin" should mean that Iṣbahān was the birth-place of Abū'l Faraj, because when the word "aṣl" is used in a biography, it usually concerns the family of the person and not the person himself. An example of this could be found in the following biography in al-Aghānī: "Muḥammad al-Raff... is a Kūfite by origin, birth and upbringing."⁴ This example, and many others, makes one come to the conclusion that al-Tha'alībī's statement does not imply that Abū'l Faraj was born at Iṣbahān, and consequently it is possible to claim that the sources within our reach kept silent about Abū'l Faraj's birth-place. However, the study of the life of his fraternal and maternal relatives might shed some light on this particular point.

From what is related in al-Aghānī, we can assume that Abū'l Faraj's paternal family was resident in Sāmarrā at least fifty years before his birth. In Sāmarrā lived his grandfather and great-grand-

¹Al-Tha'alībī, Yatīmat al-Dahr, ed. Muḥ. Muḥyī al-Dīn 'Abdal-Ḥamīd, (Cairo, 1947), Vol. III, p. 109; the Arabic text reads: "الأصلي في الأصل..."

²Wafayāt, Vol. II, pp. 250-251.

³Khaṭīb, Vol. XI, p. 398.

⁴The Arabic text reads: "هو محمد بن... كوفي الأصل والمولود بالنسبة..."
See Agh.l. Vol. XIII, p. 19.

father. The latter was a friend of the famous singer Ishāq al-Mawṣilī,¹ who died fifty years before Abū'l Faraj was born.² His paternal uncle al-Ḥasan b. Muḥ. and his father's uncle 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Aḥmad, were both scribes in Sāmarrā.³ The maternal relatives of Abū'l Faraj were also resident in Sāmarrā. His maternal grandfather, Yahyā b. Muḥ. b. Thawāba, was a scribe in Sāmarrā.⁴ As both families resided in Sāmarrā long before his birth and as the sources do not state that his parents were at the time of his birth living in Iṣbahān, there is no reason for us to believe that he was born there. Moreover, most of his relatives had the Nisba "Iṣbahānī" after their names; his uncle was called al-Ḥasan b. Muḥ. al-Iṣbahānī,⁵ his cousin was called Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan al-Iṣbahānī,⁶ and his grandfather was called Muḥ. b. Aḥmad al-Iṣbahānī.⁷ In this way, we can claim that the Nisba "Iṣbahānī" was attached to the name of Abū'l Faraj because all his near relatives had the same Nisba, and not because he was born in Iṣbahān.

¹Agh. Brünnow. Vol. XXI, p.3.

²Ishāq died in 235 A.H., see Agh. 3, Vol. V, p.430.

³See: Ibn Ḥazm, Jamharat al-Ansāb, pp.98,99.

⁴Agh. 1, Vol. XVIII, p.43.

⁵Agh. 3, Vol. IX, p.27.

⁶Ibid. Vol. VI, p.151.

⁷Maḡatīl. p. 698.

The possible question in this respect is: What is the relation between Abū'l Faraj's family and Iṣbahān, and why does it have this Nisba?

In answering this question we must recall the last days of the life of the Umayyad dynasty in Damascus, the anarchy and horror that prevailed over the capital, and the transfer of power to the hands of the Abbasids who tried to annihilate as many Umayyads as they could. This ended, as we know, by a mass flight on the part of the Umayyad survivors. Among the places the Umayyads sought refuge in was Iṣbahān. An indirect reference to this is made in al-Aghani. In an anecdote that speaks about the uprising of 'Abd al-Lāh b. Mu'āwīa b. 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far b. Abī Tālib in al Kūfa, and his flight to Iṣbahān we read that he met there leading figures of the Umayyad house such as Sulaymān b. Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik and 'Umar b. Suhayl b. 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān¹. Moreover, in Akhbār Iṣbahān, we read of a certain descendant of the Umayyad house called Muḥ b. al-Walīd al-Umawī al-Khayyāt al-Madīnī who was living in Iṣbahān and who says of himself: "I am a descendant of Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān, but please do not let anybody know that. I am a tailor, and I do not want anybody to know of my Umayyad descent".² The importance of this text is that it shows very clearly that the Umayyad survivors tried to hide behind

¹Agh 3, Vol. XII, p.229.

²Vol. II, p. 182.

Alqāb or professions to conceal their identity. To this we might add that al-Muqaddasī remarks that: "The people of Iṣbahān are, mostly, stupid and excel in their love to Mu'āwiya....".¹

From all this, it is possible to suggest that an ancestor of Abū'l Faraj was among those Umayyads who migrated to Iṣbahān in the early days of the Abbāsīd rule, and that in this way the family gained the Nisba "Iṣbahānī". It seems that the family insisted on keeping this Nisba, which helped in diverting the attentions from its Umayyad descent. Thus, it is safer to say that Abū'l Faraj was, most probably, born in Sāmarrā, where his family was residing, and not in Iṣbahān, as most of the modern works claim.

Abū'l Faraj was a descendant of the Umayyad house, a fact recognized by all sources. His great-great-grandfather was the last Umayyad Caliph Marwān b. Muḥammad.² His family was among the first settlers in Sāmarrā,³ and some of his relatives were scribes in the Dīwāns of the Caliphs⁴ there. Worthy of special attention is the strong literary tendency that most of his relatives show, and their devotion to the narration of anecdotes. In al-Aghānī we very often read: "My paternal

¹Muḥ. b. Aḥmad al-Muqaddasī, Aḥsan al-Taḳāṣīm, 2nd Ed., De Goeje (Leiden 1906), p. 399.

²See al-Fihrist, Vol. I, p.115; Yatīma, Vol.III, p.109; Yāqūt, Vol. V, p.149, and others.

³See in Agh. I, Vol. XV, pp.100-101, the conversation between Abū'l Faraj's grandfather and the Wazīr al-Zayyāt, which leaves no doubt that Abū'l Faraj's grandfather was residing before the year 233 in Sāmarrā.

⁴Like 'Aḥd al 'Azīz b. Aḥmad al-Iṣbahānī, who was a scribe in the Dīwān of al-Mutawakkil, see: Jamhara, pp. 98,99.

uncle told me on the authority of his father...."¹ or, "My paternal uncle told me on the authority of my grandfather..."². His paternal uncle 'al-Ḥasan b. Muḥ b. Aḥmad al-Isbahānī,³ and his father's paternal uncle, 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Aḥmad⁴, were very often quoted in al-Aghānī, especially in accounts of the poets and singers who had contacts with the palaces of the Caliphs in Sāmarrā. Even the name of his father appears in al-Aghānī as the narrator of a literary anecdote.⁵

His mother was of the Banū Thawāba. In al-Aghānī, our only source of information on this matter, we very often read the name of Yahyā b. Muḥ b. Thawāba, his maternal grandfather.⁶ Yahyā was a scribe⁷, and of wide literary knowledge.⁸ By revealing the kind of relationship that

¹Agh.1, Vol. XV, p.100.

²Ibid, Vol. XX, p. 91.

³The name of al-Ḥasan appears many times in almost every volume.

⁴See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.8; Vol. IX, p.260; Vol. IV, p.132; Vol. IX, p.142. Agh 1, Vol. XIV, p.4; Vol. XX, pp.20, 109; Vol. XV, p.36.

⁵Agh.1, Vol. XII, p.5.

⁶See Agh. 1, Vol. XIII, p.34; Vol. XV, p.110.

⁷In Agh.1, Vol. XVIII, p.43, we read:

«أخبرني الحسن بن علي قال حدثنا ابن مهران قال أبو علي يحيى بن محمد بن ثوبة الكاتب...»

⁸Examples of literary anecdotes related by him can be seen in: Agh.3, Vol. XII, p.37; Vol. IX, p.103. Agh.1, Vol. XIII, pp.34, 9; Vol. XV, p.110; Vol. XVII, p.121, etc.

bound him to the Banū Thawāba, Abū'l Faraj offered us a very important explanation of his adherence to the Shī'ite sect. One at first agrees with Ibn al-Athīr that it is not common to find an Umayyad Shī'ite¹, but when one knows that the Banū Thawāba were originally Christians², and later became Shī'ite Muslims,³ one can attribute the Shī'ism of Abū'l Faraj to the influence of his maternal family.

The Banū Thawāba, like the Iṣbahānīs, were residents of Sāmarrā, as one can understand from the information in al-Aghānī on Yahyā b. Muḥ b. Thawāba and Aḥmad b. Muḥ b. Thawāba⁴. In this respect, it is necessary to note that his maternal family also had obvious literary tendencies. His maternal grandfather and his maternal uncle were among the authorities on whose information he relied very often in compiling his Aghānī.⁵

In the study of the early part of the life of Abū'l Faraj we have to depend on indirect information; but, when we come to his adult life, the sources become more helpful. They all agree that he was brought up and received his early education in Baghdād.⁶ Although we cannot define

¹Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, Ed. Leiden 1892, Vol. Viii, p.430.

²See in Yāqūt, Udabā', Vol. II, p.36, the Biography of Aḥmad b. Muḥ b. Thawāba.

³Ibid, Vol. II, p.38, and Muḥsin al-Amīn al-'Āmilī, A'yān al-Shī'a, 1st ed. (Damascus 1938), Vol. IX, p.327.

⁴See Agh. 1, Vol. XVIII, p.43; Vol. XX, pp.68-69; see also Ṭabari, III, p.183.

⁵See Agh. 1, Vol. XIII, p.34; Vol. XV, p.110; Vol. XX, p.69

⁶See, for example, Yatīma, Vol. III, p.109; Wafayāt, Vol. II, pp.250-51, Tārīkh Abī'l Fidā, ed. Constantinople (1286 A.H.). Vol. II, p.114. and others.

the exact date of his coming to Baghdād, it is possible to say that, in the year 300 A.H., as he tells us, he was residing there with his father.¹ In Baghdād, he bent all his energies to the study of Arabic antiquity and met a large number of learned men. His fields of study were also numerous. He knew history, genealogy, biography, traditions lexicography, poetry, grammar, music and many other things very well.² In his early youth, Abū'l Faraj led the life of a wandering litterateur. He visited al-Kūfa, Antioch and al-Baṣra, and met learned men. In al-Aghānī and Maqātil al-Tālibiyīn we read about his visit to al-Kūfa, the learned men he met and the narratives he collected.³ The fruit of this Kūfan visit seems to have been a good deal of serious information. In al-Aghānī also, we read about his visit to Antioch, and the learned men he met there.⁵

The third place he visited was al-Baṣra and, after a short stay, he left for Hiṣn Maḥdī.⁶

The year 313 A.H. is of great importance in the life of Abū'l Faraj because it marks the end of his career as a student and the beginning of his career as an author. In this year Abū'l Faraj compiled his

¹Agh.1, Vol. XX, p.35.

²See Yatīma, Vol. III, p.109; Wafayāt, Vol. II, p.250; al-Khaṭīb, Vol. XI, p.398.

³Agh. 1, Vol. XIII, pp.36, 72; Vol. XVII, p.68; Vol. XVIII, p.162.

⁵Ibid, ~~Vol. XI~~, Vol. XI, p.141; Vol. XII, p.147.

⁶See in Yāqut, ^{Udabā'}~~Vol. V~~, Vol. V, p.159, the quotation from Kitāb Adah al-Ghurabā'.

book Maqātil al Ṭalibiyīn.¹ The emergence of Abū'l Faraj as a member of the intelligentsia of Baghdād paved the way for him to enjoying the patronage of a leading figure of the time.

Al-Tha'ālibī, Ibn Khallikān and others, tell us that Abū'l Faraj was exclusively attached to the Wazīr al-Muhallabī.² The relation between the author of al-Maqātil and the Wazīr of Mu'izz al-Dawla, al-Ḥasan b. Muḥ. al-Muhallabī seems to have exceeded the formal limits of friendship between a statesman and a litterateur and became a daily companionship. Al-Muhallabī was known for being very fond of gathering around his table as many learned men as he could.³ Moreover, he himself was a poet and of good literary education.⁴ We do not need, however, in this sketching of the life of Abū'l Faraj, to cite all the details we read in Mu'jam al-Udabā' on the private life of al-Muhallabī⁵, but we must not neglect the fact that al-Muhallabī was a man of great devotion to the life of pleasure and amusement and that he found in the person of Abū'l Faraj a good companion for it. Their friendship lasted, as Yāqūt puts it, till they were separated by death.⁶

¹As Abū'l Faraj tells us in his introduction and conclusion to this book, see Maqātil, pp.4, 721.

²See Yatīma, Vol. III, p.109; Wafayāt, Vol. II, p.251.

³Yāqūt, Udabā', Vol. III, p.190.

⁴See the biography of al-Muhallabī in Yāqūt, Udabā', Vol. III, pp.180-194.

⁵See in Ibid, the biographies of Abū'l Faraj (Vol. V, pp.149-163) and al-Muhallabī (Vol. III, pp.180-194), where one can find a lot on the private life of the latter.

⁶Yāqūt, Udabā', Vol. V, p.155.

Abū'l Faraj, like many of his contemporaries, devoted much of his time to drinking, singing and homosexuality. In more than one poem he sang his love for wine and praised the beauty of the Sāqī.¹ He hated Ramādān because, during it, he could not quench his thirst for wine.² In monasteries he drank wine and flirted with Christian girls attending religious festivities.³ In a passage from Adabal-Ghurabā', quoted by Yāqūt, Abū'l Faraj tells us about the Ghulām he loved, and how the Ghulām came once to pass the night with him and how they spent their night like "a newly married couple".⁴

As for his personal character, Abū'l Faraj was very rude and ready, if vexed, to satirize even his best friends.⁵ He once asked his friend the Qādī al Ayḡhajī to give him his walking-stick and, when the latter refused, Abū'l Faraj attacked him with the worst possible satire.⁶ Even his best friend and patron, the Wazīr al-Muhallabī, did not escape his satires.⁷ This made some of the sources, while discussing his poetry,

¹Yatima, Vol. III, p.112.

²Yāqūt, Udabā', Vol. V, p.167.

³Ibid, Vol. V, p.158-159.

⁴Ibid, Vol. V, pp.160-162.

⁵Ibid, vol. V, p.152.

⁶Ibid, Vol. V, p.168.

⁷Ibid, Vol. V, p.154.

consider satire to be his best vein.¹ In spite of the fact that his attitude was generally rude or careless in all sorts of company al-Muhallabī did not show any contempt or dislike towards him.² Generally, he was very dirty, so much so that he never washed his clothes, nor ever changed them until they were completely worn out.³

Our study of the life of Abū'l Faraj remains incomplete if it is not followed by a study of his intellectual merits. Al-Tanūkhī,⁴ a contemporary of his, sums up his cultural merits by saying: "I never found a person knowing by heart such a quantity as he did of poems, songs, historical accounts, anecdotes of ancient times, authentic narratives, and genealogies; besides which he possessed information in other sciences, such as philosophy, grammar, story-telling, biography and the history of Muslim conquests; he was acquainted also with the branches of knowledge requisite for a boon companion, such as falconry, farriery, the preparation of beverages, a smattering of medicine and astrology, etc."⁵

The Shuyūkh under whom Abū'l Faraj studied can be divided into three different groups: 1 - The traditionists, 2 - The linguists and lexicographers, 3 - The musicians and singers.

¹Yāqūt, Udabā', Vol. V, p.152.

²Ibid, Vol. V, p.153.

³Ibid, Vol. V, p.152.

⁴The Qādī, 'Alī b. Muh. b. Dāwūd Abū'l Qāsim al-Tanūkhī, died in 342, see Ibid, Vol. V, p.332.

⁵Wafayāt, Vol. II, p.250.

Of the famous traditionists of the time, Abū'l Faraj studied under: Muḥ. b. 'Abd al-Lāh al-Ḥaḍramī, Muḥ. b. Ja'far al-Qattāt, al-Ḥusain b. 'Umar b. Abī al-Aḥwaṣ al-Thaqafī, 'Alī b. al-'Abbās al-Muqānī'ī, 'Alī b. Ishāq b. Zatiyā, Abū Khubayb al-Birtī, Muḥ. b. al-'abbās al-Yazīdī and others.¹ It seems that the influence of these Sheikhs upon Abū'l Faraj was not very great, because his name was never important in the field of traditions. In the fields of lexicography, poetry and linguistics Abū'l Faraj studied under many learned men such as: Ibrāhīm b. 'Arafa, Abū Ja'far b. Rustam al-Tabrī, Muḥ. b. al-'abbās al-Yazīdī, Muḥ. b. al-Qāsim al-Anbārī, Muḥ. b. Mazīd b. Abī al-Azhar, Muḥ. b. Ja'far al-Ṣaydalānī, Muḥ. b. al-Ḥasan b. Durayd, 'Abd al-Lāh b. Mālik and 'Alī b. Sulaymān al-Akhfash.² Some of these authorities Abū'l Faraj never met or listened to directly. His relation with them was established through correspondence because they were far from Baghdād or because he did not have the chance of meeting them. An example of this could be found in the relationship between him and Abū Khalīfa al-Faḍl b. al-Ḥabāb al-Jumāhī, who was a Qādī in al-Baṣra and granted him the right of relating on his authority the literary information he used to write and send to him.³ Thus, his literary knowledge was acquired either through direct contact with the authorities, or from the written information he received from them. Moreover, he tells us of certain literary books which he read

¹Al-Khaṭīb, Vol. XI, p.398.

²Yāqūt, Vol. V, pp.149-150. Every one of these names occurs in al-Aghānī as the first authority in the chains of narrators of most of the literary information in the book.

³See Yāqūt, Udabā', Vol. VI, p.134.

under certain sheikhs. Under 'Alī b. Sulaymān al-Akhfash, he read the book of al-Muhtālīn¹, and under Muḥ. b. al-'Abbās al-Yazīdī he studied the life and poetry of Abūkilda² and the book of al-Naqā'id.³

To end this survey of the Shuyūkh of Abū'l Faraj, in connection with the cultural background of the author of al-Aghānī, we turn to the musicians and singers who helped to enrich the artistic tendencies in him.

Abū'l Faraj was, no doubt, a talented musician. This fact one can deduce from his various writings on the subject. On music and singing he wrote: Kitāb Mujarrad al-Aghānī⁴, Kitāb al-Aghānī, and several essays on melody.⁵

The sources give no direct information on the names of musicians and singers from whom he acquired his musical training and one has to rely on indirect references in Kitāb al-Aghānī. In this way, we can consider the singer Ibrāhīm b. al-Qāsim b. Zarzūr as one of them, because on more than one occasion Abū'l Faraj tells us that he heard him sing a certain melody.⁶ Another could be considered 'Abd al-Lāh b. al-Muta-Wakkil. In his biography in al-Aghānī we read: "'Abd al-Lāh composed

¹Agh.1, Vol II, p.37.

²Agh.3, Vol. XI, p.310.

³Ibid, Loc.cit.

⁴See Abū'l Faraj's introduction to Kitāb al-Aghānī

⁵See Agh.3, Vol. V, p.270, and Vol. X, p.97.

⁶Agh.3, Vol. X, p.41.

more than three hundred melodies..., I have heard most of them."¹ A third possibility is the female singer Qamariya al-'Umariya, whom he describes as: "the old female singer whose life-time overlapped with my own."² Lastly, we can name Jahza al-Barmaki, the famous drummer, as the one contributor to Abū'l Faraj's musical education of whom we can be certain. Under him Abū'l Faraj read the book of the musician Abū Hashīsha, as we are told in al-Aghānī³, and later on Abū'l Faraj composed a book in his praise (Kitāb Akhbār Jahza al-Barmakī).⁴

The outcome of this rich culture was a long list of works in different fields. No single source gives a complete list of these works and thus we have to consult the different sources and add to our list the new names that occur in each source.

According to Ibn al-Nadīm, the books composed by Abū'l Faraj were: Kitāb al-Aghānī al-Kabīr, Kitāb Mujarrad al-Aghānī, Kitāb Maqātil Āl Abī Tālib, Kitāb Tafdīl Dhī al-Ḥijja, Kitāb al Akhbār wa'l Nawādir, Kitāb Adab al-Samā', Kitāb Akhbār al-Tufayliyīn, Kitāb Adab al-Ghurabā' Min Ahl al-Faḍl wa'l Adab, Kitāb Majmū' al-Āthār wa'l Akhbār, Kitāb Ash'ār al-Imā' al-Mamālīk, Kitāb al-Khammārīn wa'l Khammārāt, Kitāb al-Diyārāt,

¹ Agh. 3, Vol. X, p.201.

² See Ibid, Vol. VI, p.175.

³ See Agh.1, Vol.XV, p.144.

⁴ See Yatima, Vol. III, p.109.

Kitāb Sifat Hārūn, Kitāb al-Farq wa'l Mi'yār being a study on Hārūn b. al Munajjim, Bayn al-Awghād wa'l Aprār.¹ Al-Tha'ālibī adds the following names to the list of Abū'l Faraj's works: Kitāb al-Qiyān, Kitāb Da'wat al-Najjār, and Kitāb Akhbār Jahza al-Barmakī. He ends his statement on the subject by saying: "...I do not doubt that he had other works..."²

From the accounts of al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī and Ibn Khallikān we know of two more books, namely: Kitāb al-Hānāt,³ and Ayyām al-'Arab.⁴ The latter contained an account of one thousand and seven hundred combats.

Yāqūt, however, gives the best account on this subject. He cites all the names we find in the previous sources and adds the following: Kitāb al-Ta'dīl wa'l Intiṣāf Fi Akhbār al-Qahā'il wa Ansābiha, Kitāb Jamharat al-Nasab⁵, Kitāb Nasab Banī 'Abd Shams, Kitāb Nasab Banī Shaybān,

¹Al-Fihrist, Vol. 1, p.115; an obvious mistake occurs in the underlined part of the text. The original Arabic text reads:

«كتاب صفة صامون كتاب الفرق والمقيار وهي رسالة في هارون بن المنجم بين مؤمنين وأعدائهم»

The same text occurs in the Cairo ed. (1348 A.H.) of al-Fihrist. The Correct text must be as we read in Yāqūt (Vol. V, p.152):

«كتاب الفرق والمقيار في الدغاد والحرار وهي رسالة عملها في هارون بن المنجم...»

²Yatima, Vol. III, p.109.

³Al-Khaṭīb, Vol. XI, p.398.

⁴Wafayāt, Vol. II, p.250.

⁵The name of this book is mentioned by Abū'l Faraj in al-Aghānī, see Agh.1. Vol. XIX, p.53.

Kitāb Nasab al-Mahāliba, Kitāb Nasab Banī Taghlib, Kitāb al-Ghilmān al-Mughannīn, and Kitāb Manājīb al-Khiṣyān, which he wrote for the Wazīr al-Muhallabī about two eunuch-singers he possessed.¹ Yāqūt ends his account by stating that Abū'l Faraj "composed a number of works for the Ummayyad usurpers of al-Maghrib which he forwarded privately to them. In return, he received valuable rewards. Few of these works came back to al-Mashriq. And God knows best."²

Only in Brockelmann's Geschichte is there a reference to a book compiled by Abū'l Faraj entitled: Kitāb al-Amālī. Brockelmann gives as his source al-Tuhfa al-Bahiya by al-Suyūṭī.³ The text in al-Tuhfa reads as follows: "Abū'l Faraj al-Iṣbahānī, may God have mercy on his soul, said in Kitāb al-Amālī:..."⁴

Al-Suyūṭī, who was born five centuries after the death of Abū'l Faraj,⁵ is the only authority to mention the name of this book and that only in the course of a quotation, and not in a statement on works by Abū'l Faraj. Moreover, the passage quoted from the so-called "Kitāb al-Amālī" occurs in Kitāb al-Aghānī, and reads exactly the same.⁶ This

¹See Yāqūt, Udabā', Vol. V, pp.151-152.

²Yāqūt, Udabā', Vol. V, p.152.

³See Brockelmann, Geschichte Der Arabischen Litteratur, Supp.1, p.226.

⁴See al-Imām al-Suyūṭī, al-Tuhfa al-Bahiya wa'l Turfa al-Shahiya, ed. Constantinople (1302 A.H.), p.51

⁵See E.I., I. Vol. IV, p.573.

⁶Compare al-Tuhfa, p.51 and Agh.1, Vol. XI, p.106.

This makes one inclined to believe that the word "al-Amālī" in al-Suyūṭī's text is corrupt and must have originally been "al-Aghānī", especially if we remember the similarity between "Amālī" and "Aghānī" when written in Arabic script.

Unfortunately, of all these compilations, very few survived. Al-Aghānī, Maqātil al-Ṭalibiyyīn, and Kitāb al-Diyārāt are the only three of Abū'l Faraj's numerous works that we possess. Only al-Aghānī and al-Maqātil have been printed whereas the third is still in manuscript form in the possession of the Berlin Library.¹

Maqātil al-Ṭalibiyyīn, a historical work, was composed in the year 313, as the author states in his introduction to the book.² It contains biographies of those descendants of Abū Ṭālib who, in some way, lost their lives for political reasons, including those who died in prison or in hiding. The first biography in the book is that of Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib, and the last are those of the seventy Ṭalibīs who died during the reign of al-Muqtadir, during Abū'l Faraj's life time. This book is a clear outcome of his Kūfite culture and, in it, one reads the names of his Kūfan Shuyūkh as his first authorities. Al-Maqātil "was published in lithography, Teheran 1307 and in print, Nadjaf 1353. The Bombay edition (1311) on the margin of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Nadjafī, Muntakhab fi'l Marāthī wa'l Khutab contains the first half only."³ The last edition

¹C.Huart, A History of Arabic Literature, London 1903, p.185.

²See al-Maqātil, pp.4, 721.

³M.Nallino, E.I,2, Art."Abū'l Faraj al-Iṣbahānī," Vol. I, p.118.

of al-Maqātil is the Cairo edition (1949) by Sayyid Saqr.

"The Berlin Library possesses another work by the same author, the Kitāb al-Diyārāt (Book of the Monasteries), giving the history of many convents and places of pilgrimage on the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, or in Egypt. It really is an anthology of the poetry in which these convents have been celebrated."¹

Kitāb al-Aghānī will be examined later in this study.

The fame of Abū'l Faraj as an author and a learned man gathered round him a large crowd of students. According to al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī,² his pupils were: al-Dārqaṭnī,³ Abū Ishāq al-Ṭabarī,⁴ Ibrāhīm b. Mukhlid,⁵ and Muḥ. b. Abī al-Fawāris.⁶ Al-Khaṭīb himself listened to traditions related on the authority of Abū'l Faraj from 'Alī b. Aḥmad al-Razzāz and Abū 'Alī b. Dūmā. But the traditions Ibn Dūmā related on the authority of Abū'l Faraj were not authentic.⁷ Among his students also were: Abū al-Ḥusayn 'Alī b. Muḥ. b. 'Abd al-Rahīm b. Dīnār al-Kātib, who read under him Kitāb al-Aghānī⁸ and Abū Zakariyyā Yahyā b. Mālīk b. 'Ā'idh

¹Huart, p.185.

²al-Khaṭīb, Vol. XI, p.399.

³See the biography of al-Dārqaṭnī in Wafayāt, Vol. I, pp.470-471.

⁴See the biography of Abū Ishāq in al-Khaṭīb, Vol. VI, p.17.

⁵See the biography of Ibrāhīm b. Mukhlid in al-Khaṭīb, Vol. VI, pp.189-191.

⁶See the biography of Ibn Abī al-Fawāris, in al-Khaṭīb, Vol. I, p.353.

⁷See al-Khaṭīb, Vol. XI, p.399.

⁸See Yāqūt, Udabā', Vol. V, p.378.

al-Andalusī, who came from al-Andalus and attended regularly his Majlis.¹

Worthy of special note in this respect is the fact that we owe to some of his students, namely Abū Ishāq al-Ṭabarī and 'Abd al-Lāh b. al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥ. al-Fārisī, the great debt of preserving his famous book Maqātil al-Ṭalibiyyīn. The copy of the book that he read to them is the one that has come down to us.²

This brings our study of Abū'l Faraj's intellectual record to an end and paves the way for the last part in this survey of the life of the author of al-Aghānī.

Abū'l Faraj led an easy life, far from privation. He lived in a large house in Baghdād overlooking the Tigris, between Darb Sulaymān and Darb Dijla and close to the house of Abū al-Faṭḥ al-Barīdī.³ In a verse Abū'l Faraj tells us that this house was his own property and not rented.⁴ Moreover, he had a boy-servant⁵, like most of the rich people of the time.

The sources from which he drew his income were:

1. His salary as a scribe in the dīwān of Rukn al-Dawla.⁶
2. The fees which he must have received from his students. There is no direct reference to this matter in the sources, but this conclusion can be reached from what Abū'l Faraj himself tells us

¹Yāqūt Udabā', Vol. V, p.166.

²Maqātil al-Ṭalibiyyīn, al-Najaf ed.(1353), p.1.

³Yāqūt, Vol. V, p.154.

⁴Ibid, Vol. V, p.160.

⁵Ibid, Vol. V, p.154.

⁶Yāqūt, Udabā', Vol. V, p.157.

in al-Aghānī about Ibn Abī 'Ubayda, who used to dictate the poetry of Kuthayyir for thirty Dīnars.¹

3. A third source of income was his books. ~~Al-Maqarrī~~ and Ibn Khaldūn state that al-Hakam al-Mustanṣir asked Abū'l Faraj to send him Kitāb al-Aghānī and sent him one thousand gold Dīnars.²
4. To that one can add the gifts of money he used to receive from his patron al-Muhallabī and which amounted, on one occasion, to five thousand Dīnars.³

Before his death he had a stroke⁴ and his intellect became disordered.⁵

Kitāb al-Aghānī

In spite of the fact that Abū'l Faraj compiled many books, his Kitāb al-Aghānī (Book of Songs) remains the one which has been unanimously considered to be his matchless masterpiece. His minor works lie in the shadow of this great work.

It seems that it was the habit of Abū'l Faraj to start his books with an introduction in which he explains the kind of information contained in the book and the method followed in compiling it. Both al-Aghānī

¹Agh.3, Vol. IX, p.5.

²See Ibn Khaldūn, Kitāb al-'Ibar wa Dīwān al Muḥtadā wa'l Khabar, (Ed.1867), Vol. IV, p.146, and ~~al-Maqarrī~~, Nafḥ al-Tīb, ed. Dozy, Dugat, Krehl and Wright (Leiden 1855-1860), Vol. I, p.250.

³al-Tanūkhī, Nishwār al-Muḥādara, ed. D. S. Margoliouth (1921), Vol. I, p.42.

⁴Yāqūt, Vol. V, p.156.

⁵Wafayat, Vol. II, p.251.

and Maqātil al-Ṭalibiyyīn have a similar introduction.

In his introduction to Kitāb al-Aghānī Abū'l Faraj tells us that in it he "collected the one hundred songs that had been chosen, by order of the Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd (incidentally, there are only ninety-nine, and not a hundred, in the book), by Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī, Ismā 'īl b. Jāmi' and Fulayh b. al-'Awra', and revised later by Ishāq al-Mawṣilī by order of the Caliph al-Wāthiq."¹

This is, however, but the least part of the work as, ^{as} in the Aghānī, one passes in review the whole of Arabic civilization from its very first days down to the end of the third century A.H.

It is true that the original aim of the book was the collection of the one hundred songs chosen by Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī and other singers, but Abū'l Faraj added to that the most important information about the poets who composed the verses of the songs, starting with an account of their lives and quoting much of their poetry. The composers of the melodies were treated in the same way and, in general, the milieu of musicians, singers and poets was described in great detail. Furthermore, Kitāb al-Aghānī contains many details about the social life and court life in the Umayyad and Abbasid periods, the ancient Arab tribes and their Ayyām, the social condition of women in the Umayyad and Abbasid periods, the life of pleasure and amusement, the literary history of the Arabs, and Arab music and song. To that one can add the scattered information on food, clothing

¹See the author's introduction, Agh.1, Vol. I, pp.2-3.

furniture, and business and transactions. The book is also a good source for the study of literary criticism. Biographies occupy a large part of the book and many pages are devoted to registering the lives and deeds of some 'Alids, in spite of the fact that Abū'l Faraj, early in his life, composed a book devoted entirely to them.

In the field of music and singing one must not fail to note that the book contains not only the one hundred melodies which were chosen for the Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd but many others chosen by Abū'l Faraj himself.

Lastly, this book has preserved all the essential traits exhibited in the preceding books on the same subject, which were lost and did not come down to us. It seems to incorporate and assimilate in its twenty-one volumes all the data provided by these books, which were written on the same lines and which never reached us.

In a word, Kitāb al-Aghānī is the "dīwān" (register) of the Arabs, as Ibn Khaldūn rightly describes it.

This, in general, is the kind of material one finds in the Aghānī.

If we are to classify this material, we can put it under five categories:

1. Technical and historical data about Arabian music and singing, with special emphasis on the question of melodies, musical schools and the different phases of evolution through which Arabian music passed.
2. Poetry, and information on poets, poetical schools, criticism and

other matters relating to the study of poetry.

3. Genealogies. (Abū'l Faraj wrote several books on this subject).
4. Ayyām al-'Arab: The great interest he shows in this subject seems to have been a result of the fact that he read Kitāb al-Naqā'id under al-Akhfash and al-Yazīdī; as it was pointed out earlier, most of the accounts on the Ayyām al-'Arab in the Aghānī, however, are related on the authority of trustworthy rāwiyas like al-Sukkarī, Ibn Ḥabīb and Abū'Ubayda.
5. Literary prose, anecdotes and historical narratives.

Of these five categories, the first two occupy the greater part of the book and, thus, deserve a closer look.

On the musical side, we have technical terms indicating the iṣba' (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 of the time.

The literary side of the picture deals with the verses of the songs, the poet's biography, his 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 acti-

vities of the time.

All poetry in the Aghānī is by poets whose poetry was borrowed by singers and it was treated as aṣwāt, and not as qasīdas. In other words, if the musicians or singers changed the words of a verse or added to the poem some new verses, Abū'l Faraj would mention them as they were sung and would later point out the changes and mention the original verses. This, however, does not mean that melodized poetry is the only type of poetry to be found in Aghānī, but it means that the only poets discussed in this book were those whose poetry had some kind of connection with the art of Ghinā'. One might remark, in this connection, that the great interest of Abū'l Faraj in Ghinā' seems to have been a result of the high place of this art in social life. Suffice it to say that, among those who were highly qualified in Ghinā' and musical theory during the life-time of Abū'l Faraj, were persons like the Caliph al-Mu'tadid bi'l-Lāh, Ibn al-Mu'tazz, 'Abd al-Lāh b. Tāhir and other notables.

The study of each poet in the Aghānī runs according to the following plan:

- a) The origin of the poet, his genealogy, his birth, etc.
- b) His poetical merits, his relations with the Caliphs and members of the ruling house and other notables, and the school to which he belonged. During this he mentions the views of the different critics and, sometimes, his own views on the poet.
- c) A description of the life of the poet, followed by the accounts and anecdotes which involve his name.

In his study of the mughannūn, Abū'l Faraj followed a similar plan.

Of the material in the Aghānī it is necessary to say something about the sources from which this material was derived.

It is not difficult for any one who reads this book to assume that Abū'l Faraj relied on three different sources of information:

1. Oral narratives,
2. Written books,
3. Written narratives.

In connection with his first source one can state that Abū'l Faraj, like many of the learned men of his time, was in the first place a rāwīya. His interest in the riwayat al-Akhbar very often made him cite things which he, himself, did not believe. In the Aghānī one very often reads things like: "I think this narrative is far from true, but this is how it was related to me by Ibn Abī al-Azhar",¹ or "we cite this narrative because we do not want to deprive the book of things people wrote down and knew".² We need not, however, cite here all the names of his authorities for oral narratives, but one should not fail to remark that not all of them were of absolute trustworthiness or reliability.³

¹See Agh.3, Vol. XII, p.293. For other examples see Agh.1, Vol.I, p.93, Vol.II, p.35 and others.

²This remark occurs very often in the Aghānī. See, for example, Agh.3, Vol.IX, pp.300, 305; Vol.X, p.40; Agh.1, Vol. XVIII, p.161, and others.

³Among his unreliable authorities are: Ibn Abī al-Azhar, al-Baghandī, Muḥ. b. Khalaf b. Wakī', al-Ṭusī, Aḥmad b. Muḥ. b. Sa'id, Aḥmad b. Ja'far b. Jahzā, al-Ṣūlī, and others.

As for his second source of information (i.e. written books), Ibn al-Nadīm says that Abū'l Faraj relied, for the compilation of his Aghānī, on books more than on oral narratives.¹ To this one can add that, from what Abū'l Faraj himself says in the introduction to his book Maqātil al-Ṭalibiyīn, one understands that, during his period of study, the practice of al-riḥla fī ṭalab al-'ilm had ceased, and that the students usually studied under the famous Shuyūkh of their home towns. In other words, these Shuyūkh, being acquainted with what information earlier rāwiyas had collected, were the main source of knowledge during Abū'l Faraj's lifetime. The other remark that one should make is that from the very many names of books that are mentioned in the Aghānī it appears that, during this period, written books became an important rival of the Shuyūkh as a source of knowledge.

It is essential, however, to say that not all the books from which Abū'l Faraj derived his material were important sources and that not all his Shuyūkh were of good reputation, or great fame.

Among the important sources he used for the compilation of the Aghānī were the following: The books of Abū al-'Abbas Tha'lab, the books of al-Yazīdī, the books of Ibn al-A'rābī, the books of Abī 'Amr al-Shaybānī, the books of Ibn Ḥabīb al-Sukkarī, the books of al-Mubarrād, the books of Qudāma b. Ja'far, the books of Ibn al-Mu'tazz, the books of

¹ Fihrist, Vol. I, p. 115.

Ishāqal-Mawsilī, and others.¹

The third source of information that Abū'l Faraj relied on in compiling his Aghānī was the written statements he used to receive from the learned men of the time on subjects of importance to his book. All anecdotes or narratives derived from written statements can be distinguished from others because they have this beginning: "I was told by..., in his letter to me,..."²

The spirit of a rāwīya in Abū'l Faraj, however, was not dominant always and, on many occasions, he took a very firm stand in the face of the Ruwāt. Amongst the ruwāt he severely attacked and strongly criticized were Ibn al-Kalbī and Ibn Khurradādhba. In the words of Abū'l Faraj, "the lies of Ibn al-Kalbī"³ and "the unreliability of Ibn Khurradādhba"⁴ were the reason for neglecting some of their narratives. The following passage might be of great value in showing us the attitude of Abū'l Faraj towards the ruwāt and the method he follows in choosing the material of his books. In his account of the uprising of Abū'l Sarāyā and the narratives

¹Like the books of Muh. b. Tāhir, the books of his maternal grandfather Yahyā b. Muh. b. Thawāba, the book of al-Marhibī al-Kawkabī, the book of Muh. b. al-Ḥasan al-Kātib, and many others. See Agh.1, Vol. XII, p.142; Vol. XIII, p.34; Agh.3, Vol. XIII, p.210; Vol. X, pp.199,175; Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.44, Agh.3, Vol. XI, p.21 and many others.

²See for example Agh.3, Vol. XIII, p.126; Agh., Vol. XXI, p.85.

³See Agh.3, Vol. XII, p.34.

⁴See Ibid, Vol. XI, p.333.

he chose for this account, he says about the narratives of 'Alī b. Muḥ. b. Sulaymān al-Nawfalī: "I might use very little of them because 'Alī b. Muḥ. was an Imāmī. His fanaticism for his dogma might make him less reliable as a narrator. Almost all his narratives were related on the authority of his father who was, at that time, a resident of al-Baṣra with no means of direct information. All his information was rumour that reached him through ordinary people. He used to commit this to writing without sufficient knowledge, with the express purpose of humiliating and vilifying people. Thus, I had to rely on the narratives of one like Naṣr b. Muḥ. b. Muzāḥim, who was, far from any doubt, reliable in all the traditions he related..."¹ Not only the ruwāt, but also the information contained in a riwāya was very often criticised and commented on by Abū'l Faraj. He based his criticism mainly on contradictions and errors committed in the text of the riwāya. An example of this could be found in his criticism of the narrative of al-Mada'inī which states that Abū'l Aswad al-Du'alī died in 69 A.H. This statement is rejected by Abū'l Faraj because, as he says, Abū'l Aswad did not have any role in the uprising of al-Mukhtār al-Thaqafī (who was killed in 67). This made Abū'l Faraj reject al-Mada'inī's statement and accept the view of Yahyā b. Ma'in, who believed that Abū'l Aswad died before 69.² Another example of Abū'l

¹Maqātil al-Ṭalibiyyīn, p.518.

²Agh.3, Vol. XII, p.334: for other examples see Ibid, Vol. XII, p.286; Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.12; Agh.3, Vol. XII, pp.194-195; Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.97; Vol. XX, pp.135-136, 158.

Faraj's treatment of his sources and his method in writing is that in connection with Yahyā al-Makkī. The latter's inaccuracy in his books of songs was strongly criticized and condemned as leading to all the mistakes made by later writers who quoted him, especially in the field of ajnas (modes). His son Ahmad, who corrected the father's collection of songs, is ranked much higher by Abū'l Faraj, considered much more reliable and praised for his efforts in that field.¹ In another place he specifies that Ahmad's book is a major source on songs and is second to none but Ishāq al-Mawsilī's.²

On some occasions, when the same information was shared by more than one narrative, we find Abū'l Faraj discussing the different narratives, pointing out the weak points in every one of them, and approving the one he considers most authentic.³

The talent of Abū'l Faraj as a critic appears at its best in his remarks and comments on poetry. We are able, more often than not, to identify, by the help of these remarks and comments, the verses attributed wrongly to poets other than their original composers.⁴ Abū'l Faraj, of

¹See Agh.1, Vol. VI, p.179.

²See Ibid, Vol. XV, p.66.

³See, for example, his critical study of the different narratives on the name of Shurayh b. al-Hārith, who was a Qādī during the Caliphate of 'Umar and 'Alī, in Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.35; another example, Ibid, Vol. XVI, p.88.

⁴Examples of what he calls al-Shi'r al-Masnū', and his criticism of the narratives, can be found in Agh.3, Vol. XIII, pp.4, 265, 124, 97, 73; Vol. XII, p.34; Agh.1, Vol. XIV, p.77; Vol. XVI, p.12, and many others.

course, did not follow this critical method in all his dealings with the material contained in al-Aghānī. In fact, the criticism of the material constitutes only a small part of the book, whereas the larger part is devoted to the accumulation of a mass of anecdotes and narratives, through which one has to dig one's way patiently and carefully.

As the book was based on the collection of the one hundred songs which had different poets and composers of different times and classes, Abū'l Faraj was unable, as he says,¹ to follow a chronological order in the classification of the material in the book.

The book is divided into aṣwāt and each ṣawt is followed by an account of the poet who wrote the verses and the composer of the melody. This method made Abū'l Faraj unable to avoid some disadvantages. One of these disadvantages is the repetition of the same information in more than one place, because the information concerning one ṣawt might involve many names of poets, singers, Caliphs and others; thus, Abū'l Faraj had to repeat sometimes much of the same information in the accounts of each of them. Another disadvantage is the scattering of information on the same person or matter in different parts of the book. This resulted from the fact that, sometimes, more than one poem of the same poet was set to music and, as the basis of the classification of the material was the aṣwāt, Abū'l Faraj had to mention with every ṣawt the information he thought suitable. Thus the material was scattered in

¹See Agh.1, Vol. I, p.3.

different parts of the book, without any order.¹

Another matter, worthy of discussion in this study of Kitāb al-Aghānī, is the wording of narratives and anecdotes. Did Abū'l Faraj retain the words of the original narrators in his anecdotes, or did he convey what the narrators meant in his own words?

It seems that the attitude of Abū'l Faraj towards this matter depended, to a large extent on the nature of the material he dealt with. In literary information and historical anecdotes, Abū'l Faraj seems to have retained with great care the wording of the original texts from which he copied.² Poetry and literary texts in al-Aghānī were, no doubt, narrated in their original words, unless the poetry was set to music, in which case Abū'l Faraj relates the verses of a ṣawt as they were sung by

¹For an example of these disadvantages, see in al-Aghānī the accounts about the poet Jarīr and the singer Ishāq al-Mawsilī.

²Compare, for example, the narrative of Yūnus b. Ḥabīb, about al-Farazdaq and Jarīr in Agh.1, Vol. VII, p.38, with Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā', Ibn Sallām, Leiden ed. p.75; the narrative of Bashshār b. Mur'ith in Agh.1, Vol. VII, p.40, with Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā', p.86; the description of Abī Zubayd al-Ṭā'ī in the counsel of the Caliph 'Uthmān, of the lion in Agh.1, Vol. XI, pp.24-25 with the text in Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā', pp.132-134; Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.170 with Ṭabarī, I, p.1295 ff; Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.224-230, with Ṭabarī, I, p.1432 ff.

the singers, and not as they were originally composed by the poets.¹

Even in the narration of Akhbār the present writer is inclined to believe that Abū'l Faraj used to retain as many words as possible of the original riwāya; whenever he was unable to do so he expressly stated that the words were his own.² What strengthens this belief is that, when he has more than one rāwī for the same anecdote, he usually identifies the rāwī whose words he uses in his text.³ Thus it is possible to assume that, unless stated otherwise, Abū'l Faraj retained the original words of narrators.

Abū'l Faraj enjoyed an unparalleled confidence from his contemporaries and later writers on him. Ibn al-Nadīm,⁴ al-Tha'ālibī,⁵ Yāqūt⁶, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī,⁷ Ibn Khallikān,⁸ and others all praise his accuracy

¹Some singers used to add or change the verses of a poem, to make it suit the melody see, for example, Agh.1, Vol.XIV, pp.98-99.

²Many examples of this occur in al-Aghānī. see, for example: Agh.3, Vol. XIII, p.164; Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.67; Ibid, Vol. XVI, p.2..etc;

³We often read in al-Aghānī things like: "The narrative of al-Sukkarī is more reliable, and the words are his", Agh.1, Vol. XII, p.105; "The narrative of Ibn al-Naṭṭāh is more reliable, and the words are his", Agh.1, Vol. XV, p.3.

⁴See Fihrist, Vol. I, p.115.

⁵See Yatīma, Vol. III, p.109.

⁶See Udabā', Vol. V, p.152.

⁷See al-Khaṭīb, Vol. XI, p.400.

⁸See Wafayat, Vol. II, p.250.

and consider him a reliable author.¹

Any comparison between some of the texts that occur in the Aghānī and earlier sources shows that Abū'l Faraj was worthy of this confidence and praise.² This comparison, however, is not possible in the case of the larger part of the material contained in the book because it has no equivalent in other sources, but the fact that he very often comments on doubtful narratives,³ makes us retain our confidence in his accuracy.

¹Al-Hasan b. al-Husayn al-Nawbakhtī was the only one to call him "the great liar" because, as al-Nawbakhtī claims, "he used to frequent the market of the book-dealers, purchase a heap of manuscripts there, bring them home and make extracts therefrom." See al-Khatib, Vol. XI, p.399.

²Compare Agh.1, Vol. XVIII, p.123 with al-Kāmil, Mubarrad, Vol. I, p.140. Agh.1, Vol. VI, pp.161-62 with Mubarrad, al-Kāmil, Vol. I, pp.168-169; Agh.Brünnow, p.21 with al-Kāmil, Mubarrad, Vol. I, p.178; Agh.1, Vol. VIII, p.10 with al-Kāmil, Mubarrad, Vol. I, pp.375-376; Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.14 with al-Kāmil, Mubarrad, Vol. I, p.338. Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.120. with Ibn Qutayba, 'Uyūn al-Akhbār, Vol. IV, p.93, and al-Shi'r wa'l Shu'arā, Vol. I, p.502; Agh.1, Vol. XIV, pp.85-86 with Naqā'id, Bevan ed., Vol. I, pp.383-384; Agh.1, Vol. V, p.118 with Kitāb al-Tāj, p.48; Agh.1, Vol. VIII, p.138 with Ansāb al-Ashraf, al-Balādhurī, Vol. V, p.202; Agh.1, Vol. III, p.103 with Ansāb, Vol. XI, pp.204-205, and Agh.1, Vol. XIV, pp.85-86 with Tabarī, II, p.1338.

³For examples of his commentary on doubtful narratives see the following: Agh.3, Vol. X, pp.141-142, Vol. XII, pp.34, 291, 294, 295, 298. Vol. XIII, pp.73, 141, 158, 189, 191, 308, 309; Agh.1, Vol. XIII, pp.44, 49, 56, 96, 97, 156, Vol. XIV, pp.77, 77-79, Vol. XV, pp.32-33, Vol. XVI, pp.35, 88, and many others.

The study of Kitāb al-Aghānī is connected, in most of the old and modern works, with the name of Sayf al-Dawla b. Ḥamdān. Some of these sources claim that Abū'l Faraj was fifty years in compiling it and that he took it to Sayf al-Dawla, who remunerated him with one thousand pieces of gold regretting, at the same time, his inability to offer a more adequate recompense.¹ It is not the one thousand pieces of gold, nor the expression of regret, that arouses one's curiosity but the name of Sayf al-Dawla the Ḥamdānī which stirs our doubts, for more than one reason.

1. The author of al-Aghānī was living in Baghdād and enjoying the patronage of the Buyids, the bitter enemies of the Ḥamdānids.
2. All the sources within our reach give no evidence that Abū'l Faraj visited Aleppo or established any kind of relation with the Ḥamdānid Court there.
3. In the author's introduction to Kitāb al-Aghānī Abū'l Faraj tells us that he wrote this book on the request of one of the Ru'asā',² a fact which leads to the following question: was Sayf al-Dawla a Ra'īs of Abū'l Faraj?

A careful examination of the sources dealing with the life and works of Abū'l Faraj might shed some light on this matter. Ibn al-Nadīm, a contemporary of Abū'l Faraj³ and the author of al-Fihrist which was

¹See, for example, Wafayāt, Vol. II, p.250.

²See the author's introduction, Agh.1, Vol. I, p.4.

³According to Ibn al-Ghazzī, Ibn al-Nadīm died in 390 A.H. See: Diwān al-Islām, Ibn al-Ghazzī, a manuscript in the possession of Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriya, referred to by M. 'Abdal-Jawād al-Aṣma'ī, Abū'l Faraj al-Iṣbahānī wa Kitābuh al-Aghānī, Cairo 1951, p.97, Note 1.

written only seventeen years after the death of the latter,¹ does not refer to this fact at all. Al-Tha'ālibī, on the other hand, in whose Yatīma a chapter was devoted to the donations of Sayf al-Dawla to the poets,² and another to the life and works of Abū'l Faraj³, remains silent about any kind of relation between Abū'l Faraj and Sayf al-Dawla. What makes al-Tha'ālibī's silence of importance is the fact that he was a contemporary of Abū'l Faraj and Sayf al-Dawla and, in his Yatīma, a good number of pages was devoted to a detailed study of their lives and works.

Al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī, like his two predecessors, does not mention such a matter at all.⁵

The first source to mention this matter was Mu'jam al-Udabā', of Yāqūt al-Rūmī. The text in Yāqūt reads: "The Wazīr, Abū'l Qāsim al-Hasan al-Maghribī, said in the introduction to his selections from the Kitāb al-Aghānī compiled by Abū'l Faraj al-Iṣbahānī that Abū'l Faraj presented Kitāb al-Aghānī to Sayf al-Dawla b. Hamdān and was remunerated with one thousand Dīnārs. On knowing that, al-Ṣāhib Abū'l Qāsim b. 'Abbād said that Sayf al-Dawla ought to have paid him much more because the

¹See the author's introduction, al-Fibrīst, Vol. I, p.2.

²See Yatīma, Vol. I, pp.20-23.

³Ibid, Vol. III, pp.103-113.

⁴Al-Tha'ālibī was born in 350 and died 429, see Wafayāt, Vol. II, p.130.

⁵See al-Khatīb, Vol. XI, pp.398-400.

book is of great value. He praised the book and said that he possessed two hundred and six thousand books but al-Aghānī remained his daily companion... Abū Muh. al-Muhallabī said that he asked Abū'l Faraj about the time he spent compiling the book and Abū'l Faraj answered that it took him fifty years to do so, and that in his life-time he wrote only the copy he presented to Sayf al-Dawla."¹

The authenticity of the above text can be tested only by the study of the life of al-Wazīr al-Maghribī, on whose authority the text was related. For our study of the life of al-Wazīr al-Maghribī we will depend on the biography written by Yāqūt.²

1. The name of al-Wazīr al-Maghribī, given in the above text as Abū'l Qāsim al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥasan, is, according to the biography of Abū'l Qāsim al-Ḥusayn b. 'alī b. al-Ḥasan.
2. According to the biography also, al-Wazīr al-Maghribī was born in 370 in Egypt and died 418 in Diyār Bakr.
3. He spent most of his life in Ramla, Mecca, Wāsit, Mawṣil and Diyār Bakr. His stay in Baghdād was very short because the Caliph al-Qādir bi'l-Lāh considered his presence in the capital a threat to the safety of the Abbasid dynasty.

¹Yāqūt, Udabā', Vol. V, pp.150-151.

²Ibid, Vol. IV, pp.60-64.

4. He was involved many times in political conspiracies and devoted much of his time to political activity.
5. In the biography there is no reference to the selections from al-Aghānī, in spite of the fact that we read in it the names of all the literary works he composed.

All these facts, considered together, make it possible to claim that al-Wazīr al-Maghribī was in no way in a better position than Ibn al-Nadīm and al-Tha'ālibī to pronounce on Abū'l Faraj and Sayf al-Dawla.

Moreover, one must not fail to remember that there is another statement on the subject given by Ibn Khaldūn and al-Maqqarī which has much in common with this statement.

In their account on al-Ḥakam al-Mustanṣir and his love for belles-lettres, Ibn Khaldūn and al-Maqqarī say: "He asked Abū'l Faraj al-Iṣbahānī to send him Kitāb al-Aghānī, and rewarded him with one thousand gold dīnārs. Abū'l Faraj sent him a copy before the book was displayed in Iraq."¹

The importance of this text is that it contains the story of the reward, like the other one, but differs from it in the name of the rewarder. The name of al-Ḥakam, however, is more acceptable to anyone familiar with the course of the life of Abū'l Faraj than the name of Sayf al-Dawla, for more than one reason:

¹See Kitāb al-'ibar, Vol. IV, p.146 and Nafḥ al-Tīb, Vol. I, p.250.

1. Al-Hakam, like Abū'l Faraj, was an Umayyad.
2. It is a recognised fact that Abū'l Faraj used to compile books and send them to the Umayyads of al-Andalus.¹
3. Abū'l Faraj did not disclose in his introduction to al-Aghānī the name of the Ra'īs on whose request he wrote the book.² A possible explanation of this could be that the name of this Ra'īs, if revealed, might cause him some trouble. One cannot ignore the unpopularity of al-Hakam's name in Baghdād at that time.

This argument, one must admit, does not definitely shake the full authenticity of Yāqūt's statement but, at least, sets the ground ready for further investigation if new material comes to light in the future.

Despite the widespread popularity of the Kitāb al-Aghānī and the high esteem in which it was held, no complete ancient manuscript seems to have survived. The work normally filled twenty large volumes but one set, at least, is known to have consisted of twenty-four. This is the Ms. Feyzullah (Millet Kutuphanesi, Istanbul, No. 1564) which contains Volumes XXI, XXIII and XXIV of the Kitāb al-Aghānī.³ Yāqūt al-Rumī copied the author's copy of the Aghānī in ten volumes for his own use.⁴ There also exist several abbreviated versions.⁵ The oldest manuscript, of which ten

¹See ^{above} ~~below~~ p. 25.

²See ^{above} ~~below~~ p. 43.

³Burlington Magazine (1953) p.129.

⁴Udabā', Vol. V, p.151.

⁵See Brockelmann, Geschichte, (1898 ed.) Vol. I, p.146.

disjointed volumes survive, appears to be the one in the Feyzullah library, Istanbul, whose Colophon is dated 526/1131.¹ The next in Chronological order is a set of volumes (from twenty) of which some are dated 614/1217. Four of these are in the Egyptian library, Cairo (Vol.II, IV, XI, XIII), and two more belong to the Feyzullah library, Istanbul (Vol. XVII, XIX).² "This manuscript," Dr. S. Rice says, "is of particular interest because it is the only known copy of which the first page of each volume is embellished by a miniature. Only five of the six volumes have preserved these frontispieces, but it is more than likely that, originally, all the twenty volumes were adorned."³

Dr. Rice says also: "There is no specific connection between the subjects depicted on such frontispiece-miniature and the narrative in the volumes which they adorn... The frontispieces of the Aghani manuscript are of a dedicatory nature, and the miniature of Vol. XI, which Dr. Fares mistook for a scene from the life of Muhammad, belongs to the same category."⁴

Of Vol.I there is a manuscript in the Hekimoglu library (Turkey) dated 1081 A.H., and another manuscript dated 1142 A.H.⁵

In 1840 the first volume of Kitāb al-Aghani was published in

¹See Burlington Magazine, (1953), p.129.

²Ibid, loc.cit.

³Burlington Magazine, (1953), p.129.

⁴Ibid, Loc. cit.

⁵H.Ritter, Oriens, (1949), p.276.

Gripesvoldiae with a Latin translation by Ludovico Kosegarten. The work on this edition, however, stopped after the appearance of the first volume and Kitāb al-Aghānī had to wait twenty eight years before it appeared in print again.

The first edition of the Aghānī was published in Būlāq 1285/1868-9 in twenty volumes. R. Brünnow published in 1888 a twenty-first volume, being a collection of texts found in the manuscripts preserved in the Berlin library and not contained in the Būlāq edition. I. Guidi made the alphabetical tables of the book, according to the Būlāq edition, in the years 1895-1900 and published them in a separate volume. The second edition was a reproduction of the Būlāq edition, together with the twenty-first volume and the tables of Guidi (al-Ḥāj Muḥ. al-Sāsī, Cairo, 1323/1905). The third and best edition was started in Cairo (Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya) in 1927; up till now only thirteen volumes have been published. Muḥ. 'Abd al-Jawād al-Aṣma'ī edited the list of corrections made by Muḥ. Maḥmūd al-Shingīṭī on his personal copy of the Būlāq edition of the Aghānī (Cairo, 1915). Lastly, we are indebted to J. Wellhausen, for the editing of some texts which were lacking in the manuscripts used for the Būlāq edition and which left a noticeable gap in the information on page 139, volume fourteen of this edition.¹

For the study in the following chapters I used the thirteen volumes of the Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya edition, the twenty volumes of the Būlāq edition, the twenty-first volume of Brünnow and the Corrections of al-

¹These texts were published in Z.D.M.G. 50 (Leipzig), 1896), pp.145-151. .

Shinqīti on the Būlāq edition. The texts edited by Wellhausen did not contribute anything of importance to ~~this~~ study.

Al-Aghani was used by many scholars for the study of the history of Arab Civilization. Among those who used it one can name Caussin de Perceval, Von Kremer, Goldziher, Mez, Lammens, R. Levy, Von Grunebaum, Aḥmad Amīn and others. Most of those who used it have not made a full use of all the information about their subject to be found in it. The fact that the information on a certain point in this book is scattered in different parts of the twenty one volumes, and the fact that there are too many contradictory statements on the same subject, made some writers give immature and, sometimes, inaccurate statements. This fount of knowledge, however, is an indispensable source for any one who wants to rebuild an unbiased picture of Arab Civilization.

THE LIFE OF
PLEASURE AND AMUSEMENT
IN THE
UMAYYAD PERIOD

An introductory note:

This examination of the life of pleasure and amusement in the Umayyad period has been made, basically, on the information to be found in the Kitāb al-Aghānī.

An examination of the material contained in the twentyone volumes of this book shows that the information on social life is exceedingly fragmentary and, in most cases, the references are indirect. Doubtless, Abū'l Faraj's purpose in writing the book was not the portrayal of the social life of the Muslim society in the periods that preceded his age. Nor was it his aim to draw a picture of the social practices and traditions. All he aimed at was the recording of the narratives which he heard or read or copied and which related to the subject of Ghinā', his major interest, in a book bearing his name.

In the course of the different narratives thus recorded references of great value for the study of social life occur. The information on social life in these references is indirect and sometimes contradicts earlier information. Moreover, the picture that one arrives at after reading the Aghānī can in no way be described as complete and one soon discovers that there are many gaps to be filled and many questions to be answered. This made it necessary for us to seek the help of other sources. But, in spite of that, many questions remain unanswered and the picture is far from complete.

However, it is necessary to mention that our method of approach depended, in the first place, on the kind of material we found in the

Aghani and that we tried to make use of other sources in as much as they offered information of value to this study.

Singing in the Umayyad period.A - The origin of Arabian music

Some of the writers who have written on the subject of Arabian music have looked, in the matter of origins, to either Greece or Persia.¹ The temptation to look towards these two countries is, probably, a result of the belief of these writers that the Arabs, in their early history, had no knowledge of, nor traditions in, music and singing and, thus, when they made their intellectual contacts with these two civilizations they borrowed from them their musical art. Other writers hold that the art of music which flourished in al-Hijāz in the Umayyad period was an outcome of the influence of the people from the conquered territories upon the social life of the Muslim inhabitants of that country.²

In considering these two views one cannot ignore the importance of the Greek and Byzantine elements which might have penetrated to the Arabian music of the Umayyad period, nor can one ignore the influence of the people from the conquered lands; but these two factors must not be overstated. In the Aghānī there is enough information to show that the Arabs in the Jāhiliyya had quite an established knowledge of, and tradition in, music and singing. In many of the houses of the nobility and

¹See the English translation of Von Kremer's Culturgeschichte des Orients, by S.Khuda Bukhsh, p.33.

²See Faṭṭḥ al-Islām, Aḥmad Amīn, 6th ed. (Cairo, 1950), pp.119-122.

the wealthy, music and musicians received special favour. Trained and qualified female singers were known at banquets and on festive occasions and those who possessed them claimed wealth and power.¹ This does not mean, however, that female singers were known only by the wealthy and nobles because there is evidence that there were places where the qiyān (singing slave-girls) sang for the entertainment of the public. It is related, for example, that when the famous poet al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī visited Yathrib he was taken to listen to a qayna who sang some verses composed by him.²

There is no indication that the qiyān who entertained the public in al-Hijāz sang in a language other than Arabic and, in more than one account, it is stated that the qiyān used to sing in Arabic³. This, coupled with the fact that these qiyān had Arabic names, makes it safe to claim that, in Arab antiquity, there was an Arab art of music and singing. Even in the field of musical instruments it is known that the Arab qiyān used certain instruments to accompany their singing. At least al-duff (tambourine)⁴ and al-mizhar (lute)⁵ were among the instruments used by female singers at that time.

It seems that the art of singing and entertaining in al-Hīra, before Islam, had reached a very advanced stage. Although al-Hīra was a

¹See Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.120 and Agh.3, Vol. XI, p.121.

²See Agh.3, Vol. XI, p.10.

³See, for example, Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.120 and Agh.3, Vol. XI, pp.10, 21.

⁴See Agh.3, Vol. XI, p.121.

⁵See Agh.1, Vol. XV, p.33.

neighbour of Persia and was supposed to be exposed to Persian influence, the qiyān there sang in Arabic and were ready to answer the requests of the listeners who asked them to sing certain verses from the poetry of a particular Arab poet. Famous among them was bint 'Afzar.¹ In this way the claim of von Kremer that "these female singers originally sang in their own tongue, Greek or Persian, and not Arabic. Not until the middle of the first century of the Hijra did a genuine school of Arab music come into existence in Mekka and somewhat later in Medina",² is partially untrue. It might be true that it was not until the middle of the first century of the Hijra that a genuine school of Arab music came into existence, but we can in no way accept the first part of the statement in which von Kremer claims that the female singers used to sing in their own tongue and not in Arabic because, as we have just seen, we possess more than one piece of evidence for the fact that many of them did use Arabic.

It seems that singing in languages other than Arabic was to be found only in the Courts of the Ghassanids and possibly the Lakhmids and not in al-Hijāz itself. We possess the following anecdote related on the authority of the poet Ḥassān b. Thābit who witnessed, at the Court of the Ghassanid monarch Jabala b. al-Ayham, the following scene: "I saw ten singing slave-girls, five of them Byzantines, singing the songs of their country to the accompaniment of the barbat (lute or barbiton),

¹See Agh.3, Vol. XI, p.96.

²See von Kremer, op.cit, p.33.

and five others singing the songs of al-Hīra. Those last five singing slave-girls were given to Jabala by Iyās b. Qubayṣa. Arab singers also came from Mecca and elsewhere for his entertainment."¹ The last part of Ḥassān's eye-witness report, if true, is of great importance because it states very clearly that there were, before Islam, professional Arab singers in Mecca and elsewhere who were sometimes summoned to the courts of Arab monarchs in neighbouring provinces. The school of Arab music which, according to von Kremer, did not come into existence until the middle of the first century of the Hijra had, according to this report, its origin in earlier days.

Farmer remarks that "during the days of Idolatry, music as a profession was in the hands of the women-folk and slave-girls for the greater part, at any rate, in al-Hijāz and the Peninsula generally."² This remark seems to be true because the only name of a male singer that can be traced in the sources is the name of Mālik b. Jubayr al-Mughannī (the singer), who was one of the deputation of the Banī Tay' to the Prophet in al-Madīna.³

In the period that followed, the rise of Islam, the struggle for its continuance and survival and later the great events at home and abroad, all were factors that withheld the rapid evolution and progress

¹See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.15.

²Farmer, op.cit., p.44.

³See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.48.

of the art of music and song. But these factors, nevertheless, did not stop every musical activity even in the parts of the Peninsula that were under Muḥammad. On one occasion, we read in the Aghānī that the Prophet passed by Sīrīn, the slave-girl of Ḥassan b. Thābit, who was singing:

"Is there upon me (woe to you)
any crime if I am gay."

Muḥammad smiled and said: "There will be no crime, if God wills."¹

Although we are in no position to defend or attack the authenticity of the above anecdote we can, at least, claim that this Sīrīn was a musical and singing celebrity of her time and composed many tunes,² and that her songs were sung by the later famous songstress 'Azza al-Maylā,³. Moreover, it is not wrong to claim that, at the dawn of Islām, there was no specific ban on music. In an account in the Aghānī we read that the Qurashis heard that the poet al-A'shā Maymūn b. Qays was on his way to meet Muḥammad and declare his Islām. They decided to intercept him. This they did, and they endeavoured to dissuade him from his project by pointing out that Muḥammad had made unlawful (ḥarām) many things to which al-A'shā was strongly addicted. When al-A'shā asked what were the things that Muḥammad had made unlawful, Abū Sufyān answered: "they

¹See Agh.3, Vol. XII, p.67.

²See, for example, the reference to a tune composed by Sīrīn, in Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.18.

³See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.13.

are fornication, gambling, usury and wine."¹ Had music been among the unlawful things, it would assuredly have been mentioned, especially when we remember that al-A'shā was known to have been a great admirer of music and singing.²

We are in no way concerned with the very long argument that occupied legists and orientalisks about the attitude of Islam towards music because our material sheds but very little new light on this matter and because H. G. Farmer made an exhaustive study of everything that was written on the subject and made good use of the information to be found in the Aghani.³ But it seems almost certain that Muḥammad had no obvious objections to the kind of Ghinā' that was called al-ḥudā' and which represented an old-established tradition of the Caravans carrying passengers across the lands of Arabia.⁴

¹The full account is mentioned in Agh.1, Vol. VIII, pp.35-36.

²See the biography and the accounts of the life of the poet al-A'shā in Agh.1, Vol. VIII, pp.76-86.

³See Farmer, op. cit., pp.22-36.

⁴See, for example, Agh. Brunnaw, p.86 and Wensink, Concordance de la tradition Musulmane, Vol. I, sub."Ḥadā", p.438.

The inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula have since ancient times been chiefly dependent on commerce. The nature of their country, its geographical situation, and other factors, had imposed the necessity of commercial activities as the back-bone of their economy and the most important means of earning their living. We need not explain here the importance of transport to trade. Of all animals, the camel was the best suited to fulfill that task, with its natural endurance and other qualities.

Against this background the real value of the Caravan-song, or ḥudā', appears in relief: it was not a mere pastime, but an essential element to the life and work of the Arabs. Its effect on the camel itself is remarkable.

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

Before proceeding to remark on the musical position under the Rāshidūn it is worth mentioning that there is no reference in the Aghānī to the question of the nationality of the singing slave-girls who were in private possession, or those of them who worked in the houses of public entertainment in the Jāhiliyya, nor is there reference to the question of the trade in qiyān, their prices, nor their musical training. There is only one reference, however, to this question in our material, and it is in connection with Sīrīn, the singing slave-girl of Ḥassān b. Thābit. It is stated in al-Ṭabari that she was sent to Muḥammad with

broken by a fall from his camel, uttered in his pain: Yā yadāh (Oh, my hound), the sound of which affected his camel. (see E.I. I, art. "Arūd", Weil, pp.465-6). This account may not be historically verifiable yet it has its significance in showing the effect of rhythm in this sphere. It is likely that ḥudā' was used to quicken, or slow down the animal's stride according to the driver's wish. The latter story is supposed to account also for the origin of the rajaḥ metre, which was the metre used in ḥudā', conforming rhythmically to the movement of the Camel's feet. (See Ibid. Loc.cit.). The close connection between ḥudā' and the rajaḥ metre is another evidence to prove how old this form of simple chanting is. However, the evolution of the more artistic songs which adorned the palaces of notables and Caliphs later in the Muslim era has waved aside the ḥudā' to a secondary place, although it is almost certain that it has never ceased to be chanted in the Caravans which carried the passengers throughout the deserts of Arabia.

her sister Māriya by al-Muqawqis, the Coptic ruler of Egypt, in the year 7 A.H., and that, while on her way to al-Madīna, she accepted Islam as taught to her by Ḥaṭīb b. Abī Balta'a, who accompanied her on the trip. Muḥammad gave her to Ḥassān b. Thābit, who later married her.¹ However, it is not impossible that most of the qiyān were either Greek or Byzantine or Persian, purchased from Syria or Persia by the merchants who had commercial relations with these countries. The question whether there were Arab-born qiyān, or not, remains unanswered.

After the death of the Prophet and the succession of the Orthodox Caliphs music seems to have had a better chance of evolution and progress. In al-Aghānī we come across two contradictory statements about music during the reign of the Orthodox Caliphs. The first occurs in a text dealing with the allegations of Ibn Khurradādhba (the rāwīya), who stated in a narrative that the Caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb sang once a certain tune. Abū'l Faraj, in condemning these allegations, says: "This is untrue, 'Umar never sang and Arabic singing was not known at his time, except what was called al-Naṣb and al-ḥudā'."²

Al-Naṣb, according to Arabic dictionaries, is a kind of singing similar to ḥudā'; it was so called because, in singing it, the voice is raised or elevated.³ Thus, according to this statement, the Arabs

¹See Tabarī, I, p.1591.

²See Agh. 3, Vol. IX, p.250.

³See, for example, Tāj al-'Arūs, sub. "Naṣb", Vol. I, p.486.

under the Orthodox Caliphs knew only naṣb and ḥudā', which both belonged to the Caravan-song category and which were meant to urge or excite the camels of the Caravan. The second statement occurs in a text dealing with a ṣawt composed by Sīrīn. Abū'l Faraj says that this ṣawt has a laḥn (melody) of the thaqīlawwal composed by Sīrīn also.¹ From this second statement one can gather that, during the reign of the Orthodox Caliphs, melodies such as al-thaqīl al-awwal were known and composed by the musicians of the time. The suggestion that one can put forward to explain this contradiction is that Abū'l Faraj, in order to discredit the statement of Ibn Khurradādhba about the singing of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, denied the existence of any kind of advanced knowledge of music during the Orthodox Caliphate. One comes to this conclusion also after considering the many indirect references made in the Aghānī which contribute to the fact that the ghinā', al-mutoan (artistic song) was well-known and practiced under the Orthodox Caliphs. We are told, for example, that, on the occasion of the circumcision of his daughter, Zayd b. Thābit al-Anṣārī² gave a big party in which the famous songstress 'Azza al-Maylā' sang her much-appreciated tunes to the accompaniment of the mizhar (lute)³. Later, the son of

¹See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.18.

²Zayd b. Thābit, one of Muḥammad's anṣār or allies, belonged to the tribe of Khazraj and was a native of al-Madīna. He died in that city A.H. 54/673-4 A.D. See Wafayāt, Vol. I, p. 372, note 2.

³See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.14.

Zayd b. Thābit, namely Khārija b. Zayd b. Thābit,¹ the famous juris-consult, was asked by Abū al-Zinād: "Is it true that this type of ghinā' al-mutqan (artistic song) was known during your time?" Khārija answered: "Yes, we had this type of ghinā', and especially at wedding-parties."² Moreover, in the biography of the songstress 'Azza al-Maylā' in the Aghānī, we read that 'Azza was the first songstress to sing the rhythmic song (al-ghinā', al-muwagga') in al-Ḥijāz, and that she was the pupil of an old songstress called Rā'iqa who taught her the music of olden days, such as had been sung or played by Sīrīn, Zarnab, Khawla, al-Rabāb and Salmā.³

All these indirect references suggest that the ghinā', under the Orthodox Caliphs, was far beyond the stage of hudā' and naṣb, as claimed by Abū'l Faraj on one occasion.

Under the Caliph 'Uthmān a new musical element appeared in al-Ḥijāz, namely the male professional singers. The first male professional singer and musician in the days of Islam is generally acknowledged to have been Tuways.⁴ The appearance of the male professional singers could be taken as a sign of the increasing love for music and song that the Muslim society was showing. It seems that, in spite of all the objections raised by the fanatics against the spread of the habit of samā'

¹Khārija b. Zayd was one of the seven jurisconsults of al-Madīna. He was a child in the latter days of the Caliph 'Uthmān and died at Madīna, A.H.99/717-8 A.D. See Wafayāt, Vol. I, p.481.

²See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.15.

³Ibid, p.13. See also p.15.

⁴Tuways was born on the day the Prophet died, and died during the Caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwan. See Agh.3, Vol.III, p.30.

(listening to ghinā), the interest displayed by the upper classes in this art gave it better chances of survival and progress and, thus, more and more people joined the profession of music and song. However, according to the Aghānī, Tuways could be credited with the following deeds: He was the first male in al-Madīna, after the rise of Islam, to sing in Arabic¹, and the first to introduce in his music the hazaj rhythm.² He is also said to have been the first to sing the ghinā'al-mutqan (artistic song)³, the first Madīnan musician to introduce in his music the iqā' (rhythm)⁴. The second important musical figure in this period of the life of Arabic music was 'Azza al-Maylā'.⁵ As was mentioned earlier, she is said to have been the first songstress to sing the rhythmic song⁶ (al-ghinā', al-Muwagga').

¹See Agh.1, Vol. II, p.170.

²See Agh.1, Vol. IV, p.38.

³See Ibid, loc.cit.

⁴See Agh. 1, Vol. II, p.171.

⁵We do not possess the exact dates of the birth and death of 'Azza, but we know that she sang in a festivity at al-Madīna in the presence of the poet Ḥassān b. Thābit (see Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.14), that she studied under the musical celebrities of earlier days and that she died before the famous songstress Jamīla who was one of the most famous musical figures during the early Umayyad period. See Agh.1. Vol. XVI, p.13.

⁶See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.13.

It is difficult to say what these musical terms used by Abū'l Faraj meant exactly. The sources available are of no help in this matter. However, the English equivalents of the Arabic terms used in this study are taken from Farmer's History of Arabian Music, and compared with the definitions given in the dictionaries.

Sā'ib Khāthir,¹ another famous musician and singer, was among those who contributed a share to the advancement of this new music. He was, we are told, the first in al-Madīna who made a 'ūd (a wooden-bellied lute), and the first to accompany his singing with it.² We are not told whether this lute was an imitation of a Persian or Greek instrument, or whether it was a new contribution in the field of musical instruments.

All these musicians, and many others,³ started their musical career during the reign of the Orthodox Caliphs and reached fame later under the Umayyads. Their importance lies in the fact that they were the founders of the great musical school of al-Hijāz and, in their skill and devotion, one can find the explanation of the somewhat advanced art of music and song in the Umayyad period.

To sum up the importance of the period of the Orthodox Caliphs and its contribution to the progress of the progress of the art of music and song in the next period one should stress the following points:

1. The founders of the musical school of al-Hijāz, which became very famous during the Umayyad period, lived and started their musical career under the Orthodox Caliphs.

¹Sā'ib Khāthir was among the fay' of Kisrā and was bought by 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far. He was killed during the Caliphate of Yazīd b. Mu'āwiya. For his biography and the accounts of his life see Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.321-322.

²See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.321.

³Like Nashīṭ, Fand, al-Dalāl, and others. For the accounts of their lives see Guidi's Tables of al-Aghānī, and Farmer's History of Arabian Music.

2. The emergence of the male professional singers as the leading figures in the world of music, and the evolution of the art itself in their hands by the introduction of new rhythms and new musical instruments.
3. Through cultural contacts with the conquered nations, new ideas made their way to the different fields of the life of the Arabs. Music was, no doubt, among the fields affected by these contacts.
4. The patronage of the art and its exponents by some members of the nobility¹ of al-Hijāz during the days of 'Uthmān helped the art a great deal to survive the bitter attacks launched against it. This patronage, however, did not exempt the ghinā from being considered among the malahf (forbidden pleasures) and linked up with wine-drinking and fornication.

¹In connection with the terms "nobility", "ashrāf" and the like which appear in this study, it should be remarked that, although Islam has preached equality among all Muslime as one of its main principles (Grunebaum, Medieval Islam, p.199), yet 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 the element 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, and there existed two distinct grades in Islamic society: the noble aristocracy, and the people. 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. (see Grunebaum, op.cit., p.211.).

The rise of the Umayyad dynasty still kept the conception of aristocracy confined to those who were full-blooded Arabs (see R.Levy, The Social Structure of Islam, pp.54-57) although not to the exclusion of the administrative functionaries, that is, the whole of the well-to-do ruling class.

Thus, one can say that, with the close of the Orthodox and the opening of the Umayyad period, the future of music was already assured and the art had practically become an essential part of the daily life of many upper-class people.

B. Singing during the Umayyad period.

The opening of the Umayyad era is accompanied by the noticeable change in the mode of living of the Arabs, especially in al-Hijāz. The old simplicity and austerity gave way to the luxurious life to which the rich aristocrats so fondly abandoned themselves. This change is not without reason. One can claim that three main causes helped to bring about a life marked by an increasing tendency towards pleasure and amusement:

1. The immense wealth that poured into Arabia after the victorious campaigns and extensive conquests of the Arab army. In addition to these great fortunes which the wars of conquest had gained for the aristocracy of Arabia, one must not fail to remember that, under the Caliph 'Uthmān and his Umayyad successors, the members of the aristocratic party secured for themselves the key positions in the administration of the state and, consequently, the best sources of large income.
2. The intermingling of races. Ahmad Amīn says that, as a result of the conquests, the Arabian peninsula was no longer the Peninsula of the Arabs, but became the Peninsula of all Muslims.¹ This view finds support in the fact that large numbers of war captives flocked to al-Hijāz and other parts of the Peninsula from the very first days of the conquests and formed a consider-

¹See Fajr al-Islam, 6th ed. (Cairo, 1950), p.93.

able part of the population. The Caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb's instructions to his generals were that booty and captives must not be distributed among the mujāhidūn in the conquered lands, but must be sent to the capital, al-Madīna, to be distributed.¹

To give an example of the large numbers of war captives that flocked to the Peninsula one can cite the following incident: After the battle of Caesarea four thousand captives of either sex were despatched to al-Madīna and, there, distributed amongst the orphans of the anṣār.² Later, under the Umayyads, the number of slaves and war captives flooding the Muslim empire reached very high figures.³ It is then possible to seek in this new

¹See Tabarī, I, p.2229.

²See Futūḥ al-Buldān, al-Balādhurī, 1st ed., Egyptian Press (1932), p.147.

³From the somewhat exaggerated figures that came down to us, we can get an idea of the huge numbers of war captives that flocked to the Arabian Peninsula during the reign of the Umayyads. It is said that Mūsā b. Nuṣayr took 300 thousand captives from Africa and sent a fifth of them to the Caliph al-Walid I. (See al-Maqqarī, Nafh al-Tīb, ed. M. Muḥyī al-Dīn (Cairo 1949, Vol. I, p.218). He is said also to have won 30 thousand maidens who were daughters of Spanish kings and nobles. (See Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil Fi'l Tārīkh, ed. Tornberg, 1870, Vol. IV, p.448). Qutayba, the Arab general, in the peace treaty he concluded with the Sughd, stipulated that he must be given 100 thousand captives. (See Ibn al-Athīr, Vol. IV, p.454). Al-Zubayr b. al-'Awwām is said to have left after his death one thousand male and female slaves. (See Mas'ūdī, Murūj al-Dhahab, ed. C.B.de Meynard, Vol. IV, p.254). Lastly, in al-Aghānī, it is said that the poet 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'a had seventy slaves in his possession. (See Agh. I, Vol. I, p.37).

element an explanation for the deep changes which took place in the social life of the Arabs. It is possible to say that this change came about partly through the contacts of conquerors and conquered who brought with them new habits and ideals, as well as a new mode of living and art.

3. The indirect participation of the Umayyad Caliphs in encouraging the life of pleasure and amusement by their attempt to keep their political opponents, especially the Hijāzī aristocracy, away from the political activities of the state, and by the removal of the seat of the Caliphate from al-Madīna to Syria.

To elaborate this, one should start by stating the fact that al-Hijāz, during the Umayyad period, became the greatest centre of pleasure and amusement, especially in the field of music and song. This unexpected turn in the life of al-Hijāz is due, on the one hand, to the political embargo that was imposed upon the Hijāzī aristocracy by the Umayyad Caliphs, and to the material wealth of this aristocracy on the other. Apart from the wealth gained through the wars of conquest, the members of the Hijāzī aristocracy, whose opposition was probable, received on the different occasions large monetary donations which added to their wealth. The Umayyad dynasty, from its very first days, embarked upon a policy of bribing its opponents in order to secure their loyalty and to keep them as far as possible from the political activities of the Capital. As soon as he assumed power, Mu'āwiya put this policy into practice. He believed that the best way to hold the

dangerous elements around him in check was to bribe them.¹ Mu'āwīya's successors, generally, maintained this policy which proved to be fruitful in securing the dynasty's interests.² This item in the Umayyad policy can be understood better if we recall the attitude of the Caliphs of Damascus towards the abnā', al-ṣaḥāba wa l tabi'īn in general, and the eminent 'Alids in particular. To the Umayyads, now the de facto leaders of Islam, these two elements, with their probable opposition and claims, were a source of constant worry. To limit their possible activities, the Umayyads tried always to keep them in al-Ḥijāz, not to entrust to them the administration of the state,³ and to buy their loyalties with money.⁴ This policy as a whole encouraged, in an indirect way, the spread of worldly pleasures. On the other hand, the removal of the capital from al-Madīna to Syria had great cultural effects, if we take

¹Lammens says that Mu'āwīya believed that buying men (i.e. through monetary donations) is more expedient than cutting off their heads. See the examples he cites on this policy in Mo'awia Ier, pp.222-223. See also, al-Ṭabarī, II, p. 96; Agh.1, Vol. XVIII, p.160, where some more examples of this policy are cited.

²Examples on other Umayyad Caliphs resorting to this policy are to be found in Ibn 'Abd Rabbih (Aḥmad b. Muḥammad), al-'Iḍ al-Farīd, ed. Cairo, 1283 A.H., Vol. I, pp.144,145,146,148; Vol. II, pp.133,134,135, 205; Vol.III, pp.237, 239, and others.

³To support this claim one can mention the simple fact that, in the list of Umayyad administrators, there is no mention of any name of a member of these two groups.

⁴For examples of the large sums of money that the Umayyad Caliphs used to pay to some of the abnā', al-ṣaḥāba wa l tabi'īn, whose opposition they feared, see Ṭabarī, II, pp.402, 403, 404; and Agh.1, Vol. XI, p.71; Vol. XIII, p.105.

into consideration the wider influence it brought to intellectual life by closer contact with Byzantium and Persia.

All this helped to set the ground ready for the new life of pleasure and amusement, regardless of Islam and its moral precepts.

Against this background we can proceed to study singing during the Umayyad period. In the following section, however, an examination of the material that concerns the musical situation in general will be made.

The study of the information on ghinā'¹ in the Aghānī, provides us with the idea that the passion for ghinā' was a characteristic of the Umayyad period.

One can in no way claim that the habit of samā' (listening to singing) was confined to a certain class of people of a certain age or social status. In fact, we have every reason to believe that the passion for ghinā' was shared by people of different backgrounds. A Qurashī, we are told, came from al-Tā'if to Mecca to see the singer al-Gharīd (d. during the Caliphate of Sulaymān), for the sole purpose of listening to him singing a certain melody. When al-Gharīd sang the melody the Qurashī kissed his head and said: "May myself and my family be ransom to you. I am happy that I did not come to Mecca for the 'Umra (the little pilgrimage) or other acts of worship, but to listen to you only."² On another occasion, a very poor man whose family had

¹Music was known by the generic term ghinā', which primarily meant song hence mughannī stood generally for musician, although in its specific sense it meant singer (see Farmer, op.cit., p.51.). The terms mūsīqā and mūsīqī came into usage later.

²See Agh.1, Vol. XX, p.10.

nothing to eat and no clothes to wear, refused to accept the money and clothes offered to him by the singer Ibn 'Ā'isha,¹ and preferred to listen to him singing a certain melody.² To this passion for ghinā' the singer Ma'bad owes his life. He was once crossing a desert on his way to visit one of the princes of Ḥijāz when he felt extremely thirsty. He stopped his camel in front of the tent of a black slave and asked him for a drink of water. The slave refused to give him anything and, thus, Ma'bad sat helpless in the shadow of his camel and started to sing. On hearing the tender voice of Ma'bad, the slave hurried to him, carried him to his tent and offered him cold water and some other cold beverage. (sawīq).³

It seems that this passion for ghinā' was not confined to the common people. Some of the nobility, as well as some pious men, showed great interest in the art of ghinā'. 'Abd al-Lāh b. al-Zubayr⁴, al-Nu'mān b. Bashīr,⁵ 'abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far,⁶ Ibn Abī 'Atīq,⁷ Sukayna bint al-Ḥusayn,⁸ Hamza b. 'Abd al-Lāh b. al-Zubayr,⁹ and other members

¹See his biography in Agh.3, Vol. II, p.235. See also Farmer, op.cit., p.82

²See Agh.3, Vol. II, pp.227-228.

³See Agh.3, Vol. I, p.46.

⁴See Agh.3, Vol. IX, p.69.

⁵See Agh.1, Vol. DIV, p.121.

⁶See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.321.

⁷See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, pp.19-20.

⁸See Agh.3, Vol. II, p.355.

⁹See Agh.3, Vol. V, p.104.

of the aristocratic party were known to have been great admirers of singing and patrons of the art. Some of them were so fond of singing that they held a singing party every night.¹ Although a hot war was waged against ghinā' by many Muslim fanatics,² we do not fail to find a good number of Muslim divines charmed by the flourishing art of singing. An ascetic and a man of 'ilm an fiqh, we are told, used to frequent the house of 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib, and attend his majlis. Once, he heard a singing slave-girl singing a certain melody and was so much impressed by the singing that he fell in love with her and abandoned his worship. The advice of the famous theologians 'Aṭā' and Ṭawūs did him no good and it was not until 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far bought the singing-girl and gave her to him that he returned to his asceticism and worship.³ The famous singing-girl Sallāma al-Qass, who was bought later for the Caliph Yazīd b. 'Abdalmalik,⁴ gained the appellation al-Qass because, when she was in Mecca, a certain pious man called 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Abī 'Ammār al-Jushamī and nicknamed al-Qass for his piety and asceticism, was known to have been a great admirer of her singing.⁵ The same love for ghinā' is reported about the Qaḍī Muḥ. b. 'Umrān al-Taymī, who had a very famous singing slave-girl, and who re-

¹Like al-Ḥusayn b. 'Abd al-Lāh b. Al-'Abbās, see Agh.3, Vol. XII, p.70.

²For the attitude of Muslim fanatics towards singing, see Chapter IV, pp. 233-242.

³See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.19.

⁴See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.334.

⁵See Ibid, p.335.

fused to sell her to a young man called Muh. b. Khālīd b. 'Abdal-Lāh for whatever sum of money.¹

It seems that this passion for singing was, for many people, not in conflict with the teachings of Islam. We read in the Aghānī that, for some pious people, singing not only does not contradict the principles of Islam, but also helps in the worship of God. On one occasions the songstress Jamīla, who was one of the earliest and most important musical figures of the school of Hijāz,² ordered her door-keeper to invite the public of al-Madīna to assemble in the courtyard of her house. When a very large crowd assembled, Jamīla came out and told them that she had seen a dreadful dream and, because of this dream, wanted to give up singing. An old man, "known for his 'ilm, fiqh and experience", rose from amongst the crowd and blamed Jamīla for her decision and said to her: "singing is a great pleasure and of great effect on the soul.... He who believes in the importance of singing is of great knowledge, and he who abandons it is absurd... How then can one accept that singing must be abandoned while it is a good help in obedience to Allah and a means to his worship!" Nobody objected to the long speech of the old man, and his views were accepted. Then the old man turned to Jamīla and said: "Did you understand, and accept, what I said?" "Yes", Jamīla said, "and I ask God's forgiveness." Before the crowd dispersed she delivered one

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VI, pp.338-339.

²See the biography of Jamīla and the accounts of her life in Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.186. See also Farmer, op.cit. pp.85-86.

of her famous melodies.¹

From the above examples it is possible to deduce that ghinā', in the Umayyad period, established itself as an important item in the life of the society and that the admiration of ghinā' was shared by many people, regardless of their age, social position, or religious background.

An idea of the importance of ghinā' in the social life of the early Umayyad period can be seen in the great number of singers who were to be found in a city like al-Madīna. In the account of the pilgrimage that the songstress Jamīla undertook we are told that, when she left for Mecca, her procession consisted of thirty male singers and fifty singing-girls.² This great number of male and female professional singers can be taken as evidence of the prevalence of ghinā' in this period.³

This brings us to a second point in these general remarks on ghinā' in this period, namely the factors that helped this art to flourish

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.224-226. In connection with this old man's claim that ghinā' is "a good help in obedience to Allah and a means to his worship" it might be important to remark that Islam, unlike Judaism and Christianity, excluded music from its worship. The sources offer no explanation as to why Islam took this attitude and the present writer is of the opinion that the absence of music from the religious rituals of pre-Islamic Arabia might have been among the reasons for the absence of music from Islamic worship. As is well known, music was adopted later by some sūfi sects.

²See the full account of Jamīla's pilgrimage and the three days' fête that followed her return from Mecca, in Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.209-220.

³In al-Kāmil of al-Mubarrad (ed. W. Wright, Leipzig 1864) we even read of a man singing in the mosque of the Prophet in al-Madīna while other people were performing their prayers. See Vol. I, p.394.

and stand the bitter attacks of the Muslim fanatics against it.

H. G. Farmer refers to the indifference of the Umayyads towards Islam which "augured well for musical art"¹ and says that the "new Khalifs represented the old pagan ideas of the Arabs."² This claim, although true to some extent, can in no way be given full credit because we must not fail to remember that many of the stories about the profligacy of the Umayyads and their indifference towards Islam were inspired by the 'Abbasid hatred of this dynasty. Moreover, from the information in the Aghānī, one can assume that there were certain factors that helped the musical art to survive the attack that was brought against it, and the obstacles put in the way of its progress.

The most important factor seems to have been the patronage of some of the nobility to this art. During the reign of Mu'āwīya the extraordinary popularity of the songstress 'Azza al-Maylā' scandalized the stricter Muslims. They complained to the governor of al-Madīna, who would have upheld their grievance had not the great art patron, 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far, intervened and stopped the governor from taking any action.³ This same 'Abd al-Lāh was also the patron and protector of the famous musician and singer Sā'ib Khāthir, whom he bought from his masters when he heard him singing.⁴

¹See Farmer, op. cit., p.65.

²See Ibid., pp.65-66.

³See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, pp.19-20.

⁴See Agh.3, Vol. II, pp.355-356.

Another patroness of singing and singers was Sukayna bint al-Husayn. When the singer Ibn Surayj attracted notice by his elegy (nawh) on the slain of al-Madīna during the siege of 683 A.D., Sukayna attached him to her service and thus became his patroness and protectress.¹ She was so famous for her fondness for music and singing that, when a foreign singer visited al-Madīna, he was taken immediately to her palace, where a musical fête was held, the like of which had not been experienced in al-Hijāz before.²

The role of the nobility was not restricted to the protection of the artists and the patronage of the art. Some of them should be credited with sincerity and enthusiasm in their effort to encourage young artists with promising abilities to establish themselves in the field of music. A good example of this can be found in the story of the early life of the singer Mālik b. Abī al-Samh al-Ṭa'ī. Mālik was born in the mountain home of Ṭay', but was left an orphan when his father died. His mother brought him, with his younger brothers, to al-Madīna, where he was supposed to beg for the livelihood of his mother and brothers. Instead, he used to go to the door of the house of Ḥamza b. 'Abd al-Lāh b. al-Zubayr, where the singer Ma'bad used to sing for the latter every night, and listen to the singing. Ḥamza saw him once at the door, and the event changed the whole of his career. He gave him and his family a house to

¹See Agh.1, Vol. I, pp.97-129.

²See Agh.3, Vol. II, pp.355-356.

live in, a regular allowance, clothing, a servant, and a slave to carry water for them. In this way, Mālik confined all his efforts to the study of music under Ma'bad and, before long, he established himself as a leading musical figure in al-Madīna.¹

The singers, too, by professional solidarity, did not spare any effort to increase the love of the people for their profession. They, on the one hand, used their skills to convince objectors and fanatics that their art deserved every praise,² and, on the other, improved and developed the existing art of music by colouring it with the Persian and Byzantine tunes which had already begun to attract attention and charm many people. The singer Sā'ib Khāthir, for example, is claimed to have been the first who sang the Arabian song (ghinā') copied from the Persians and the first who transferred the Persian song into the Arabian song.³ After him, Ibn Misjah and his pupil Ibn Muhriz are credited with a similar service to Arabian music. "In Syria Ibn Misjah learned the Byzantine melodies and received instruction from the barbiton players (barbatīyya) and the theorists (ustokhosiyya). He then turned to Persia, where he learned much of their ghinā'. Returning to al-Ḥijāz he chose the most advantageous of the modes of these countries and re-

¹See Agh.3, Vol. V, pp.102-104.

²See in Agh.3, Vol. I, pp.303, 304, and Vol. IX, p.177, the accounts about the different methods used by the singers of al-Ḥijāz in order to convince those who stood against the art that their talent and skill were worthy of every praise.

³See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.321.

jected what was alien to the Arabian song.¹ Like his master, Ibn Muhriz travelled in Persia and Syria where he learned the melodies and song of the Persians and Byzantines. Then he laid aside the disagreeable rhythms in them and composed songs the like of which had not been heard before.²

The occasion of hajj, also, when people from all parts of the Muslim world meet in Mecca, was exploited by many singers to popularise their art. In the Aghānī we read many stories about singers, during the pilgrimage season, going to meet the pilgrim crowds and sing for them.³

In this way the art of ghinā, continued to flourish and attract new admirers every day.

The third point to be discussed in these general remarks is: when and where did people listen to ghinā?

In answering the first part of this question one has to distinguish between two different classes of people: the rich aristocrats, and the common people.

As far as the rich aristocrats were concerned, there is no doubt that, from the opening of the Umayyad period, many of them kept singing-girls to entertain themselves and their guests. These singing-girls

¹See Agh.3, Vol. III, p.276.

²See Agh.1, Vol. I, p.151.

³See Agh.3, Vol. I, pp.261-262; Vol.II, p.362, and Agh.1, Vol. XVIII, p.127.

constituted an important part of the household of many aristocrats under the Umayyads. From a very early date in the Umayyad period slave dealers (nakhkhāsūn) used to buy female slaves, train them in music and sell them.¹ Besides these female slaves, many of the aristocracy had male singers attached to their service to entertain them whenever they wanted. Sā'ib Khāthir, for example, was the mawlā of 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far, and much of his musical talent was devoted to satisfying his master.² The same could be said about the singer Ma'bad, who was "exclusively attached to Ḥamza b. 'Abd al-Lāh b. al-Zubayr"³. These male and female private singers used to entertain their masters and their guests wherever and whenever the masters ordered them to do so.⁴ In the meantime, we read that some of these aristocrats used to frequent the houses of some of the famous singers to listen to their singing.⁵ Thus, the noble aristocrats usually enjoyed the singing of their private male and female singers at their palaces and, sometimes, visited the houses of other famous singers for the same purpose.

As for the common people, they used to frequent the houses of the qiyan, where they could listen to professional female singers, as well as

¹See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.19.

²See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.321FF.

³See Agh.3, Vol. V, pp.102-103.

⁴See, for example, Agh.3, Vol. VI, pp.338-339; Vol. V, pp.102-103; Vol. VIII, p.324; Vol. XII, p.70, and many others.

⁵See, for example, Agh.1, Vol. XIV, p.121; Vol. XVI, pp.19-20, and others.

musicians, and where music tournaments were sometimes held.¹ Apart from these houses reserved for the entertainment of the public, we find on many occasions singing parties held in the gardens and recreation grounds around the cities where the youths of these cities passed joyful hours drinking and listening to singers.² It is also said in the Aghānī that, in Hims, the youths used to gather in the morning in one of the public baths of the city and leave later for the house of one of them where a singer would join them to entertain them while they drank the ṣabūḥ (morning drink).³

This is all the information we find in the Aghānī, and other sources consulted, about the first part of the above question (i.e. where did people listen to ghinā'). As for the second part of the question (i.e. when did people usually listen to ghinā'), it seems that most of the singing-parties were held at night.⁴ There are also a few references to singing-parties held in the morning and early afternoon.⁵ Even in the houses of qiyan, where we might expect a fixed time for the entertainment of the public, guests were entertained whenever they wanted. But it is to be assumed that, as wine was served during

¹See below, pp. 105-123.

²The most famous among these places was al-'Aqīq. See Guid's tables. See also Mu'jam al-Buldān, Yāqūt, ed. Wustenfeld (Leipzig 1868), Vo. III, p. 700FF. Cf. art. "al-'Aqīq" E.I. 2. Vol. I, Fas. 6, p. 336, by G. Rentz.

³See Agh. 3, Vol. II, pp. 346-347.

⁴For example, see Agh. 3, Vol. XII, p. 70.

⁵See, for example, Agh. 3, Vol. II, p. 346; Vol. VI, p. 338.

singing-parties in most cases, the period after the ʿishā prayer was most likely the time when most of the singing-parties were held, especially if we remember that, in the early Umayyad period, most of the people performed their five daily prayers regularly.

Another matter worthy of special notice in these general remarks is the question of payment to singers. In the Aghānī there is no information on how and how much the singers who sang for the public charged their audience. Although we possess hundreds of examples of the gifts of money, clothing and other things that professional male and female singers received from the Caliphs and nobility, we have no information on how and what the customers of houses of qiyān paid. Yet it is not impossible to suggest that the owner of the house of qiyān was the person entitled to receive all the payments of the customers because he was usually the owner of the singing-girls in the house.

It is important to note, while we are making these general remarks about ghinā, that, during the Umayyad period, the collection of the first musical literature of the Arabs began. The singer and musical litterateur, Yūnus al-Kātib, began to collect biographical and historical material concerning Arabic music and its celebrities. He wrote many books on musical theory and on musicians, as we are told in the Aghānī.¹ Abū'l Faraj describes his Kitāb al-Naghām (Book of

¹Look in Guidi's Tables for the very many references made to Yūnus al-Kātib in the Aghānī.

Melodies) as the first attempt to collect the songs of the Arabs, together with information about their melodies, authors and composers.¹ Unfortunately, the writings of Yūnus did not come down to us, although much of them was quoted in the Aghānī.

The last point to be discussed in these general remarks is al-nawḥ (elegy), which seems to have had close connection with ghinā'. The study of the life of some of the singers of the Umayyad period shows that they started their musical career as nā'iḥ (singer of elegies). Ibn Surayj, we are told, after studying under Ibn Misjah, and receiving instructions from Ṭuways, returned to Mecca, where he became a singer of elegies.² The same is said about the singer al-Gharīd, who, after passing into the household of Sukayna bint al-Husayn, was trained as a nā'iḥ by Ibn Surayj on the orders of Sukayna.³ Apart from these famous names, we read about two singing-girls, Hawrā' and Baḡhūm, who were professional singers of elegies.⁴ We even read about what were called "the singers of elegies of Mecca, the singers of elegies of al-Madīna and the singers of elegies of al-Ta'if",⁵ which means that each city had its own singers of elegies. These facts show that elegy-

¹See Agh.1, Vol. VI, p.7.

²See Agh.3, Vol. I, pp.253-254.

³See Ibid, Vol. II, pp.360,361.

⁴ " " " " p.361.

⁵ " " " I, pp.255,256.

singing was to be found side by side with ghina, although it served a different purpose. The connection between ghinā and nawḥ is that they are both melodized verses,¹ but there is no evidence that elegy was sung with the accompaniment of any musical instrument.² It occurs only once in the Aghānī that we read of a non-melodized elegy.³

In the Aghānī, as well as in other sources,⁴ there is much evidence for the fact that elegy-singing was an established social practice. It seems that, on the death of a distinguished man or woman, it was usual to invite the singers of elegies to the house of the deceased to mourn him, or her, before the burial ceremony.⁵ On the occasion of the death of a great personality, the singers of elegies used to ask a poet to compose special verses for the occasion, melodize them, and sing them. This brought them a higher reward.⁶ In this way, the nawḥ became a profession attached to ghinā, and, in the course of time, elegiac tradition began to develop and became complicated. For example, we find that, in the late Umayyad period, the singer of elegies had to stand in a certain part of the room and in a certain position.⁷ Male

¹See Agh.3, Vol. I, pp.255, 256.

²It is clear from the following references that elegy was sung with no musical accompaniment: Agh.3, Vol.I, pp.255,256; Vol.II, pp.364-365; Vol. III, pp.346-347.

³See Agh.3, Vol. I, p.321. See also the Diwān of al-Farazdaq, ed. R.Boucher (Paris 1870), p.67.

⁴See, for example, Die Hasimijjat des Kumait, ed. J. Horowitz (Leiden 1904), pp.84-85 and Diwān al-Farazdaq, op.cit., p.67.

⁵See Agh.3, Vol. II, pp.364-365.

⁶See Ibid, Loc.cit., and Vol. I, pp.255-256.

⁷See Agh.3, Vol. II, pp.364-365.

singers of elegies, when singing for a female audience, had to sing from behind a curtain.¹ We see them also in the late Umayyad period dressed in black shirts torn in the front,² and holding a piece of cloth called al-mi'lāt.³

Thus, one can see that mourning songs have occupied a prominent place in Muslim life.

Nawḥ, it seems, goes further back to the Jāhiliyya and the pre-Islamic Arabs had their lamenters.⁴ Together the ḥudā' and nawḥ could, in fact, be considered the origin of all Islamic vocal music, being the most ancient and popular forms known to the nomadic Arabs.⁵

In spite of men exercising this profession, the usage of the pre-Islamic⁶ and other ancient civilizations⁷ leads to the assumption that it was generally practiced by women. It might be important to note, in this connection, that, according to the custom prevalent at the time, if a wife stood up while bewailing her deceased husband, it meant that she did not want to marry after him.⁸ Elegy-singers usually

¹See Agh.3, Vol. II, p.360.

²See Dīwān al-Farazdaq, op.cit., P.67.

³See Die Hasimijjat des Kumait, pp.34-35.

⁴See Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.140. See also, Farmer, op.cit., p.10.

⁵See J. Zaydan, al-Tamadūn al-Islāmī, V, pp.33-38.

⁶See Agh.1, Vol. IV, pp.34,5; also II, p.129.

⁷Hastings, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. IX, p.39, on the Hebrew women mourners.

⁸See Agh. 3, Vol. II, p.381; Vol. XI, pp.183-185.

performed their nawḥ in the house of the deceased. On few occasions only do we read of the immediate female relatives of the deceased, together with the nā'ihāt (women lamenters) marching in the streets and bewailing their dead relative by songs.¹

It is thus seen that nawḥ, from being an auxiliary art attached to ghinā', and dependent on it, was developing into a complicated social practice.

These general remarks open up the way for the study of the mughan-nūn of the Umayyad period as members of one profession.

¹See Tabarī, II, p.384, and Ansāb al-Ashrāf, al-Balādhurī, Vol. IV, B, p.110.

C - The Mughannūn:

In the following pages an examination will be made of the biographical information contained in the Aghānī about some of the mughannūn of the Umayyad period. The aim of this examination is not to rewrite the biographies of these mughannūn - this was done by Abū'l Faraj himself - but to point out the common elements in the lives of these singers and to draw a picture of them as members of one profession.

One of the characteristics of the Umayyad period was that most of the craftsmen came from the people of the conquered lands. Ghinā' was among the professions that the Arabs considered beneath their dignity and, thus, all the professional singers of the Umayyad period, with the exception of one or two, were mawlās. Ibb Misjah (d. ca. 715) was a client of the Banū Jumah, according to one narrative, or the Banū Makhzūm, according to another.¹ Ibn Muhriz (d. ca. 715) another famous singer of the Umayyad period, was the son of a Persian client, and he himself is said to have been a client of the Banū 'Abd al-Dār of Qusay.² Another famous singer of mawlā status was Ibn Surayj (ca. 634-726), who was a mawlā of the Banū Nawfal b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, or the Banū al-Hārith b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib.³ The same could be said about

¹See Agh.3, Vol. III, p.276 and Farmer, op.cit., p.77.

²See Agh.1, Vol. I, p.150 and Farmer, op.cit., p.78.

³See Ibid, Vol. I, p.97 and Farmer, op.cit., p.79.

al-Gharīd (d. ca. 716), who belonged to a Barbarī family of slaves,¹ Ma'bad (d. ca. 743), who was a client of 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Qaṭan,² Ibn 'A'isha (d. ca. 744) (his father's name being unknown), the son of 'A'isha, a female hairdresser in the service of al-Kathir b. al-Ṣalt al-Kindī,³ Yūnus al-Kātib, a client of Persian origin,⁴ and many others.

The only singer of whose free Arab descent we are sure is Mālik b. Abī al-Samḥ al-Ṭā'ī (d. ca. 754). Mālik was an Arab of noble birth, his father being a member of the Banū Thu'l, a branch of the Banū Tay', whilst his mother was a Qurashite of the Banū Makhzūm.⁵ His becoming a singer, we are told, was a mere coincidence and was first and foremost a result of his great love for music.⁶

The other singer of whose mawlā descent we are not quite sure is Ḥunayn b. Balwa' al-Ḥirī (d. ca. 725). Abū'l Faraj says that there are different ideas about the origin of Ḥunayn and that there is a possibility that he might have been a free Arab of the Banū al-Ḥārith b. Ka'b.⁷ However, he was a native of al-Ḥira and a Christian.⁸

¹See Agh.3, Vol. II, p.359 and Farmer, op.cit., p.80.

²See Agh.1, Vol. I, p.19 and Farmer, op.cit., p.81.

³See Ibid., Vol. II, p.203 and Farmer, op.cit., p.82.

⁴See Agh.1, Vol. IV, p.114 and Farmer, op.cit., p.83.

⁵See Agh.3, Vol. V, p.101.

⁶See in Ibid., pp.102-103 the account of how Mālik became a singer.

⁷See Ibid., Vol. II, p.341.

⁸As far as it can be gathered from the sources within our reach, Ḥunayn was the only Christian singer during the Umayyad period. The rest were all Muslims.

Thus, as far as the male professional singers were concerned, one can claim that, with the exception of one or two cases, all of them were of a mawlā status or descent. As for the female professional singers, one finds no reference at all to any free Arab female singer in the Umayyad period. They were all either freedwomen of different Arab tribes,¹ or slave-girls purchased from foreign lands and trained in music and song later.²

Another fact about the singers of the Umayyad period is that many of them had another occupation for their livelihood besides the ghinā'. Examples of this can be seen in the case of the singer Sā'ib Khathir (d. 683) who, according to the Aghānī, "was a rich merchant of foodstuffs" in al-Madīna,³ and, in spite of all his fame as a singer, did not give up his trade. Hunayn b. Balwa' al-Hīrī, who made his living by hiring out his camels to carry passengers to Damascus and elsewhere,⁴ al-Gharīd who worked as a tailor,⁵ 'Umar al-Wadī who was a builder,⁶ al-Hudhalī who was a stone-hewer,⁷ Hakam al-

¹Like the songstress 'Azza al-Maylā' (see Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.13) and Jamīla (see Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.186), and others.

²See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.321.

³See Ibid., Loc.cit.

⁴See Agh.3, Vol. II, p.341.

⁵See Ibid., p.360.

⁶See Ibid., Vol. VII, p.85.

⁷See Ibid., Vol. V, p.65.

Wādī who earned his living by hiring out his camels for carrying olive-oil from Damascus to al-Madīna,¹ Dahmān al-Ashqar who was a merchant and used to hire out his camels as well,² and Burdān who was a sort of market supervisor in al-Madīna.³ In trying to assess the significance of these examples, difference should be made between the early and late parts of the Umayyad century. In the early part of the Umayyad century, when ghinā' was only of secondary importance in the life of the Muslim community, singers took the art as a side-line only and relied for their upkeep on another profession or a trade. But, later, when ghinā' entered the houses of the nobles as well as the palaces of the Caliphs, they depended entirely on their earnings from ghinā' and did not carry on any other business. Examples of this can be seen in the accounts of the lives of some singers. Sā'ib Khāthir, for example, although one of the recognized masters of the art, had to trade in food-stuffs for his living. The fact that this singer lived during the early part of the Umayyad period (d. 683 during the siege of al-Madīna under Yazīd I), is the explanation for his reliance on a trade for his living. On the other hand, singers like Tuways, Ibn Surayj, Ma'bad and others who lived until late in the Umayyad period were entirely dependent on ghinā' and no reference

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VI, p.280.

²See Ibid, p.25.

³See Ibid, Vol. VIII, p.277.

is made to their taking other jobs for their living. As for the singers who lived in the later part of the Umayyad period and had, in spite of that, to rely on a trade or profession for their upkeep (like the ones mentioned above), it should be remarked that they were of little fame in the field of ghinā' and did not enjoy the patronage of Caliphs or nobles.

In this way it is possible to claim that the Umayyad period witnessed the birth of a new profession, namely that of ghinā', and that most of the members of this profession were mawālī.

The members of the profession of ghinā' had to receive a certain degree of professional training before practising the art. Generally, they used to start their training under one of the known musicians of their town and later travelled from one town to another to study under famous artists. Ibn Misjah, for example, was born and received his first musical training at Mecca. Later, it became his aim to go abroad so as to ascertain what else there was to be learned from foreigners. This took him to Syria and Persia, as we have mentioned earlier and, on his return to al-Hijāz, we see that new methods were introduced into Arabian music.¹ The same could be said about Ibn Muhriz, who studied music under Ibn Misjah and learned the art of accompaniment from 'Azza al-Maylā'. After this beginning, Ibn Muhriz led a wandering life, spending three months of the year at Mecca and the rest of his time at

¹Agh.3, Vol. III, p.276.

al-Madīna and other towns. Like his master, Ibn Misjah, he too travelled in Persia and Syria, where he learned the melodies and songs of the Persians and Byzantines and thus became one of the contributors to the improvement of Arabic music.¹ The famous Ibn Surayj led a similar life, too. His first training in singing and music was under Ibn Misjah of Mecca. He then left Mecca for al-Madīna, where he received instruction from Tuways and attended the singing-parties of 'Azza al-Mayalā, and other famous singers.²

In brief, the study of the life-story of most of the singers of the Umayyad period shows that this professional training was the cornerstone in the musical career of every one of them.³

Indeed, the residences of many singers were turned into conservatories of music where students of the art studied and where the rich nobility sent their singing-girls to be trained, for no rich house could be without its singing-girl. To that, one can add the great number of foreign (Byzantine and Persian) musicians and singers who used to visit the big Arabian cities from time to time and their contribution to the improvement of the native art.⁴

¹Agh.1, Vol. I, p.151.

²Ibid., Vol. II, p.174; Vol. III, p.84; Vol. XVI, p.14.

³In the Aghānī see the biographies of Ma'bad, al-Gharīd, Ibn 'Ā'isha, Yūnus al-Katīb, Malik al-Ta'ī, and others.

⁴See, for example, in the Aghānī the accounts about the visit of the band of Cymbalists to al-Madīna and their training to Sa'ib Khāthir (Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.321), and about the Persian lute-players who came to Mecca to help in the building of the Ka'ba during the Caliphate of Ibn al-Zubayr and their training to Ibn Surayj (Agh.1, Vol. I, p.98).

Moreover, some of the members of the profession of ghinā', for the sake of better training, seem to have visited the monasteries and listened to the singing of the monks and introduced some of their melodies in their singing.¹ Thus, this training was a necessary first step to any one who wanted to join the profession of ghinā'.

It should be remarked in this connection that, apart from the female slaves who were sent by their masters, most of the musical students of the time were independent practitioners who wanted to take up music as a profession in the future. It should be remarked, also, that there is no reference in our material as to how much and in what manner these students paid for the instruction they received.

There is no evidence that the singers of the Umayyad period wore a special kind of clothes which distinguished them from other members of society. All one can say in this respect is that singers were more inclined than others to the use of coloured clothes (muṣabbaghāt) for everyday wear.² It is to be noticed that respectable people were supposed to avoid these coloured clothes and, on one occasion, a member of the nobility was punished by Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm, the Qādī of al-Madīna during the Caliphate of Hishām b. 'Abd al-Mālik,³ for wearing them.⁴

¹See Agh.3, Vol. II, p.397 and Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.64.

²See Agh.3, Vol. I, p.46; Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.135; Vol. XIII, p.169 and Agh.3, Vol. II, p.347.

³See the "events of the year 125" A.H. in al-Tabarī, III, p.1768.

⁴See Agh.3, Vol. VI, pp.13-14.

What should be mentioned in this respect is the special clothes the singers used to wear on some festive occasions. In the Aghānī we read about a singing-party held in the house of the songstress Jamīla and attended by other singers like Ibn Surayj, Ma'bad, al-Gharid and Ibn 'Ā'isha. In this party we first find all the singers, including Jamīla, wearing long barānis (a hooded cloak)¹, with caps (qalansiya) on their heads and a Burda yamāniyya (burda being a kind of striped garment of the fabric of the Yaman)², wrapped around their shoulders. Then Jamīla ordered them to change these clothes and put on a complete set of coloured clothes, with wigs on their heads. Clad in a similar outfit, she led the performance.³

The question, whether singers wore special clothes for performing for the public or not, remains unanswered as far as the material preserved in the Aghānī is concerned.⁴

However, it is possible to claim that the singers generally took great interest in bedecking themselves.⁵ The khidāb (dyeing with hinna)⁶ of the white hair and beard, for example, was an old Arab practice which continued to exist during the Umayyad period.⁷ The singers of this period not only dyed their hair and beard, but also their fingers

¹See R. Dozy, Dictionnaire des noms des vêtements chez les Arabes, (Amsterdam 1845), pp.73-80.

²Ibid, pp.59-64.

³Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.226-227.

⁴Other sources consulted also give no reference to this matter.

⁵Agh.3, Vol. II, p.360.

⁶See Ibid, Vol. XI, p.28.

⁷See Agh.1, Vol. XIV, p.140 and Agh.3, Vol. XII, p.290.

and hands, like women.¹ Another example of their interest in their external appearance can be seen in a story about the singer Ibn Surayj who was bald headed and who, we are told, used to wear something similar to a wig to cover his head.² Singers also were among the very few people who took great care in dressing and combing their hair.³ To that one can add the many reports about the woman - like mode of walking of some of them who used to hold the hand of their companion, or incline their bodies from side to side while walking.⁴

The emergence of music from a stage where it was a collective activity practised 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 way society regarded 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 esteem of 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

¹See Agh.3, Vol. I, p.274 and Vol. VI, p.22.

²See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.226.

³See Ibid, Vol. I, p.46; the most famous person for his care of his hair was Zayd b. al-Tathriya, see Ibid, Vol. VIII, pp.155-185.

⁴See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.135; Agh.3, Vol. IX, p.176; Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.169.

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 practised by a servile and degenerate class of social outcasts. The mukhannathūn,¹ who constituted the earliest professional singers under Islam, have cast a dark shadow over the art by their inferior moral and religious standards. The public persecution, to which they were subjected intermittently under several officials in the first century of Islam,² is indicative of the prevalent attitude of society towards them. The fact that the mukhannathūn 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 mawālī, whether male or female.³ The social disrepute and inferiority 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. A certain degree of the measures taken by Umayyad officials in al-Hijāz⁴ was directed against this class, rather than towards music itself.

Yet, among this socially inferior caste, we find the exponents of Islamic music who have contributed towards building up its tradition.

¹For the mukhannathūn see below Chapter III, pp. 167-193.

²See below Chapter III, pp. 184-191.

³See Farmer, op.cit., p.46.

⁴See Agh.1, Vol. II, pp.130, 170 and Vol. IV, pp.60-61.

Such names as Ibn Surayj,¹ Tuways,² al-Dalāl³ 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 in society than their male colleagues. 'Azza al-Maylā provides an interesting example here. Her great popularity, which attracted the rich nobility of al-Madīna to her singing-parties,⁴ together with the protection extended to her by 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far,⁵ put her in a higher position than that of the male professional singers of the time. Another example, occurring only a few years later, appears to justify such a view, and that is the case of Jamīla (d. ca. 720), 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.⁶

The musical career of both 'Azza al-Maylā and Jamīla brought them in direct contact with the Quraysh nobility, who treated them

¹Agh.1, Vol. I, p.97.

²Ibid, Vol. II, p.170.

³Ibid, Vol. IV, p.59 and Vol. VII, p.137.

⁴See Farmer, op.cit., pp.54-55.

⁵See Agh.1, Vol. IV, p.35.

⁶See Ibid, Vol. VII, pp.134-135.

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.¹

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 this servitude in itself is not as humiliating as it is considered now, and is not of primary importance to the inferiority of that class of early professional musicians. The bad reputation of the mukhannathūn 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 and whereby they earned 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-Ḥijāz. Thus, social and economic factors seem to favour the view that the first position assigned in the Muslim society to the exponents of music was none but modest, in spite of the scattered efforts of some members of the nobility to counterbalance it. As

¹Cf. Farmer, op.cit., p.67.

compared to their successors who flourished under the 'Abbasid dynasty, the professional singers of the first century A.H. received but modest remuneration for their musical abilities. Instances of the fabulous wealth bestowed on the Mawṣilī 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.

At the end of the first century A.H. and the beginning of the second, one feels that the social status of singers is moving steadily from that modest servility of the first century to the peak of respectability and prestige attained by the artists of the late Umayyad and early 'Abbasid periods.

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. Throughout the period studied we find that many of the professional musicians were employed by noblemen or caliphs so that, to a great extent, their livelihood was guaranteed. Such complete dependence on one wealthy patron was not without its risks and inconveniences. We often read of famous musicians who suddenly fell into disfavour at court,¹ whether

¹See Agh.1, Vol. III, p.162 and Vol. V, p.7.

for a political¹ or a moral² offence, or merely because of the despotic whims and caprices of their master.³ However, the fortunate musicians who were lucky enough to keep their positions at court, and at the palaces of the late Umayyad and early 'Abbasid nobility, amassed considerable fortunes solely by their musical abilities.⁴ With all its possible

¹See Agh.1, Vol. X, p.124.

²See Ibid. Vol. XIII, p.19.

³See Kitāb al-Tāj, p.36.

⁴Examples of the fortunes amassed by some of the famous musicians of the Umayyad period are given on very many occasions in the Aghānī. It is claimed in the Aghānī that Yazīd I was the first Caliph to introduce the custom of bestowing precious gifts upon singers (see Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.71) and that, in the days of his successors, these gifts became a permanent item in the Caliphal palace expenditures. We are told, for example, that the Caliph al-Walīd I, after listening once to the singing of Ibn Surayj, ordered the servants to cover the singer with Khil'as and to give him a purse full of dīnars and several purses full of dirhams (see Agh.3, Vol. I, p.301). This same Ibn Surayj is said to have won the ten thousand dirhams prize offered by Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik - before he became Caliph - at a tournament of song at Mecca (See Agh.3, Vol. I, p.317, and Vol. VII, p.63). He was so rich that he could afford to attach to his service a certain sahl b. Baraka as his "lute carrier" (see Agh.3, Vol. XII, p.118). Ma'bad, the other famous singer of the time, was summoned to Damascus to sing for the Caliph al-Walīd II and, on doing so, the Caliph sent for a purse of 15,000 dīnars and poured it out into the bosom of the singer. (See Agh.3, Vol. I, pp.52-53). These are only very few examples of the gifts and donations received by some of the singers of the Umayyad period. In spite of the exaggerated tone of many of them, they can be taken as evidence of the good material position of some of the Umayyad musicians.

disadvantages to the musicians such patronage from the aristocracy meant an easier life and a more stable income.

Thus, the two basic factors in determining the social position of musicians were their servility and their material dependence on the aristocratic class. It remains for us to say that 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 way was paved for a golden age of music and musicians, as will be the case in the 'Abbasid period.

It is important to note that the examination of the material concerning the lives of the mughannūn preserved in the Aghānī shows a spirit of solidarity prevailing among the members of the profession of ghinā', and the existence of some form of cooperation between them. The existence of this cooperative spirit can be seen in the accounts of the visits they used to exchange. Ibn Surayj, for example, on learning about the skill of the singer Ḥunayn al-Ḥirī, set out for al-Ḥira to pay his famous colleague a visit. There, he was received by Ḥunayn, who offered him a private house and entertained him for three months.¹ The hospitality of Ḥunayn impressed Ibn Surayj so

¹Agh.3, Vol. II, pp.353-354.

much that he and his Meccan colleagues decided to return the kindness and to pay their respects to their venerable confrere of al-'Irāq, by inviting him to visit Mecca. Here, an illustrious gathering of singers, poets and nobles received him with pomp and ceremony. At the residence of Sukayna bint al-Ḥusayn, a grand musical fête was prepared and Ḥunayn delivered his best tunes.¹

The singers of the different towns of al-Ḥijāz also followed the custom of visiting one another from time to time and, during these visits, they used to discuss matters of importance to their profession.² This cooperative spirit was in no way the only kind of activity in the relations between the members of the profession of ghinā. The rivalries that usually exist between the members of the same craft were also to be found among the mughannūn of the Umayyad period. These rivalries, on the one hand, took the form of a common bond between the singers of one city against the singers of another,³ and, on the other, divided the mughannūn as well as the people, to factions like Ma'badī (nisba Ma'bad) and Surayjī (nisba Ibn Surayj).⁴

From all this it is clear that a sort of craft-bond linked the members of the profession of ghinā in the Umayyad period and that this bond was stronger than their religious and regional differences. There

¹Agh.3, Vol. II, pp.355-356.

²See, for example, Ibid, Vol. IX, p.177; Vol. I, p.274 and Vol. V, p.108.

³See Ibid, Vol. IX, p.238;

⁴See Agh.1, Vol. I, p.98.

is no evidence, however, that a musical guild existed under the Umayyads but, nevertheless, the members of the craft had what might be described as a cooperative spirit.

D - Public entertainment

It was pointed out earlier in this chapter that the passion for ghinā' was a characteristic of the Umayyad period,¹ and it was said also on another occasion that, from the opening of the Umayyad period, the rich aristocrats kept singing-girls for their entertainment and that of their guests.² Those who did not possess slave-girls trained in music and song usually went, when they wanted to listen to ghinā', either to a friend who had such a one,³ or more often, to public institues known by the name of buyūt al-qiyān (Lit. houses of the singing slave-girls).

Ghinā' was performed in these houses for public entertainment by slave-girls known by the name of qiyān (sing. gayna) and there is no indication that any male singer took part in the performances given in these houses. It is important to note that it is not the aim of this section to study the slave-girls as such, or to try to examine their social conditions, but we shall refer to them when the need arises to build up certain facts about the qiyān who belonged to the class of slave-girls.

The term gayna, according to Tāj al-'Arūs and Lisān al-'Arab, means "a singing slave-girl" أمة فنية. It comes from التقین meaning التزين (bedecking), because she (the gayna) usually decks herself

¹See above, p. 72.

²See above, p. 80.

³An example of this kind of practice can be seen in the story of the group of youths who went to listen to the ghinā' of the singing slave-girl of their friend Ibn Shuqran in al-Madīna. See, Agh.3, Vol. VI, p. 284.

up... Al-Azhari said: the appellation qayna is given to a mughanniya when ghinā' is her profession; and this is a profession of slave-girls and not of free women (harā'ir)."¹ Thus, according to the above definition, the qiyān were professional female singers of ama (female slave) status, and no free women (harā'ir) were among them.

There is no reference in the Aghani as to how and from where these qiyān were obtained, and the same could be said about the question of their origin and nationality. Von Kremer says that, in the Jāhiliyya, the qiyān were obtained for large, even fabulous sums, from the neighbouring Byzantine and Persian provinces, especially from Hira,² but, unfortunately, he does not cite the sources he relied on for this statement.

However, the trade in qiyān continued to exist in al-Hijāz under Muḥammad, who is said to have opposed this trade. In a tradition related on the authority of Abū Umāma we read that Muḥammad said: "Do not sell qiyān and do not buy them and do not train them. There is no good in trading in them, and their price is unlawful."³ Abū Umāma, the relator of this tradition, says that the reference in the Qoranic verse: "But a man there is who buyeth an idle tale, that in his lack of knowledge he may mislead others from the way of God...etc."⁴ is to

¹See art. قَيْن in Tāj al-'Arūs, Vol. IX, p.316 and Lisān al-'Arab, Vol. XIII, p.351.

²See von Kremer, op.cit, pp.32-33.

³See Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī, 1st ed. (Cairo, 1934) Vol. XII, pp.72-73. See also Al-Jāmi' li-Aḥkām al Qur'ān, al-Qurṭubī, ed. Dār al-Kutub al Misriyya (Cairo, 1915), Vol. XIV, p.51.

⁴Qoran, 31,⁶

the trade of giyān.¹

The truth of this ḥadīth was questioned by the Imām Abū Bakr b. al-'Arabī al-Mālikī in his commentary on the Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Tirmidhī. He argues that the listening to the ghinā' of a qayna is not unlawful because, as he puts it, if the qayna is a man's property he has full rights in her body including her voice and, if she is not his property, he can listen to her ghinā' also because she is a slave-girl and the face and the voice of a slave-girl is not a 'awra (pudendum).²

The importance of this ḥadīth, however, is that it shows that the trade in giyān existed in al-Hijāz during Muhammad's life-time. In the Umayyad period this trade continued to exist and, as regards the prices the information in the Aghānī shows that the prices of slave-girls trained in music and song were much higher than for those untrained. From more than one example it can be seen that the same slave-girl fetched a much higher price after she was trained.³

¹See Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī, Vol. XII, p.73.

²See Ibid, pp.72-73. 'Awra is the part or parts of the person which it is unlawful to uncover and to look at. The 'awra in a man, what is between the navel and the knee and, in a free woman, all the person except the face and the hands as far as the wrists, and respecting the hollow of the sole of the foot there is a difference of opinion. In a female slave the head and the neck and the fore arm (what appears of her while serving) are not included in the term 'awra. (See Lane's Lexicon and Tāj al-'Arūs art. عورة). For pudendum generally and the difference between the pudendum of a ḥurra and 'ama, see al-Jāmi' li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān, al Qurtubī, Vol. VII, pp.182-184.

³The poet Kuthayyir tells us that he bought a slave-girl for three hundred dirhams and, after she was trained, he sold her for one thousand dīnārs. (See Agh.3, Vol. IX, p.260). See also in Agh.3, Vol. VI, pp.25-27 the story of the slave-girl whom the singer Daḥmān al-Ashqar bought for two hundred dīnārs, and sold later to the Caliph al-Walīd b. Yazīd for ten thousand dīnārs after she was trained in music by himself, Ma'bad and al-Abjar.

As early as the life-time of 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far¹, who must have died during the early Umayyad period, we read that he paid four thousand dirhams for a gayna and presented her to a friend of his who was in love with her.² During the Caliphate of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, the poet Kuthayyir was offered one thousand dīnārs for a singing slave-girl he possessed.³ We possess more than one account about the prices paid by Yazīd b. 'Abd al-Mālik for singing slave-girls. According to al-Ṭabarī, Yazīd was on pilgrimage during the Caliphate of his brother Sulaymān when he saw the famous Ḥabbāba and bought her for four thousand dīnārs. Sulaymān considered the price unreasonable and ordered his brother to give her back to her owner. This Yazīd did, but later, when he assumed the Caliphate, his wife Sa'da, who knew his great desire to obtain Ḥabbāba, bought her for four thousand dīnārs and presented her to him.⁴ For the other famous singing slave-girl Sallāma, he is said to have paid twenty thousand dīnārs.⁵ The smallest price he paid for a singing slave-girl is said to have been one thousand dīnārs.⁶ According

¹For the accounts of the life of 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far, see Guidi's tables.

²See the complete story in Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.19.

³See Agh.3, Vol. IX, p.260.

⁴See al-Ṭabarī, II, pp.1464-1465.

⁵See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.343.

⁶See Agh.1, Vol. XVIII, p.201.

to the Aghānī, his son al-Walīd b. Yazīd paid ten thousand dīnārs for a well trained and good looking singing-girl.¹

These accounts about the prices paid by Yazīd b. 'Abd al-Mālik and his son, al-Walīd, for singing slave-girls seem to have been either exceptional or exaggerated, because from one of the stories preserved in the Aghānī it appears that, in the late Umayyad period, a good-looking and well-trained singing-girl fetched no more than six hundred dīnārs.² Therefore, it is possible to suggest that, at the earlier part of the Umayyad period, a well trained and good-looking gayna fetched about four hundred dīnārs (the price paid by 'Abd al-Lāh b. ja'far) and that, later, up to one thousand dīnārs (the price offered to the poet Kuthayyir) were paid for such a gayna.

It is essential, however, to note that the accounts about the prices of singing slave-girls contained in the Aghānī deal mostly with the prices paid by Caliphs or notables for singing slave-girls bought for them, and that there is no reference to the prices of the ordinary qiyān who worked in the houses of public entertainment. It is probable that the prices of these qiyān were not as high as the prices of singing-slave-girls purchased for Caliphs or notables.

There is no direct reference in the Aghānī as to the training of qiyān but, from some indirect references, it is possible to assume

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VI, p.26.

²In Agh.3, Vol. VI, pp.338-339, see the story of Muhammad, the son of Khalīd b. 'Abd al-Lāh, and the qadī Muhammad b. 'Umrān al-Taymī. Note especially the argument that took place between them about the price of the latter's singing slave-girl.

that the famous mughannūn of the time used to purchase young slave-girls, train them in music and song and sell them at higher prices.¹

The house of the singer Ma'bad seems to have been the most famous music institute in al-Ḥijāz for training slave-girls and qiyān. Among Ma'bad's pupils were Ḥabbāba² and Sallāma, the two famous singing slave-girls of Yazīd b. 'Abd al-Mālik. We read of one of his pupils as a famous gayna in al-Ahwāz.³

The houses of later mughannūn continued to be open for the training of female slaves and, through this, some singers made great profit.⁴

Houses of public entertainment were run by men known by the name of ṣāhib qiyān (owner of qiyān) or muḥayyin.⁵ As far as one can judge from the names of these men, it is possible to claim that some of the aṣḥāb al-qiyān of the Umayyad period were free Arabs, whereas others

¹See, for example, Agh.1, Vol. I, pp.24, 99-100 and Vol. II, p.126 (below).

²See Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.161.

³See Agh.1, Vol. I, p.24.

⁴The singer Dahmān al-Ashqar, who lived till the early 'Abbasid period (see his biography in Agh.3, Vol. VI, p.21FF), is said to have made a profit of nine thousand and eight hundred dīnārs through the training and selling of a singing slave-girl to the Caliph al-Walīd b. Yazīd, as we mentioned in an earlier note. See Agh.3, Vol. VI, pp.25-27.

⁵Although the relation between the word فتين and قينة is clear, we do not find any reference to it in the lexicons. This word, however, seems to have come into use in the later part of the Umayyad period and continued to be used during the 'Abbasid period.

were clients of a non-Arab descent.¹ In this respect, it is essential to note that the accounts we possess about the owners of qiyān show that the running of a house of public entertainment was a means to good and easy living for the person engaged in it.

In the Aghānī there is reference to a woman running such a house. She was called Barbar and, among the regular visitors to her house was Muṭī' b. 'Iyās.² In this story in which Barbar's name appears there is no evidence that she, herself, took part in the ghinā' and this makes us believe that she was only the owner of the tavern. The fact that Muṭī' b. 'Iyās was a regular visitor to her house makes one believe that she lived during the later part of the Umayyad period and that the house she ran was in al-Kūfa.³ To this should be added that her name (Barbar) indicates that she was not of Arab origin.

¹If we are to accept that a person's name is of importance in judging his origin or descent there is enough evidence in the Aghānī to support the claim that, during the Umayyad period there were some free Arabs who ran houses of public entertainment. As early as the Caliphate of Mu'āwiyā, we read of a certain 'Abd al-Lāh b. 'Amir as a ṣāhib qiyān in al-Madīna. (See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.321). In al-Kūfa, in the same period or a little later, there was another ṣāhib qiyān visited by the poet 'Umar b. Abī Rabi'a and called 'Abd al-Lāh b. Hilāl. (See Agh.3, Vol. I, p.153). Shortly before the end of the Umayyad period a house of public entertainment run by Ibn 'Umrān al-Tulayhī was mentioned in a poem by Ibn Abī al-Zawā'id (See Agh.1, Vol. XII, p.171). Each of these names underlined can be a name of a free Arab. As for the names of those who were of a non-Arab origin, one can cite names like: Ṣuraym (see Agh.3, Vol. I, p.149), Ibn Rāmīn or Ibn Zāmīn (see Agh.3, Vol. XI, p.364) and 'Aṭ'aṭ (see Agh.1, Vol. XII, p.171).

²See Agh.3, Vol. XIII, p.313.

³See the biography of Muṭī' in Agh.3, Vol. XIII, pp.274-276. About Muṭī' see also von Grunbaum's article in Orientalia, Vol. XVII, (1948), pp.160-204.

All this leads us to conclude that the houses of public entertainment in the Umayyad period were run mostly by men and that, at the end of this period, some non-Arab women seem to have joined this business.

Famous songstresses seem to have felt it beneath their dignity to join a bayt diyān and opened their own houses for the entertainment of the public on certain days. They had their own trained slave-girls and their customers were mostly from among the higher classes of society. The first famous songstress to open her house for the entertainment of the public was 'Azza al-Maylā,¹ Jamīla, another famous songstress and a pupil of 'Azza, also had her house open for the entertainment of the public. Among the distinguished persons who used to attend her public parties and listen to her singing and the singing of her slave-girls were 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far,² 'Umār b. Abī Rabi'a,³ al-'Arjī,⁴ al-Aḥwas,⁵ and others. A third famous songstress, whose house was frequented by the public for the purpose of listening to her singing and

¹See, for example, in Agh.1, Vol. XIV, p.121, the story about the visit of al-Nu'mān b. Bashīr to al-Madīna and his attendance at the entertainment in her house. See also in Agh.1, Vol. II, p.174; Vol. III, p.34, the accounts about the public singing-parties held in her house.

²See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.227-229.

³See Agh.1, Vol. VII, p.133.

⁴See Ibid., p.145.

⁵See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.331-332.

the singing of her slave-girls was 'Aqīla. Among her regular visitors were al-'Ahwaṣ, Mu'ādh al-Anṣārī and others.¹

Before proceeding to discuss the rest of the points which relate to the study of buyūt al-qiyān it is of importance to mention that, in the early Umayyad period, the profession of entertaining the public was not entirely in the hands of the female slaves who worked in these buyūt. In the Aghānī there is evidence that two Meccan male singers of the early Umayyad period used to sing for the public on a certain day of the week. In an account about the musical abilities of the singer Ibn Surayj and al-Gharīd, it is stated that, in the suburbs of Mecca, during the early Umayyad period, there was a house to which, on a certain day of the week, the two singers used to come and sing in front of a large crowd of listeners.² The fact that this account is the only reference in the Aghānī to male singers entertaining the public, coupled with the fact that Ibn Surayj and al-Gharīd were of the early Umayyad period,³ and that there is no mention of any male singer of the later Umayyad period entertaining the public, suggests that the male singers who worked in houses of public entertainment were few and that the profession depended mostly on female slaves. The little interest that the famous professional male singers of the late Umayyad

¹See al-Kāmil, al-Mubarrad, Vol. I, p.392.

²See Agh.3, Vol. I, p.276.

³For the biographies of Ibn Surayj and al-Gharīd see, respectively, Agh.3, Vol. I, pp. and Agh. 3, Vol. II, pp.359-399.

period took in working for houses of public entertainment can be partly explained by the fact that they found, in the Court under Caliphs like al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Mālik, Yazīd b. 'Abd al-Mālik and al-Walīd b. Yazīd, a better market for their art. To this should be added that, together with the patronage of some Caliphs and members of their family, the famous singers enjoyed also the patronage of some of the nobility who summoned them to their private parties and picnics. The patronage of these two groups, as we have seen earlier in this chapter, left the famous mughannūn with little or no fears for their livelihood and this, in turn, made some of them think it beneath their dignity to sing for the public. On the other hand, since the first-class male singers were unwilling to entertain them, it is not impossible that the public itself preferred to be entertained by female slaves, rather than by second-class male singers.

There is enough evidence in the Aghānī to show that the houses of public entertainment were to be found in some of the cities of the Arabian Peninsula since the opening of the Umayyad period. In an account about the last days of the life of the poet Ḥassān b. Thābit, who must have died during the early days of the Caliphate of Mu'āwiyā¹, we read of the poet, who was fond of ghinā' since the days of Jāhiliyya, visiting a certain bayt qiyān in al-Madīna where his son 'Abd al-Rahmān and a group of his friends were listening to the ghinā' of a certain gayna². During the Caliphate of

¹In the various narratives about the death of Ḥassān b. Thābit, various dates are given. W. 'Arafāt thinks that the most likely date of the death of Ḥassān is 40 A.H. See, Thesis, W. 'Arafāt, pp.3-4.

²See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.18.

Mu'āwiya also, 'Abd al-Lāh b. 'Āmir purchased a number of cymbalist slave-girls (jawārī ṣannājāt) and brought them to al-Madīna where, on a certain day of the week, they played for the public.¹ In another account we read of the poet 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'a visiting al-Kūfa and attending a singing-party in the house of 'Abd al-Lāh b. Hilāl, who had two well trained giyān for the entertainment of the public.²

These houses of public entertainment continued to exist and receive customers during the whole of the Umayyad period. Among the famous houses in al-Madīna during the Caliphate of 'Abd al-Mālik were the house of Ṣuraym and that of Ibn Asmā'. When the poet al Farazdaq visited al-Madīna he attended singing-parties held in these houses and, at one of them, met the poet 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'a,³ Another famous house of public entertainment during the Caliphate of 'Abd al-Mālik was the house of al-Dhālfā'. Among the distinguished visitors to this house were the poet Abū Dahbal⁴ and Abū al-Sā'ib al Makhzūmī.⁵ During the Caliphate of Hishām b. 'Abd al-Mālik houses of public entertainment continued to be prosperous and attracted many customers.⁶ In the last

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.321.

²See Ibid. Vol. I, p.153.

³See Ibid. Vol. I, p.149.

⁴For the biography of Abū Dahbal see Agh.3, Vol. VII, pp.114-145.

⁵See Agh.3, Vol. I, p.292.

⁶See al-Ṭabarī, II, p.1733.

days of the Umayyad period, the number of these houses seems to have increased a great deal. In the Aghānī several accounts are preserved about houses of public entertainment in this period and the increasing number of their visitors. Among the famous houses in al-Madīna during this period was the house of Ibn 'Umrān al-Ṭulayhī.¹ In al-Kūfa we read about the **houses** of Barbar,² Ibn Rāmīn³ and others.

Some idea can be obtained from the information in the Aghānī and other sources as to the development of these houses. According to al-Aghānī a house of public entertainment in the early Umayyad period was no more than a place for listening to the singing of qiyān.⁴ But, from an anecdote in al-Kāmil, it appears that some of the visitors to houses of public entertainment at that period were not interested in the samā' only, but also in conversation with the slave-girls. In this anecdote we read: "Al-ʿAḥwaṣ (the poet) said one day to Ma'bad: let us go to 'Aqīla (a famous qayna) and converse with her and listen to her singing and the singing of her slave-girls..."⁵ There is a fairly

¹See Agh.1, Vol. XII, p.171.

²See Agh.3, Vol. XIII, p.313.

³See Ibid., Vol. XI, p.364.

⁴See, in Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.18, the account of the visit of the poet Ḥassan b. Thābit to a bayt qiyān where he met his son 'Abd al-Rahmān and a group of his friends; in Agh.3, Vol. I, p.153, see the account of the visit of 'Umar b. Abī Rabi'a to al-Kūfa where he listened to the singing of the qiyān of 'Abd al-Lāh b. Hilāl. See, also, Agh.3, Vol. I, p.149; Vol. VIII, p.12 and Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.161.

⁵See al-Kāmil, al Mubarrad, Vol. I, p.392.

similar anecdote preserved in Ansāb al-Ashraf of al-Balādhurī. In this anecdote we read: "The Caliph 'Abd al-Mālik b. Marwān was on pilgrimage once and passed in front of the house of Ḥubbā al-Madīniyya in al-Madīna whom the youths of Quraysh used to visit and to whose place they came to converse. When Ḥubbā saw the Caliph's processions she looked at him and blessed him. 'Abd al-Mālik stopped and said to her: ..O, Ḥubbā, how is your cold water, and how are the youths of Quraysh who visit you? Ḥubbā said: They are well, O Prince of the faithful... 'Abd al-Mālik gave her five hundred dīnārs, and accepted the presents she offered to him."¹

In the first anecdote there is clear reference to the effect that the house of 'Aqīla was open for both samā' and conversation, whereas in the second there is no reference to ghinā', although it is not impossible that the youths of Quraysh were also entertained with ghinā' at Ḥubbā's house. Thus, it can be assumed that the huyūt al-qiyān in the early Umayyad period were places for listening to ghinā', as well as conversing with slave-girls. Before leaving this point, attention should be drawn to the reference to conversation with slave-girls in the above accounts which should be seen in the light of the seclusion and veiling of free women, and the vacuum which it left in the life of men. This, however, becomes clearer in the 'Abbasid period when slave-

¹See Ansāb, Vol. XI, p.186.

girls played a very important role in the life of the Muslim society.

In the accounts on the buyūt al-qiyan of the later Umayyad period, i.e. the period from the Caliphate of al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Mālik and onwards, it appears clearly that the customers of these buyūt could drink wine besides listening to singing and conversing with slave-girls. In an anecdote about the poet al-Ḥazīn, who seems to have been a contemporary of the Caliph al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Mālik and a friend of 'Urwa b. Udhayna,¹ we read of a qayna he loved and, for the first time, we are told that he used to drink wine at her place which was open for the entertainment of the public.² In another anecdote in al-Ṭabarī we read of a man brought to the Caliph Hisham b. 'Abd al-Mālik and described as a man who had "singing slave-girls (qiyan), wine and lutes."³ In another account about the qiyan of Ibn Rāmīn who lived in al-Kūfa during the late Umayyad period, it is stated clearly that the house of this man was open "for all who wanted to listen to ghinā' or drink wine..."⁴

Lastly, one should mention that, in the material on the buyūt al-qiyan open for public entertainment during the short period which preceded the fall of the Umayyad regime, there are references to the

¹For the biography and the accounts of the life of the poet al-Ḥazīn, see Agh.1, Vol. XIV, p.76ff.

²See Agh.1, Vol. XIV, p.81.

³See Ṭabarī, II, p.1733.

⁴See Agh.3, Vol. XI, p.364.

sexual relations that some of the customers had with the qiyān who worked in these buyūt. From these references it appears that a bayt qiyān at that period was open for drinking and fornication as well as for singing and conversation.

Thus houses of public entertainment during the Umayyad period developed gradually from places for samā' and conversation only, to places where customers were entertained with music and song, drank wine and had sexual intercourse.

The next question to be considered is the relation between the owner of a house of public entertainment (ṣāhib qiyān) and his customers. From an account in al-Kāmil it appears that an owner had the full right of excluding from his place the persons he did not want to receive. In this account we are told that 'Aqīla (the famous gayna whose house was open for public entertainment in al-Madīna), refused to admit to her place the poet al-Aḥwaṣ, who came to her door with a group of young men, but received the rest of the group. The reason she gave for this was that she was angry with al-Aḥwaṣ.² Furthermore, if the owner of a house of public entertainment

¹See, in Agh.1, Vol. XII, p.171, the story of the poet Ibn Abī al-Zawā'id and the qiyān of 'At'at and his poetry about them. See also the story about Mutī'b. •Iyās and Jawhar (a slave-girl who worked as a gayna in the house of Barbar), and the poem composed by Mutī' about her and a man called Ibn al-Ṣaḥḥāf in Agh.3, Vol. XIII, p.313. In both accounts and poems there are clear references to fornication.

²See al-Kāmil, al-Muharrad, Vol. I, p.392.

felt that the presence of a certain customer, or his behaviour might disturb the rest of the customers or affect the normal course of the party, he could order the expulsion of that customer. According to the Aghānī, Jamīla ordered the expulsion of a certain customer from a public majlis held in her house because she thought that his behaviour affected the normal course of the party and caused some disturbance among the slave-girls.¹ On the other hand, customers could ask the qiyān to sing for them certain songs, and the qiyān had to carry out their wish.²

On certain occasions the owner of a house of public entertainment, or a famous songstress whose house was open for public entertainment, would close his or her place to the public because a certain notable and his friends were to be entertained privately. In the Aghānī there are two references to this matter. In the first it is stated that the poet 'Umar b. Abī Rabi'a and a group of his friends came to Jamīla and asked her to close her house to the public that night because they came especially from Mecca to enjoy her singing and that of her slave-girls in a private party.³ In the other we are told that Jamīla ordered her door-keeper one day not to admit the public on that night because she was holding a

¹See in Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.331-332, the story about the public majlis held in the house of Jamīla and the behaviour of a certain person brought by the poet al-Aḥwaṣ, and how Jamīla ordered al-Aḥwaṣ to take his friend and leave the majlis.

²See Agh.3, Vol. IX, p.236.

³See Agh.1, Vol. VII, p.133.

private party for 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far.¹ In connection with this last reference it is possible to remark that, in the case of a person like 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far, it might have been his religious and social position that made him refrain from attending parties held for the public and prefer to be entertained in private.

The practice of reserving a bayt qiyān for private parties seems to have continued to exist till the late Umayyad period and, on one occasion, we are told that a group of Qurashis stayed in the house of a certain qayna for a whole week, during which they were entertained by the qayna privately.²

It might be important to note, before leaving the subject of the relations between customers and owners of houses of public entertainment, that the information in the Aghānī on the subject shows that some customers were so attached to the house they used to frequent that they would continue to visit it regularly, even when it was moved from their neighbourhood to new premises in a quarter far away from them,³ and that, in the accounts of the buyūt al-qiyan of the late Umayyad period, we read for the first time about love relations between customers and slave-girls working in them.⁴

¹See the account of this party in Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.227-229.

²See Agh.3, Vol. IX, pp.236-237.

³See in Agh.3, Vol. XI, p.364, how the poet Ismā'il b. 'Ammār and his friends continued to visit the house of Ibn Rāmīn after the latter moved to new premises very far from their quarter.

⁴See, for example, in Agh.3, Vol. XIII, p.313, the love story of Muṭī' b. Iyās and Jawhar, the slave-girl who worked in the house owned by Barber.

There is no reference in the Aghānī or the other sources consulted as to how and how much ordinary customers paid for their visit to or occupation of a bayt qiyān. As for notables and wealthy men, it seems that they used to pay the qayna, or the owner of the house, gifts of money or other things. 'Umar b. Abī Rabi'a, for example, is said to have given Jamīla, for the private party she held for him and his friends, ten thousand dirhams and ten garments.¹

The information as to the special clothes, make-up and ornaments worn by slave-girls while entertaining the public is very little and unsatisfactory. In the account on the visit of 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far to the house of Jamīla where he was entertained privately, we are told that Jamīla, on that day, "made her slave-girls let their hair fall down in clusters upon their hips, ordered them to wear coloured clothes and put crowns upon their heads, and ornamented them with jewels."² We are not sure whether these preparations were made before every public performance, or whether they were made especially for the visit of 'Abd al-Lāh.

There is reference also to cosmetics (ṣibgh) in another account. When the messengers of Yazīd b. 'Abd al-Malik came to al-Madīna and

¹See Agh.1, Vol. VII, p.134.

²See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.227-228.

bought Sallāma (the famous singing slave-girl), her master asked the messengers to give him a little time to provide her with the "ornaments, clothes, perfume and cosmetics", which she might need.¹ There is no further reference to ornaments or make-up worn by the qiyān of houses of public entertainment in our material and, thus, it is impossible to draw a complete picture of this matter.

Before bringing this section to an end, it must be mentioned that, in the material which we consulted, there is no reference to any bayt qiyān in Damascus. Most of the houses of public entertainment we read of were in al-Madīna, al-Kūfa, and very few in Mecca. If we are to accept that the silence of the sources about this matter means that there were no houses of public entertainment in Damascus, it is possible to suggest that the explanation of this should be sought in the fact that the Umayyads, who depended very much on the jund al-Shām in their military activities, did their best to stop the wave of pleasure and amusement which spread over al-Hijaz and al-'Irāq from reaching Syria and, thus, did not allow the opening of houses of public entertainment in Damascus.

¹See Agh.1, Vol. VIII, p.10.

CHAPTER II

WINE - DRINKING

Chapter II

Wine-drinking

The word khamr is very common in the poetry and anecdotes of the Jāhiliyya period preserved in the Aghānī. The fact that Arabia is not a suitable soil for the wine was never a reason to stop the Arabs from drinking wine.¹ Wine was either imported from Syria and Iraq (this fact one can deduce from the various names of places in Syria and Iraq that were mentioned in the Jāhiliyya wine-poetry,) or made locally in al-Madīna from the various kinds of dates (such as busr, tamr, fadīkh and zahw).

Before the days of Muḥammad the Arabs used to indulge in drinking as often as an occasion offered itself.² Drunkenness often became a cause of scandal and of indulgence in some further vice. The poet Qays b. 'Aṣim,³ we are told, got drunk once and tried to force his daughter or sister to have sexual intercourse with him. When he was told the next day about what he had done, he took the solemn oath before God that he would never drink again. "He was," as Abū'l Faraj puts it, "the first Arab to forbid himself from drinking wine in the Jāhiliyya."⁴ Asad b. Karz, the great-grandfather of Khālīd b. 'Abd

¹The term "wine" in this study is used to indicate the different kinds of intoxicating drinks, whether made from grapes or not, which were known up to the end of the Umayyad period and which had different names.

²See al-Muḥabbar, Ibn Ḥabīb, ed. Ilse Lichtenstädter, (1942) pp.470-473.

³Qays was a poet and a sayyid of the Banū Tamīm tribe. He lived during both the Jāhiliyya and Islam. For his biography and some of the accounts of his life see Agh.1, Vol. XII, p.149.

⁴See Agh.1, Vol. XII, p.155.

al-Lāh al-Qasrī, is also said to have forbidden himself to drink wine. He did so, we are told, because he wanted to "hold himself far from unclean things".¹ The phrase "because he wanted to hold himself far from unclean things" is of great importance in this context because it shows that, even in the Jāhiliyya and long before Islam condemned wine-drinking, some nobles refrained from drinking for reasons of self-respect and to hold themselves far from things they considered unclean.

In the Aghānī we read that the wine trade before Islam was mainly in the hands of Jews and Christians.² The wine-sellers (khammārūn, sing. khammār), used to pitch a tent among the Bedouins, or take some kind of permanent residence in the towns and provide it with a sign denoting its character. In these wineshops little orgies were often held in the company of singing-girls.³ The most famous wine-shops before Islam were those of al-Hīra and, in the Aghānī, there is a very long account of a visit paid by al-Mughīra b. Shu'ba and a group of Meccans to several of the wine-shops of this city.⁴

It is worth noting that the non-Arab wine-sellers who lived among tribes were treated as a jār and enjoyed the full rights of protection from the tribe.⁵

¹See Agh.1, Vol. XIX, p.53.

²See, for example, Agh.1, Vol. XII, pp.123-124, 155; Vol. XIII, pp. 136-137, and others.

³See, for example, Agh.3, Vol. XI, p.96.

⁴See, for example, Agh.1, Vol. XIV, p.140.

⁵See, for example, Agh.1, Vol. XII, pp.123-124.

Drinking-parties held in the palaces of princes and monarchs were scenes of great luxury. The attendance had to observe the strict rules of etiquette that were followed on such occasions. In the Aghānī there are two descriptions of such parties. One of them was held at the palace of Jabala b. al-Ayham and the second at the palace of al-Hārith al-Ghassānī and, at both parties, the poet Hassān b. Thābit was present. On one occasions Hassān went to visit the Ghassānid monarch, Jabala b. al-Ayham and the following is the description he gives of the drinking-party he attended at his palace: "I saw ten singing-girls, five of them Byzantines, singing the songs of their country to the accompaniment of the lute (barbat), and five others singing the songs of al-Hīra... At banquets and drinking-parties, Jabala sat on couches strewn with myrtles, jasmines and other sweet-scented flowers. In gold and silver vessels, musk, amber and aloes were burnt for him during winter and, in summer, his mailis was surrounded by ice. In summer he and his guests were attired in bright and light garments and, in winter, they wore fur coats. Every time I attended a drinking-party at his palace, he bestowed upon me the garment he wore."¹

On another occasion Hassān went to visit al-Hārith b. Abī Shammar al-Ghassānī. Before he entered the audience-hall of the palace of the

¹See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, pp.15-16.

Ghassānid monarch, the door-keeper gave Ḥassān the following advice:

"...you will see him (al-Ḥārith) eating; do not eat with him until he invites you and, anyhow, do not eat much. You will see him drinking; do not drink with him until he invites you and, anyhow, do not drink much." Ḥassān thanked the door-keeper and entered the audience-hall. Al-Ḥārith asked Ḥassān several questions and afterwards ordered the door-keeper to bring him something to eat. "He ate for one hour and then turned to me and said: Come and eat. I came to the table and ate very little. The food was taken away. Then many male servants holding jugs containing different kinds of drinks and coloured handkerchiefs,¹

¹The Arabic equivalent of the underlined section reads: "...manād-īl al-līn..." According to Tāj al-'Arūs, līn means coloured. (See Tāj, art.

لون Vol. IX, p.337). There is reference to the word līn in the Tabaqāt of Ibn Sa'd (Leiden, 1917, p.31). In an anecdote about how Farwa b. 'Amr al-Judhāmī, the Byzantine ruler of 'Ammān of the Balqā' region became Muslim we read that this Farwa sent to the Prophet a gift of athwāb līn. Wellhausen (Skizzen und Vorarbeiten, IV, Berlin, 1889, p.124)) translates athwāb līn: "weiche Kleider" - "soft clothes". It is probable also that līn in Ibn Sa'd's anecdote is from Latin Linum: "flax: a linen cloth, linen". If the meaning of athwāb līn was to be taken as "striped, or coloured (possibly through striped weaving), cloth" then it would still be possible to derive this sense from the same Latin root: Cf. linum: "a thread" and linea: "a linen thread; a line, a mark". The context in which athwāb

entered the hall and stood attending us. He called for the Byzantine lute players who played for him while he drank. The cup-bearer standing next to me gave me to drink, but I refused until al-Hārith ordered me to take the drink. When we were intoxicated I recited some of my poetry, which he admired..." After a stay of a few days at al-Hārith's palace, Hassān received a gift of 500 dīnārs and some clothes and returned to al-Hijāz.¹ These accounts may not be historically verifiable yet they have their significance in showing that many of the rules that were observed in the drinking parties held in the palaces of the princes and monarchs of the Jāhiliyya were followed, as we shall see, in the Umayyad period. At least one can claim that the scene and etiquette at these festive boards and banquets did not change very much at the Court of the Umayyads in Syria.

Wine-drinking in the Jāhiliyya was not the privilege of the upper class only. The common people in the towns, as well as the tribesmen in the deserts, drank wine too. On one occasion in the Aghānī we read of

(cont) līn occurs here seems to add colour to the proposed etymology.

However, it seems that it was customary in the wine parties of the Jāhiliyya to give the drinker a handkerchief to wipe his mouth after each drink. This custom seems to have survived till the late Umayyad period, as appears from the accounts of wine-parties held at the palace of the Caliph Walīd II.

¹See Agh.1, Vol. XIV, pp.8-9.

the ṣabūḥ (morning drink) being served in the tent of a Khammār living among the Tamīm tribe.¹

In a poem by Ḥassān b. Thābit dedicated to the praise of wine we read the description of the sāqī (cup-bearer) who was serving at a wine-shop. It appears from this poem that cup-bearers were mostly foreigners (in the case of the one described here, it seems that he was a Byzantine), wore a certain kind of clothes (like hooded cloaks - Burnus - and tight girdles) and cut their hair according to a certain fashion.²

Islam defined its attitude towards khamr by declaring it ḥarām (unlawful) in a clear text in the Qoran. But, soon after the first awe inspired by Islam had worn off, and in spite of the strict prohibition by the new religion, many Muslims ignored the dictates of the Qoran and indulged in drinking. An explanation of this can be sought in the fact that khamr held an important place in the life of the Arabs before Islam on the one hand, and in the increasing tendency of Muslim society towards pleasure and amusement on the other.³

¹See Agh. 1, Vol. XII, p.155.

²See Ibid, Vol. XVI, p.17. I understand from Dr. W. 'Arafāt that he did not find sufficient evidence for rejecting this poem as spurious but that it suffers from the doubt generally cast on poetry ascribed to Ḥassān b. Thābit.

³While discussing the efforts of the Caliph 'Umar b. al-Khattāb to make

It must be pointed out, before proceeding to study the different questions that relate to the drinking of wine in the Umayyad period as

(cont). al-Madīna "la cité modèle de l'Islam", Lammens says: "Dans la ville sainte de nombreux cabarets étaient tenus par des Juifs et par des Chrétiens. Des Taqafites Musulmans et même des Qoraisites exploitaient cette industrie." (See Mo'awia Ier, p.410). The Caliph 'Umar, the statement continues, burnt some of these "Cabarets" and it is not sure that he succeeded in closing down the rest. For the first part of his statement (that "Cabarets" were to be found in al-Madīna under 'Umar), Lammens gives the following references: Agh.1, Vol. IV, p.104; Vol. XIII, p.137 and Vol. XXI, p.152. As for the second part - the Thaqafite and Qurashite wine-sellers - the following reference is given: Agh.1, Vol. VI, p.60.

An examination of the information contained in these references shows that the validity of this statement is not unquestionable. In the narrative in Vol. IV, p.104, we read that the poet Ibn Harima sent his servant to a wine-sellers in al-Madīna, called Ibn Hawnak, to buy some wine. Ibn Harima had no money and thus sent with the servant his mantle as a pledge. Ibn Harima, according to al-Aghānī, was born in 90 A.H. and later established himself as the poet of the Abbasid Court. In the year 140 A.H. he recited a poem in the presence of the Caliph al-Manṣūr, in which he declared that he had reached the age of fifty. He lived a long time after that and was fond of wine. (See Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.367-397). From this short biography of Ibn Harima, it appears clearly that the wine-seller, Ibn Hawnak, must have lived and practised his trade, either

revealed in the Kitāb al-Aghānī, that the lexicographical, juridicial and theological discussions about the difference between khamr and

(cont.) at the very end of the Umayyad period, or more probably during the Abbasid period. However, it can in no way be true that he lived during the Caliphate of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. Moreover, we have no information about his religion, nationality, or social status. The second reference, i.e. Vol. XIII, p.137, deals with the cause of the death of Ṣakhr b. 'Amr, the brother of the poetess al-Khansā'. It is said that this Ṣakhr, and a friend of his called Bal'ā b. Qays al-Kinānī, who were both famous for their beauty, went once to drink in a wine-shop in al-Madīna run by a Jewish Khammār. The khammār felt jealous of their beauty and gave them poisoned wine to drink. A few days after this incident, Ṣakhr died. If we are to accept that this narrative is true, and most probably it is not, (for the cause of the death of Ṣakhr see E.I. art "Al-Khansā" Vol. II, p.901), we should recall that it is a known fact that Ṣakhr died before the rise of Islam, and that the famous elegies which al-Khansā' composed on the occasion of the loss of her brother belong to the pre-Islamic poetry. Thus, we have no reason to believe that this Jewish khammār who lived in al-Madīna before Islam survived the massacres and expulsion of the Jews under the Prophet, and continued to sell his wine to the Madīnans under 'Umar.

The third and last reference supporting the first part of Lammens's statement is Vol. XXI, p.152. In this we read that Abū al-Sā'ib al-

nabidh, and whether the Qoranic prohibition against khamr covers nabidh as well, do not fall within the scope of our study because this question

(cont.) Makhzūmī went with Ghurayr b. Talhā al-Arqamī to the house of Muslim b. Yahyā b. al-Aratt, the wine-seller and client of the Banū Zuhra, where a certain singing-girl named al-'Ajfā' sang for them beautiful songs. They were impressed by the singing of al-'Ajfā', immensely, so much so that they decided to visit her twice a week. After that the fame of al-'Ajfā' reached al-Andalus, and she was bought for 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Mu'āwiyā b. Hishām (i.e. the Caliph 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Dākhil 138-172/756-788), and was taken to him. In the case of this last wine-seller, it is clear beyond doubt that he lived long after the Caliphate of 'Umar, and was neither Christian nor Jewish but a Muslim and a client.

So much for the first part of Lammeus's statement. As for the second part of this statement which says that some Thaqafites and even Qurashites ran wine-shops in al-Madīna, the reference is given as: Vol. VI, p.60. In page 58 of this volume Abū'l Faraj quotes a verse by the poet Abū Dhu'ayb al-Hudhalī which can be translated as follows:

Even if she had as much wine as Ibn Bujra
She would not have quenched my thirst.

After this, in p.60, we read: "Ibn Bujra, who was mentioned in the poem of Abū Dhu'ayb al-Hudhalī, was a man of the Banū 'Ubayd b. 'Uwayj b. 'Adī b. Ka'b of the tribe of Quraysh. The Banū 'Ubayd b. 'Uwayj never resided in Mecca or al-Madīna... Ibn Bujra was a wine-seller."

was first raised during the Abbasid period. It must be pointed out also that, in the following study, the term "wine" will be used to

(cont.) The poet Abū Dhu'ayb al-Hudhalī was a mukhadram. After the rise of Islam he came to Muḥammad and declared his Islam. In the year 26 A.H. he went with the army sent by the Caliph 'Uthmān to Africa. When 'Abd al-Lāh b. Sa'd b. Abī Surah, the leader of the army, conquered Africa, he sent 'Abd al-Lāh b. al-Zubayr and the poet Abū Dhu'ayb to tell the Caliph 'Uthmān about the victory. On their way to al-Madīna Abū Dhu,ayb died. (See Agh.1, Vol. VI, pp.58-59).

From this short biography it can be seen clearly that, after accepting Islam, Abū Dhu'ayb became a strong believer and a volunteer in the Muslim army which fought for the spread of Islam. Thus, it is more likely that he composed the above poem before Islam. On the other hand, in the text itself there is clear statement to the effect that the tribe of Ibn Bujra never resided in Mecca or al-Madīna. From all this it appears clearly that this text can in no way be used as evidence of the existence of Qurashite wine-sellers in al-Madīna during the life-time of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. It is thus seen that the material used by Lammeus to support his claim is inadequate and provides no evidence of the existence of "Cabarets" in al-Madīna during the Caliphate of 'Umar I.

However, it is not the aim of this argument to prove that, during the reign of the Orthodox Caliphs no one drank wine in al-Madīna because

designate khamr as well as nabidh, because in the accounts used for this study they indicate an intoxicating drink. C. Pellat thinks rightly that the real aim behind these discussions was "resterindre la prohibition au hamr et d'en exclure le nabid̄, bien que, de bonne heure, le mot nabid̄ semble avoir été employé par euphemisme pour designer le vin."¹

In the Aghānī there are many accounts which prove that wine was drunk from the very first days of the Umayyad period but of special significance are those which speak of the prevalence of wine-drinking among some people of outstanding religious and social backgrounds. It is related, for example, that al-Walīd, the son of the Caliph 'Uthmān b. 'Affān was a heavy drinker, and that his drinking-companion was the

(cont.) our material contains several references to wine-drinkers during this period (see, for example, Agh. Brünnow, pp.210-211, Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.112, and others) - but the point is that it is hard to accept that the trade in wine was carried on openly in "Cabarets" owned by Muslims and non-Muslims in the metropolis of Islam and under the sovereign who spared no effort to carry out the "ḥudūd of God".

¹C. Pellat, Le milieu Basrien et la formation de Gahiz, p.248. In Tāj al-'Arūs and Lane's Lexicon there is much evidence that the nabidh was an intoxicating drink; see art. نابذ in Tāj, and Lane.

poet, Ibn Artāt.¹ We read also that Bishr, the son of Marwān b. al-Ḥakam and the governor of al-Kūfa, not only drank wine and held fabulous drinking-parties in his palace,² but also sent a present of wine to the poet al-Akḥṭal when the latter visited al-Kūfa during his governorship.³ The famous al-Walīd b. 'Uqba b. Abī Mu'ayt, who played an eminent role in the crisis of 'Alī and Mu'āwiya, is said to have ordered his sons, while on his death-bed, to give a yearly sum to his friend, the poet and great wine-lover, Abū Zubayd al-Ta'ī, for his wine-supply.⁴ Wine was thus drunk by some dignitaries and noblemen, as well as by common people with no claim to honour or dignity.

This leads us to a second question, namely the relation between the spread of the habit of Samā' (listening to singing), and wine-drinking, or, in other words, did all those who enjoyed listening to ghinā', who kept singing slave-girls and were attracted by the arts of the mukhannathun, drink wine? In answering this question, reference could be made to the following cases: 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far, for example, the great

¹See Agh.3, Vol. II, p.245; these reports about al-Walīd are confirmed in Ansāb al-Ashraf, Vol. V, pp.115-116.

²See Agh.3, Vol. II, pp.349-350; see also Ansāb al-Ashraf, Vol. V, pp.172-173.

³See Agh.3, Vol. XI, pp.61-62.

⁴See Agh.3, Vol. XII, pp.138-139.

patron of art and the staunch defender of ghinā', is said never to have drunk wine. The Caliph Mu'āwīya, we are told, came once to visit this 'Abd al-Lāh and saw him sitting with a glass in front of him. Mu'āwīya suspected that the glass might contain wine, and thus asked him what he was drinking. 'Abd al-Lāh insisted that the Caliph should taste the drink and Mu'āwīya found it was honey mixed with water, musk and camphor.¹ It is also related that the poet Ṭurayḥ said once to the Caliph al-Walīd b. Yazīd: "O, prince of the Faithful, your maternal uncle² wants you to know that he never tasted a drink mixed with water except sour milk or honey.³ However strange it may appear, the mukhannath al-Dalāl was among those who never drank wine. At parties and on festive occasions, when everybody drank wine, he used to drink honey mixed with water.⁴

From these examples and many others it can be deduced that the uncertainty over the attitude of the Qoran and the Prophet towards music and singing gave the majority of people an excuse for listening to ghinā', whereas the clear condemnation of wine-drinking in a Qoranic text made them refrain from indulging in wine.

¹See Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.212.

²Ṭurayḥ called himself the maternal uncle of the Caliph al-Walīd because he was of the Thaqif tribe, and so was the Caliph's mother.

³Wine was usually mixed with water, as we shall see. Ṭurayḥ meant that he never drank wine. See Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.310.

⁴See, for example, Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.298.

The next question to be discussed is the view of Umayyad drinkers concerning the qualities of a good wine. Information of this kind in the Aghānī is exceedingly fragmentary, and the references but few, so that a great deal can only be surmised; in the meantime, one has to seek the help of other sources.

The words khamr, nabīdh, Qahwa, bint al-hān, bint al-dann or al-dinān, and many others, occur very often in much of the poetry and anecdotes preserved in the Aghānī, and many poems were devoted to the praise of wine, but there is hardly a reference to what was meant by a good wine, nor how it was made and kept, nor what kinds of wine were drunk.

It has to be assumed that the Hijāz, except al-Tā'if, was not a wine-producing country and that most of the wine consumed there was imported from other places. The best kind of wine seems to have been the wine of Bābil. The fame of khamr Bābil was great since the Jāhiliyya.¹ Likewise, the wines of 'Āna,² Bayrūt,³ 'Asqalān,⁴ and others⁵ were praised by many drinkers.

Grape-wine appears to have been the favourite wine of all drinkers, and in almost all the poems devoted to the praise of khamr there is reference to bint al-'inab (lit. the daughter of grapes).⁶ That, however,

¹See Agh.1, Vol. VI, p.119 and Vol. X, pp.89, 119.

²See Agh.1, Vol. VIII, p.85 and Vol. VI, p.109.

³See Agh.1, Vol. VI, p.120.

⁴See Agh.1, Vol. VIII, p.162.

⁵Like the wine of Baysān and Buṣrā, see Naqā'id, ed. Ṣulḥānī, p.50 and Agh.3, Vol. II, p.256.

⁶See, for example, the poem by al-Walīd b. Yazīd, in Agh.1, Vol. VI, p.110.

does not mean that all the wine consumed during the Umayyad period was grape-wine. In Iraq, for example, where great quantities of dates were produced, wine must have been made from them almost entirely. In the Yaman, we are told, a certain kind of wine called al-Bata' was drunk before Islam. It was an intoxicating drink made from honey and dates. The drinking of bata' was prohibited by Muḥammad.¹ Likewise, there was a prohibition against another kind of wine made also in the Yaman, called ghubayrā' and made from wheat and barley.² It is not improbable that the production of these kinds of wine continued after the death of Muḥammad, especially in the parts of Arabia where the soil was not fit for the vine.

Good wine also meant old wine. There seems to have been a unanimous agreement on this point among all the drinkers of the Umayyad period and the description mu'attaga (old wine, matured) occurs in almost all the poems about khamr in the Aghānī.³ On one occasion we read that the wine a certain poet drank was "ten years old".⁴

There is no direct reference as to how wine was made and kept. From a poem by al-Akḥṭal it can be gathered that the grapes which are to be used in the making of wine should be allowed to ripen and become sweet. After that they should be squeezed and the juice should be kept

¹See Ibn Ḥanbal, al-Musnad, (Cairo 1313 A.H.), Vol. VI, pp.96²⁷.

²Ibid, p.427, 10.

³See, for example, Agh.1, Vol. X, p.116; Vol. VI, pp.110,120,123; Vol. XIII, p.147, and others.

⁴See Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.81.

in a sealed receptacle (dann). For sealing the receptacles they used to put fibres soaked in tar on top of the aperture of the receptacle and cover them with a layer of mud. Then the sealed receptacles should be kept far from the fire and preferably in a cool alcove for a certain period, after which the grape-juice becomes wine. For opening a dann a side-hole should be made in it, so that clear wine can flow and the turbid remnants rest in the bottom.¹

Thus this poem gives us some idea about how wine was made during the Umayyad period, and shows that the process of wine-making today is basically no different from that evolved in the Umayyad period.

It seems that the wine made during the Umayyad period was of a fairly high alcoholic content, so much so that drinkers had to mix it with water.² In almost every poem about wine a verse or two were devoted to the description of the clear and cold water with which the drinker mixed his drink.³ Very few drinkers, the Caliph al-Walīd b. Yazīd being one of them,⁴ drank neat wine, and Ibn Ḥabīb in al-Muḥabbar devotes a whole chapter to citing the names of "Those who died because they drank neat wine."⁵ The fact that wine was always drunk after the meal and

¹Two verses only of this poem are mentioned in the Aghānī. (Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.147); the rest of the poem should be seen in the diwān of al-Akhtal, ed. Sālḥānī, pp.117-118. See also, pp.76-77 of the diwān, and Agh.1, Vol. VII, p.175; Vol. VIII, p.85.

²See, for example, Agh.1, Vol. X, p.116.

³See Agh.1, Vol. VII, p.175; Vol. VIII, p.85; Vol. X, p.119; Vol. XIII, p.147, and others.

⁴See Agh.1, Vol. VI, p.109.

⁵Muḥabbar, op.cit, pp.470-473.

never before, or with it,¹ is another reason which leads one to believe that it was of high alcoholic content.

The next question to be considered is wine-parties. As for the rules to be observed at a wine-party, one would expect to find much information on this matter in the Aghānī but, in fact, there is practically no mention of such occasions. In the accounts of the parties held at the Umayyad Court - which will be discussed in the chapter on Court life - few references are made to what might have been the etiquette of drinking-parties held in the palaces of the Caliphs but, apart from that, there is nothing on the rules that were observed in the wine-parties held by ordinary people. It is only once in the Naqā'id that we read in a poem by al-Akhtal that, at a wine-party, drinking must stop during the listening to ghinā, or while food is served.²

The wealthy and nobles seem to have held their wine-parties at their palaces, whereas common people used to drink in wine-shops. At wine-parties held by nobles, the drinking was usually accompanied by listening to ghinā, and some of the nobles used to wear special clothes (similar to thiyāb al-munādama of the Abbasid period) for the occasion. Al-Shā'bi,³ the famous traditionist and theologian, tells us that, during the governorship of Bishr b. Marwan in al-Kūfa (71-73 / 690-692) he was

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp. 11, 31-32.

²See al-Naqā'id, Ṣālḥānī, pp.51-52.

³For the biography of al-Shā'bi, see Wafayāt, Vol. II, pp.4-6.

in charge of the Mazālim (lit. the examination into wrongful exactions; i.e. the board for the inspection of grievances). One day, he went to the palace of Bishr to discuss an urgent matter with him. The Hājib (door-keeper) told him that Bishr had ordered him not to allow anybody in because he was in a private sitting and no one should disturb him. After a long argument, the door-keeper went and came back with the consent of Bishr to meet al-Sha'bī. "Bishr", al-Sha'bī says, "was sitting on a yellow couch surrounded with cushions. He wore a yellow ghilāla¹, wrapped a glossy milā'a² round his body, and put a wreath of sweet-smelling plant (rayhān) round his head. The singer Hunayn b. Balwa' sat opposite to him. He was wearing a rough qubā'³ of bright colour, a long-sleeved fur coat (mustuqa),⁴ and a pair of embroidered shoes, and wound an Egyptian turban upon the round of his head."⁵ In this drinking-

¹A ghilāla is a garment that is worn next the body, beneath the other garment and likewise beneath the Coat of mail. See Dozy, Dictionnaire des noms des vêtements, pp.319-323.

²Milā'a is a covering for the body composed of two pieces of cloth sewn together; it appears to have been mostly of a yellow colour. See Dozy, op.cit., pp.408-411.

³The term "qubā'" here seems to mean a type of tunic, see Dozy, op.cit. pp.352-362; see also notes 1 and 2 in Agh.3, Vol. II, p.350.

⁴There is no mention of the term mustuqa in Dozy. The only reference to it occurs in Kitāb al-Mu'arrab by al-Jawālīqī, and it is quoted in Agh.3, Vol. II, p.350, note 3.

⁵See Agh.3, Vol. II, pp.349-350. This same account is mentioned also in Ansab al-Ashrāf, Vol. V, pp.172-173. For the above text, we used the information contained in these two accounts.

party 'krima b. Rib'ī and Khalid b. 'Attāb b. Warqā' were present, but al-Sha'bi does not tell us what they were wearing. The reference to the wreath of sweet-smelling plant (Iklīl al-Rayhān) in the above account, especially at a wine-party attended by the singer Hunayn al-Hirī, might have a connection with the accounts on the use of rayhān by this singer for greeting the company at wine-parties in which he took part as a singer.¹ Apparently Hunayn was the only singer in the Umayyad period who greeted his listeners at a drinking-party with rayhān because there is no reference to any other singer doing the same. In this respect, it is important to note that, during the Jāhiliyya, it was customary for Christian Arabs to greet one another on Palm Sundays with rayhān. In a poem by al-Nābigha al-Dhubyanī we read the following verse:

٢ "رِقَاقُ النِّعَالِ طَيِّبٌ هَجَرَاتِهِمْ يَجِيُونَ بِالرَّيْحَانِ يَوْمَ السَّبَابِ"

¹See, for example, Agh.3, Vol. II, pp.345, 352.

²This verse is mentioned in the diwān of the poet al-Nābigha, see the M. Hartwig Derenbourg edition of the diwān (Paris, 1841), p.73. Yawm al-Sabāsib, according to Sharh Dibajāt al-Qāmūs, is Palm Sunday (see Vol. I, p.81). Derenbourg translates the above verse as follows: "Chaussés de sandales légères et parés de belles ceintures, ils sont salués avec des branches odorantes au jour des Rameaux." (See, p.114, of the diwān). He remarks later: "sur l'etymologi de يوم السباب pour 'la fête Chretienne des Rameaux', il ne peut pas y avoir de doute: en Syriaque et an Chaldeen,signifie 'Rameaux',.....Un autre nom de cette fête أيام الشابين, a également une origine Syriaque..." (See note 25, p.184, of the diwān). The connection between Palm-Sunday and the sweet-smelling plants seems to have come from the palm-branches strewn before Jesus on his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. In some Christian countries, it was customary on this day to strew flowers and green boughs about the Cross in the churchyard. (See art "Palm-Sunday", in the Catholic Encyclopedia (London, 1913), Vol. XI, pp.432-433).

Under Islam, Christians seem to have retained this custom.

Ḥunayn¹ being the only known Christian singer in the Umayyad period, and a native of al-Ḥīra, a town of mainly Christian population, seems to have been influenced by this custom when he introduced the practice of greeting with rayḥān. To that one can add that, in his youth, Ḥunayn earned his living through the selling of bouquets of flowers to "the fityān, the wealthy, the qiyān, and the pleasure-lovers in al-Ḥīra and al-Kūfa."²

From a poem by al-Walīd b. Yazīd it can be deduced that, at a wine-party, cups should be served from right to left.³ The reason for this order seems to have been the fact that people attending the mailis of a noble or a Caliph had to sit according to their social ranks. The highest in social rank usually sits to the right of the host, and the next to him in rank to his right, and so on.⁴

Common people used to drink in wine-shops run by persons called khammārūn,⁵ (sing. khammār) or nabbādḥun (sing. nabbādḥ).⁶

¹For the biography of the singer Ḥunayn see Agh.3, Vol. II, p.356.

²See Agh.3, Vol. II, p.345.

³See Agh.1, Vol. VI, p.123.

⁴See in Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.316, the order of sitting in the mailis of the Caliph al-Walīd b. Yazīd.

⁵See Agh.3, Vol. XI, pp.264-265.

⁶See Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.373.

A result of the prohibition of khamr by Islam was that all the wine-sellers of the Umayyad period were either Christians,¹ or Jews,² and it is not impossible that some of them were Majūs.³

Although the prohibition of khamr by Islam did not stop many Muslims from drinking, we know of no Muslim in the Umayyad period trading in wine or running a wine-shop. Thus, the wine trade, like almost all other trades, was left exclusively in the hands of non-Muslims.

Wine-shops were to be found in big cities and centres of pleasure and amusement, as well as in the deserts where the tribes encamped. It is important to note that the wine-sellers of the Umayyad period who lived among the tribes enjoyed the full rights of a Jār from the tribe.⁴

The most famous city during the Umayyad period for its wine-shops seems to have been al-Ḥira. The fame of the wine-shops of this city was great since the days of the Jāhiliyya when the wealthy merchants of al-Ḥijāz and the members of the different embassies from Arabia and elsewhere to Kisrā used to stop there and enjoy its wine and song.⁵ Under

¹See Ansāb al-Ashraf, Vol. V, p.178.

²See Agh.3, Vol. XII, p.266.

³There is no reference in our material to any Magian trading in wine or running a wine-shop, but one cannot exclude the possibility altogether, especially in Persia.

⁴See the account of the war between the Banū Jawshan and the Banū Sahn b. Murra because of the Jewish Khammar who was the Jār of the latter, and killed by the Banū Jawshan, in Agh.3, Vol. XII, p.266.

⁵In the Aghānī there are many accounts of the drinking-parties held by notable Arab visitors to the wine-shops of al-Ḥira before Islam; see, e.g. Agh.3, Vol. XI, p.96 and Agh.1, Vol. XIV, p.140.

the Umayyads the scene in al-Ḥīra did not change very much and its wine-shops remained as famous as they used to be in the Jāhiliyya and attracted customers from neighbouring towns. The poet al-Uqayshir who was famed for his love of wine, and who lived during the early Umayyad period,¹ used to leave his home-town, al-Kūfa, every morning and go to al-Ḥīra, where he spent the day drinking in the wine-shops. This daily trip cost him, according to one narrative, three dirhams: one for the mule that took him from al-Kūfa to al-Ḥīra, another for the wine, and a third for the food.² According to a second narrative, the cost of this daily trip was five dirhams: two dirhams for the rent of the mule, two for the wine and one for the food.³ In his poetry al-Uqayshir mentions some of his encounters with the wine-sellers of al-Ḥīra.⁴

It seems that wine-shops were to be found in many of the cities and towns of the Umayyad Empire and that the trade in wine in these cities was carried out openly, and was recognized by the state. It is said, for example, that whenever the Caliph 'Abd al-Mālik wanted to listen to the poetry of al-Akhtal, he used to send a messenger to one of the wine-shops in Damascus, where the poet spent much of his time, to summon him to the palace.⁵ This seems to have been due to the fact that there were

¹See the biography of the poet al-Uqayshir and the many stories about his love for wine in Agh.3, Vol. XI, pp.251-276.

²See Agh.3, Vol. XI, pp.264-265.

³See Agh.3, Vol. XI, pp.260-261.

⁴See, for example, Agh.1, Vol. X, p.94.

⁵See Agh.1, Vol. VII, p.173.

non-Muslims settling in these cities, for whom wine-drinking was lawful and who appear to have been safe from the interference of the state in their religious affairs. The only relation that existed between the state and the owners of the wine-shops was that the latter were entitled to pay the customs tax to the treasury. In Kitāb al-Kharāj by Yahyā b. Ādam we read: "The Ahl al-dhimma pay double on wine if they trade in it",¹ and: "'Ushr is taken from wine."² Thus the 'Ushr (tithe) was to be paid only on wine used in commerce, whereas wine used for personal consumption was free of tax.³

Before leaving this point, it must be mentioned that there is no clear evidence in the information preserved in the Aghānī that there were wine-shops in Mecca or al-Madīna frequented by the drinkers of these two cities during the Umayyad period, nor is there mention of any trade in wine. This, however, does not mean that there was no wine-trade, nor does it mean that no wine was drunk there, but it does mean that the trade in, and the drinking of, wine were kept far from the eyes of the authorities.⁴ The explanation for this could be the fact that, in these two cities, unlike others, there were no non-Muslim inhabitants whose presence in the other cities was the reason that made the authorities consider the trade in wine and the opening of wine-shops as a part of the

¹See Kitāb al-Kharāj, Yahyā b. Ādam al-Qurashī, ed. Cairo, 1347 A.H., p.68. cf. Taxation in Islam, Vol. I, ed. A. Ben Shemesh, Leiden, 1958, p.56.

²See Kitāb al-Kharāj, p.69; cf. Taxation, p.57.

³In Kitāb al-Kharāj we read: "There is no charge on anything not used for trade, the tax collector should accept the statement of the owner about it, be he Muslim or Dhimmi. ... See Taxation, p.57 tradition 216.

⁴The wine trade in Mecca and al-Madīna was illegal, and it is almost certain that in the buyūt al-qiyan of al-Madīna, wine was served secretly.

religious freedoms granted to non-Muslim citizens.

It occurs only once in this material that we read of a nabbādh in al-Madīna called Ibn Ḥawnak, to whom the poet Ibn Harima sent a boy to buy some wine.¹ In examining this reference, one has to consider two points:

1. the clear statement of the narrator of the story to the effect that Ibn Harima and his friends were drinking in a private house, and not in a wine-shop, which might mean that Ibn Ḥawnak was not an owner of a wine-shop, but simply a wine-merchant;
2. the fact that the poet Ibn Harima was born in the year 90 A.H., and did not become famous till the early Abbasid period, when he was introduced to Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr and al-Mahdī.²

It is, thus, not impossible that this nabbādh practiced his trade in al-Madīna during the early Abbasid period.

There is also reference to a wine-shop in a place called al-'Aqīq. The fact that there were many places in the Arabian Peninsula known by the name of al-'Aqīq, one of them being in the outskirts of al-Madīna, makes it important to examine this reference thoroughly. The reference occurs in a story about the poet Zayd b. al-Ṭathriyya³, who was a resident

¹See the whole account in Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.373.

²For the biography and the accounts of the life of the poet Ibn Harima see Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.367-397.

³Zayd b. al-Ṭathriyya was one of the poets of the Umayyad period. For his biography see Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.155-185 and Wafayāt, Vol. IV, pp.266-268.

of a place called al-'Aqīq.¹ In this story we read: "... and he (Zayd) said to the daughter of the Khammāra (woman wine-seller) at whose shop he used to drink..."²

According to Yāqūt there were four places in the Bilād al-'Arab called al-'Aqīq, one of them being in al-Yamāma.³ "The 'Aqīq of 'Ārid," Yāqūt says, "was in al-Yamāma... Al-Sakūnī said: the 'Aqīq of al-Yamāma belongs to the Banū 'Uqayl; in it there are many villages and palm trees ... It is a minbar⁴ of the manābir of al-Yamāma, and it lies on the road leading from al-Yamāma to al-Yaman."⁵ Ibn Khallikān, on the other hand, says that Ibn al-Ṭathriyya died in a place "near a village called al-Falaj and situated, I believe, in the province of Yamāma."⁶ To this should be added that the mother of Ibn al-Ṭathriyya, i.e. al-Ṭathriyya, by whose name he was known was of the Banī Ṭathr, who were attached to the Banū 'Uqayl, the owners of the 'Aqīq al-Yamāma, by walā'.⁷ All these facts, taken together, show that Ibn al-Ṭathriyya was from the

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.174.

²See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.175.

³See Mu'jam al-Buldān, Yāqūt, Vol. III, p.700.

⁴The term minbar (pulpit) in this context designates a big town, because a town cannot have a pulpit unless it be the capital of a province or a considerable district. See Wafayāt, Vol. IV, p.269, note 9.

⁵See Mu'jam al-Buldān, Vol. III, p.700.

⁶See Wafayāt, Vol. IV, p.266.

⁷See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.155-156.

'Aqīq of al-Yamāma and not from the 'Aqīq of al-Madīna.¹ Thus, the khammāra at whose shop Ibn al-Tathriyya used to drink must have been a resident of the 'Aqīq of al-Yamāma.

The wine-shops of the Umayyad period were not places for drinking only. In some of them, customers could get food,² listen to the singing of a gayna or a singer,³ and even make a deal with a prostitute.⁴

Like in the Jāhiliyya, the service in a wine-shop was done by a person called sāqī (lit. one who gives to drink - a cup-bearer).

The sāqīs were supposed to be young and good looking. They usually wore special clothes. In a poem by al-Akhtal we read of the beautiful sāqī whose colour was white intermixed with red. He was turbaned and wore a short shirt and earrings.⁵

In clothing and ornamentation the sāqīs of the Umayyad period seem to have retained much of the customs of their pre-Islamic counterparts. In the wine-shops of pre-Islamic Arabia some of the sāqīs used to have a necklace upon their necks,⁶ or wore earrings made of silver

¹For the 'Aqīq of al-Madīna see below, p.180.

²See the story of the poet al-Shamardal and his friend, Daykal, who ate a camel in a wine-shop in Khurāsān, in Agh.3, Vol. XIII, p.357.

³See Agh.1, Vol. VI, p.109, and al-Naqā'id, Ṣalḥānī, p.51.

⁴See, for example, Agh.1, Vol. X, p.96. For the question of prostitution and wine-shops see below, p.213.

⁵See the dīwān of al-Akhtal, p.324.

⁶In a poem by the poet al-A'shā we read:

«يَقُولُ بِالسَّاقِي عَلَيْنَا مَتْنُومٌ خَفِيفًا زَنْفِيًّا مَا يَزَالُ مُعَفَّرًا»

(See the dīwān of the poet al-A'shā, ed. M. Husayn, 1950, Poem 55, verse 6). The word متنوم according to Lane means: "having a qilāda (or necklace) put upon his neck." (See art. تروم in Lane's Lexicon, Book I, p.323.)

beads fashioned like pearls.¹ Moreover, some of the sāqīs of the Jāhiliyya period used to cover their mouths with a piece of cloth called fidām while serving the drinks to customers.² In the Umayyad poetry there is no reference to a sāqī wearing a necklace, but there is enough evidence that they wore earrings,³ and from a verse by al-'Ajjāj⁴ it appears that the fidām was also used by some of the sāqīs of that period.⁵

¹In another poem, by the poet al-A'shā, we read:

« دُرودتو متین و نازقہ یَعْلُ دِیْرَعُ تَکْرَا رَها »

(See the diwān of al-'A'shā, poem 64, verse 24). The word "تومة" according to Tāj al-'Arūs, means: "a silver bead fashioned like a pearl." (See art. توم in Tāj al-'Arūs, Vol. VIII, p.214).

²In a poem by the poet al-A'shā we read the following:

« دِظَلْ تَجْرِ بَیتَا دِ مَظْم یَیْ بِلَا »

(See the diwān of al-A'shā, poem 39, verse 34). According to Tāj al-'Arūs and Lane's Lexicon the word "مَظْم" comes from "مَظْم" meaning he covered his mouth with the fidām. The fidām seems to have been a piece of cloth which the Persians and the Magians used to bind upon their mouths on the occasion of their serving drink. (See art. مَظْم in Tāj and Lane.) In Dozy's Dict. des noms des vêtements, under the title "مَظْم", we read: "Ce mot designe, suivant le Kamous, le turban (عمامة)." (See p. 326). This definition is wrong according to the author of Tāj al-'Arūs, who says:

« فرام العمامة فی السخی والصلوب والقدامة العمامة وصوما یوضع علی فم البعیر... »
(See art. مَظْم in Tāj al-'Arūs, Vol. IX, p.10.) Another sāqī was described by al-A'shā as "مَظْم". The verse reads:

« یَکُونُ بِلَا سَاقٍ عَلَیْنَا مَظْمٌ خَفِیفٌ ذَخِیفٌ مَا یَزَالُ مَظْمَا »

(See the diwān of al-A'shā, poem 55, verse 6.)

³See the verse from a poem by al-Akhtal cited above, p.150.note 5.

⁴Al-'Ajjāj, an Umayyad poet, born about 25/646 and died in 197/715. See E.I.2, art. "al-'Adjdjadj", Vol. I, Fasc.4, p.207.

⁵The verse reads:

« مَا نَزَالُ عَمَامَةً مُنْطَقَا قَطَعْنَا مِنْ أَعْنَابه مَا قَطَعَا »

(See art. "مَظْم", Tāj al-'Arūs. Vol. IX, p.10.)

Some of the wine-shops of the Umayyad period were run by women usually known by the name of khammāra (a woman wine-seller).¹ Some of the khammarāt seem to have worked in the wine-shops of their husbands or sons,² whereas others ran independent shops under their own management. Among the latter was Dawma of al-Ḥīra, at whose shop the poet al-Uqayshir used to drink, and whose name is mentioned in his poetry.³ Shahlā', was another famous khammāra in al-Ḥīra. Her name is mentioned in some of the stories on wine-drinking in al-Ḥīra during the Umayyad period.⁴ A third famous khammāra was Hushayma, whose shop was in Damascus. She is said to have been the cleanest and most experienced person that ever ran a wine-shop. Her fame was so great that she frequently was called to the palace to serve at the drinking-parties given by the Caliph al-Walīd b. Yazīd. She lived till the Abbasid period and died during the Caliphate of Hārūn al-Rashīd.⁵ All the khammarāt were either Christian or Jewish.

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.175.

²In Agh.1, Vol. X, pp.89,90, see the story of the poet al-Uqayshir and Umm Ḥunayn, the mother of Ḥunayn the wine-seller, at whose son's shop he used to drink.

³See Agh.1, Vol. X, p.94.

⁴See in Masalik al-Absār, by Ibn Fadl al-lāh al-'Umarī (ed. A.Zaki, Cairo, 1924), Vol. I, p.391, the story about the policeman and al-Uqayshir in the wine-shop of Shahlā'. This story is mentioned in al-Aghānī. (See Agh.3, Vol. XI, p.264), but the name of the owner of the wine-shop is not mentioned.

⁵See Masalik al-Absār, Vol. I, p.398; see also Agh.1, Vol. V, p.46.

There are references in the material on wine-drinking in the late Umayyad period, to drinking in the monasteries. The fame of these monasteries seems to have attracted some drinkers. In an account in al-Aghānī we read that Muṭī' b. Iyas used to frequent a certain monastery (Dayr Ka'b) for drinking and conversing with the monks.¹ In Masālik al-'Absār there are several accounts of drinking in the monasteries, all of which involve the name of the Caliph al-Walīd b. Yazīd, whose love for good wine made him search for it everywhere.² Of the drinkers of the early Umayyad period, the only one whose name is mentioned in an account on drinking in the monasteries is Yazīd b. Mu'āwīya. It is said in an account in al-Aghānī that, during the life-time of his father, Yazīd visited Dayr Murrān³ with his wife, Umm Kulthūm and drank the ṣabūḥ (morning drink) there. When the news of this visit reached Mu'āwīya he was so annoyed that he ordered Yazīd to join an army engaged in a war against Byzantium.⁴ In general, it seems that, in the Umayyad period, the number of people who visited monasteries for the sole purpose of drinking was very small, especially in comparison with the great numbers

¹See Agh.3, Vol. XII, pp.306-307.

²See in Masālik al-'Absār, Vol. I, pp.321-322, 349, 349-350, 351, 352, 355-356, and others, the many accounts of the drinking-parties held for the Caliph al-Walīd b. Yazīd in the different monasteries.

³Dayr Murran was near Damascus, see al-Ṭabarī, II, pp.1270, 1272.

⁴See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.33.

of Muslim drinkers who frequented the monasteries in the Abbasid period for this purpose.¹ This claim finds support in the fact that, in the Umayyad wine-poetry, there are very few references to monasteries and wine-parties held in them,² whereas the Abbasid wine-poets devoted much of their work to reminiscences of their happy days in the monasteries.³

In the Umayyad period, as in the Jāhiliyya⁴, the morning drink (al-ṣabūḥ) was praised by many poets. There is no direct evidence as to whether the drinking of ṣabūḥ was a common practice or not; however, to judge from the way in which, in the accounts and poems on the subject, it is associated with the names of those known to be strong addicts of wine, it is possible that ṣabūḥ was not taken by merely occasional drinkers. Among those who used to drink the ṣabūḥ were: Yazīd b.

¹For drinking in the monasteries during the Abbasid period see Masālik al-Absār, Vol. I, pp.254-386.

²In the Umayyad wine-poetry which we consulted there are only two verses about drinking in the monasteries. One is by Yazīd b. Mu'āwiya and it describes his visit to Dayr Murrān, where he drank the ṣabūḥ (see Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.33) and the other is by al-Walīd b. Yazīd, and it describes the pleasant time he had in Dayr Bawanna. (See Masālik al-Absār, Vol. I, p.351.).

³Much of this poetry is quoted in Masālik al-Absār (see Vol. I, pp.254-386). See also Tatawur al-khamriyat fi al-Shi'r al-'Arabi, Jamīl Sa'id, Cairo, 1945, pp.190-198.

⁴See, for example, in Agh.1, Vol. VI, p.123, the poem by 'Adī b. Zayd in praise of al-ṣabūḥ.

Mu'āwiya,¹ al-Akḥṭal,² al-Walīd b. Yazīd,³ Muṭī' b. Iyās,⁴ and others of a similar reputation.

The ṣabūḥ, as it appears from the accounts, was taken on an empty stomach and, in most cases in the morning following a late drinking night.⁵ From an anecdote dating from the late Umayyad period and involving the name of Muṭī' b. Iyās it appears that the ṣabūḥ was best liked on a rainy or cloudy morning, or on the morning which follows a rainy night.⁶

Before bringing this study about wine-drinking in the Umayyad period to an end, these remarks should be made:

The first is that the examination of certain anecdotes cited in the Aghānī leaves one with no doubt that, in the earlier part of the reign of the Umayyads, many people believed that the drinking of wine was unbecoming for a man of high social standing, or a tribal chief. In one of these anecdotes we read that Ḥāritha b. Badr al-Ghudānī, a poet and a noble of the Banī Tamīm,⁷ was a heavy drinker and a friend of Ziyād b. Abīh, the governor of al-'Iraq. After the death of Ziyād

¹See, for example, Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.33.

²See Naqā'id, Ṣālḥānī, p.49 and the dīwān of al-Akḥṭal, p.320.

³See Agh.1, Vol. VI, p.109.

⁴See Agh.3, Vol. XIII, pp.293-294.

⁵See Agh.3, Vol. XIII, pp.293-294, and Masālik al-Absār, Vol. I, p.396.

⁶See in Agh.3, Vol. XIII, pp.293-294, the anecdote related on the authority of 'Alī b. al-Qasim who was invited by Muṭī' b. Iyās to drink the ṣabūḥ.

⁷For the biography of Ḥāritha b. Badr and the accounts of his life see Agh. Brünnow, pp.20-44.

and the appointment of his son 'Ubayd al-Lāh as governor, Hāritha felt that 'Ubayd al-Lāh did not treat him with the same friendliness as his father had done. When questioned about this 'Ubayd al-Lāh answered: "It is because you drink wine. I cannot ignore the fact that people are criticising you and speaking ill of you. I am not in a strong position, like my father, who could pay little attention to public opinion."¹ This same Hāritha was blamed by al-Aḥnaf b. Qays for drinking because drinking, as al-Aḥnaf said, is debasing and scandalizing.² In a story about al-Ḥakam b. al-Mundhir b. al-Jārūd, who seems to have had an eminent role in the wars between 'Abd al-Mālik and Muṣ'ab b. al-Zubayr in al-'Irāq,³ we read that he was a heavy drinker. His friends advised him to stop drinking because, as they said to him, it is blameworthy for a man of high social standing to drink. Al-Ḥakam did not pay much attention to the advice and continued to drink. The poet al-Ṣaltān al-'Abdī, being a member of al-Ḥakam's tribe, composed a satirical poem addressed to al-Ḥakam in which he said that drinking brings disgrace and shame and that a noble man must never drink. On hearing about the poem, al-Ḥakam said that the poet was quite right in his view and that he himself believed that it was shameful and disgraceful for a man to drink, but that his

¹See Agh. Brünnow, p.21.

²See Ibid, p.26.

³See al-Ṭabarī, II, pp.801-802.

love for wine was so great that he was unable to give it up.¹

If the notable drinker could not overcome his "lust for drinking", the least he could do was to drink in secret. Mukhāriq b. Ṣakhr, an eminent chief of the Rabi'a tribe, said to his friend Ḥāritha b. Badr when he saw him drinking the ṣabūh: "Wine has destroyed your dignity and manliness... I am blaming you because your behaviour is being criticized by many people... (My advice to you is that) you either stop drinking, or at least do not drink openly."² This same advice was given to Ḥāritha by Ziyād b. Abīh.³

The preceding examples show that, in the earlier part of the Umayyad period, or to be more exact until the Caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik, the Muslim society believed that a man of high social standing is supposed to avoid drinking, or at least not to drink openly. As for the later part of the Umayyad period, one cannot say with complete certainty whether society retained the same view, or not. But, as far as one can judge from one incident, it is likely that drinking continued to be regarded in this way. In an anecdote in the Aghānī we are told that one of the first acts of al-Walīd b. Yazīd as a sovereign was to summon to his Court the singer 'Aṭarrad from al-Madīna. When 'Aṭarrad arrived he found the Caliph sitting in a large saloon, in the centre of which

¹See Agh. Brünnow, p.41.

²See Ibid, pp.42-43.

³See Ibid, p.19.

was a marble basin filled with a mixture of wine and water. 'Aṭarrad was asked to sit and sing on the other side of the basin. He began with a love song. It made such an impression upon the Caliph that he cast off his perfumed upper garment and plunged himself in the basin and took a draught from it. This occurred on three successive nights. The last night, the Caliph sent for a purse with one thousand dīnārs, poured it out into the bosom of 'Aṭarrad and told him: "Return to your people and keep quiet about what you have seen. By Allah, if I hear that you have uttered a word I will cut off your head."¹ Al-Walīd's remark can be taken as a sign of his concern about his reputation. It is possible that other drinkers in important positions during the late Umayyad period had similar scruples.

The second point to be discussed in this conclusion is that the Muslim drinkers throughout the whole of the Umayyad period were well aware that drinking was a sinful act but, in the meantime, they believed that God was merciful and would forgive them because they believed in him and worshipped no other god. This view was first expressed by a group of drinkers, amongst whom was the poet Abū Miḥjan al-Thaqafī,² to the Caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. 'Umar asked Abū Miḥjan and his friends why they drank wine when they knew it was prohibited. In answer, Abū Miḥjan and his friends said that they believed in the verse: "No blame

¹See Agh.3, Vol. III, pp.307-309.

²For the biography of Abū Miḥjan see Agh. Brünnow, pp.210-220.

attacheth to those who believe and do good works in regard to food they have tasted, so long as they fear God and believe and do the things that are right, and still fear God and believe, and still fear him and do good; for God loveth those who do good."¹ This same view was expressed later in a poem by the poet al-Uqayshir, who lived during the Caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik and who was known to be a heavy drinker.² In this poem al-Uqayshir says that he believes if one performs his five daily prayers and does not worship any god but Allah, God will forgive him on the day of judgement for drinking.³ A third example of this view can be found in a poem by Abū al-Hindī, the poet who lived during the late Umayyad and early Abbasid periods and whose poetical abilities were, as Abū'l Faraj says, devoted to the praise of wine.⁴ In this poem we read the following verse: "When I die, make my shroud of vine-leaves and my grave a wine-press. Tomorrow, I hope that God will forgive me, for drinking wine."⁵ Thus, it is clear that the drinkers were aware of the sin in their act, but hoped that the merciful God would forgive them because they were believers.

The third point to be discussed in this conclusion is the fact that the poets of al-Hijāz did not compose much wine-poetry and, when

¹Quran, V,93. See the complete account in Agh. Brünnow, p.219.

²For the poet al-Uqayshir see above, p.146.

³See Agh.1, Vol. X, p.91.

⁴For the biography of Abū al-Hindī and the accounts of his life see Agh. Brünnow, pp.277-280.

⁵See Ibid. p.279.

they did, it was mostly for the sake of tashbīh, or comparison, whereas the poets of al-'Iraq not only devoted many of their qaṣīdas to khamr, but also, in the case of some of them, devoted all their poetical abilities to the praise of wine.

To elaborate this general statement mention must be made of the fact that, in the poetry of the famous Hijāzī poets like 'Umar b. Abī Rabi'a,¹ 'Ubayd al-Lāh b. Qays al-Ruqayyāt,² al-Aḥwaṣ al-Anṣārī,³ al-'Arjī⁴ and others, we find but few references to wine and, when a poet mentions wine in his poetry, we find that his aim is not the praise of wine itself, but the use of the word for a tashbīh, or comparison. An example of the only kind of wine-poetry that we come across in the poetry of al-Hijāz in the Umayyad period can be seen in the following verse by 'Umar b. Abī Rabi'a in which he describes the taste of the lips of his beloved girl: "(The taste of her lips) is like musk and

¹'Umar b. Abī Rabi'a, according to al-Aghānī, was born on the 26th Dhu'l-Hijja 23/ beginning of November 644 (the night the Caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb was assassinated), and died seventy years later in 93/712. (See Agh. 1, Vol. I, p.34). For his biography, poetry, the accounts of his life, see Guidi's tables and the dīwān of 'Umar b. Abī Rabi'a, ed. P. Schwarz (1902).

²'Ubayd al-Lāh, or the poet of Quraysh, as he was sometimes called, must have lived till after the Caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik because he played an eminent role in the wars between this Caliph and Muṣ'ab b. al-Zubayr. (See Agh. 3, Vol. V, p.76). For his biography and poetry, see Agh. 3, Vol. V, p.73 ff, and Guidi's tables.

³The poet al-Aḥwaṣ was born about 35/655 and died after an illness in 110/728-9. For his biography and poetry, see Agh. 3, Vol. IV, pp.224-268 and Guidi's tables.

⁴Al-'Arjī, a great-grandson of the Caliph 'Uthman b. 'Affan, and a poet regarded as the best of those who belonged to the Umayyad family. He satirised the Governor of Mecca, Muḥammad b. Hishām, the maternal uncle of the Caliph Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik. As a result of this he was thrown into

honey mixed with the iced old wine of Jadar¹." ² In this example one finds that the aim of the poet is not the praise of wine but the description of the taste of the lips of the beloved. Of the same nature are most of the few references to khamr that occur in the poetry of the Hijāzis during the Umayyad period. In the meantime, we have every reason to believe that these poets drank wine,³ and devoted much of their time to pleasure and amusement.⁴ The poets of al-'Iraq of the same period, on the other hand, unlike their Hijāzi contemporaries, left us a great deal of wine poetry in which they recorded their love for wine and memories of the drinking parties they held or attended. To this should be added the fact that some of these Iraqi poets, as Abū'l Faraj puts it, devoted all their poetical abilities to wine-poetry.⁵ Among the poets of al-'Irāq who were famous for their khammriyyāt were: Harithā b. Badr al-Ghudānī whom we mentioned earlier in this study, al-Uqayshir, whose

(cont.) prison, where he died, probably about 120/738. For his poetry and the accounts of his life, see Guidi's tables, and his diwān, ed. Baghdād, 1956.

¹Jadar, a village between Hims and Salamiyya, famous for its wine. See Yāqūt, Mu'jam al-Buldān, Vol. II, p.39.

²See the Dīwān of 'Umar, poem 5, verse 14.

³In the following references in the Aghānī it is stated clearly that the poets 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'a, 'Ubayd al-Lah b. Qays, al-Aḥwaṣ and al-'Arjī used to drink wine: Agh.1, Vol. I, p.102; Vol. IV, p.162; Vol. IV, p.53; Vol. XI, p.20 and Vol. VII, p.134.

⁴See the references for the accounts of the lives of these poets as given in notes 1, 2, 3, 4, p.160, and notes (cont.) p.161, of this study.

⁵See, in Agh. Brūnnow, p.277, the remark of Abū'l Faraj on the poetry of Abū al-Hindī.

poetical talent was recognized by many since the days of the first Umayyad Caliphs and who continued to be famous for his wine-poetry till the days of 'Abd al-Malik,¹ Asmā' b. Khārīja, who seems to have lived in al-Kūfa during the governorship of al-Ḥajjāj,² al-Ḥakam b. 'Abdal al-Asdī, who left al-'Irāq for Damascus during the uprising of 'Abd al-Lāh b. al-Zubayr and the installation of his brother, Muṣ'ab as governor in al-'Irāq,³ 'Ammār b. 'Amr, called Dhī Kināz, who lived during the last part of the first century of the Hijra and the early part of the second and who was a friend of the famous Muṭī' b. 'Iyas,⁴ and Muṭī' himself who was a drinking-companion of the Caliph al-Walīd b. Yazīd and who died during the Caliphate of the Abbasid Caliph al-Ḥādī (169-170/785-786).⁵

The explanation of this feature - the rarity of wine-poetry in al-Ḥijāz and its spread in al-'Irāq - can be sought in the following facts:

1. Among the freedoms that non-Muslim subjects of the Muslim state enjoyed was the freedom of drinking and trading in wine. The cities

¹See what was said about al-Uqayshir during the course of this study and Agh.3, Vol. XI, pp.251-276.

²For the biography and poetry of Asmā' see Agh.1, Vol. XVI, pp.41-47.

³ " " " " " al-Ḥakam see Agh.1, Vol. II, pp.149-159.

⁴ " " " " " 'Ammār see Agh.1, Vol. XX, pp.277-280.

⁵See what was said about Muṭī' during the course of this study and Agh.3, Vol. XIII, pp.274-335. See also von Grunebaum, Orientalia, Vol. XVII, (1948), p.160.

which had non-Muslim inhabitants seem to have been the only cities which had wine-shops openly practising the trade. These wine-shops, which were frequented by Muslims as well as non-Muslims, as we have seen, were no doubt responsible for the increase in the number of drinkers and the spread of the habit of drinking. In al-Ḥijāz, a country of entirely Muslim population and the home-land of Islam, there were no justifications for the existence of wine-shops or wine-trade and, thus, the drinking of and trading in wine had to be carried out in secret. This drastically reduced the number of drinkers in that country and, with the important religious position of its two cities, Mecca and Madīna, the conditions for the flourishing of such kind of poetry were less favourable than in al-'Irāq, where a large number of non-Muslims lived and where the visit to a wine-shop was an essential item in the daily routine of many Muslim, as well as non-Muslim, people.

2. The examination of the biographies of these Irāqī poets shows that all of them were either natives or residents of al-Kūfa. This fact might also help to explain the prevalence of wine-poetry in al-'Irāq.

Al-Kūfa, being only six kilometres from al-Ḥīra, must have had many Ḥirites among its first inhabitants. In this respect it is of importance to recall some of the facts of the history of al-Ḥīra in its pre-Islamic days, when it was the capital of the Lakhmid kings and the meeting place of the members of the delegations from Arabia on their way to Ctesiphon. The majority of the inhabitants of al-Ḥīra at that time

were Christians and, in it, Hind, the mother of the King 'Amr (reigned after 550) founded a monastery. The wine-shops of this city were of great fame throughout Arabia as we have seen earlier in this study and to them flocked wine-lovers from the different parts of the Peninsula. Among the regular visitors to these wine-shops were poets like 'Adī b. Zayd, al-'A'sha, Tarafa and al-Nābigha al-Dhubyanī, who left us a great deal of wine-poetry.¹

In the Umayyad period the scene in al-Ḥīra did not change very much and its wine-shops remained as popular as they used to be in the earlier days. Evidence pointing in this direction can be taken from what we mentioned earlier in this study about the Kūfan poet al-Uqayshir and his regular visits to the wine-shops of this city,² and from what we read in the Aghānī about the poet Bakr b. Khārīja, another Kūfan poet who must have lived during the second century of the Hijra, and whose visits to the wine-shops of the neighbouring al-Ḥīra were recorded in some of his poems.³ In this way it is possible to draw the conclusion that the nearness of al-Kūfa to al-Ḥīra had an important effect on the increase of wine-drinking in the former and this, consequently, led to the flourishing of wine poetry. A further reason for the prevalence of

¹The above information about al-Ḥīra in the Jāhiliyya is taken from al-Tabarī, I, pp.821, 853, 2016, 2038 and Yāqūt, Mu'jam al-Buldān, Vol. II, pp.375-379. For the khamriyyāt of 'Adī b. Zayd, al-'A'shā, Tarafa and al-Nābigha al-Dhubyanī, see Guidi's tables.

²See above, p.146.

³See, for example, Agh.1, Vol. XX, p.87.

wine poetry in al-Kūfa would be the fondness of the Umayyad poets for modelling the style and structure of their poetry on that of their pre-Islamic predecessors whose khamriyyāt were famous for their artistic merits. Such a poetry could flourish in al-Kūfa more readily than in the strict society of al-Hijāz, conscious as it was of its importance as the home of Islam.

3. A third possible explanation may lie in the fact that the Umayyad reign in al-'Irāq was marked by almost continuous political unrest and uprisings against the Umayyad house. The suppression of these uprisings took most of the time and effort of the officials there and left them with little or no time for other matters, such as the infliction of ḥadd punishments upon drinkers, or generally the maintenance of good morals and the prevention of acts and offences forbidden by Islam. This, however, does not mean that the authorities in al-'Irāq during the Umayyad period neglected entirely the application of the "ḥudūd of God", nor does it mean that no Irāqī was punished for drinking or other irreligious acts,¹ but it means that, in al-'Irāq, drinkers and pleasure-lovers in general were under less governmental supervision and enjoyed more freedom than those in al-Hijāz. This, relatively, freer atmosphere helped the flourishing of wine-poetry in al-'Irāq.

¹For the attitude of the authorities towards wine-drinking and other forbidden pleasures see below, p. 242-273.

CHAPTER III

THE MUKHANNATHŪN,

PEDERASTY,

AND PROSTITUTION.

Chapter III

The Mukhannathūn, Pederasty, and Prostitution.A. The Mukhannathūn (effeminates).

As was mentioned earlier, the mughannūn class comprised three main groups: the male and female professional singers, the instrumentalists and the mukhannathūn.

The mukhannathūn, although most of them were male professional singers, deserve a separate study, because they performed a somewhat different role in society and represented a special mode of behaviour.

It is difficult to say when, in the history of Arab society, the term mukhannath was first used and what it represented; but one can say with certainty that the Muslim society of al-Madīna during the life-time of the Prophet contained a number of persons called al-mukhannathūn. In the Aghānī we read about a certain al-Mukhannath, Hīt, describing the beauty of a girl from al-Ṭā'if called Bādiya bint Ghaylān to 'Amr, the son of Umm Salama the wife of the Prophet, or to his brother Salama, before the battle of al-Ṭā'if, and saying to him: "If you win the battle of al-Ṭā'if, you should ask the Prophet to give her to you."¹ In Fath al-Bārī the commentary of Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī on the Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, the same story is mentioned, and we are told that the Prophet was present at the house of Umm Salama

¹See Agh.3, Vol. XIII, p.200.

and heard the mukhannath Hīt utter some impolite words about the girl which aroused his anger and therefore expelled him from al-Madīna and forbade the mukhannathūn from entering the houses of Muslim women.¹ In the Tāj al-'Arūs we read: "Hīnb was a mukhannath expelled by the Prophet. In the Hadīth it is said that the Prophet expelled two mukhannathūn, one called Hīt and the other Māti', the first was Hīnb and not Hīt, the name was distorted by the traditionists."²

On another occasion in the Aghānī the mukhannath Hīnb is mentioned as "one of the earliest mukhannathūn of al-Madīna and previous to Tuways and al-Dalāl."³ It is, thus, possible to accept the correction of al-Tāj of the name of the mukhannath expelled by the Prophet, and to consider the word "Hīt" mentioned in the Aghānī anecdote as a misprint, or a misreading.

The order of the Prophet that the mukhannathūn should not be admitted to the houses of Muslim women is mentioned also in the Aghānī.⁴

From all this, one can claim that the mukhannathūn were to be found in the Arabian Peninsula, or at least in the Hijāz, in the period that preceded the rise of Islam, as well as during the life-time of Muḥammad, because their presence during the early days of the Prophet in al-Madīna, the expulsion of two of them, and the ban forbidding women

¹Cairo ed. (1348 A.H.), Vol. X, p.274.

²See Tāj al-'Arūs, Vol. I, p.518. It should be remarked that we have not found any reference to the mukhannathūn in the Sira.

³See Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.269.

⁴See Ibid, p.276.

to mingle with them, indicate that they resided in al-Madīna before Muḥammad migrated there.

There is only one reference in the Aghānī to the mukhannathūn unde There is only one reference in the Aghānī to the mukhannathūn-annath Hīnab who was expelled by the Prophet. We are told that this mukhannath, according to the orders of Muḥammad, was expelled to al-Ḥimā and stayed there during the Caliphate of Abū Bakr and 'Umar. When 'Uthman assumed the Caliphate, he was told that this mukhannath became very old and sick. The Caliph therefore granted him permission to come to al-Madīna every Friday to beg, and go back to al-Ḥimā.¹ Apart from this, there is reference in Fath al-Bārī to a mukhannath expelled according to the orders of the Caliph 'Umar.² In the Umayyad period the word mukhannath becomes more common and references to them become more frequent in the literary works dealing with that period.

The word mukhannath originally comes from khanatha, meaning "he affected a bending, or an inclining of his body from side to side" or, "he was, or became soft, delicate, tender and affected languor, or or languidness". Takhannatha, in the sense of "he was or became effeminate" signifies, as the author of al-Tāj says, "one who affects languor, or languidness, of the limbs; one who makes himself like women

¹See Agh.1, Vol. II, p.172.

²See Fath al-Bārī, Vol. X, p.274.

in the bending of himself and in affecting languor, or languidness, and in speech." It is essential, before bringing this lexicographical examination to an end, to state that the word mukhannath signifies also an impotent man.¹

It is within the frame of the great changes that took place in the society of the Umayyads that the emergence of the great numbers of mukhannathūn should be seen. In this new and encouraging atmosphere the mukhannathūn found the fertile soil for their activity.

An examination of the information on the mukhannathūn of the Umayyad period, in the Aghant shows that the mukhannathūn were mostly of a mawlā status and probably of a non-Arab origin. Fand, for example, was a mawlā of 'Ā'isha bint Sa'd b. Abī Waqqas,² and the same could be said of Tuways, the mawlā of the Banū Makhzūm,³ al-Dalāl, the mawlā of the Banū Fahm,⁴ and many others.⁵ The information as to the origin of the mukhannathūn is exceedingly fragmentary and the references but few, so that a great deal can only be surmised.

It is possible to infer that the mukhannathūn were mostly non-Arabs because of the mawlā status of most of them on the one hand, and

¹See art. خَنَّات in al-Tāj, Vol. I, pp.619-620 and Lane, Book I, Part II, pp. 814-815.

²Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.58.

³Agh.3, Vol. III, p.27.

⁴Ibid, Vol. IV, p.269.

⁵See, for example, Ibid, Vol. III, p.29; Vol. IV, p.280 and others.

from the names of many of them on the other.¹

Not all the mukhannathūn of the Umayyad period, however, were of non-Arab origin, because we read of some free and noble Arabs who were described by the name of mukhannathūn. We are told for example that the famous Khālīd b. 'Abd al-Lāh al-Qasrī was "a mukhannath in his youth and a close friend of the mukhannathūn and the mughannūn. He was the messenger of the poet 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'a to his many lady-loves and his name was then Khālīd al-Khirrīt."² Another free and noble Arab who was a mukhannath was the poet al-Aḥwaṣ of the Banū Dubay'a b. Zayd, a clan of al-Aws.³

In the Ansāb al-Ashraf of al-Balādhurī this fact is confirmed and at least two noble Arabs are described as having been mukhannathūn. On one occasion we read that Abbān, the son of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān,

¹Although names like Hīt, or Hinb, Māti', Fand (all mentioned earlier in this section), Mukhkha (Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.280-281), Zarjawn and al-Naghāshī (Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.220-221), suggest that most of the mukhannathūn were non-Arabs, the question of the origin of the mukhannathūn remains unsolved because the sources maintain complete silence on this point. It is possible, however, that some of the mukhannathūn of the Umayyad period came from among the Persian or Coptic war captives who were brought to al-Ḥijāz after the wars of conquest.

²See Agh.1, Vol. XIX, p.55. Although little doubt can be entertained regarding the reliability of the rāwiyas of the above account, the general information on Khālīd al-Qasrī in the Aghānī and the other sources consulted makes one hesitate to accept that he was a mukhannath in his youth. As governor, Khālīd showed great severity in his dealings with sensualists, pleasure-lovers, and offenders generally. For further information on Khālīd, see below, Chapter IV, pp.268-269.

³See Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.239.

had a son called Marwān. This Marwān was a debauchee and a mukhannath." ¹ The other mukhannath, according to al-Balādhurī, was 'Arīm b. 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān, the brother of the Caliph 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz. ²

It seems that the connection between ghinā' and khunth was very strong, so much so that it was said: "In al-Madīna, ghinā' had its origin among the mukhannathūn." ³ The first male professional musician in the days of Islam is generally acknowledged to have been the mukhannath Tuways, ⁴ and among the later famous singers ~~as~~ al-Dalāl, whose khunth was proverbial. ⁵ Fand, ⁶ 'Ajāja, ⁷ and others ⁸ were also renowned mukhannathūn singers. The fame of the mukhannathūn as good singers may have been the reason for describing good singing

¹Ansāb al-Ashraf, Vol. V, p.121.

²Ibid, p.185.

³Agh.1, Vol. IV, p.161.

⁴See his biography in Agh.3, Vol. III, p.27.

⁵See the biography of al-Dalāl in Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.269.

⁶See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.58.

⁷See Agh.3, Vol. V, p.108.

⁸See Ibid, Vol. VI, pp.337-338.

as ghinā' mukhannath.¹

There is no evidence, however, that the free Arab mukhannathūn professed ghinā', like the rest of their colleagues, but it is fairly clear that they enjoyed the ghinā' and the friendship of the mughannūn.²

Ghinā' was only one aspect of the activity of the Umayyad mukhannathūn in society. Al-Dalāl, for instance, a famous mukhannath singer of al-Madīna, was the city's only male match-maker. His services were pressed in the interest of both sexes. He, apparently, was ready to supply his male customers with all the information about their future wives and to convey the wishes of the females to their fiances.³ There is no reference to any fixed charge for such a service, but it seems that he always expected remuneration of some kind.⁴

Fand, another Umayyad mukhannath, is said to have had a sort of house of assignation, "where men and women met for immoral purposes",⁵ and the same is reported about Marwān, the son of Abbās b. 'Uthman b. 'Affān.⁶

¹See Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.277-278.

²See, for example, Agh.1, Vol. XIX, p.55; Agh.3, Vol. IV, p. , and Ansāb, Vol. V, p.121.

³See Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.270, and the story about the officer in the army of the Caliph Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik, who came to Mecca for pilgrimage, and his meeting and conversation with al-Dalāl, in Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp. 286-289.

⁴See Ibid, loc.cit.

⁵See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.60.

⁶See Ansāb, Vol. V, p.121.

In general, the term mukhannath implied the perfection of some other arts besides ghinā' and, on these auxiliary skills, depended very often the success of a mukhannath in his public life. The Madīnans, for instance, considered Hīnb, Tuways and al-Dalāl as the three best mukhannathūn for, besides their musical abilities, they were very good tellers of jokes and were famed for their wit.¹ We can also add the conveying of love messages from men to women and vice-versa as another field of activity of the mukhannathūn.²

Worthy of special attention in this respect are the many anecdotes in the Aghānī about the mukhannathūn being received by free Arab women in their homes and the many references to their frequent visits to the women of the Quraysh tribe.³

This seems to have been the case also during the days of Muḥammad in al-Madīna before he expelled the two mukhannathūn and prevented the rest from mingling with the Muslim women of the community.⁴

There is no information in the Aghānī to explain why the mukhannathūn had this privilege of mingling with the free Arab women, in spite of the prescribed seclusion and veiling of the Muslim women of that time.

¹Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.269.

²See, for example, Agh.1, Vol. XIX, p.55; Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.272,276, 291, and others.

³See, for example, Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.291; Agh.1, Vol. XIX, p.55, Agh.3, Vol. XIII, p.200, Vol. IV, pp.272, 276; Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.60.

⁴See above, p.168.

The only explanation that one can suggest is to be derived from the fact that the society regarded the mukhannathūn as impotent men¹ and no danger to the chastity of women. This explanation becomes more acceptable if we add to it the following statement we read in the Tāj: "It is said in a tradition that they used to reckon the mukhannath as one of those having no need of Nikāh."² Later, however, they discovered that this belief was wrong and the authorities had then to order the castration of all the mukhannathūn for the protection of Muslim women.

In connection with what was said earlier about the mughannūn and how they took great care in their external appearance,³ it is possible to say that this tendency was exaggerated by the mukhannathūn to the extent of imitating women in their external appearance and affecting female manners. There are four references in the Aghānī which support this view. In an account of the governorship of Yahyā b. al-Hakam in al-Madīna and his effort to suppress the activity of the mukhannathūn we read:..."and the mukhannath was arrested and brought to Yahyā. He looked exactly like a woman, his clothes were of bright colours, his hair was combed and his hands were dyed with hinna!"⁴ Likewise Tuways, the mukhannath singer is said to have once dyed his hands and his fore-arms up to the elbows with hinna.⁵ On another occasion, we read that

¹See above, p. 170.

²See Tāj, art ٤٠١, Vol. I, p.145.

³See above, p. 95.

⁴Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.220.

⁵Ibid, Vol. IV, p.219.

the mukhannath poet al-Aḥwas was seen once "wearing two well-washed - madlūkān - garments made yellow with safflower. A bunch of a sweet-smelling plant hung down from his ear and he was smeared with a perfume called al-Khalūq."¹ Lastly, we are told that an old mukhannath was arrested in al-Madīna and taken to the Caliph 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz. "He (the old mukhannath) had his beard and hands dyed with hinna, wound a sabaniyya round his body and carried a tambourine in his kharita (leather purse)..."²

The last two accounts are by far the most important. From al-Tāi we learn that the Khalūq (the perfume used by the poet al-Aḥwas) is "a certain species of perfume, fluid, but of thick consistency. It is composed of saffron and other things and redness and yellowness are predominant in it. It is forbidden to men, because it is one of the perfumes of women, who use it more than men."³

The Arabic text of the last account reads:

« فَإِذَا شَيْخٌ فَضِيبٌ أَلْبِيَّةٌ رَأَى طَرَفَ مِغْبَرٍ بَسِيَّةٍ قَدْ هَمَلَ رِغَاءً فِي هَرِيْلَتِهِ »

The words " مِغْبَر " and " بَسِيَّة " in this text are of special importance.

In the words of Lane: " اِغْتَبَار " is a mode of attiring peculiar to women.

اِعْتَبَرَتْ : she (a woman) bound a مِغْبَر upon her head, she attired herself with the مِغْبَر ; مِغْبَر meaning a piece of a cloth, like a fillet,

¹Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.253.

²Ibid, Vol. VI, p.337.

³See Tāi al-'Arūs, art. خلق Vol. VI, p.337.

wound upon the round of a woman's head."¹ As for the word " سَبِيَّة ", we are told that it is a nisba to Saban (a town in al-Maghrib), and it signifies a sort of black silken waist-wrapper worn usually by women.²

Thus, the above-mentioned examples provide us with the necessary evidence to support the view that the mukhannathūn imitated women in their external appearance and affected female manners.

Another point worthy of discussion in this general survey is the morals of the mukhannathūn and their attitude towards religion. There is enough evidence in the Aghānī to make us believe that the mukhannathūn did not attach great importance to moral values and rules of decent behaviour. We read, for example, that the houses of many mukhannathūn were open for immoral purposes and that, through them, intercourse with women was facilitated.³ Some of them were said to have been homosexuals⁴ and others led many women to misconduct.⁵ In the Aghānī many examples are cited on the utter ignorance of mukhannathūn about Qoran,⁶ their violation of the sanctity of mosques,⁷ and their mockery of religious sects.⁸

¹See Lane, art. عَجْر Book I, Part 5, p.1958; cf. Tāj, art. عَجْر Vol. III, p.38.

²See Tāj, art. سَبِيَّة Vol. IX, p.230; cf. Dozy, Dict. des vêtements..., p.200.

³See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.60; Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.272; Ansāb, Vol. V, p.121.

⁴See Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.283.

⁵Ibid, Vol. IV, p.272.

⁶See Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.220-221; Vol. VI, pp.337-338 and Vol. III, p.29.

⁷See Ibid, Vol. IV, p.277.

⁸See Ibid, Vol. IV, p.279.

The mukhannathūn, as the information about them in the Aghānī indicates, resided only in big cities and centres of pleasure and amusement. Mecca and al-Madīna were the two cities where most of the mukhannathūn resided and practiced their activity.¹ On only one occasion we read about a mukhannath called 'Ajāja living in al-Baṣra, and the relator of the story describes him as "the most famous among the mukhannathūn of the City", which indicates that other less famous mukhannathūn were to be found in al-Baṣra.²

An explanation of the presence of mukhannathūn among the Meccans and Madīnans can probably be sought in the fact that the two cities of al-Hijāz under the Umayyads developed into centres of worldly pleasures, nurseries of song and conservatories of music. This atmosphere of pleasure and amusement was the most suitable milieu for the activity of the mukhannathūn and, in this way, one can understand the relatively large numbers of them in these two cities.

The question whether there were mukhannathūn in the other big cities of the Umayyad Empire, or not, remains without a final answer because our sources give no reference to the matter but, to judge from their presence in al-Baṣra, it is possible to claim that other cities also might have had some numbers of them.

These facts show that the Hijāz was the home of most of the

¹See Agh. 3, Vol. IV, p.276, 269, 272; Vol. III, p.29; Vol. VI, p.337, Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.61.

²Agh.3, Vol. V, p.108.

mukhannathūn and that there might have been some of them in a few other cities.

There are very few references as to the relations that existed between the mukhannathūn of the Umayyad Empire.

Muslim society, as well as the Umayyad authorities, regarded the mukhannathūn as members of one distinct group and treated them on this basis. This was a natural result of their similar appearance and behaviour on the one hand, and their belonging to one craft on the other. There is evidence, also, that the mukhannathūn of one city, on visiting another city, used to go to meet their confreres there.¹ To this one can add that the use of the term ghinā' mukhannath², which came into use in the Umayyad period, indicates a distinction even between the non-mukhannath singers and the mukhannath ones. On the other hand, the authorities also regarded the mukhannathūn as one body and dealt with them on this basis. Whenever the help of a governor or a Caliph was called upon for the checking of the unlawful activity of a mukhannath he would order the punishment of all the mukhannathūn of the city or the district.³ Thus, the mukhannathūn were regarded and treated by society and the authorities as one body holding a common responsibility.

¹See Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.280, 281.

²Ibid, Vol. IV, p.278.

³For example, see Ibid, Vol. IV, pp.220-221, 273-274, 274-276; Vol. III, p.29; Vol. IV, p.272.

The most famous mukhannathūn seem to have been the "mukhannathūn of al-'Aqīq". Al-'Aqīq is "a valley passing just west of Madīna, from which it is separated by Harrat al-Wabra... After heavy rains the valley is filled with a broad river which has been compared with the Euphrates." Some traditions speak of the fondness Muḥammad had for al-'Aqīq, which he used to describe as "the blessed valley". During the Umayyad period, after the rainy season, the banks of al-'Aqīq and the gardens around it were the place where the youths of al-Madīna passed joyful hours drinking, flirting with women and listening to the ghinā' of some of the mukhannathūn.¹

These singing and drinking parties and the role of a certain group of mukhannathūn in them must have been the reason for the appellation "mukhannathū al-'Aqīq". Another possible reason for this appellation could have been the fact that some of the famous mukhannathūn singers resided in houses near al-'Aqīq.²

Besides the fame of the "mukhannathū al-'Aqīq" in music and singing, they seem to have been an example of tenderness and gentleness, so much so that elegant poetry was compared to them.³

The social position of the mukhannathūn in the Umayyad society is a subject not directly dealt with in the Aghānī. In an account related on the authority of Ḥassān al-Anṣārī we read the following about the mukhannath Ṭuways: "... I found the Qurashites very fond of him. They

¹This information on al-'Aqīq was taken from Mu'jam al-Buldān, Yāqūt, Vol. III, p.700 FF, Agh.1, Vol. II, p.172 and E.I.2, Vol. I, Fasc.6, G.R. entz. art. "al-'Aqīq", p.336.

²The house of the mukhannath singer Ṭuways, we are told, was near al-'Aqīq, see Agh.1, Vol. II, p.172.

³See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.108.

liked his company, listened attentively to his conversation and greatly admired his singing. The only thing that debased him was his khunth. Were he not a mukhannath, there would be no Qurashī, or Anṣārī, or any other person who would not welcome his company."¹

From this statement one can deduce two things: the first is that khunth was regarded as a low quality and that the mukhannathūn were boycotted and probably despised by some people of high social standing and the second is that the musical abilities and wit of a mukhannath like Ṭuways might gain for him a better social position and diminish the possibility of a boycott from society. Among the notables that thought it beneath their dignity to mingle with the mukhannathūn was 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥassān, the son of the famous poet Ḥassān b. Thābit. On one occasion he was invited to a wedding-party in al-Madīna. When he entered the house where the party was held, he saw the three mukhannathūn - al-Dalāl, Ṭuways and al-Walīd - among the attendance (apparently they had been invited to sing and entertain the people). He immediately withdrew and, when asked why, he said: "I do not sit in one place with mukhannathūn."² This same 'Abd al-Raḥmān is reported to have said to 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far, when the latter proposed that they enter the house of the mukhannath Ṭuways to take shelter from the pouring rain: "May I be your ransom, what do you want from Ṭuways, may the wrath of God befall him! He is a

¹Agh.1, Vol. II, p.171.

²Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.284.

mukhannath and his company is an insult."¹ These accounts show the hostile attitude and even the contempt of some notables towards the mukhannathūn. In the meantime, the musical abilities and wit of a mukhannath counted, in the view of others, more than anything else and this made them feel no insult in dealing with them. It is said that the noble 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far answered the above remark of 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Ḥassān about Ṭuways by saying: "Do not say such a thing about Ṭuways. He is pleasant and witty, and his company is great pleasure to us."² During the Caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik, Abbān b. 'Uthmān visited the Caliph in Damascus and was appointed governor of al-Madīna. On his return from Damascus the notables of al-Madīna went out to the outskirts of the city to receive him. With them was Ṭuways who, when the procession of the governor came in sight, struck a fine melody and sang with such warmth and affection that Abbān "felt like flying, and said to him: thank you Ṭāwūs (peacock), thank you. He did not call him Ṭuways (little peacock) لنبه في عينه "3 Although the word " لنبه " does not indicate the noble birth of Ṭuways it shows the esteem in which the noble Abbān held the musical ability of the mukhannath singer, regardless of his khunth. Likewise, the musical ability of another

¹Agh.1, Vol. II, p.172.

²Ibid, loc. cit.

³Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.219.

mukhannath, whose expulsion was ordered by the Caliph 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, gained for him the sympathy of his guards who listened to his singing and admired it very much, so much so that they disobeyed the orders of the Caliph and set him free.¹

Thus it appears that khunth was generally despised by society and that the mukhannathūn were counted among the lowest classes but, at the same time, people who paid little or no attention to anything except their pleasures, justified their dealings with the mukhannathūn on the grounds of their wit, intelligent conversation, musical skills or other qualities.

There appears to have been some reaction on the part of the mukhannathūn to this contempt and hostile attitude of some members of society. The wish to avenge themselves on these hostile members made some mukhannathūn bear a feeling of hatred towards them and use every possible means to achieve vengeance. In this way one can understand the reports on the efforts of the mukhannath Ṭuways to revive the tribal grudges of al-Aws and al-Khazraj. In a statement related on the authority of al-Madā'inī we read: "The mukhannath Ṭuways was fond of setting to music the poetry about the tribal wars of al-Aws and al-Khazraj before Islam. His aim in this was to revive the tribal feuds of these two tribes. When asked to stop singing this kind of poetry, Ṭuways said: I will not stop

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VI, pp.337-338.

that until I am laid in my grave."¹

Generally, the mukhannathūn seem to have represented a dangerous threat to the moral standards of Muslim society. It is in the light of this fact that one should consider the many accounts preserved in the Aghānī about the efforts of the authorities to suppress their activities and stop their increase.

The Caliph mu'āwīya, we are told, used to appoint Marwān b. al-Ḥakam and Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ alternately to the governorship of al-Madīna, each of them holding the office for one year. Unlike Sa'īd, Marwān was generally known to have been severe and merciless in his dealings with the sensualists and, during his governorship, debauchees and dissolutes used to flee from al-Madīna and not come back until his term of office expired. He is reported to have met the mukhannath Fand during the governorship of Sa'īd and said to him: "Enjoy your stay in al-Madīna now, it is only a matter of a few days before I assume the governorship and you know what will befall you under me."² During his term of office a mukhannath called al-Nughāshi was arrested and brought to him. Marwān asked him to recite some verses from the Qoran, but the mukhannath knew none and mocked the Qoran. Marwān got very angry and ordered the execution of the mukhannath. Then, he declared that he would reward any

¹Agh.1, Vo, II, pp.175-176.

²See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.61.

one who brought him a mukhannath with ten dīnārs.¹ Likewise, his brother Yahyā b. al-Ḥakam, who assumed the governorship of al-Madīna under 'Abd al-Malik,² is said to have inflicted the same punishment upon another mukhannath called Ibn Nughāsh,³ and declared that a reward of three hundred dirhams would be paid to any one who brought him a mukhannath. As a result of this declaration, it seems that some mukhannathūn fled from al-Madīna and sought refuge in different places near it. A mukhannath called Zarjawn is said to have fled to al-'Āliya, and the famous Ṭuways took refuge in al-Suwaydā', a place on the road from Damascus to al-Madīna.⁴ Under the Caliph al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik, the governor of al-Madīna⁵ seems to have embarked on a more merciful

¹See Agh.3, Vol. III, p.29.

²Yahyāb. al-Ḥakam assumed the governorship of al-Madīn under 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān in 75/694 and, in 76/695, was replaced by Abban b. 'Uthmān. See Tabarī II, pp.863, 940.

³The similarity between the names of this mukhannath (Ibn Nughāsh) and the one mentioned in the previous narrative (al-Nughashī) makes one inclined to believe that the above narrative is a second version of the first one. Nevertheless, it is not impossible that this Ibn Nughāsh was the son of al-Nughashī, mentioned in the previous narrative.

⁴See Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.220-221.

⁵According to the above narrative, Abū Bakr b. Muḥ. b. 'Amr b. Ḥazm was the governor of al-Madīna who carried out the punishment. This, obviously, is a mistake because, under al-Walīd I, the governor of al-Madīna was 'Uthmān b. Ḥayyān al-Murri. See Tabarī, II, pp.1281-1282.

policy vis-à-vis the mukhannathūn. The penalty for a mukhannath was no longer execution, but flogging and expulsion. He is said to have flogged the poet al-Ahwaṣ for being a mukhannath, carried him on a donkey round the streets of the town to disgrace him, denuded him, and expelled him to the island of Dahlak.¹

The greatest misfortune that befell the mukhannathūn seems to have been their castration.² In the Aghānī there are two contradictory statements about when this took place and the direct reason that made the authorities impose this penalty upon them.

In the first statement it is claimed that the castration order was issued by the Caliph al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik after he received reports from al-Madīna telling him that the mukhannathūn of the city mingled with the Qurashi women, in spite of the orders of the Prophet that banned all contact between women and mukhannathūn. The operation, according to this statement, was carried out by Ibn Ḥazm al-Anṣārī, the governor of al-Madīna.³ In the second statement it is said that Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik was the Caliph who ordered the castration of the mukhannathūn. Following this second statement two different accounts

¹Dahlak, according to Yāqūt, "is an island in the sea of the Yaman, between al-Yaman and Ethiopia. It is very small and hot. The Umayyads used to send to it all unwanted persons." See Mu'jam al-Buldān, Vol. II, p.634. For the account of the punishment inflicted upon al-Ahwaṣ, see Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.239.

²In connection with the castration of the mukhannathūn, it should be remarked that there is no reference to this matter in the chronicles consulted.

³See Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.276.

are given to explain why Sulaymān did so. In the first account it is claimed that the mukhannath al-Dalāl, who was a match-maker in al-Madīna, had immoral relations with his male and female customers. This was reported to the Caliph Sulaymān who, as the relator of the story describes him, was very sensitive about the chastity of women. The Caliph wrote to Ibn Ḥazm ordering him to castrate the mukhannathūn of Mecca and al-Madīna because, as the Caliph said in his message, they were dangerous for the chastity of the women of the Quraysh tribe.¹ The second account gives a different reason for the castration of the mukhannathūn. In it we are told that the mailis of the Caliph Sulaymān was held one night on the roof of his palace. When the visitors left, he ordered a slave-girl to help him perform his ablutions (wuḍū'). The slave-girl remained silent and seemed preoccupied with something else. At this point the Caliph realised that beautiful singing was coming from a certain part of the city and that the slave-girl was busy listening to it. The next morning the Caliph conducted a thorough investigation about singing-parties held during the previous night in that particular part of the city and suspected a certain singer. The suspect was thereupon summoned to the palace and, in the presence of a group of courtiers, confessed that he sang at that certain hour of the night the verses the Caliph heard. The Caliph ordered that the singer be castrated and, turning to the courtiers present at his mailis, he asked: "Do you know

¹See Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.272.

where is the origin of ghinā'?" "In al-Madīna, among the mukhannathūn." came the answer. The Caliph wrote to Abū Bakr Muḥ. b. 'Amr b. Ḥazm al-Anṣārī, the governor of al-Madīna, ordering him to castrate all the mukhannathūn singers of the town. Ibn Ḥazm carried out the order and castrated nine of them. Among those castrated were: al-Dalāl, Turayf and Ḥubayb Nawm al-Duḥā.¹ Commenting on this last account Abū'l Faraj says: "As far as the isnād is concerned, this is the most reliable account."

In examining these different narratives attention should be paid to the fact that Ibn Ḥazm, the governor of al-Madīna, during whose term of office the castration of the mukhannathūn took place according to all three narratives, was appointed governor during the reign of Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik and not al-Walīd I.² This makes it possible to pay little attention to the first narrative and concentrate on the other two. It is agreed in these two narratives that it was Sulaymān who ordered the castration of the mukhannathūn and that it was Ibn Ḥazm who carried out the order. They give two different explanations as to why the Caliph took this step and differ on whether or not the mukhannathūn of Mecca were castrated. Whether it was because the mukhannath match-maker, al-Dalāl, had immoral relations with his male and female customers that Sulaymān ordered the castration of the mukhannathūn, or whether

¹Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.273-274.

²Ibn Ḥazm was appointed governor of al-Madīna in 96/715. See Tabarī, pp.1281-1282.

it was because he felt jealous of the singer who attracted the attention of his slave-girl that he took this step, we do not know, but it is fairly evident from both explanations that the Caliph was worried about the chastity of free women, especially the Qurashites, and that he tried to stop the possible dangers that might arise from the relations and contacts between the mukhannathūn and these women. The important point of difference between the two narratives, however, is whether the mukhannathūn of Mecca were castrated with their Madīnan colleagues, or not. In the first place one should not fail to remember that Abū'l Faraj's remark that the last narrative (i.e. the one which states that only the Madīnan mukhannathūn were castrated) has the most reliable isnād, adds much weight in favour of the theory that only the Madīnan mukhannathūn were castrated. To this should be added that, in a narrative in al-Kāmil of al-Mubarrad, there is clear reference to the castration of the Madīnan mukhannathūn and nothing is said about the Meccan ones.¹ A further point in favour of the theory that only the Madīnan mukhannathūn were castrated is the fact that Mecca had its own governor under Sulaymān.² Had it been true that the Caliph ordered the castration of the mukhannathūn of Mecca with those of al-Madīna,

¹See al-Kāmil, al-Mubarrad, Vol. I, p.394. It should be remarked that the above narrative is without isnād and starts with the word "ḥuddithu".

²According to al-Ṭabarī the governors of Mecca under Sulaymān were: Ṭalḥa b. Dāwūd al-Ḥaḍramī and 'Abd al-'Azīz b. 'Abd al-Lāh b. Khālīd b. Usayd. See II, pp.1305 FF.

their castration would be encharged to the governor of their city and not to the governor of al-Madīna. All this leads one to conclude that the mukhannathūn castrated were those of al-Madīna only and that the operation took place during the reign of Sulaymān and the governorship of Ibn Ḥazm.¹

¹According to Majma' al-Amthāl of al-Maydānī (d. 518/1124) the castration of the Madīnan mukhannathūn was a result of a mistake committed in Sulaymān's letter to Ibn Ḥazm. After citing the story of the slave-girl and Sulaymān, al-Maydānī tells us that Sulaymān ordered the castration of the singer who attracted the attention of the slave-girl by his singing, and told the scribe to write a letter to Ibn Ḥazm, the governor of al-Madīna, asking him to count (iḥṣi) the mukhannathūn of the city, who were described to him as "the origin of singing". As a result of a defect in the pen with which the letter was written, the word iḥṣi (count) became ikhṣi (castrate) and thus the mukhannathūn of al-Madīna were castrated. (See Majma' al-Amthāl, al-Maydānī, ed. Būlāq, 1284 A.H., pp.220-221,227). Although al-Maydānī does not cite the names of his rāwiyas, which makes it difficult to compare his narratives with those of al-Aghānī, it is possible to claim that the fact that castration is prohibited by Islam - (see Ibn Ḥazm, al-Muḥalla, Cairo 1352 A.H. Vol. X, pp.449-451, and Wensinck, Concordance, Vol. II, p.38) - is a point in favour of al-Maydānī's narrative. To this should be added that in Adab al-Kuttāb of al-Ṣulī (ed. Baghdad, 1341 A.H., p.59) there is a narrative similar to that of al-Maydānī and, in it, the story of iḥṣi and ikhṣi is given, together with the other details of al-Maydānī's narrative. The importance of this last narrative is that it was given in the course of a statement about the fatal consequences that might follow a mistake committed by a scribe.

To end this survey of the attitude of the authorities towards the mukhannathūn mention must be made of the way followed by the Caliph 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz in his dealings with them. It is reported that a complaint reached the Caliph about a mukhannath in al-Madīna whose relations with the women of the town became a source of worry to many people. The Caliph wrote to the governor ordering him to send the mukhannath to the Capital. As soon as the mukhannath arrived he was taken to the Caliph, who had with him some of his counsellors. The mukhannath was an old man, with his beard and hands dyed with hinna, wore a woman's black silken waist-wrapper and carried a tambourine. The Caliph asked him to recite a sūra of the Qoran. The mukhannath remained silent and, when the Caliph insisted, he told him that he knew none of it. The Caliph ordered that the mukhannath should be sent to prison and that a teacher should be appointed to teach him the Qoran and principles of religion. After some time in prison, the mukhannath was summoned to the palace to be examined by the Caliph and he proved to be as ignorant as he had been. This made the Caliph decide that keeping him in prison for a longer period was of no use, and thus ordered his expulsion.¹

Despite execution, expulsion, punishment and persecution, the mukhannathūn continued to exist throughout the Umayyad period,² and

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VI, pp.337-338.

²In al-Ṭabarī we read about two mukhannathūn sent to prison by the Caliph Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik. See Ṭabarī, II, p.1737.

traces of their existence could be remarked in the society of the early Abbasid period in cities like Baghdād and al-Baṣra.¹

Summing up the significance of the emergence of the mukhannathūn as a distinct element in the body of the Umayyad society, one might emphasize three main points:

1. An explanation of the role played by the mukhannathūn in society can be sought in the fact that, as a result of the seclusion and veiling of the women of the Muslim community on the one hand, and the increasing tendency towards pleasure and amusement on the other, a gap was created. This gap was felt by many pleasure-lovers, because the withdrawal of free women from the social life of the men was not yet replaced completely by slave-girls, as in the Abbasid period. This gap was filled temporarily by the mukhannathūn who, as was pointed out earlier, imitated women in their external appearance and affected female manners.
2. Distinction should be made between the two kinds of mukhannathūn that appeared during the Umayyad period. The first were the mawālī mukhannathūn who were mostly professional singers and whose effeminate manners and behaviour was their source of living, and the second were the free Arab mukhannathūn, who appreciated and adopted khunth as a way of behaviour and dressing, but were neither professional singers nor depended on khunth for their

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VII, p.214; Vol. IV, p.7 and Vol. IV, p.72.

living. It was these free Arab mukhannathūn who suffered most of the contempt of society.¹

3. The fact that Mecca and al-Madīna were the home of most of the mukhannathūn indicates that these two cities developed under the Umayyads to a main centre of worldly pleasures, and that many of their youths, besides constant and immoderate indulgence in wine and song, sank into the unchaste arts offered to them by the mukhannathūn. This could have been another reason why the authorities proceeded with the utmost rigour against the mukhannathūn and spared no effort in suppressing their activity.

¹See Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. V, p.121.

B - Pederasty.

This section is not meant to be a study of the manners and morals of the Umayyad society, nor is it an assessment of the moral standards of the Muslim community during the period in which the great social changes were taking place, but an exposition of some of the facts that can be obtained from some of the accounts and narratives preserved in the Aghānī and other sources which relate to the subject of pederasty.

In the Umayyad period, however, intrigue with boys played some part in social life and this makes it necessary for us to deal with it in as much as it relates to the study of the life of pleasure and amusement in that period which is the subject of our study.

In the Aghānī and other literary and historical works consulted, there is no reference to homosexuality in the period that preceded the rise of Islam. The only sources that give reference to the homosexuals of the Jāhiliyya period are the books of Tafsīr. In these books the reference to this matter is made in connection with the following Qoranic verses: "We also sent Lūṭ; when he said to his people, proceed ye to a filthy deed in which no creature hath gone before you."¹ "Verily ye come to men, instead of women, lustfully! Nay, but ye are a people given up to excess."² "Remember also Lūṭ, when he said to his

¹Qoran, 7, 80.

²Qoran, 7, 81.

people, proceed ye to such filthiness with your eyes open."¹, and "Come ye indeed with lust unto men rather than to women, nay, ye are an ignorant people."²

The "Lūt" mentioned in these verses is, no doubt, the biblical "Lot". According to the Qoran, Lūt was a messenger of God (Mursal) sent to sinners who forbid hospitality, rob strangers and practice homosexuality and cruelty, such as no other people had done before them.³

In commenting on the first two verses of the four we have just mentioned, the famous Qoran commentator al-Qurturbī⁴ quotes much of what was said by earlier mufasssirūn (Qoran commentators) and Doctors of Law on the subject of homosexuality before Islam, and refers to the attitude of the Prophet and some of the orthodox Caliphs vis-à-vis

¹Qoran, 27, 54.

²Qoran, 27, 55.

³The references to Lūt in the Qoran occur in the following sūrās:

11, 73-91; 15, 59-61; 21, 71-74; 26, 160-175; 27, 55-59; 29, 25-34.

See also Tabarī, I, pp.346, 347.

⁴Abū 'Abd al-Lāh Muh. b. Ahmad b. Abī Bakr b. Farh al-Ansarī al-Khazrajī al-Andalusī al-Qurturbī, a famous mufasssir, was born and spent most of his life in al-Andalus. Since his early youth he bent all his energies to the study of Qoran and tafsīr and wrote many books on this subject. His most famous work is the book of tafsīr known as al-Jāmi' li-Ahkām al-Qur'ān. He died on the 9th of Shawwāl 671 A.H. For his biography, the accounts of his life and works see Nafh al-Tīb, al-Maqqarī, ed. A.F.Rifā'ī (Cairo 1936, Vol. VII, pp.221-224).

this matter. Apart from the story of the people of Lūṭ (qawm Lūṭ),¹ one finds no clear reference in al-Qurṭubī's al-Jāmi' Li-Ahkām al-Qur'ān to pederasty in Arabia before Islam. In the traditions quoted by al-Qurṭubī while discussing the subject in general there are only two relating to the subject of homosexuality directly. In the first, it is claimed that Muḥammad said: "Kill him whom you see doing the deed of the people of Lūṭ, and kill the person with whom he committed the deed."² The second reads: "The thing I fear most is that my people might commit the deed of the people of Lūṭ."³ Both traditions have very reliable isnād.⁴

In these two traditions, apart from the name of Lūṭ, there is no clear reference to the practice of homosexuality in Arabia before Islam. But the severe punishment Muḥammad prescribed for homosexuals, and the fears he expressed, suggest that homosexuality was not unknown in Arabia before the rise of Islam and that these traditions, if they were not later forgeries, were aimed at the checking of its growth. The writer of the article "Lūṭ" in the Encyclopedia of Islam remarks that "the biblical Lot has, in Muslim legend, even as early as in the

¹For the story of Lūṭ as given by the Qoran commentators, see al-Qurṭubī, op.cit., Vol. IX, p.79.

²See Ibid, Vol. VII, p.244.

³See Ibid, Vol. VII, p.245.

⁴The relators of the first tradition are: Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Māja, al-Tirmidhī, al-Nassā'ī and al-Darqutnī, and the second is related by Ibn Māja on the authority of Jābir b. 'Abd al-Lāh.

Kur'an, an importance which he does not have in the Bible or Haggada."¹

This importance, which the story of Lūṭ acquires in Muslim legend, can be taken as further evidence for the fact that pederasty was practised by some of the Arabs of the Jāhiliyya. The insistence of the Qoran on citing the details of the disaster that befell the people of Lūṭ as a result of their practising pederasty can be attributed to the wish of Muḥammad to warn the people of his time of the severe punishments that would attend such practices.² All this makes it probable that pederasty was practiced in Arabia before and during the life-time of Muḥammad.

Under the Orthodox Caliphs there is no actual evidence that homosexuality was practised except that we read in al-Qurṭubī that, during the Caliphate of Abū Bakr, Khālīd b. al-Walīd wrote to the Caliph informing him that a certain person known by the name of al-Fujā'a was seen committing pederasty. Abū Bakr sought the advice of the ṣaḥāba on this matter. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib suggested that the man should be burned. The rest of the ṣaḥāba adopted 'Alī's view and the Caliph instructed Khālīd to burn al-Fujā'a.³ According to al-Ṭabarī, a man known by the name of al-Fujā'a (his actual name was 'Iyās b. 'Abd al-

¹See E.I. 1, Vol. III, p.53, art. "Lūṭ".

²According to the Qoran God was so severe in his punishment of the people of Lūṭ that their city was turned completely upside down and that ṣijjīl stones rained upon them. See Qoran, 11,⁸⁴ and 15,⁷⁴.

³See al-Qurṭubī, op.cit., Vol. VII, p.244.

Lāh b. 'Abd Yālayl b. 'Umayra b. Khufāf of the Banī Sulaym) was burned during the Caliphate of Abū Bakr for playing a dishonest part during the wars of apostasy. He is said to have come to Abū Bakr and said that he wanted to fight those who apostatized. Abū Bakr gave him a horse and weapon, but discovered later that he was using them for robbing Muslims, as well as apostates. This made Abū Bakr order Ṭurayfa b. Hājiz (one of the generals of the Muslim army) to take him, dead or alive. Ṭurayfa carried out the Caliph's order and arrested al-Fujā'a and brought him to the Caliph, who ordered that he must be burned. Ṭurayfa took al-Fujā'a to the muṣallā (the courtyard of the mosque) and burned him.¹ There is also a short reference to the burning of al-Fujā'a in Murūj al-Dhahab. Al-Mas'ūdī says that Abū Bakr, while on his death bed, expressed his sorrow for burning al-Fujā'a.² There is no mention in the Murūj of the reason for which he was burned, nor are we told the full name of al-Fujā'a.

It is hard to pass a final judgement in favour of one of these two narratives because we are not sure whether or not ~~two~~ ^{the} two narratives speak of the same person and the same incident. Al-Qurtubī does not give the full name of al-Fujā'a and the details of his narrative are entirely different from those given by al-Ṭabarī. In fact, there

¹See Ṭabarī, I, pp.1903-1904.

²See Mas'ūdī, op.cit., Vol. IV, pp.184,467.

is nothing in common between the two narratives except the nickname of the burned man.

The only remark that one can put forward, as far as the narrative of al-Qurṭubī is concerned, is that it is hard to believe, especially if we take into consideration our general knowledge of Abū Bakr's character and ways of dealing with problems, that he ordered the burning of a man for committing a sin for which a much less severe punishment was prescribed in the Qoran.¹ It is also not altogether unlikely that such a narrative was introduced to support the ḥadīths in which it is claimed that Muḥammad ordered severe punishments for those who practise homosexuality.

However, apart from this incident, there is no reference in the sources consulted to any act of homosexuality committed during the reign of the other Orthodox Caliphs.

In the Umayyad period pederasty continued to exist. The first reference to an act of homosexuality during this period occurs during the Caliphate of Yazīd b. Mu'āwīya. In an account in the Ansāb al-

¹There is difference of opinion between the founders of the Orthodox schools of law on the punishment that should be inflicted upon the person who commits sexual intercourse with males. Mālik was of the opinion that if he is a muḥṣan (married man) he should be stoned; if not, he should be imprisoned. Al-Shāfi'ī held that the punishment of a zānī is the right punishment. Lastly, Abū Ḥanīfa's view was that he should be reproached only. See Qurṭubī, op.cit., Vol. VII, p.243.

Ashrāf we read that this Caliph inflicted the ḥadd (punishment) upon Khālīd b. Ismā'īl b. al-Ash'ath because two men and their wives bore witness that they saw him committing sexual intercourse with a boy.¹ Shortly after that, during the reign of 'Abd al-Lāh b. al-Zubayr over al-Ḥijāz, seven men were punished for the same crime.² During the Caliphate of al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik, the poet al-Aḥwas visited the Capital and was received in the Caliphal palace as the guest of the Caliph. After he had stayed for a few days the Caliph was told that al-Aḥwas had tried to entice the baker who worked in the palace to have relations with him. Al-Walīd sent al-Aḥwas back to al-Madīna and instructed the governor to punish him severely for his deed.³ Roughly about the end of the reign of this Caliph the singer al-Gharīd is reported to have had sexual intercourse with a boy in al-Madīna.⁴ Before being castrated, the singer al-Dalāl was also punished for his unlawful relations with a boy.⁵ Pederasts, however, continued to be found among the members of the Muslim community of the later Umayyad period and it might even be true to claim that their number increased during that period.⁶

¹Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. IVB, p.10.

²See al-Qurtubī, op. cit., Vol. VII, p.244.

³See Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.235-236.

⁴See Ibid, Vol. II, p.369.

⁵See Ibid, Vol. IV, p.283.

⁶See, for example, the following references: Agh.3, Vol. VI, pp.83-84, Agh.1, Vol. XIII, pp.95, 279, 280, and others.

These are all the references in our material to acts of homosexuality committed during the different stages of the Umayyad period.

It is essential to note that the references to pederasty in the Umayyad period in the Aghānī are very few but, from these few references, one can see that most of the persons whose names were involved in acts of homosexuality were either mukhannathūn,¹ or singers,² or dissolute persons;³ there is no evidence that it was practised by people of high social standing. The period, as a whole, contrasts in this respect with the Abbasid, in which many Caliphs and other notables were pederasts. More evidence for the fact that the number of homosexuals in the Umayyad period was not very big can be taken from what was said earlier about the mukhannathūn and their imitating women in their external appearance. As was pointed out, the mukhannathūn, being aware of the vacuum felt in society as a result of the withdrawal of free women from the social life of free men and of the little interest in intercourse with boys, tried to add a feminine element to their external appearance in order to attract pleasure-lovers. Had they found a strong tendency for homo-

¹Like al-Ahwaṣ (see Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.235-236), al-Dalāl (see Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.283) and others.

²Like the singer al-Gharīd (see Agh.3, Vol. II, p.369).

³Like Hammād al-Rāwīya (see Agh.3, Vol. XI, pp.83-84), Mutī' b. 'Iyās (see Agh.1, Vol. XIII, pp.279-280), Hammād 'Ajrad (see Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.95) and others.

The only name of a non-mukhannath or a singer to come down to us in an account of pederasty is Khālīd b. Ismā'il b. al-Ash'ath. The sources within our reach give no information on him.

sexuality in society, one would expect them to retain their male appearance.

The term ghulām occurs in most of the accounts on pederasty in the Aghānī and other sources. According to Tāj al-'Arūs and Lane's Lexicon, a ghulām is "a young man..., one whose mustache is growing forth or has grown forth; or one from the time of his birth until he attains to the period shabāb (meaning young manhood...)." ¹ From this definition of the term, one can state that pederasty was practised with young boys.

There is no reference in the Aghānī or the other sources consulted to the origin of these ghilmān, although it is stated in some of the anecdotes that they were of mawlā status. ² There is only one reference to a free Arab with whom pederasts could have sexual intercourse. He was the poet al-Ahwaṣ, ³ of whom we said earlier that he was a mukhannath and dissolute. ⁴ Al-Ahwaṣ, however, cannot be considered as a ghulām and the question of the origin of the professional ghilmān, if there were any, remains unanswered.

While discussing the views of doctors of law and 'ulama' on the punishment that must be inflicted upon a pederast, al-Qurtubī

¹ See Lane's Lexicon, art. غلام Book I, part 6, pp.2286-2287, and Tāj al-'Arūs, art. غلام, Vol. IX, pp.4-5.

² See, for example, Agh.1, Vol. XIII, pp.95, 280; Agh.3, Vol. VI, p.83, and others.

³ See, in Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.235-236, the account of his visit to al-Walīd and how he tried to persuade the bakers of the Caliphal palace to have sexual intercourse with him, as was mentioned earlier.

⁴ See above, p. 171.

refers to the views of the 'ulamā' on the question of sexual intercourse with animals and quotes a hadīth on this subject.¹ Apart from this jurisprudential reference in al-Qurṭubī's tafsīr there is no mention in the sources consulted of any person committing sexual intercourse with an animal.

There is no evidence in the sources that in the Umayyad period there were professional ghilmān with whom pederasts could have sexual intercourse and, in some cases, one feels that the ghulām was rather obliged than willing to surrender to the wish of a pederast.²

From an account in the Aghānī it appears that some of the homo-

¹This hadīth is related by Abū Dāwūd and al-Dārquṭnī on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās, who claimed that the Prophet said: "He who commits sexual intercourse with an animal, kill him, and kill the animal with him." Later, Ibn 'Abbās denied that the Prophet ordered the killing of the animal and said that he only disapproved the eating of its flesh (makrūh). See this tradition and the reference to sexual intercourse with animals in Qurṭubī, op.cit., Vol. VII, pp.244-245.

²See, for example, in Agh.3, Vol. II, p.369, how the singer al-Gharīd asked his friends to convince the ghulām to have intercourse with him, and the efforts of the friends to make the ghulām accept. There is no mention in the story of who this ghulām was and it is not impossible that he was the servant of one of them. See also in Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p. 95, the phrase " ... بختال عليه " in the story about Muṭī' b. Iyās and the boy with whom he had sexual intercourse. See also Agh.3, Vol. VI, pp.83-84.

sexuals of the later part of the Umayyad period, were described as zindīqs.¹ It is not clear whether this description was given to all the homosexuals of that period, or whether it was added later by the relators of the Abbasid period when the word came into more common use. It is fairly clear, however, that, during the whole of the Umayyad period, society did not look highly upon homosexuals.

Before ending this section on pederasty it may be remarked that, in the Umayyad period, poets did not praise the love of ghilman as did some of the poets of the Abbasid period and that, in this period, we do not find a parallel to al-ghazal al-mudhakkar, which occupied a special place in the poetry of some of the Abbasid poets. The explanation to this could be sought firstly, in what was said earlier about the small number of pederasts in the Umayyad period and, secondly, in the fact that the society did not have a great regard for pederasts, as has just been pointed out. It is not until the Abbasid period that one feels the prevalence of homosexuality.

¹See, in Agh.1, Vol. I, Vol. XIII, pp.279-280, the story of Muṭī' b. Iyas and 'Umāra b. Ḥamza, "who were known to have been zindīqs, and a boy servant of 'Abd al-Lāh b. Mu'āwiya, who led an uprising against the Umayyads shortly before the downfall of their dynasty. On zindīqs, see Goldziher, "Salih und das Zindikthum", Transactions Xth Oriental Congress, 1892, II, p.642.

C - Prostitution.

Prostitution was known and recognized by the society of the Arabs in the Jāhiliyya and, in the sources, there is direct and clear information on this question. W. Robertson Smith explains the reason for the existence of prostitutes in the society of ancient Arabia by saying: "The prices asked for women in ancient Arabia under the name of mahr were often very high, and at the time of Mohammed, as among the Bedouins at the present day, there were many men who could not afford a wife. Such men, intolerant of celibacy as all Arabs are, usually took refuge in what the Prophet called Zinā (fornication)..."¹ To this should be added that Smith regards zinā before Islam as a kind of polyandry in which the number of the husbands was not defined.²

From the Aghānī and some other sources it appears that prostitution in the Jāhiliyya, at least in cities like Mecca and al-Ṭā'if, was a profession of women who formed a separate class, generally freed-women or slaves, whose houses were marked by a flag hung over the door (dhawāt al-rāyāt).³

There were also in the Jāhiliyya other prostitutes who worked

¹See W. Robertson Smith, Kinship and marriage in early Arabia, (London, 1907), p.151.

²Ibid, Loc.cit.

³See al-Qurtubī, op.cit., Vol. XII, p.160, al-Kāmil, Ibn al-Athīr, Vol. IV, p.160 and Agh.1, Vol. II, p.32.

for wine-sellers and were available to the customers of wine-shops.¹

Thus, in the Jāhiliyya, prostitutes were either independent and practised their profession in private houses, or were attached to wineshops.

Before Islam the idea that it was disgraceful for a man to visit houses of prostitutes did not exist. This can be gathered from what we read about some of the notables of Quraysh and their visits to houses of prostitutes and even their marriage to them. The sources refer, for example, to Abū Sufyān and his sexual intercourse with a prostitute known by the name of Sumayya, the slave-girl of the Banū 'Ajlān, and the birth of Ziyād b. Abīhi as a result of this intercourse.² It is also said that the Marwānid branch of the Umayyad family had for ancestress a certain al-Zarqā', of whom it was known that she was one of "those who hung out a flag" (min dhawāt al-Rāyāt). Later, she was married to Abū al-'Āṣ b. Umayya, the father of al-Ḥakam and, thus, one of her grandsons was Marwān b. al-Ḥakam.³ R. Smith goes further to say that "there was no stain of illegitimacy attached to the child

¹See, in al-Ya'qūbī, Vol. II, pp.259-260, the story of Abū Maryam al-Salūlī, the wine-seller, and Abū Sufyān and the prostitute known by the name of Ama of the Banū 'Ajlān, which took place in a wine-shop in al-Ṭā'if. See also in Agh.1, Vol. II, p.32, how 'Adī b. Zayd committed fornication with a certain prostitute called Māriya in a wine-shop in al-Hīra.

²See al-Ya'qūbī, Vol. II, pp.259-260.

³See Ibn al-'Athīr, al-Kāmil, Vol. IV, p.160. See also al-Ṭabarī, II, p.1075. Very often the Banū Marwān were referred to as "the sons of al-Zarqā'", especially by their enemies who wanted to insult them. See, for example, al-Ṭabarī, II, pp.218, 780.

of a harlot", and that "men were not unwilling to claim the fatherhood of a prostitute's child and there was actually a class of wise men (cāif, pl. cāfa) whose business it was to discern the bodily marks by which a child could be recognised as a particular man's son, and assigned to him."¹ Smith supports his claim with quotations from the Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī and other sources. All this, however, brings one to the conclusion that prostitution was fully recognized by the society of ancient Arabia.

Islam, as is well known, was entirely hostile to zinā and Muḥammad spared no effort in his battle against fornication. It is significant that, according to Qoranic legislation, an adulterer was to be stoned to death (rajm) and a fornicator to be scourged with a hundred stripes. This firm stand in the face of unlawful relations between men and women, coupled with the fact that Muḥammad gave the example to his followers by paying small dowries to his wives,² can be taken as

¹See Smith, Kinship, pp.151, 169. In connection with Smith's views on the legitimacy of a child born from a prostitute, it is worth recalling that the news of the recognition (istilḥāq) of Ziyād b. Abīh during the early part of the Umayyad period was a great shock to many people, and made Mu'āwiya invite the wufūd to the Capital to endorse his action. This might suggest that, even in the Jāhiliyya, not all members of society were willing to accept the fatherhood of a prostitute's child.

²Muḥammad is said to have paid a dowry of five hundred dirhams or twelve and a half uqiyyas to a number of his wives. See Ibn Sa'd, al-Tabaqāt al-Kubrā (ed. Leiden 1905-1928), Vol. VIII, pp.43, 10-12, 102, 18-21. There is evidence also that the dowry of 'A'isha did not amount to more than one hundred and fifty dirhams. See Ibid, Loc.cit.

evidence on the effort of Islam to put an end to illegal relations between the two sexes, and to encourage marriage by removing the difficulty of mahr referred to by Smith. As a result of this firm attitude, prostitution seems to have shrunk or, possibly, disappeared temporarily, from al-Ḥijāz under Muḥammad.

There is no evidence or material to support this claim, except the fact that there is no reference in all the sources consulted to any prostitute practising her profession in al-Ḥijāz, nor is there reference to any Ḥijāzī punished for committing sexual intercourse with a prostitute during the life-time of the Prophet.

The same could be said about the period of the Orthodox Caliphs who seem to have followed the example of the Prophet in their firm stand in the face of prostitution. As was said earlier, in the sources consulted there is no mention of any prostitute practising her profession in al-Ḥijāz during the reign of these Caliphs.¹

Before proceeding to examine the information about prostitution in the Umayyad period, it is of importance to refer to a curious pas-

¹In some of the Tafsīr books there are very few references to acts of adultery and fornication committed by some men during the life-time of Muḥammad and under the Orthodox Caliphs. The women involved in these acts were either slave-girls or free women, but never professional prostitutes. (See, for example, al-Qurṭubī, op.cit., Vol. V, pp.82-90, Vol. XII, pp.159-171.) Moreover, in our material, there is no mention of any house for professional prostitution in al-Ḥijāz during this period. This point, however, will be further discussed later in this section.

sage in al-Muḥabbar of Ibn Ḥabīb relative to the apostasy of Ḥaḍramawt after the death of Muḥammad.¹ The title of this passage is: "The women who desired the death of Muḥammad and their story.", and in it there is mention of what were called the "harlots of Ḥaḍramawt". The following is a translation of some excerpts from this passage:

"When the Prophet of God died, the news of it was carried to Ḥaḍramawt by a man of Kulayb, of the Banū 'Āmir b. 'Awf of the Banū al-Jilāḥ, whose name was Jahbal.... There were in Ḥaḍramawt six women, of Kinda and Ḥaḍramawt, who were desirous of the death of the Prophet of God; they therefore (on hearing the news) dyed their hands with hinna, and played on the tambourine. To them came out the harlots of Ḥaḍramawt and did likewise, so that some twenty women joined the six. They belonged to various villages of Ḥaḍramawt..., and included the following: 'Amarrada, daughter of Ma'dīkarib, and Hunayda, daughter of Abī Shamir; both of these belonged to the Ashrāf..... Thereupon Imru' al-Qays b. 'Ābis al-Kindī wrote to Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq..., saying as follows: The harlots rejoiced on the day when Jahbal announced the death of Aḥmad the Prophet....

Moreover, a man of Tin'a, who was a sharīf, named Shaddād b. Mālik.. wrote to Abū Bakr thus: Tell Abū Bakr when you reach him that the harlots have desired most eagerly, and have shown joy at, the death

¹Al-Muḥabbar, pp.184-189.

of the Prophet, and they have dyed their hands with hinna'.

When these two letters reached Abū Bakr....., he wrote to al-Muhājir b. Abī Umayya as follows: Imru' al-Qays b. 'Ābis al-Kindī and Shaddād b. Mālik.... have written to me declaring that before them there are certain women of the people of Yaman who have desired the death of the Prophet of God, and that these have been joined by singing-girls of Kinda and prostitutes of Ḥadramawt, and they have dyed their hands and shown joy and played on the tambourine.. When my letter reaches you, go to them with your horses and men, and strike off their hands. If any one defends them against you,....., expostulate with him,..... but if he declines, break off negotiations with him and proceed to hostilities..... When al-Muhājir read the letter, he gathered his horses and men, and proceeded against the women, but certain men of Kinda and Ḥadramawt intervened between him and them; so he expostulated with these men, but they insisted on fighting. Then their people retired from him, and he did battle with them, and routed them, and took the women and cut off their hands..."¹

¹The above translation of al-Muḥabbar's text is taken from an article by A.F.L.Beeston in Oriens, Vol. 5, (1952), pp.16-19. In al-Ṭabarī there is reference to two songstresses who had their hands cut off and their front teeth knocked out by al-Muhājir b. Abī Umayya because one of them had sung a satire of the Prophet and the other had sung a satire of the Muslims in general. There is no mention in al-Ṭabarī's account of any prostitute, and the word used is "mughanniyatān". See Ṭabarī, I, pp.2014,2015.

In commenting on this passage A.F.L. Beeston says: "It is impossible to read this curious text without asking oneself the question, who and what really were these so-called "harlots", whose opposition to Islam was apparently regarded by the first Caliph as a genuine threat to the new religion..... Nor would it be clear, had they been nothing but prostitutes, why the local tribes gathered so vigorously to defend them."¹

The solution which Beeston proposes is "that these women, or at all events some of them, were in fact priestesses of the old pagan religion of South Arabia, who hoped that the death of Muḥammad would afford them a chance of staging a revival of the old religion; their "singing and dancing" was not merely an expression of personal rejoicing, but an incitement to their fellow-tribesmen to rise and try to throw off the yoke of the new religion, which had deprived the pagan priests and priestesses of positions of considerable power and influence..... The term "harlot" applied to these women could of course be interpreted simply as an approbrious epithet employed by their political antagonists among the Muslims....."²

The reference to the "harlots of Ḥaḍramawt", however, is the only reference in our material to the existence of prostitutes during

¹See Oriens, op.cit., p.20.

²See Ibid, loc.cit., p.20.

the life-time of Muḥammad and the period of his Orthodox successors in Arabia. The fact that Abū Bakr ordered the cutting off of the hands of these prostitutes and the battle with those who tried to defend them shows that this Caliph was determined to extinguish the opposition to the new religion regardless of its nature or source.

With the coming to power of the Umayyads, harlotry reappeared. The first reference to the trade of prostitution during the Umayyad period occurs in an account on the events of the life of the poet al-Uqayshir, who was known for his love of pleasure and wine. In this account we read that al-Qubā'¹ ordered al-Uqayshir to join the Irāqī army sent to fight the forces of the Umayyads during the revolution of 'Abd al-Lāh b. al-Zubayr in al-Hijāz and al-Ṭrāq.

Instead of joining the army, al-Uqayshir fled to Qinnīn² and took refuge in the house of a Nabatean wine-seller who "used to expose

¹Al-Hārith b. 'Abd al-Lāh b. Abī Rabī'a, nicknamed al-Qubā', was appointed in 65/684 governor of al-Baṣra by 'Abd al-Lāh b. al-Zubayr after 'Ubayd al-Lāh b. Ziyād fled as a result of the uprising against the Umayyads in al-'Irāq. (See Ṭabarī, II, pp.464,578, 593). He retained this office until 67/686, when he was replaced by Muṣ'ab b. al-Zubayr. (See Ṭabarī, II, p.717).

²There is no mention in the sources consulted of this village. It is not impossible that it was somewhere in the "Arḍ of Bābil" near al-Kūfa. This suggestion is based on the fact that it is stated in the account used for the above information that al-Uqayshir got to Qinnīn after crossing the bridge of Sūrā. Sūrā, according to Yāqut's Mu'jam al-Buldān, is a place in al-Ṭrāq in the land of Bābil (see Vol. III, p.184). Al-Kūfa, in the meantime, is situated near the ruins of the old city of Bābil. Thus, it is most likely that Qinnīn, being situated next to the bridge of Sūrā, which was in the land of Bābil, was near al-Kūfa which was also in the vicinity of ancient Bābil.

his wife to shame", where he stayed for several days drinking wine and committing adultery with the wine-seller's wife.¹

As al-Qubā's term of office was between 65-67/684-686,² this story seems to have happened during the Caliphate of Marwān b. al-Hakam, or more likely, during the early days of the reign of his son 'Abd al-Malik. From this it is possible to deduce, as there is little doubt that the wife of the wine-seller was a professional prostitute, that the early Umayyad period witnessed the return of the trade of prostitution after it disappeared completely, or possibly went underground during the period of early Islam and the Orthodox Caliphs. It is also possible to deduce from this account that, in the Umayyad period, like in the Jāhiliyya, there was some kind of connection between wine-sellers and prostitutes.

The poet Jarīr used the term mākhūr to indicate a house of prostitutes.³ The editor of the diwān of this poet, without giving any reference, describes a mākhūr as "a place for fornication and wine".⁴ In Tāj al-'Arūs and Lane's Lexicon, on the other hand, we get the following definition for the word mākhūr: "An Arabicized word from the Persian maykhor; a place of assembly of vicious or immoral persons."⁵

¹See the full account in Agh.3, Vol. XI, pp.274-275.

²See above p.212 note 1.

³See, for example, the following verse:

"نتع في المافور كل ضريبة
ولست بأهل المحضات الكرام"

from a satirical poem by Jarīr, see Diwān, Vol. II, p.137.

⁴See the diwān of Jarīr, Vol. II, p.137.

⁵See art. "محر" in Lane's Lexicon and Tāj al-'Arūs.

From the definition given by the author of al-Tāj and Lane it appears that wine was consumed in mawākhīr. However, we are in no way able to say when the term mākhūr came into use for the first time, and what it indicated exactly.

Under the Caliph 'Abd al-Malik and during the uprising of 'Abd al-Rahmān b. al-Ash'ath (80-82/699-701), the sources refer to another prostitute. According to al-Aghānī the name of this prostitute was Mustarād al-Ṣannāja (the cymbalist) and she was a resident of a city called Dastabā,¹ but in Ansāb al-Ashrāf we read that her name was Māhabūsh and that she lived in Sijistān.² Both sources, however, agree that the poet Abū Ḥarāba (or Abū Ḥazāba), who was among those who joined the revolution of Ibn al-Ash'ath against al-Ḥajjāj, spent a night at her place, but differ on the sum he had to pay for this night. According to al-Aghānī, a customer had to pay one hundred dirhams per night, whereas, according to Ansāb al-Ashrāf, fifty dirhams were the charge. The house of this prostitute seems to have been open to customers since the beginning of the Caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik, or possibly earlier, because in the Ansāb al-Ashrāf, we read that 'Abd al-Rahmān b. al-Ash'ath used to frequent it while he was on a visit to Sijistān with his maternal uncle, long before he started his revolution.³ There is

¹See Agh.1, Vol. XIX, p.154.

²See Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. XI, p.335.

³See Ibid, p.309.

no indication in these two accounts, however, that this prostitute was employed by any wine-seller or attached to a wine-shop, but it seems that she ran an independent house, and it is not impossible that she had other prostitutes working with her.

There is reference to the trade of prostitution in the poetry of al-Akḥṭal.¹ In a poem about his rāwiya, who was called Jarīr,² al-Akḥṭal speaks about "the elegant place for young men which left Jarīr with no time, even for his father and mother." This place, to which al-Akḥṭal gives no specific name, like the poet Jarīr when he called it makhūr, was inhabited by vicious and immoral women with whom the rāwiya Jarīr passed most of his time.³

Later in the Umayyad period one feels that the houses of prostitutes began to increase in number and attract more and more customers. Shortly before the end of the first century of the Hijra, ten dirhams seem to have been a reasonable payment by a customer to a prostitute. This fact we learn from an account preserved in the diwān

¹The date of the birth of al-Akḥṭal is uncertain, but it may have been, as R. Blachere says, about 20/640. As for the date of his death, the year 92/710 is a possible suggestion. (See E.I. 2, art. "al-Akḥṭal", Vol. I, Fas.6, p.331). For his biography and the accounts of his life see Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.280-320.

²Père Šālḥānī, the editor of the Dīwān of al-Akḥṭal, says in note 2, p.267 of the diwān that the name "Jarīr" mentioned in this poem refers to al-Akḥṭal's rāwiya, and not to the famous poet who had the same name.

³See the Dīwān of al-Akḥṭal, p.267.

of the poet al-Farazdaq in which we read that, around the year 93/711, the poet al-Farazdaq¹ visited 'Abd al-Lāh b. Muslim al-Bāhilī, who was appointed governor of Samarqand and Khawārizm by his brother Qutayba b. Muslim al-Bāhilī,² and received from him a gift of one thousand dirhams and a horse. After al-Farazdaq left, 'Amr b. 'Afrā al-Dabbī who was present when al-Farazdaq received the gift, said to 'Abd al-Lāh that it is unwise to pay such a large sum to al-Farazdaq because, as 'Amr put it, "al-Farazdaq does not need more than thirty dirhams; with ten he will be able to commit adultery (Yaznī bi 'ashara), and the other twenty dirhams will pay for his food and drink."³

With the turn of the century the trade of prostitution seems to have found its way to some of the big cities of Arabia through the non-Arab elements who flocked to these cities from the remote parts of the empire. For example, from an account in the Aghānī, it can be inferred that a house of prostitutes run by a Nabaṭī was to be found in al-Madīna in the first decades of the second century of the Hijra. The following is a resumé of this account: Ibn Harima, a Madīnan poet born in the

¹The poet al-Farazdaq was probably born during the Caliphate of 'Umar or 'Uthman. In the year 36/656 his father took him to the Caliph 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (see Agh.1, Vol. XIX, p.6). According to one narrative, he died in 110/728 and, according to another, in 114/732-3 (see Agh.1, Vol. XIX, pp.6, 45). For his biography see Agh.1, Vol. XIX, pp. 2 - 45, and Guidi's Tables.

²For the appointment of 'Abd al-Lāh b. Muslim al-Bāhilī, who was known also as 'Abd al-Lāh al-Faqīr, as governor of Samarqand and Khawārizm by his brother Qutayba, see Ṭabarī, II, pp.122-1253. This 'Abd al-Lāh was killed in a battle in the year 96/714. (See Ṭabarī, II, p.1296).

³See the full account in the Diwān of the poet al-Farazdaq, ed. R. Boucher (1870) p.74.

year 90/708, and a strong lover of wine and amusement,¹ went once to the market of the Nabaṭ (Nabateans) - we are not told in what city - where a man whose wife and two daughters were professional prostitutes, lived. On the payment of a certain sum of money, Ibn Harima was admitted to the house of this man, where he stayed for several days committing adultery and drinking wine. Shortly before he was due to leave, the man came to him and said: "Did you not know that there was yesterday an earthquake in al-Rawḍa?" (Zulzila bi'l Rawḍa).² Ibn Harima knew that the man was lying and that what he told him about the earthquake was a trick to urge him to leave the house because he wanted to receive new customers and, therefore, he left the house.³

The fact that Ibn Harima was himself a native of al-Madīna, coupled with the reference to al-Rawḍa in the above account, is the evidence that we can produce to support our claim that the above story took place in al-Madīna, and that the house of prostitutes mentioned in the story was in al-Madīna too.

¹Ibn Harima, a famous poet of the late Umayyad and early Abbasid periods. For his biography and the accounts of his life, see Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.367-397.

²It is known that the Madīnans call the space between the tomb of the Prophet and the minbar (pulpit) of his mosque, al-Rawḍa, because it is said in a tradition that the Prophet once said: "(The space) between my tomb and my minbar (is) a meadow (rawḍa) of the meadows of paradise." See the Musnad of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Vol. III, p.64, and Lisān al-'Arab, art. روض, Vol. VII, p.163.

³See the full account in Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.388-389.

In the accounts of the life of the poet Abū al-Hindī,¹ who also was of the late Umayyad and early Abbasid periods, there are two references of some importance in the study of prostitution in the late Umayyad period. In one of these accounts, for example, there is reference to a district in Sijistān known by the name of Kūhziyān "where wine was sold, and adultery committed. In it (in this district) lived all dissolutes, adulterers, and prostitutes."² In another account, we read that Abū al-Hindī once committed fornication with a prostitute in a house of prostitutes run by a woman wine-seller (khammāra) in Kūdarnān.³ Of these two references, the first is of greater importance. From it one can deduce that, in Sijistān, there was a kind of special quarter inhabited by prostitutes and those living around them. Both accounts, however, bear clear evidence on the fact that, in the late Umayyad period, prostitution flourished as a profession and that houses of prostitutes attracted more visitors than before. This, as one would expect, was a natural result of the increasing tendency towards pleasure

¹The poet Abū al-Hindī, famous for his wine-poetry, lived in Sijistān and Khurāsān, in the late Umayyad and early Abbasid periods and was known to have been a very heavy drinker. For his biography and the accounts of his life, see Agh. Brūnnow, pp.377-380.

²See Ibid, p.278.

³There is no mention in the sources consulted of a place called Kūdarnān. It is not impossible that it was either in Sijistān or Khurāsān because, as it was pointed out in note 1, the poet passed most of his life in these two places. The account is to be seen in Ibid, p.280.

and amusement in this period.

After this general survey of prostitution during the different stages of the Umayyad period, reference should be made to some of the facts that one can deduce from the general information on the subject in the Aghānī and other sources.

The first conclusion that one comes to, after considering this information, is that, in the early part of the Umayyad period, prostitution was very limited and most probably practised in secret in the remote parts of the Empire which were far from the direct supervision of the Muslim authorities. For example, we said earlier in this section that the first case of prostitution in the Umayyad period we read of in our material took place in a village in al-'Irāq called Qinnīn, about the year 65/685. This village, which seems to have been somewhere in the land of Bābil,¹ must have been very small and not under the direct supervision of the authorities in al-Baṣra or al-Kūfa. We said also that, under the Caliph 'Abd al-Malik, the sources refer to the poet Abū Ḥarāba and his visit to the house of the prostitute Mustarād al-Ṣannāja in Dastabā, according to the version of the Aghānī, or to the house of Mahabūsh in Sijistān, according to the version of Ansāb al-Ashraf. Both Dastabā,² and Sijistān were far from the direct

¹See above, p.212 note 2 .

²Dastabā, according to Yāqūt's Mu'jam al-Buldān, was a province between al-Rayy, Hamadhān and Qazwīn. See Vol. II, pp.573, 607.

supervision of the authorities in al-'Irāq. To this one should add that the very fact that, in the sources which we consulted and which deal with prostitution and other matters relating to the subject of pleasure and amusement in the early Umayyad period, there is no mention of any house of prostitutes or of independent prostitutes practising their profession in Mecca, al-Madīna, al-Kūfa and other big cities and centres of pleasure and amusement is, in itself, evidence in favour of the argument that prostitution in the early Umayyad period was confined to the remote parts of the empire. Thus, it can be claimed that, in the early Umayyad period, most of the houses of prostitutes were in villages and towns far from the supervision of the authorities.

Another remark on prostitution in the early Umayyad period is that it was a profession run and practised by non-Arabs and, most probably, non-Muslims. For example, the prostitute with whom al-Uqayshir committed adultery was the wife of a Nabatean wine-seller. Being the wife of a wine-seller is enough evidence that she was a non-Muslim because no Muslim could become a wine-seller. The fact that the trade of prostitution was in many cases connected with wine-sellers and wine-shops can also be taken as evidence in favour of the above claim (i.e. that it was run and practised by non-Muslims). As for the first part of the above claim (i.e. that they were mostly non-Arabs), it is possible to seek evidence on it in the clear reference in some of the accounts

of the non-Arab origin of the prostitute or of a close relative of hers (like the wife of a Nabatean wine-seller), or in the non-Arabic names they had (like Mustarād and Māhabūsh). To that one should add that all the cases of prostitution in the early Umayyad period which we cited took place in places of a non-Arab majority of inhabitants. To support this claim one can cite the names of Sijistān¹ and Dastabā² which certainly had a majority of non-Arab inhabitants. As for Qinnīn,³ of which we know practically nothing, it is not impossible to suggest that it, too, was of a mostly non-Arab population. This suggestion is based on the fact that Sūrā, the village next to Qinnīn, was, as Yāqūt says, of a mostly Syriac (Siryan) population.⁴

In this way, the claim that the profession of prostitution in the early Umayyad period was run and practised mostly by non-Arabs and non-Muslims, is not without any ground.

Gradually, the number of prostitutes increased. In the accounts of prostitution in the later Umayyad period we no longer read of a single prostitute (like the wife of the Nabatean wine-seller, Mustarād and Māhabūsh, of the early Umayyad period) but of whole quarters inhabited by prostitutes and those who lived around them,⁵ and of houses

¹See The lands of the Eastern Caliphate, G. Le Strange (1930), pp.334-351.

²See Yāqūt, Mu'jam al-Buldān, Vol. II, pp.573, 667.

³See what was said about Qinnīn in, above p.212 note 2 .

⁴See Yāqūt, Mu'jam al-Buldān, Vol. III, p.184.

⁵"The quarter of Kūhziyān, where wine was sold and fornication committed, and in which lived all dissolutes, adulterers, and prostitutes." See Agh. Brünnow, p.278.

of prostitutes.¹ This means that prostitution in the later Umayyad period flourished as a profession and attracted more customers than before. As for the origin and religion of those who were in the profession during this period, the remark made earlier about the early Umayyad period remains valid (i.e. that most of those who were in this profession were neither Muslims nor Arabs). The evidence for this claim can be sought in the fact that most of those who ran the business of prostitutes were wine-sellers,² which is clear evidence that they were non-Muslims. As for their origin, it is stated in one of the accounts that the man whose daughters and wife were professional prostitutes was dwelling in a quarter known as "the market of the Nabateans".³ This makes it highly probable that he himself and his wife and daughters were Nabateans. In the rest of the accounts of prostitution in the late Umayyad period it is stated clearly that the prostitutes they refer to were living in places like Sijistān⁴ and Kūhziyān⁵, which had few or no Arabs among their inhabitants. Thus,

¹Abū al-Hindī (the poet) drank one day at the shop of a woman wine-seller who ran a house of prostitutes, and had sexual intercourse with her prostitutes." See Agh. Brunnnow, p.280.

²See Ibid., pp.278, 280.

³See Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.388.

⁴See Agh. Brunnnow, p.278.

⁵See Ibid., p.280.

from the afore-mentioned evidence, it appears that, in the later part of the Umayyad period, the profession of prostitution flourished and continued to be mostly in the hands of non-Arabs and non-Muslims. Before leaving this point, it must be pointed out that, although there is no clear or direct reference in the Aghānī and the other sources consulted to the nationality, social status and religion of the prostitutes themselves, it is almost certain that most, if not all, of them were non-Arab slave-girls on the one hand, and non-Muslims on the other. This is the conclusion reached after taking into consideration their names, the places where they lived and practised their profession and the severe punishment prescribed by Islam for adulteresses which made it very difficult for a Muslim woman to take the risk of becoming a prostitute.

A third remark is that there is no mention in our material of any prostitute practising her profession in cities like Mecca, al-Madīna, al-Kūfa or other famous centres of pleasure and amusement in the early Umayyad period. There is, however, one instance already referred to in which we read of professional prostitutes practising their profession in al-Madīna during the very end of the Umayyad period.¹ In the account where the reference to these prostitutes occurs, there is no mention of the name of the city in which they practised their

¹See above, p.217, the story of the poet Ibn Harima and the man who lived in the market of the Nabateans and whose two daughters and wife were prostitutes.

profession but, through indirect references in the story, we could identify al-Madīna as the city in which the story took place.¹ Apart from this single reference, the sources give no evidence on the existence of prostitutes or houses of prostitutes in Mecca, al-Madīna, al-Kūfa and other centres of pleasure and amusement during the Umayyad period. This might look strange to any one familiar with the exaggerated love for every kind of pleasure and amusement, especially in the two cities of al-Ḥijāz, Mecca and al-Madīna, but an explanation is not impossible.

Firstly, one should remember that Islam waged a very hot war against fornication and adultery and ordered the strongest punishment

¹See above pp. 216-217 and note 2, p. 217. It is important to note that we are not sure that this story took place during the Umayyad part of the life of the poet Ibn Harima, of whom we said earlier that he belonged to the late Umayyad and early Abbasid periods (see above, p. 217, note 1). On the other hand, it must be noticed that the fact that these prostitutes were the daughters and wife of the man who ran their business and at whose house they received their customers, might have helped them in keeping their unlawful activities unknown to the authorities of the city, and thus avoided the possible expulsion or other punishments which the authorities might have inflicted upon them.

for any one who committed them.¹ This firm stand taken by Islam against unlawful relations between the two sexes played, no doubt, a direct and decisive role in the campaign waged by Muḥammad and the Orthodox Caliphs against prostitution, which was a recognised institution before Islam and which represented to Muḥammad a dangerous threat to family life.² A result of this campaign was that, under Muḥammad and the Orthodox Caliphs, professional prostitution ceased to exist. This conclusion is based on the fact that the sources dealing with the subject of unlawful relations between the sexes under Muḥammad and his Orthodox successors give reference to very few cases of adultery and fornication and, in all these, it is implied that the women with whom the acts of adultery or fornication were committed were either free-

¹"The whore and the whoremonger - scourge each of them with a hundred stripes; and let not compassion keep you from carrying out the sentence of God; if ye believe in God and the last day. And let some of the faithful witness their chastisement." See Qoran, 24². See also art. زنا in Wensinck, Concordance et indices de la tradition Musulmane. Vol. II, pp.228-230. For the very firm stand of Islam against zinā and the strong measures to check its growth, the difference between the punishment of an adulterer and the punishment of a fornicator, and the views of the Prophet, Orthodox Caliphs and 'Ulamā' on the punishments that should be inflicted upon adulterers and fornicators, see al-Qurṭubī, op.cit. Vol. V, pp.82-90, and Vol. XII, pp.159-171.

²See al-Qurṭubī, op.cit., Vol. V, pp.88, 89.

women or slave-girls and, at any rate, not professional prostitutes.¹

Under the Umayyads, the authorities seem to have continued to maintain this firm attitude towards prostitution and, indeed, could not but do so. Thus, the trade of prostitution did not have the chance to flourish even in Mecca and al-Madīna, the two big centres of pleasure and amusement. In this respect, it is possible to argue that what we say now about the firm attitude taken by the Umayyad authorities, even in al-Hijāz, vis-à-vis prostitution contradicts what we said earlier in this study about the encouragement given by the Umayyads to the life of pleasure and amusement in al-Hijāz so that they could keep the Hijāzīs away from the political affairs of the dynasty.² The answer to this is that the question of the unlawfulness of zinā, unlike ghinā and khamr, did not create any division in the opinions of the fugahā and 'ulamā. They unanimously condemned it,

¹See, in Qurṭubī, op.cit., Vol. XII, p.161, the story of the man who confessed to the Prophet that he had committed adultery and, in p.162 of the same volume, the reference to the slave-girl flogged by the Caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb for adultery and, in p.87 of Vol. V, the punishment inflicted by 'Alī b. Abī Tālib on Shurāha, the slave-girl who committed adultery. See also, in Agh.1, Vol. XIV, pp.145-147, the story of al-Mughīra b. Shu'ba and al-Raḡṭā', a woman of the Banū Thaqīf, with whom he committed adultery and the course of the trial conducted by the Caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. In all these references, which are almost parallel to the rest of the cases of unlawful relations between men and women under the Orthodox Caliphs of which we read in our material, it is implied that the women involved were in no way professional prostitutes.

²See above, Chapter I, p.70 .

and very strongly.¹ To make this point more clear, ghinā', for example, found, as we have seen, many sympathisers who disputed its unlawfulness and even defended its help in the worship of God;² wine-drinking brought into discussion the question of the difference between khamr and nabīdh and whether nabīdh is lawful, or not,³ but zinā did not and could not find anyone to defend it. This, in the view of the present writer, obliged the Umayyads to adopt a firm attitude vis-a-vis prostitution, especially in al-Hijāz.

Secondly, if we are to agree with the theory of R. Smith that the reason for the existence and recognition by the Jāhiliyya society of prostitution was that it was the only way out for the men who were intolerant of celibacy and could not afford a wife because of the high prices (mahr) of women,⁴ we find that this theory does not apply to the Hijāzīs during the Umayyad period for many reasons:

1. The material wealth which followed the wars of conquest under the Orthodox Caliphs and the extensive campaigns of the Umayyad armies.

¹See al-Qurṭubī, op.cit., Vol. V, pp.82-90, and Vol. XII, pp.159-171.

²See the details of the long discussions that took place between the 'Ulamā' of the Umayyad period about the question of the lawfulness of ghinā' in Farmer, op.cit., pp.22-36.

³See, in Jamīl Sa'īd, Taṭawur al-Khamriyyāt fī al-Shi'r al-'Arabī, pp. 98-103, the question of the attitude of some of the 'ulamā' towards the lawfulness of nabīdh.

⁴See above p.205.

2. The flood of sabāya (female war-captives) in whom every warrior had right, and the increase in the trade in slave-girls in whom a capable Muslim had an unlimited right.¹
3. The lowering of the minimum of mahr by Muḥammad to a limit within the reach of most of the poor men who wanted to marry,² and the introduction of polygamy.
4. The fact that the visitors of the houses of prostitutes during the Umayyad period were not only poor bachelors is another reason for our belief that R. Smith's theory does not apply to the Umayyad period.

All these facts show that the theory of R. Smith is inapplicable to the Umayyad period in general, and al-Ḥijāz in particular, especially if we take into consideration the fact that al-Ḥijāz was among the richest parts of the Umayyad empire.

Thirdly, and lastly, the fact that the two cities of al-Ḥijāz were of great religious importance, coupled with the Qoranic condemnation of unlawful relations between the two sexes, is another possible explanation for the absence of professional prostitutes from Mecca and al-Madīna.

¹Under 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, for example, the war captives, amongst whom there were many females, after the battle of Caisarea, were four thousand. They were despatched by Mu'āwīya to 'Umar, who distributed them among the orphans of the 'Anṣār. See Futūḥ al-Buldān, p.147. During the Umayyad period similar large numbers of male and female war captives flocked to the different cities of the Empire. See Chapter I, pp. 68-69.

²According to the traditions and narratives cited in al-Qurtubī, op.cit., Vol. V, pp.128-129, the minimum mahr could be one dirham, or five dirhams or even a handful of food.

A fourth remark is that there is some information in the accounts used for this study on the sums of money which customers of houses of prostitutes had to pay on entry, or at the end of their stay. At about the year 65/685 the poet al-Uqayshir had to pay one dirham to the husband of the prostitute with whom he had sexual intercourse.¹ During the revolution of 'Abd al-Rahmān b. al-'Ash'ath (80-82/699-701) a certain prostitute in Sijistān used to charge a customer for passing the night with her fifty dirhams, according to one narrative,² or one hundred dirhams, according to another.³ Later, at about the year 93-94/711-712, ten dirhams were considered a reasonable payment to a prostitute.⁴ This information, although incomplete and far from satisfactory, is enough evidence for the fact that prostitution in the Umayyad period became a bread-winning profession.

It is to be remarked lastly that the customers of the houses of prostitutes in the Umayyad period were, in most cases, persons of ill repute, and had little care, except for their pleasures.⁵ This

¹See, in Agh.3, Vol. XI, p.275, the two verses in which the poet al-Uqayshir relates the story of the bargain he had with a wine-seller whose wife was a prostitute.

²See Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. XI, p.335.

³See Agh.1, Vol. XIX, p.154.

⁴See the Diwān of al-Farazdaq, p.74.

⁵The list of the names of those who visited houses of prostitutes during the Umayyad period as given in the different accounts, comprises names like al-Uqayshir, whose entire life was devoted to wine-drinking and immoral deeds (see Agh.3, Vol. XI, pp.251-276), Abū Hazāba, the famous satirist and a dissolute (see Agh.1, Vol. XIX, pp.152-156), Abū al-Hindī, whose life and poetry were devoted to wine and forbidden pleasures (see Agh. Brunnow, pp.278-280), and others of similar principles in life.

kind of customers, whose material and social positions could not be counted on for the protection and encouragement of the trade of prostitution, might have been another reason for the small success of this trade in the Umayyad period. This point can be better understood if we recall the fact that, among the factors that helped ghinā' to flourish, was the protection and patronage of some of the wealthy and nobility who were interested in it.¹ In the case of prostitution, we find that those interested in it were neither wealthy nor noble.

A. Mez remarks that prostitution flourished in Islam in spite of polygamy, which made unmarried men and women exceptions to the general rule, and in spite of the fact that the law penalised adultery with death by stoning.² This remark, which Mez does not support by any evidence, might be true as far as the third and fourth centuries of the Hijra are concerned, but, as it appears from the present study, it is in no way applicable to the Umayyad period.

¹See above, Chapter I, p. 77 .

²See A. Mez, The renaissance of Islam, (London, 1937), p.361.

CHAPTER IV

THE ATTITUDE OF THE PIOUS

AND THE AUTHORITIES TO THE

LIFE OF PLEASURE AND AMUSEMENT.

Chapter IVThe attitude of the pious and the authorities
to the life of pleasure and amusement.

It was pointed out earlier that, with the great fortunes that poured into the Arabian Peninsula as a result of the successful campaigns of the Muslim army, with the political seclusion imposed upon some of the nobles and aristocrats, and with the large number of war captives and male and female slaves who flocked to many parts of the Peninsula, some of the cities of the Umayyad Empire developed into centres of worldly pleasures where some members of the Muslim community led a life far from the sober spirit of Islām. It is natural that this worldly life aroused the fears of some pious Muslims and made them raise the standard of opposition. At the same time, the authorities could not but respond from time to time to the complaining voices which demanded a firm stand against the wave of pleasure and amusement which swept over some parts of the Muslim world.

In this chapter we shall discuss firstly the reaction of the pious to the life of pleasure and amusement and their efforts to check its growth and, secondly, we shall examine the attitude of the authorities vis-à-vis forbidden pleasures and the measures they took to maintain good morals and prevent the commission of acts and offences forbidden by Qoranic legislation.

A - The pious and forbidden pleasures:

It must be pointed out at the beginning of this section that the information on the reaction of the pious to the life of pleasure and amusement, their efforts to abolish forbidden pleasures and the reaction of the Muslim community in general to the sinful life of some of its members is very little and, in most cases, indirect. This poverty in material, however, cannot be interpreted as a sign of a weak opposition to forbidden pleasures by society because the few references which occur in our material suggest that the opposition to such pleasures found support from many people. It is not impossible that many accounts of this opposition were omitted by writers like Abū'l Faraj, who stated in the introduction of his Aghānī that he did not include in the book all information which did not relate to the subject of ghina'.

As far as it can be gathered from the few accounts that came down to us, listening to ghina', illicit relations between the two sexes, drinking of wine, and such like, were the worldly pleasures against which some members of the Muslim society of the Umayyad period campaigned. They were known by the term lahw and people who indulged in them were called lahūn.

¹See the author's introduction, Agh.3, Vol. I.

The opposition to lahw, as it appears from such accounts as we possess, came from two main groups: the pious men, who believed in the religious qualities and mode of life which Islām set up and imposed upon its followers, and the members of the aristocratic party who held that lahw is ruinous to the manly virtues of a noble.

The difference between the bases on which these two groups built their opposition reflects the sharp contrast that existed between, on the one hand, the spiritual and ethical foundations of pre-Islāmic Arab life and the principles and qualities that were brought by Islām, on the other. The contrast which Goldziher described between murū'a of the Jāhiliyya and dīn of the Islāmic period,¹ is demonstrated here in the difference in aim and sphere of activity of the two groups who took part in the opposition to lahw. Inspired by religious motives, the pious arranged a campaign aiming at the abolition of all irreligious aspects of the life including lahw. They condemned all lāhūn, regardless of their social position or background. The nobles, on the other hand, disapproved of lahw only because it represented a danger to the reputation of those of them who indulged in it. Lahw, in the view of this group of opposers, was in conflict with the moral and spiritual ideals of their class; ideals which, in many cases, were identical with those of the Jāhiliyya. Thus, their condemnation of lahw was

¹Muhammedanische Studien, I, pp.1-39.

based on moral, and not on religious, grounds and their main aim was the saving of their fellow nobles who departed from the ideals of their class.

This difference in aim and sphere of activity between the two groups of opposers shows that, in the society of the early Umayyad period, the ideal of Islām, and that of the Jāhiliyya lived side by side. It is true that murū'a and the virile ethics of the Jāhiliyya period were appreciated in the Islāmic period¹ but it is equally true that the qualities of purely religious character which Islām brought created a wide gulf between the spiritual and ethical conceptions of pre-Islāmic paganism and those of Islām.

Against this background we can proceed to examine the few accounts which we possess about the opposition of the pious and nobles to lahw.

It is not easy to state when the opposition to lahw started, or what were the names of those who led the first movement against it. It seems, however, that this opposition dates back to the first days of the Umayyad period when the society was showing an increasing love for ghinā' and music.²

¹M.M.Bravmann argues that the contrast which Goldziher tried to establish between dīn and murū'a does not exist at all, that murū'a played an important part in Islāmic days and that, in the course of time, other qualities of purely religious character were added to it. See Le Museon, LXIV, 1951, p.318.

²The oldest reference to the opposition to ghinā' in our material occurs in an account in the Aghānī involving the name of the songstress 'Azza al-Maylā' who, as pointed out earlier, must have died during the early part of the Umayyad century. See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, pp. 19,20.

The opposition of the pious, as was said earlier, was based on religious grounds and took the form of a campaign aiming at the abolition of forbidden pleasures. To achieve the aim of their campaign the pious opposers followed different ways. They, for example, approached the authorities, especially on the occasion of the appointment of a new governor, and demanded the taking of strong measures against irreligious persons who indulged in lahw. This method was used by some pious Madīnans since the early Umayyad period. In an account involving the names of 'Azza al-Maylā' and 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far it is stated that a deputation of pious Madīnans approached the governor of the city and asked him to put an end to the activities of 'Azza, whose singing seduced people.¹ On another occasion, another deputation of pious men visited 'Uthmān b. Hayyān al-Murri² on the occasion of his appointment as governor of al-Madīna and asked him to take the necessary measures to "purify al-Madīna from corruption and adultery".³ Von Kremer refers to the sermons which the Muslim divines of the Umayyad period used to deliver in support of their campaign and in which they portrayed the sinfulness of the present world, the wrath of God and the terrors of hell.⁴

¹See the full account in Agh.1, Vol. XVI, pp.19-20.

²'Uthmān b. Hayyān was appointed governor of al-Madīna in 94 A.H. by the Caliph al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik. See Tabarī, II, p.1258.

³See the full account in Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.341-2, and in al-Kāmil, al-Mubarrad, Vol. I, pp.375-6.

⁴Von Kremer gives no material to support the above statement. See op.cit., p.44.

This appears to be all the information we have on the religious opposition to lahw.

The opposition of the second group, i.e. the nobles, seems to have been provoked by the lax conduct of some of their fellow nobles who did not behave in a manner in keeping with their rank in society. We need not repeat here the many accounts and stories mentioned in the Aghānī and other sources about the careless and immoral behaviour of some of the nobles of the Umayyad period because most of them were referred to in the course of the previous chapters. Suffice it to cite the following examples to illustrate the moral standard and ideals of life of some of the nobles of the period.

In an account related on the authority of the trustworthy rāwīya Abū 'Ubayda, it is stated that the poet al-Aḥwaṣ al-Anṣārī, the noble Awsī and the grandson of the famous 'Āṣim, the companion of the Prophet, said once: "had I been left to pasture by myself where I pleased - (a proverb meaning if I had the freedom to act according to my own desires)¹ - I would have relations with boys, let men commit sexual intercourse with me, and commit adultery!"² About the end of the first century A. H. a nobleman expressed the view that chaste women existed no longer.³ To al-Walīd b. Yazīd and a

¹The Arabic version of the proverb reads:
See Tāj al-'Arūs, art. جرب

« إِذَا فَزَنُ جَرِيرِي ... »

²See Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.233.

³See, in Ibid, Vol. XIII, p.286, the conversation between Yahyā b. Ziyād al-Ḥārithi, Muṭī' b. Iyās, and Ḥammād al-Rāwīya,

group of his companions the best thing in life was "a glass of clear wine mixed with rain-water and served by a young, beautiful woman."¹

In contrast with this, other nobles believed that a noble should lead a respectable life in keeping with his rank in society. They not only believed in this and behaved accordingly, but also took part in the campaign against forbidden pleasures. The aim of their participation in this campaign seems to have been the rescue of those nobles who indulged in worldly pleasures, and the saving of their reputation. For this they exploited every chance to remind them of the shameful life they led and of the unbecomingness of their behaviour for a man of high social standing.

The liberal-minded Qurashi and patron of music 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far was subject to severe criticism from men of his class for his "ungodly behaviour and shameful associations." Al-Tabarī, for example, tells us that the Caliph Mu'āwīya more than once blamed this 'Abd al-Lāh for listening to ghinā' and indulging in pleasures.² 'Abd al-Rahmān, the son of the poet Hassān b. Thābit, is said also to have reproached 'Abd al-Lāh for his indulgence in pleasures and his contacts with the mukhannathūn and mughannūn.³ In al-'Iqd al-

¹See Agh.3, Vol..XIII, p.305.

²See Tabarī, II, p.214.

³See Agh.1, Vol. II, pp;171-2.

Farīd there is mention of a conversation between 'Abd al-Lāh b.

Ṣafwān, the sayyid of the Banū Jumāh, and 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far.

In this conversation Ibn Ṣafwān pointed out to Ibn Ja'far that the people of al-Madīna were dissatisfied with his shameful activities and advised him to be more careful in his behaviour.¹ Marwān b. al-Hakam is said, in a narrative, to have reproached strongly his brother Yahyā b. al-Hakam for the rumours he heard about the latter's love for a slave-girl called Shanbā'. It is said in this narrative that Marwān went to the extent of threatening his brother with severe punishment if he insisted on his debasing love-affair.² The same attitude was taken by 'Umar b. Sa'īd, a Kūfan noble of the late Umayyad period, towards Muṭī' b. Iyās, who was in love with a gayna called Maknūna. 'Umar is said to have reproached Muṭī' by saying: "Your people complained about your behaviour and said that you are scandalizing them with your love-affair. Your love for this woman is a disgrace to your people, which has brought upon them dishonour and shame."³

From a story told in the Aghānī it appears that some of the nobles took up the task of reproaching the mughannūn who, as they thought, were the source of enticement, and blamed them for their irreligious behaviour. They even put pressure upon them to make them give up their

¹See Iqd, Vol. II, p.152.

²See Agh.3, Vol. XIII, p.264.

³See Ibid, p.286.

profession.¹

Thus, it can be seen that the efforts of the nobles who participated in the campaign against forbidden pleasures were aiming at the rescue of the reputation of wanton nobles and that, in order to achieve their aim, they used advice, moral pressure and other personal means.

To end this section it must be remarked that the opposition movement seems to have had little effect on the course of the social life of the Umayyad period which continued to be as "irreligious" and "immoral" as it used to be when the first objectors raised their voices against it, if not more so.

As far as one can judge from the few accounts which we have, it seems that, every time the objectors convinced the authorities to do something in favour of their campaign, the members of the opposite party, i.e. those who enjoyed the life of pleasure and amusement, took counter-measures to frustrate this campaign. For example, it is said in the Aghānī that, on one occasion, 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far met the messenger of the governor of al-Madīna outside the house of 'Azza al-Maylā' telling

¹In the Aghānī there are two versions of this story and both versions agree that the singer reproached was Ibn Surayj. The only difference between the two narratives is that, in the first, there is no clear mention of the name of the noble who reproached Ibn Surayj whereas, in the second, the noble is named as 'Abd al-Lāh b. 'Umayr al-aythī. See Agh.3, Vol. I, pp.303, 303-4.

her that she must give up singing because many Madīnans had complained against her. On hearing this 'Abd al-Lāh said to the messenger: "Go to your master and tell him to send a public crier to ask those men and women who were seduced by the singing of 'Azza to come out so that we can know them." The governor sent the public crier to make the proclamation but nobody came out. Then, Ibn Ja'far entered the house of 'Azza, assured her of his protection and asked her to sing for him a certain melody.¹ On another occasion, we are told, Ibn Abī 'Atīq came also to the rescue of Ahl al-ghinā' wa'l zinā (the people of singing and adultery) when 'Uthmān b. Hayyān al-Murri, the newly appointed governor of al-Madīna, gave them a three days notice to evacuate the city in response to the appeal of the pious Madīnans. A summary of the long account given in the Aghānī is the following. Ibn Abī 'Atīq was away when the governor took this decision and, on returning to al-Madīna, he went directly to visit the songstress Sallāma al-Qass, who told him about the decision and asked him to help. On leaving Sallāma's house, he went to visit the governor and discuss the decision with him. After a long conversation, Ibn Abī 'Atīq persuaded the governor to listen to Sallāma reciting some Qoranic verses. After the recitation, Sallāma sang some of her finest melodies and thus won the governor to her side and made him suspend the execution

¹See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.19-20.

of the expulsion order.¹

The foregoing examples show how little were the chances of success for the campaign of the pious. The fact that there were, among the wanton men (lāhūn), influential persons ready to use their power for the protection of their way of life was, no doubt, a major obstacle in the way of the objectors. To this should be added that some of the pleasures against which the pious stood, like ghina', were not condemned by a clear Qoranic text, nor was it sure that the Prophet had a clear attitude towards them. This, doubtless, added to the trouble and made it more difficult for the objectors to achieve a successful end for their campaign.

This leads us to the second section in this chapter, namely, the attitude of the authorities towards the life of pleasure and amusement.

B - The authorities and forbidden pleasures.

Since the Rāshidūn the duties of the head of the Muslim state included the upholding of the fundamental principles of the Muslim religion and the administration of what was later termed the "penal law". In the provinces, where the Caliph could not have direct supervision, these duties fell within the scope of governors. Thus, the supervision of public morals in the provinces formed part of the gov-

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.341-342.

ernor's duty. During the reign of the Orthodox Caliphs, a police force was formed to help the governors in the execution of their duties. The administration of the police was encharged to the governors. Later, in the early days of the Umayyad period, the police was divided into two branches: one attending to public morals, and the other maintaining law and order. The duty of the Chief police officer (Ṣāhib al-Shurṭa) may be summed up as the maintenance of good morals and the prevention of acts and offences forbidden by law.¹ In short, it was his duty to stop all improprieties if they occurred in public places. It was, however, forbidden to him to meddle with the secrets of families or to enter into private houses, or to interfere with private affairs.

Against this background we can proceed to examine the accounts of the efforts of the Umayyad authorities to prevent the commission of acts and offences forbidden by law, and their supervision of public morals.

The oldest reference in our material to an action taken by an Umayyad official to maintain the law of Islām and stop the commission of immoral acts, dates from the year 45/665 during the reign of Mu'āwiya.

¹The Shari'a which regulates the external relations of the subjects to Allah and his fellow-men, did not come into being till the 'Abbasid period. During the Umayyad period "law" in the modern sense of the word meant, in the first place, God's commandments relating to the activities of man; and the only "law book" recognized was the Qoran. Therefore, in the present chapter, the term "law" will designate only God's commandments as revealed in the Qoran.

In an account cited in al-Tabarī we read that, in this year, the Caliph Mu'āwīya appointed his half brother Ziyād b. Abīh governor of al-Basra, the city which was swarming with corruption and depravity. On arrival, Ziyād pronounced a discourse in the mosque of Basra. It is called the "truncated speech" (al-Khuthba al-Batrā'). In it, he referred to the corruption and sin that stamped the lives of many of the Basrians, developed his programme and announced the vigorous measures to which he would have recourse if necessary.¹ Examples followed to show that his threats were not mere words. He is said to have increased the number of his police force to four thousand and appointed 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ḥiṣn as Chief police officer. He appointed also al-Ja'd b. Qays al-Tamīmī as deputy Chief and entrusted to him the task of pursuing the corrupt and dissolute and inflicting upon them severe punishments.² The immediate result of this severity, as al-Tabarī put it, was the maintenance of good morals and the disappearance of dissolutes from the public scene. Some time after the year 51/671, i.e. during the governorship of 'Amr b. Hurayth³ in al-Kūfa, the Chief police

¹See Tabarī, II, p.73.

²See Ibid, pp.77-78.

³In "the events of the year 51 " A.H. in al-Tabarī we read that, in that year, Ziyād b. Abīh entrusted the governorship of al-Kūfa to 'Amr b. Hurayth, and settled in al-Basra. 'Amr occupied this post until the year 65/684 when the Kūfans deposed him as a result of the disturbances that followed the death of Yazīd I, and elected 'Āmir b. Mas'ūd b. Umayya b. Khalaf al-Jumahī, known as Duhrūja al-Ju'al, as governor. See Tabarī, II, pp.115, 508.

officer of that city and his men seem to have been very active in the extirpation of drinkers. It appears from an account that the Chief officer of the police force of al-Kūfa at that period, a man called Hishām, used to smell the odour of the mouths of passers-by when he suspected that they were drunk.¹ In other accounts we read that some members of the Kūfan police force used to go to wine-shops and search for drinkers.²

In al-Hijāz, on the other hand, there is evidence also that the hudūd (sing. ḥadd, an unalterable punishment prescribed by religious law) were inflicted by the authorities upon those who disobeyed the word of God and committed unlawful acts. During the term of office of Marwān b. al-Hakam as governor of al-Madīna, according to some narratives,³ or during the term of office of his successor al-Walīd b. 'Utba b. Abī Sufyān,⁴ according to another,⁵ a famous poet called 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Sayhān⁶ was scourged for wine-drinking. The fact that this

¹See Agh.3, Vol. XI, pp.267, 268.

²See Ibid, pp.257, 264.

³There are, in the Aghānī, four narratives concerning the punishment inflicted upon Ibn Sayhān for drinking wine. Three of these narratives refer to Marwān b. al-Hakam as the governor during whose term of office the punishment was inflicted. See Agh.3, Vol. II, pp.251, 246-247; Agh.1, Vol. II, pp.81-82.

⁴In the year 57/678 Mu'āwiya dismissed Marwān b. al-Hakam and appointed al-Walīd b. 'Utba as governor of al-Madīna. See Tabarī, II, p.180.

⁵See Agh.1, Vol. II, pp.82-83.

⁶For the biography and accounts of the life of the poet 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Sayhān, or Ibn Artāt, as he was sometimes called, see Agh.3, Vol. II, pp.242-260.

poet belonged to a family known for its allegiance to the Banū Harb branch of the Umayyad house and that he himself composed several poems in praise of Abū Sufyān and his sons, complicated the matter and made the Caliph Mu'āwīya take quick steps to save the honour of his ally. It is said that the Caliph, on knowing about the story, wrote to Marwān reproaching him and ordering him to declare from the pulpit after the Friday prayers that it was by mistake that Ibn Sayhān had been punished and that it had been established later that he was innocent. The Caliph also ordered Marwān to give the poet a gift of two thousand dirhams as a compensation.¹ Another eminent Hijāzī scourged for wine-drinking during the reign of Mu'āwīya was 'Abd al-'Azīz, son of Marwān b. al-Hakam. According to Ansāb al-Ashraf the punishment was carried out by 'Amr b. Sa'id b. al-'Ās², the governor of Mecca during the last days of Mu'āwīya's reign.³

The immediate impression that one gets after considering the foregoing examples leads one to believe that the Umayyad authorities, during the Caliphate of Mu'āwīya, were active in observing public morality and punishing those who disobeyed the dictates of the religion and

¹See Agh.1, Vol. II, pp.81-82. According to the narrative in which it is stated that the punishment was inflicted upon Ibn Sayhān during the governorship of al-Walīd b. 'Utba, the poet is said to have received a gift of five hundred dīnārs from Mu'āwīya and four hundred sheep from al-Walīd, as a compensation. See Agh.1, Vol. II, pp.82-83.

²'Amr b. Sa'id b. al-'Ās, nicknamed al-Ashdaq, was appointed by Mu'āwīya governor of Mecca in 60 A.H., and was dismissed by the Caliph Yazīd I in 61 A.H. See Tabarī, II, pp.216, 395.

³See Ansāb al-Ashraf, Vol. IVB, p.144.

led a sinful life. But this is not totally true. In the first place, Mu'āwīya's term of office fell directly after the reign of the Orthodox Caliphs and thus it was natural that the authorities under him showed some kind of severity in dealing with those who dared to disobey the dictates of the religion. Besides that, it should be noted that the inflicting of punishments (iqāmat al-ḥudūd) upon the so-called "sensualists" depended to a great extent on the political motives of the state and on various other considerations. For example, one should not fail to remember that, in al-'Irāq where Ziyād b. Abīh took severe measures against corruption and unlawful pleasures, there were political reasons which made this severity justifiable. Ziyād was first and foremost interested in crushing all opposition against Mu'āwīya in a land which had been, a short time earlier, the stronghold of 'Alī. The references to "corruption", "mawākhīr",¹ and "breaking the word of God" in his "truncated speech"² were no more than a pretext for a severe attack against the 'Alīds and other anti-Umayyad elements in this part of the Muslim state. This claim finds more support in the incident of Ibn Sayhān. It is stated in all the four narratives which give reference to this incident that Mu'āwīya was very much upset to hear that an ally of his was punished

¹Sing. mākhūr. For the definition of the word mākhūr see above, Chapter III, p. 213.

²See the "truncated speech" of Ziyād in Ṭabarī, II, p. 73.

in spite of the fact that two trustworthy witnesses witnessed that they saw him drunk. In his letter to Marwān, Mu'āwīya said: "... Verily, you have scourged Ibn Sayhān because you have known him an ally of Abū Sufyān. Had he been an ally of al-Hakam, you would never have inflicted any punishment upon him. Annul the punishment inflicted upon him, or else I will order the scourging of your brother 'Abd al-Rahmān b. al-Hakam, who was seen drunk as well...."¹ Thus, it was enough protection for Ibn Sayhān to be an ally of the Caliph to become beyond the reach of law and to enjoy life as he pleased.

The Caliphate of Yazīd b. Mu'āwīya lasted for only a short period(60-63/680-683) and was a time of unrest and turmoil. The Caliph himself was busy with the many political events that took place since the very first day of his reign and, as is well known, many parts of the Empire were under the rule of his rival, Ibn al-Zubayr. To that should be added that Yazīd himself was a drinker and lover of music. These facts taken together might explain why there is almost no mention in the sources consulted of any one being punished during his reign for sinful behaviour. It occurs only once in our material that we read of a person being punished by Yazīd I for an unlawful deed. In an account in the Ansāb al-Ashrāf it is stated that Yazīd I inflicted the punishment for illicit intercourse upon Khālīd b. Ismā'īl b. al-Ash'ath for

¹See Agh. 3, Vol. II, p.251.

having relations with a boy. The transmitter of the account remarks that it was known that Yazīd disliked this Khālīd for personal reasons.¹ This remark leads one to conclude that the real reason behind the punishment was more personal than moral or religious. It is not impossible, however, that the 'Abbasid writers, who took every opportunity to run down the Umayyads, did not care to record, or possibly meant to omit, all narratives which might give credit to the "man without religion", as some of them termed Yazīd.²

On the death of Mu'āwīya II, 'Abd al-Lāh b. al-Zubayr, now the acknowledged Caliph at Mecca and Madīna, took the task of carrying out the "ḥudūd of God" in al-Hijāz. According to al-Qurtubī, Ibn al-Zubayr scourged on one occasion three unmarried men with the number of stripes prescribed for illicit intercourse because they had relations with a boy, and stoned to death four married men for the same crime.³ During the rule of Ibn al-Zubayr also, a grandson of Khālīd b. al-Walīd called Khālīd b. al-Muhājir was punished for wine-drinking and impolite behaviour during the pilgrimage season.⁴

The short reign of Marwān I seems to have had little effect on the course of life in al-Hijāz but, from the very first days of the

¹See Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. IVB, p.10.

²See Agh.1, Vol. XX, p.106 and Ya'qūbī, Vol. II, p.271, for an example of the different kinds of appellations given to Yazīd by writers of 'Abbasid and Shi'ite tendencies.

³See Qurtubī, op.cit., Vol. VII, p.244.

⁴See Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. V, p.202.

reign of 'Abd al-Malik, the Syrian army operating against Ibn al-Zubayr under the leadership of al-Hajjāj followed a very severe policy against those who ventured to commit unlawful deeds. An example of this policy can be seen in the accounts preserved in the Ansāb al-Ashraf about the severity of a certain member of the staff of al-Hajjāj (he was called Tha'laba and was in charge of the army marching on al-Madīna to liberate it from the troops of Ibn al-Zubayr) - in his dealings with those who committed acts punishable according to the dictates of the religion. This Tha'laba is reported to have scourged a man to death because he had forced a woman to have relations with him and crucified him after his death.¹ We need not cite here all the accounts cited in the Ansāb al-Ashraf about the cruelty of this Tha'laba, but it is essential to remark that, from reading these accounts, one feels convinced that the real aim of this policy was not simply the administration of "penal law" but revenge against pro-Zubayr elements.²

Of the important points that come up for the first time in our material on 'Abd al-Malik is the question of the attitude of the Muslim authorities towards non-Muslim pleasure-lovers. As is well known, a Muslim was liable to penalty if enough evidence was produced to prove that he had illicit intercourse with a woman who was not his wife or concubine, even if she was a prostitute; and the same punishment

¹See Ansāb al-Ashraf, Vol. XI, p.41.

²See Ibid, Vol. XI, pp.41,42.FF, where a detailed account is given about this Tha'laba and the way he treated Madīnans.

applied to the woman. In an account in Ansāb al-Ashrāf we read that 'Abd al-Rahmān b. al-Ash'ath was scourged during the Caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik with the number of stripes prescribed for illicit intercourse when four men had witnessed that they saw him having sexual intercourse with a certain prostitute in Sijistān.¹ There is no mention in the account that the prostitute herself was scourged or received any other punishment. The explanation of this could be that she was a non-Muslim and, thus, did not come under the jurisdiction of Muslim authorities.² There are other examples in our material which confirm the fact that the non-Muslim subjects under 'Abd al-Malik were allowed the jurisdiction of their own canon law. For example, there is, in the Aghānī, a long account about the punishment inflicted by the bishop of the Christian community in Damascus upon the poet al-Akhtal for falsely accusing married women of adultery, for speaking evil of the ancestors of several people and for composing satirical poems.³ Being a non-Muslim, al-Akhtal was tried and punished by the responsible head of his community. Muslim authorities interfered only when a Muslim was in-

¹See Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. XI, p.309.

²It is claimed that, after the conquest of Syria, the Caliph 'Umar b. al-Khattāb laid down the regulations for his non-Muslim subjects in the contract he made with the Christian authorities of Jerusalem. According to this contract - known by the name of "'ahd 'Umar" (the covenant of 'Umar) - each non-Muslim community governs itself under its responsible head - rabbi, bishop, etc. - who is its link with the Muslim government. In spite of the doubts that are entertained regarding the authenticity of this covenant, it remains possible to say that the Dhimmis were allowed the jurisdiction of their own canon law.

³See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.309-310.

volved in trouble with a non-Muslim and, on such occasions, severe measures were taken to avenge the Muslim from his non-Muslim enemy. During the reign of 'Abd al-Malik, for example, the authorities cut off the head of a Jewish man, crucified him and confiscated all his property because he forced a Muslim girl to have relations with him.¹

However, the question of enforcing the law of Islam upon those who broke it by their immoral behaviour or their commission of acts and offences forbidden by Islam, seems to have never been an important item in the internal policy of 'Abd al-Malik. From more than one incident one feels that the question of carrying out the hudūd during his reign was left entirely to the governors of the provinces and their personal judgement. The result of this was that the fate of the lāhūn in a province was decided by the piety and principles of the governor of their province. For example, wine-drinkers in al-'Irāq under Bishr b. Marwān (governor from 72-74/691-693), who was himself a heavy drinker,² felt much happier than under al-Hajjāj, who took severe

¹See Ansāb al-Ashraf, Vol. XI, p.230.

²See what was said about Bishr in Chapter II, pp.136, 141-142, etc.

measures against drinkers.¹ In al-Hijāz the lovers of ghinā' suffered much from Yahyā b. al-Hakam² (governor of al-Madīna in 75/694) but under his successor, Abbān b. 'Uthman³, they were able to enjoy undisturbed the singing of their favourite musicians. These few examples suggest that the central authority had no planned policy vis-a-vis the question of forbidden pleasures and that it was left to the governor to decide when he should act to preserve the law.

¹An example of the way drinkers were treated during the governorship of Bishr can be seen in the story of the poet al-Uqayshir, his uncle and Bishr b. Marwān. Al-Uqayshir, who was a heavy drinker, was given once one thousand dirhams by Bishr. Al-Uqayshir's paternal uncle took the money and kept it with him because he thought that, if it was left with al-Uqayshir, he would spend it on wine and leave his family without food, clothing or other necessary things. On learning about the story Bishr ordered the chief police officer to take the money from the uncle and give it back to al-Uqayshir, so that the latter could enjoy his drinking. (See Agh.3, Vol. XI, p.270). Other examples of Bishr's attitude towards the question of wine-drinking in al-'Irāq during his governorship can be taken from the stories of his wine-parties and the gifts of wine he used to send to some of his friends. (See Agh.3, Vol. II, pp.349-350; Vol. XI, pp.61-62). As governor of al-'Irāq, al-Hajjāj, on the other hand, did not confine his activities to putting down rebellions but took great interest in the question of enforcing the law. It is not impossible, however, that his severe measures against the so-called lahūn were a part of his campaign against anarchy. For examples of his severity against lahūn see Tabarī, II, pp. 863-866, 869, 871, 873, 1120-1121, 1161 and others.

²See, for example, Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.220-221.

³Abbān was appointed governor of al-Madīna in 76/695. For an example of his friendly treatment of musicians and music-lovers, see Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.219.

In one of the accounts which deal with the efforts of the authorities during the Caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik to put an end to the unlawful activities of singers, we read of the confiscation of the property of a certain singer in Mecca called Ibn Misjah by the governor of that city according to orders received from the Caliph. The rāwiya of the story, a person called Dahman al-Ashqar, claims that he himself was the governor of Mecca who carried out the confiscation order.¹ Dahmān al-Ashqar, it should be noted, was a singer of the late Umayyad and early Abbasid periods and was never a governor of Mecca.² It is very strange that Abū'l Faraj cited the above narrative without commenting on it, as he usually does when he doubts a text or a chain of transmitters.³ Apart from this unreliable account, the sources give no indication that 'Abd al-Malik ever directed his governors to take action against wine-drinkers, or music-lovers, or wanton persons generally.

¹See the full account in Agh.3, Vol. III, p.282. It must be noted that, in the other sources consulted, there is no mention of a similar account.

²The singer Dahmān al-Ashqar was a mawlā of the Banū Layth b. Bakr b. 'Abd Manā b. Kināna, and was known to have been a drinking-companion of the Caliph al-Walīd II and, later, of the Abbasid Caliph al-Mahdī. For his biography and the accounts of his life, see Agh.3, Vol. VI, p.21FF.

³The only suggestion that one can put forward in defence of the authenticity of the above account is that there might have been a mistake in the name of the rāwiya of the story (i.e. Dahmān) who claims that he was the governor of Mecca who carried out 'Abd al-Malik's order against Ibn Misjah. But the fact that the same name appears in all the known editions of the Aghānī makes this possibility less probable.

Under al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik the governors of the provinces seem to have been more active in their pursuit of wanton persons and in their maintenance of law and good morals. Al-Walīd himself, unlike his father, showed much interest in the question of inflicting the hudūd upon those who broke the word of religion by their behaviour or deeds. This seems to have been due to the fact that al-Walīd inherited a relatively calm and stable empire, whereas his father was most of the time busy putting down rebellions and stabilizing his rule. To this should be added that al-Walīd, as Abū'l Faraj put it, "liked to exhibit his piety".¹

From the very early days of his reign the governors of the provinces, especially in al-Hijāz, seem to have devoted much attention to preventing the commission of acts and offences forbidden by law. In Mecca, a governor - (his name is not given in the account) - started his career by ordering all the singers of the city to leave the sacred area (al-Haram) within a period of a few days. But, before the fixed time came, the governor had to postpone the carrying out of his order because of the great pressure the Meccans put on him.² During the second year of his reign (87/706), al-Walīd appointed 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz governor of al-Hijāz. As governor 'Umar spared no effort

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.71.

²See the full account in Ibid, Vol. II, pp.363,364.

to maintain good morals and to enforce the word of Islām. One of the people punished for wine-drinking during his governorship was a sayyid of the Qurashite clan of Makhzūm called al-Wābiṣī. As a result of this punishment, al-Wābiṣī forsook al-Madīna for the Byzantine Empire, where he became a Christian and married. He experienced bitter attacks of nostalgia but, although invited to return, preferred to stay, and died a Christian.¹ Generally, drinkers during his term of office were not only scourged, but also imprisoned.² He also introduced the practice of istinkāh (breath test) as a first step to establish evidence against a person suspected of drunkenness.³ 'Umar, on the other hand, dealt vigorously with love-poets who falsely accused married women of adultery. In the Aghānī there are two accounts about the punishment inflicted upon the poets Jarīr and 'Umar b. Laja' during the Caliphate of al-Walīd for satirizing one another and for falsely accusing married women of adultery. In the first account it is stated that the punishment was inflicted during the governorship of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz,⁴ whereas in the second it is claimed that Abū Bakr Muḥ. b. Ḥazm al-Anṣārī was the governor who, on behalf

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VI, p.116. Cf. p.117, of the same volume. See also, Grunebaum, Medieval Islam, p.59.

²Ansāb al-Ashraf, Vol. V, p.280.

³Ibid, loc. cit. 240.

⁴See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.82.

of the Caliph Walīd I, carried out the punishment.¹ The fact that it was not until the Caliphate of Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik that Ibn Ḥazm assumed the governorship² makes one inclined to accept the first account as more reliable. Both accounts, however, agree that the two poets were made a public example by tying them together with a rope and putting them in the market place to acquaint the spectators with their offence. To that, the rāwiya of the second account adds that they were scourged with the number of stripes prescribed for falsely accusing married women of adultery, and were paraded upon large hair-cloth sacks.³

In the year 89/707 Khālīd b. 'Abd al-Lāh al-Qasrī succeeded 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz as governor of Mecca for al-Walīd I. The chief police officer during his term of office was a person called al-'Aryān. On arriving at Mecca Khālīd noticed that the habit of samā' was widespread among the Meccans and decided to take measures against it. One of his steps in this direction, we are told, was to order his chief police officer to arrest all the female members of the profession of ghina'. In one day, al-'Aryān was able to arrest six female singers.⁴

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.71-72.

²Ibn Ḥazm al-Ansārī was appointed governor of al-Madīna during the Caliphate of Sulaymān in 96/715. See Ṭabarī, II, pp.1281-1282.

³See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.72.

⁴See Agh.1, Vol. XIX, p.63.

The name of Nāfi' b. 'Alqama appears in one of the accounts in the Aghānī as one of the governors of Mecca who "acted with firmness against music-lovers and wine-drinkers."¹ De Slane claims that Nāfi' assumed the governorship of Mecca during the reign of al-Walīd I,² whereas Caetani puts the name of Nāfi' among those who governed Mecca during the Caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik and says that the governor who succeeded him was Yahyā b. al-Hakam³ (Yahyā b. al-Hakam was appointed governor of Mecca in 75/694). The fact that there is no mention of the name of Nāfi' in the well-known chronicles,⁴ and that Caetani's theory, unlike De Slane's, is based on references made in reliable sources,⁵ makes one inclined to accept the former.

The governors of al-Madīna, on the other hand, seem to have participated also in the effort to abolish forbidden pleasures. In the year 94/712 al-Walīd I appointed 'Uthmān b. Hayyān al-Murri governor of al-Madīna. Shortly after he arrived in the city, the members of the profession of ghinā' were informed that, within a period

¹See Agh.3, Vol. XII, pp.118-120.

²See Wafayāt, Vol. II, p.374, note 4.

³See L. Caetani, Chronographia Islamica, pp.1038-1039.


⁴According to al-Tabarī, Ibn al-Athīr and other Chroniclers, the governors of Mecca during the Caliphate of al-Walīd I were 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz (87-89/705-707) and Khālīd b. 'Abd al-Lāh al-Qasrī (89/96/707-714). See Tabarī, II, pp.1182, 1191, 1200, 1199, 1305, and Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, Vol. IV, pp.418, 420, 423, 433, 424, 438. Even the list of governors of Mecca under 'Abd al-Malik in these two sources does not include the name of Nāfi'.

⁵See Caetani, Chronographia, p.1039.

of three days, they all should quit al-Madīna. Very naturally, the notable Madīnans intervened to save their favourite artists and the governor's order was never carried out.¹ Another governor of al-Madīna during the Caliphate of al-Walīd (his name is not given in the account) suspected once that al-Dalāl (a mukhannath singer) had relations with a boy, but could not inflict the prescribed punishment upon him for lack of evidence. This made him order that al-Dalāl and the boy should be paraded in the different streets of al-Madīna as a public example.²

Al-Walīd himself, on the other hand, was not less active than his governors in this field. For example, on knowing that the poet al-Ahwas had relations with one of the bakers of the Caliphal palace, al-Walīd ordered that the poet should be scourged with one hundred stripes and that he should be paraded upon the large hair-cloth sacks (al-bulus) as a public example and a means to acquaint the public with his offence. His aim, we are told, was that others might take warning from him. After all this was done, the rāwiya of the story adds, the Caliph ordered that boiling water be poured upon his head.³ It

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.341-342, and al-Kāmil, al-Mubarrad, Vol. I, pp.375-376.

²See Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.283. The offender, in this case, is generally mounted upon an ass or a camel and often with his face towards the animal's tail. See art.  in Lane's Lexicon and Tāj al-'Arūs.

³See Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.236.

is said also that, on another occasion, he ordered that the same poet be scourged and expelled from al-Madīna because of an immoral utterance.¹ It is thus seen that al-Walīd, as well as the governors of the provinces during his occupancy of the throne, were more active than their immediate predecessors in the field of iqāmat al-hudūd upon offenders.

Under Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik one finds that hudūd were very often used as a mere pretext for revenge from political enemies. For example, Sulaymān opened his reign with punishing Khālīd b. 'Abd al-Lāh al-Qasrī and 'Uthmān b. Hayyān al-Murrī. Both were governors during the reign of his immediate predecessor al-Walīd I, and both were said to have supported al-Walīd I who wished to displace his brother Sulaymān from being heir-apparent, in favour of his own son. To justify his deed, Sulaymān claimed that Khālīd had falsely accused a married woman of adultery and that 'Uthmān had drunk wine, but this was based on no ground of truth.² The offenders who seem to have aroused Sulaymān's anger most and made him resort to severity were those who exposed the chastity of free Arab women to danger. Evidence pointing in this direction can be taken from what was said in the section on mukh-annathūn and their castration during his reign for reasons relating to

¹See Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.233.

²See Ya'qūbī, Vol. II, pp.352-353.

the protection of the chastity of free Arab women.¹ Moreover, in the Aghānī there is reference to the expulsion of the poet 'Umar b. Abī Rabi'a from Mecca during the hajj season for a qaṣīda in which he mentions his love adventures with free-women during a pilgrimage season. It is said in the Aghānī that the first thing Sulaymān did when he came to Mecca to perform the hajj and knew about the qaṣīda was to expel 'Umar to al-Ta'if.² It is essential to note, however, that there are only very few references in our material to Sulaymān and that the general information about him gives one the impression that he did not pay great attention to the question of inflicting the hudūd upon offenders.

Under 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz the question of the protection of the chastity of free Arab-women received more attention from the authorities. Since Muḥammadan times the family had felt disgraced when one of their women folk was mentioned by a poet as the object of his affections. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb went to the extent of forbidding love poetry.³ It seems that, according to the social custom, it was permissible for the poet to mention the names of slave-girls, but never the names of ladies. During his Caliphate, 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz seems to have kept a close watch on poets who spoke of love

¹See above, Chapter III, pp. 186-190.

²See Agh.3, Vol. IX, pp. 67-68.

³See, in Ibid, Vol. IV, p. 356, the comment of the poet Humayd b. Thawr.

and inflicted severe punishments upon those of them who composed erotic verse addressed to free women. In an account in the Aghānī it is said that, when he assumed the Caliphate, 'Umar felt it his duty to put an end to the disgraceful deeds and compositions of love-poets. He had in mind two poets: 'Umar b. Abī Rabi'a and al-Aḥwaṣ. In a letter to the governor of al-Madīna he commanded that the two poets be arrested and sent immediately to the Capital. After a long interview, 'Umar b. Abī Rabi'a, being a man of high social standing, escaped punishment and expulsion by taking the solemn oath in front of the Caliph that he would refrain from addressing love-songs to women for the rest of his life. Al-Aḥwaṣ, on the other hand, was expelled to Bīsh,¹ (or to the island of Dahlak², according to another narrative) where he stayed till the death of the Caliph 'Umar II. In spite of the efforts and mediations of many eminent Anṣāris, the Caliph did not change the punishment and swore that, as long as he remained Caliph, he would not allow al-Aḥwaṣ to go back to al-Madīna.³ The poet al-Nusayb, who addressed love-songs to a free woman called Zaynab, was about to receive a similar punishment from the Caliph 'Umar II but was saved at the last minute when the notables attending the majlis of the Caliph witnessed that he was a pious man and that he had had stopped composing erotic verse long ago.⁴

¹Bīsh, a place in the Yemen, see Yāqūt, Buldān, Vol. I, p.790.

²For Dahlak see above, p.186, *note*, 1.

³See the details of the above account in Agh.3, Vol. IX, pp.64-65.

⁴See Ibid, Vol. VI, pp.123-124.

Apart from these two incidents, there is no mention in our material of other persons punished during the Caliphate of 'Umar II for the commission of acts and offences forbidden by the law of Islām. This silence, however, does not indicate that Muslims, during 'Umar's occupancy of the throne, forsook the habits of drinking wine and listening to ghinā', but might suggest, as al-Ṭabarī says, that 'Umar's piety had its effect on the behaviour of his subjects who led a more serious life than before.¹

Yazīd II seems to have cared little for the question of hudūd. In our material there are only two references to the question of the attitude of this Caliph towards those who committed acts and offences punishable according to law, and both references concern the poet al-Aḥwaṣ. In the first it is stated that al-Aḥwaṣ was called back from his place of exile and that he was compensated as soon as Yazīd II came to the throne because Ḥabbāba, a favourite singing-girl of the Caliph, liked his poetry and wanted to listen to some of his qaṣīdas.² In the second, we read that al-Jarrāḥ b. 'Abd al-Lāh al-Ḥakamī (the governor of Adharbayjān 104/722) shaved the hair and beard of al-Aḥwaṣ and scourged him in front of a big crowd for wine-drinking.³ As far as our material is concerned, this last account records the only occasion

¹See Ṭabarī, II, 1273.

²See Agh.3, Vol. IX, p.67.

³See in Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.255-256, the account of the visit of al-Aḥwaṣ to Adharbayjān during the Caliphate of Yazīd II and the punishment inflicted upon him for wine-drinking.

on which the hudūd were inflicted upon a Muslim for breaking the law of Islām during the reign of Yazīd II. It is not impossible that there were other occasions on which offenders were punished for irreligious behaviour or deeds, but it seems that, in general, as the author of Kitāb al-Tāj says, the authorities under this Caliph did not devote much attention to the question of public morals and the prevention of irreligious deeds.¹

The scene changed a great deal under Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik. The Caliph himself, the governors of the different provinces, and other officials, seem to have been more sincere in their effort to abolish forbidden pleasures. In al-Madīna, for example, a governor is said to have commanded that allsingers, mukhannathūn, and dissolutes be detained in the mosque of the Prophet and secluded from other members of the Muslim community in the city.² The mosque of the Prophet, being the gathering-place of all pious men, was, in the view of the governor, the most suitable "prison" for these irreligious elements. The poet al-'Arjī, a great-grandson of the Caliph 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, was known to have been pleasure-loving and carefree. His poetical talents and line of life were identical with those of 'Umar b. Abī Rabi'a. He loved wine and never hesitated to mention the names of his lady-loves in his poems. Being a member of the highest society and a close relative of

¹See Kitāb al-Tāj, p.30.

²See Agh.3, Vol. II, p.215.

the ruling house, he always escaped punishment. The first time a punishment was inflicted upon him was during the Caliphate of Hishām. The governor of Mecca, we are told, scourged him with the number of stripes prescribed for wine-drinking, when evidence was produced that he was seen drunk.¹ Like 'Umar II, Hishām seems to have been very sensitive about the question of love-poetry addressed to free women. During his occupancy of the throne, several poets were severely punished for mentioning the names of free women in their qasīdas as the object of their affections. The poet Ibn Ruhayma, for example, composed a love-song addressed to Zaynab bint 'Ikrima, a granddaughter of al-Ḥārith b. Hishām, and gave it to Yūnus al-Kātib (a well-known singer of the Umayyad period) who melodized it and sang it on several occasions. On the complaint of Zaynab's brother, Hishām commanded that the poet be scourged with five hundred stripes and swore that he would put him to death if he mentioned her name in another poem. He also declared that the same punishment would be inflicted upon any singer who sang the love-poetry addressed to this lady. To escape the punishment, Ibn Ruhayma and Yūnus stayed in hiding for the whole of Hishām's reign.² Another poet punished for the same offence during the Caliphate of Hishām was Zayd b. al-Ṭathriyya, who composed erotic verse in which he

¹See Ansāb al-Ashraf, Vol. V, p.112.

²See Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.405.

mentioned the name of a certain woman of the Banū Jarm called Wah-shiyya.¹ It is important to remark here that the authorities during the reign of Hishām seem to have used, more than before, the shaving of the hair as a punishment, especially for those who offended women or committed immoral acts. Ibn al-Ṭathriyya, Tukhaym al-Asdī, a young man of the Banū Kilāb, and others, all received this punishment for the commission of immoral acts and offences.² There is only one previous reference to this punishment in our material. Al-Jarrāh al-Hakamī, the governor of Adharbayjān during the Caliphate of Yazīd II, used it to disgrace the poet al-Ahwaṣ, as was pointed out earlier.

According to our material the ṭā'ifūn-(sing. ṭā'if, i.e. the patrol or watch that goes the round of the houses, especially those who do so by night³) - and qādīs during the reign of Hishām took part for the first time in the effort to abolish forbidden pleasures. Apart from the usual duty of protecting people's property and life ṭā'ifūn, during the reign of Hishām, had the power to arrest any one seen drunk during the night and to keep him till the following morning, pending his trial.⁴

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.173.

²See Ibid, pp.173-179.

³See art. طوف in Lisān al-'Arab, and Lane's Lexicon.

⁴See, in Agh.1, Vol. XIV, pp.79-80, the account about the ṭā'if Ṣafwān and the poet 'Amr b. 'Ubayd, known as al-Ḥazīn.

The fact that some of these tā'fūn were mawlās and could, in spite of that, enforce the law upon offenders of high social standing,¹ suggests that the authorities were serious in their effort to abolish forbidden pleasures.

The qādīs, on the other hand, emerged for the first time under Hishām as participants in the struggle against immorality and irreligious deeds. Up to now, our material has contained no reference to the effort of qādīs in this field.² The officials of whom we have spoken were Caliphs, governors and members of the police force but never qādīs. Under Hishām the name of the qādī of al-Madīna, Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm b. 'Abd al-Rahmān. b. 'Awf³, appears in some of the accounts which deal with the question of the attitude of the authorities towards unlawful pleasures. For example, it is stated in the Aghānī that, during the term of office of Sa'd "the impudent, poets and singers, were treated very roughly and received severe punishments for the least crimes".⁴ On other occasions we read that this qādī beat to death the poet Dāūd b. Salm

¹See Agh.1, Vol. XIV, pp.79-80 where we read of a tā'if who was a mawla of the Banū Makhrama b. Nawfal and an offender who was a member of the powerful Kināna tribe.

²It might be important to remark that, in the judicial sources consulted, no reference is made to any qādī taking part in the efforts to abolish forbidden pleasures.

³Sa'd remained qādī of al-Madīna until the year 125/742, when the Caliph al-Walīd II dismissed him from office. (See Tabarī, II, p.1768).

⁴See Agh.3, Vol. III, p.359.

for walking in an impolite way,¹ and that he scourged the same poet and reproached a grandson of 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far for wearing coloured clothes.²

It is worth recalling in this connection that Sa'd, unlike the majority of the qādīs of the Umayyad period, was a member of the Hījāzī aristocracy and a grandson of the famous 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Awf al-Zuhri. When seen in the light of his religious office and noble background, the participation of Sa'd in the efforts to abolish forbidden pleasures appears in complete harmony with both his religious and social positions. As a qādī Sa'd was a defender of the dictates of the religion and, as a member of the nobility, he was a defender of the moral code of his class. In short, Sa'd's attitude was inspired by a combination of both dīn and murū'a.

A similar policy was followed by the authorities in al-'Irāq. It is stated in the Aghānī that Khālīd b. 'Abd al-Lāh al-Qasrī, the governor of 'Irāq during the greater part of Hishām's reign (106-120/724-737),³ took measures from the very first days of his rule to ban music and forbid musicians from practising their profession in the provinces under his rule. The singer Hunayn al-Hīrī succeeded in getting special permission from the governor when he undertook that

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VI, p.10.

²See Ibid, pp.13-14.

³See Tabarī, II, pp.1471, 1647.

he would never sing in the presence of "impudent or quarrelsome persons".¹ Hunayn, however, was the only one to get such permission. It is important to remark here that the condition under which Hunayn was allowed to sing (i.e. the absence of impudent and quarrelsome persons) leads one to conclude that, among the reasons that made the authorities ban ghinā' were the evil associations and consequences that ghinā' had. Some people go to the extent of arguing that the real source of the dispute over the question of the lawfulness of listening to ghinā' was the fact that music had very often evil associations such as wine-drinking, immorality and neglect of religious duties; therefore many declared it unlawful.²

However, the successor of Khālīd b. 'Abd al-Lāh al-Qasrī in the governorship of al-'Irāq, i.e. Yūsuf b. 'Umar, maintained this severe policy vis-à-vis forbidden pleasures. He and his chief police officer, a person called al-'Abbās b. Ma'bad al-Murri, are said to have dealt vigorously with the lāhūn and inflicted severe punishments upon them.³

The foregoing facts lead one to conclude that the authorities during the Caliphate of Hishām were active in the supervision of public morals and the carrying out of the hudūd. It is not impossible that this activity was a result of the serious character of Hishām himself

¹See Agh.1, Vol. II, pp.123-124.

²For further information on this point see J. Robson, Tracts on listening to music (London, 1938), p.4FF.

³See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.178-179.

and his belief in both the principles of Islām and the virile ethics of the Jāhiliyya.

The death of Hishām, however, marks the end of the glorious period in the history of the Umayyad dynasty. The short reign of his nephew al-Walīd II opened the door wide for the factors which brought the life of this dynasty to an end. The governmental machine under this Caliph was completely idle, as some sources try to show or, more probably, too busy with the Abbasid propaganda on the one hand, and the plots of other members of the Umayyad house against the ruling sovereign, on the other. The result of this, however, was less attention from the officials to the question of forbidden pleasures. In the only reference to the question of hudūd during the reign of this Caliph we read that al-Walīd II wrote to the governor of al-'Irāq ordering him to inflict a double hadd upon any member of the police force who charged the poet 'Ammār Dhī Kanāz¹ with drinking and, at the same time, to set the poet free. He did this, we are told, because it reached him that this poet received the hadd punishment on several occasions, for wine-drinking.²

For the period that falls between the assassination of Walīd II and the collapse of the Umayyad rule, the sources consulted offer no information on the subject of this chapter. The fact that this period witnessed the great political and military events that brought the

¹The poet 'Ammār Dhī Kanāz was known to have been a very heavy drinker. For his biography and the accounts of his life, see Agh.1, Vol. XX, p.174 FF.

²See Ibid, pp.174-175.

Abbasid house to power had, no doubt, its effect on the course of the work of the governmental machine. Routine matters, such as hudūd and the like, very naturally received less attention from the authorities.

To sum up, it is possible to say that the foregoing facts indicate that the question of iqā mat al-hudūd was not an important item in the general policy of the Umayyads. The hudūd punishments were inflicted in most of the cases upon ordinary persons of no great social importance, or power. The fact that sometimes political, factional, personal and other factors were taken into consideration before inflicting a hadd punishment upon an offender (like the case of Marwān b. al-Hakam and 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Sayhān) encouraged many people to enjoy without fear their irreligious pleasures. On the other hand, those who did not enjoy the privilege of being politically powerful or important, found very often in the character and principles of some of the governors the leniency that enabled them to escape the prescribed punishments for their irreligious deeds. This is to say nothing of the bribes that some members of the police force used to receive from offenders, especially wine-drinkers, in return for their silence and non-interference.¹

All these facts suggest that the central authority, especially during the early period of the reign of the Umayyads when the consolidation of the regime and the gathering of allies was more important for the survival of the ruling house than anything else (i.e. from the very first

¹For examples of the bribes that some offenders used to pay to policemen see Agh.3, Vol. XI, pp.257, 264, 267, 268 and others.

days of the reign of Mu'āwīya until the end of the Caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik), paid little attention to the question of hudūd and, in general, to public morality. As for the Caliphs themselves, there is nothing in our material to confirm that they were personally concerned about the spread of unlawful pleasures among their Muslim subjects. With the exception of 'Umar II, Hishām and, to a certain extent, al-Walīd I, they even were sometimes lenient in their dealings with offenders and wanton persons.

In connection with wine-drinking, it is important to mention that the authorities during the reign of the Umayyads followed the practice introduced during the Caliphate of 'Umar b. al-Khattāb, namely the raising of the hadd punishment for wine-drinking from forty stripes, as under Muhammad and Abū Bakr,¹ to eighty stripes. Some modern writers attribute this change to 'Umar himself² but, from an account with reliable isnād in al-Jamī' Li-Ahkām al-Qur'ān of al-Qurtubī it appears that it was 'Alī b. Abī Tālib who suggested the raising of the hadd and that 'Umar approved it.³ It is even said that 'Alī, during his Caliphate, scourged

¹See Qurtubī, op.cit., Vol. XII, p.165.

²See Lammeus, Mo'awia 1^{er}, p.411.

³The account is related on the authority of the trustworthy al-Zuhri. In it we read that Khālīd b. al-Walīd once sent a messenger to 'Umar to inform him that many Muslims drank wine and that the hadd punishment for wine-drinking proved to be ineffective because it was not severe enough. When the messenger arrived, 'Alī and other companions of the Prophet were with 'Umar. 'Alī's view was that "when a man drinks he is apt to talk irrationally, and when he speaks irrationally he is apt to fabricate lies against others. The punishment of him who fabricates lies against others is 80 stripes". 'Umar turned to the messenger and said: "Convey what you have just heard to your master." From that day, the rāwīya of the story continues, 'Umar used to scourge drinkers with eighty stripes. See Qurtubī, op.cit., Vol. XII, p.165.

a man with one hundred stripes for wine-drinking.¹

Von Kremer states that, during the Umayyad period "song and music were forbidden by moral censors appointed by government".² Apart from the police, which performed the double task of attending to the public morals and maintaining law and order, there is no reference in our material to the existence of an independent body whose task was to forbid the playing of musical instruments and the singing of songs. All the evidence in our material shows that this duty fell within the scope of the police.

¹See Qurtubī, op.cit., Vol. XII, p.165.

²See Von Kremer, op.cit., p.44.

CHAPTER V

PLEASURE AND AMUSEMENT

AT THE COURT OF

THE Umayyads

Chapter VPleasure and Amusement at the Court of the Umayyads

Arab historians, like many of their contemporaries and predecessors, concentrated on political and military events and neglected matters important for the study of the social aspect of life. Wars, revolutions, political incidents, intrigues and ambitions of kings, generals and politicians, and similar happenings, attracted their attention more than any other human aspect of the life of the community, or individuals. It could be said that, generally, historiography did not set out to tell the story of the evolution of the society, nor did it care to record the details of the lives of individuals, even "great" individuals. This remark appears in relief when one examines the information available in the sources about the Umayyad Caliphs and the life at their Court. Most of the writings on the Umayyad Caliphs that came down to us deal with the political side of the lives of these Caliphs and very little is said about their human side. This is to say nothing about the different kinds of prejudices which occur in these writings, and which make the task even harder. With all this, it is difficult to claim that any study of the life at the Court of the Umayyads can be of a satisfactory standard of accuracy or completeness.

The study in the present chapter, however, is a part of our general study of the life of pleasure and amusement and will deal with

the subject of lahw (forbidden pleasures) at the Court of the Umayyad Caliphs. Each Caliph will be dealt with separately and, after that, a general section will be devoted to the study of the information available on Court etiquette.

Mu'āwīya, the first Umayyad Caliph (40-60/661-680) is regarded by most of the sources as a man of literary taste and a ruler devoted to the duties of his office. Most of the chroniclers agree that there was no place for lahw in the life of the founder of the Umayyad dynasty. They say that his entourage consisted of men who were mostly distinguished by political, literary and scientific acquirements and that his time was devoted to the affairs of his kingdom and the consolidation of his rule.¹ This general information is practically the only direct reference to the subject of Mu'āwīya's attitude to lahw that one gets from the sources. For further information, one has to rely on indirect references made in the course of a story or a narrative and on indirect evidence. For example, it is possible to claim that Mu'āwīya abstained from wine because, first, there is no evidence in the sources

¹There is a detailed description in al-Mas'ūdi's Murūj of the daily routine that Mu'āwīya followed after he assumed the Caliphate. From this description, one can see that the greater part of Mu'āwīya's day and night was devoted to the running of the affairs of the state. He gave five audiences a day and was ready to receive important officials at any time they wished. Even while taking his meals, al-Mas'ūdi claims, Mu'āwīya used to discuss state affairs with his kātib (scribe). See this detailed description in al-Mas'ūdi, Vol. V, pp.73-78.

consulted that he ever drank and, second, because it appears from an anecdote in the Aghānī that his favourite drink was the still popular Damascene sherbet made of rose-water.¹ Moreover, from more than one anecdote in the Aghānī, it appears that he did not look highly upon those who drank wine, especially if they were of a high social standing.² In the same way, it is possible to define his attitude towards music. It is sure, for example, that among the members of the Caliphal household during his reign there were a large number of male and female slaves³ but there is no evidence that any of these slaves was a singer. In fact, all the indirect evidence makes one convinced that Mu'āwīya was not among those who were swayed by the new art of ghinā' and that he never deliberately listened to singing. From an account in al-Kāmil of al-Mubarrad, it appears that the great patrons of music in his day (like 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far) were aware of his dislike of, or little interest in, the art of ghinā' and that, for this reason, they tried to hide their artistic inclin-

¹See Agh.1, Vol. XV, p.48.

²See, in Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.212, the account of the sudden visit paid by Mu'āwīya to the house of 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far, when he was told that the latter drank nabīdh and how 'Abd al-Lāh proved to the Caliph that he was drinking a beverage made of honey, musk and camphor. See also in Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.33, how Mu'āwīya got very angry when he knew that his son Yazīd took the ṣabūh, and ordered him to join the army fighting in Byzantine territory.

³See 'Iqd, Vol. II, p.238 (ed. 1898).

ations behind the close relationship between poetry and music, and claimed that their real interest was in the poetry and not in the music.¹ This fact finds support in a report in al-'Iqd al-Farīd, in which we read that, when 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far wished to introduce a certain musician at Court, he had to plead that the latter was a "poet" because the Caliph claimed that he had no idea of music and had never admitted a musician into his presence.² Reports of similar significance and nature appear also in the Aghānī.³ It is thus seen that Mu'āwīya himself cared little for ghina', but whether this

¹See al-Kāmil, al-Mubarrad, Vol. I, p.390. The liberal-minded Qurashī patron of music, 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far, succeeded in conveying the close relationship between poetry and music, dominant at this period, in the following incident. The Caliph Mu'āwīya, coming to his house, was shocked to find him sitting listening to 'Azza al-Maylā' singing and playing. On expressing his dismay, Ibn Ja'far explained to him that she was singing verses by Hassān b. Thābit (the Prophet's poet) adding: if a rough and unsightly Arab recited 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 (tunshiduhu) in her beautiful voice. See Agh.1, Vol. IV, p.35.

²See 'Iqd, Vol. I, p.318 and Vol. III, p.238.

³In one of these reports we read that the singer Sā'ib Khāthir asked this same 'Abd al-Lāh to introduce him to the Caliph Mu'āwīya because he wanted to ask the Caliph's help in a certain matter. 'Abd al-Lāh, knowing that the Caliph did not admit singers into his presence, ordered Sā'ib to wear a light yellow garment and a waist wrapper of the same colour, so that the Caliph would not discover his real profession. See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.323.

fact had effect on his attitude towards the problem of samā' generally, or not, is hard to decide. Apart from the fact that there are no direct references to this subject in the sources, many contradictions occur in the accounts. In al-Kāmil, for example, on two successive occasions, there is mention of two incidents which have contradictory significance. In the first, it is stated that, one night Mu'āwīya heard beautiful singing coming from the house of his son Yazīd. When Yazīd told him the next morning the name of the singer who had been entertaining him the previous night, Mu'āwīya said: "Reward him generously".¹ In the second, we read of Mu'āwīya criticizing 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far for his indulgence in ghinā', which spoiled manly manners.² In al-Ṭabarī, the same contradiction occurs and, on two successive occasions, we read of Mu'āwīya taking two different attitudes towards the question of samā'.³ The Aghānī accounts, on the other hand, tend to show that, although Mu'āwīya did not care to attend singing-parties and attach singers to his service, he admired immensely

¹See al-Kāmil, al-Mubarrad, Vol. I, p.390.

²Ibid, Loc.cit.

³See, in Ṭabarī, II, pp.214-215, the story of the Caliph Mu'āwīya and the singer Budayh; and, on the same page, see how he treated the singer Sā'ib Khāthir.

beautiful singing and had an artistic taste.¹ It is thus seen that there is evidence in the sources to support both views, which makes a final statement practically impossible. A last remark in connection with the subject of Mu'āwīya and music is, that the earliest open association of music with considerations of political import, seems to be Mu'āwīya's deprecation of the indulgence in music of some 'Alids (like 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far)² yet, 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. There is even evidence that he provided them with money towards that end.³

Listening to historical anecdotes and poetry seems to have been Mu'āwīya's favourite pastime. Al-Mas'ūdī gives a detailed description of how the first Umayyad Caliph passed his nights. "A third of the night was devoted to the reading of the history of the Arabs and their

¹See, for example, Agh.3, Vol. VIII, pp.323,324. Cf. Tabarī, II, p.215. Evidence of the same nature appears in al-Kāmil and al-Tabarī. It is said in al-Kāmil that 'Amr b. al-'Aṣ once blamed Mu'āwīya for making gestures and moving his limbs to show his great pleasure on listening to the singing of a certain singer. In answering, Mu'āwīya said: "...Verily, admiration of music is a quality of every noble man!" (See al-Kāmil, al-Mubarrad, Vol. I, p.390). In al-Tabarī, it is stated that he said the same sentence to Ibn Ja'far. (See Tabarī, II, p.214).

²See Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.212-213. 'Iqd, Vol. IV, pp.98-9, and al-Kāmil, al-Mubarrad, Vol. I, p.390.

³See above, Chapter I, pp.70-71.

famous combats; to that of foreign peoples and kings, their policies, and biographies, their wars, their stratagems, their systems of government, in one word all the history of their past. ... After this, he slept for a third of the night. When he woke up, he ordered that all archives containing the biographies of kings, their history, their wars, the secrets of their policy be brought to him; special pages were entrusted with the task of reading and preserving these documents. Every night he spent a long time listening to these historical and political readings."¹ It is also said that, soon after he assumed the Caliphate, he summoned 'Ubayd b. Sharya, the famous Yemenite historian and the then best authority on the Ayyām al-'Arab, to his Court at Damascus for the same purpose.² He is said, also, to have surrounded himself with poets.³

Poetry, in fact, was more than a pastime for Mu'āwīya. It was an important and reliable medium for the dissemination of his views and the gaining of support. The fact that the fate of the Umayyad regime in the early days of its rise was unsettled, and that the survival of the dynasty depended on the recruitment of allies and sympathizers, made Mu'āwīya realise the importance of gaining to his side the support of

¹See Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, pp.77-78.

²See Fajr al-Islām, pp.166-167.

³See Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, p.77. His badawī wife, Maysūn, was an accomplished poetess also. A nostalgic poem of hers is quoted by most of the literary works.

public opinion.¹ To achieve this end, Mu'āwīya had a very limited choice of means. The media through which a sovereign could communicate with his people and convey to them his views and plans, were the wufūd and poetry. Wufūd could be compared with a temporary parliament assembling for a short period and having a limited task. During the Caliphate of Mu'āwīya, on only few occasions were wufūd invited to the Capital,² and their effect on public opinion was small. Poetry, on the other hand, played an important role as a public relations medium under Mu'āwīya. It performed the task of the press today and replaced, as a means for propagating a certain view, the minbar of the mosque of the Prophet which was used by the Orthodox Caliphs. It has been acknowledged that poets played an important function in public life and that their poems - apologies, as well as satires - treated of current events. Journeying from town to town and tribe to tribe, poets would pass on their poems and their news, which would consolidate the body

¹For further information on the importance of propaganda (da'wa) for the survival of the regime during the early days of Mu'āwīya's rule, see Lammeus, Mo'awia 1^{er}, p.252.

²During the Caliphate of Mu'āwīya, wufūd were invited to the Capital on the occasion of the recognition (istilhāq) of Ziyād b. Abīh (44/664. See Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, Vol. III, pp.369-371, and Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, pp.20-26), the abdication of al-Hasan (41/661, see Ibn al-Athīr, op.cit., Vol. III, pp.339-342) and the bay'a of Yazīd (56/675, see Ibn al-Athīr, op.cit. Vol. III, pp.417-419, and Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, pp.69-73). On all three occasions, it was the intention of Mu'āwīya to ask the Umma, through its "representatives", to approve his line of policy.

politic.¹ Mu'āwīya, however, exploited poetry to the full in influencing public opinion and in spreading his cause.² He himself

¹An incident which fully demonstrates this capacity of poetry as a propaganda medium is that of the poet al-Dārīmī who was approached by a merchant who came to al-Madīna with some Iraqi veils, and sold them all except the black ones. Al-Dārīmī, who had become an ascetic, and given up poetry and assiduously attended the mosque, thereupon threw aside his garment of asceticism and took up poetry again, reciting a poem about "the beautiful one in the black veil". This poem became so popular in al-Madīna that all the black veils became in great demand and the whole stock was soon exhausted. (See Agh.3, Vol. III, p.45). Although of no political implication, the story reveals the efficiency of poetry in influencing public opinion.

²The assassination of the Caliph 'Uthmān (35/656), and the allegations that 'Alī b. Abī Tālib was an indirect participant in the conspiracy against him, are regarded rightly by some modern and old writers as a landmark in the history of the Arabs after Islām. In the field of poetry the event opened the door wider than ever for politics to penetrate and, within a short time, "political poetry" began to appear as an important weapon in the battle between the Umayyads and the 'Alids. One of the first reactions to the assassination of 'Uthmān came from the poet Ḥassān b. Thābit, who composed a long poem in praise of the murdered Caliph and, in this poem, he condemned 'Alī, and declared his support for the Ahl al-Shām and the Amīr (i.e. Mu'āwīya). Little doubt can be entertained regarding the authenticity of this poem, which is mentioned in the two available editions of Ḥassān's diwān (the Tunis ed., p.98 and the Leiden ed., p.22), as well as in al-'Iqd al-Farīd (1898 ed. Vol. II, pp.188, 189), Khizānat al-Adab (Bulāq ed., Vol. IV, p.118), Ibn al-Athīr's History (Vol. III, p.151), and other sources. Ḥassān's poem, however, is one in a long list of poems dealing with the Umayyad-'Alid dispute. Among the first poets to advocate the cause of Mu'āwīya and take his side against 'Alī was also the Taghlibite Ka'b b. Ju'ayl, whose famous qasīda:

«أرى من نكده مروج العراق
راهن العراق لهم ما رهنا»

illustrates the wide differences between al-'Irāq and al-Shām and defends Mu'āwīya's claims to the Caliphate. (See Kitāb al-Akhbār al-Tiwāl, Abū Ḥanīfa al-Dīnawarī, Leiden 1888, pp.170-171). In al-Hijāz, the poet Ibn Sayhān, or Ibn Artāt, as he was sometimes called, was one of the spokesmen for Mu'āwīya and much of his pro-Umayyad poetry is quoted in the Aghānī and other sources. (See Agh.3, Vol. II, pp.246-247, 251, and others). Even in al-'Irāq, the stronghold of 'Alī and

composed poems¹ and advised fathers to include poetry in the education of their sons.² The Taghlibite Ka'b b. Ju'ayl was his Court-poet,³ and, later, under his son Yazīd, another Taghlibite, namely al-Akhtal, filled the same post. Among the poets who made their way to the mailis of Mu'āwiya, in spite of his young age, was the poet al-Farazdaq. It is said in the Aghānī that, when al-Farazdaq was only a ghulām (i.e. very young), he managed to get to the mailis of Mu'āwiya on the occasion of a public audience and recited a poem which pleased the Caliph.⁴

Mu'āwiya's entourage consisted of able statesmen, tribal Chiefs and members of the Meccan aristocracy of his day. The offices of naḍīm, jester, and such like, were not known at his Court.⁵ Women, it seems,

(cont.)

the home of his shī'a, Mu'āwiya found strong advocates of his cause in the persons of the poets Ḥāritha b. Badr al-Ghadānī (see Agh. Brunnow, pp.20-44), 'Abd al-Lāh b. al-Zabīr al-Asdī (see Agh.1, Vol. XIII, pp. 33 ff), Yazīd b. Mufarrigh al-Himyarī (see Agh.1, Vol. XVII, pp.51-73) and others. These are only a few examples. For further information on political poetry during the reign of Mu'āwiya and the Umayyad period generally, see C. Nallino, Ta'rīkh al-Ādāb al-'Arabiyya, (Egypt, 1954), pp.201-243. Cf. Lammeus, Mo'awia 1er, pp.252-266.

¹See specimens of Mu'āwiya's poetry in Tabarī, I, p.3466. Mas'ūdī, Vol. V. p.31 and al-Kāmil, al-Mubarrad, Vol. I, p.184.

²See, in Lammeus, Mo'awia 1er, p.256, the story of the letter mu'āwiya wrote to Ziyād b. Abīh, advising him to include poetry in the education of his son, 'Ubayd al-Lāh.

³See al-Akḥbār al-Tiwāl, p.170.

⁴See Agh.1, Vol. XIX, p.37.

⁵Besides the famous 'Amr b. al-'Ās, Ziyād b. Abīh, al-Mughīra b. Shu'ba, and other able statesmen, there is mention in the sources of the seven other men who worked in close collaboration with Mu'āwiya to strengthen the regime and secure its stability. These were: 'Abd al-Rahmān b.

played only a secondary role in the life of Mu'āwīya. There is no evidence, for example, that he was married to more than four wives,¹ nor is there evidence that he had too many concubines. Without any convincing reason, Lammeus suggests that the possibility that the mother of Mu'āwīya's eldest son, 'Abd al-Rahmān, might have been of a servile status, should not be excluded.² As far as our material is concerned, there is nothing to justify this suggestion. It remains true, however, that Mu'āwīya's harīm was modest in number and that women were of secondary importance in his life.

Al-Ya'qūbī, in condemning Mu'āwīya, cites a long list of "ir-religious innovations" introduced by this Caliph, and quotes the saying of the famous theologian, Sa'īd b. al-Musayyab, that Mu'āwīya was the first to turn the khilāfa into mulk. He also claims that Mu'āwīya himself used to say: "I am the first of the muluk".³ Among the "ir-

(cont.) Khālīd b. al-Walīd, Ḥabīb b. Maslama, Busr b. Abī Artāt, al-Dahhāk b. Qays, Abū al-A'war al-Sullamī, Ḥamza b. Mālīk al-Ḥamadānī, and Shurahbīl b. al-Simt al-Kindī. (See Ṭabarī, I, pp. 3272, 3360, 3396, II, 139). The first four were of Meccan origin, and the rest were representatives of the main tribal groupings. With the exception of Shurahbīl, who started his career in the battlefields of Persia, they all came to Syria with the first Muslim armies and resided there ever since. (See Ṭabarī, I, 2004, 2005, 2225, 2265, 2093, 2109, 2150, 2154).

¹See, in Ṭabarī, II, pp. 204-205, and Agh. 1, Vol. XIV, p. 124, the names and genealogies of Mu'āwīya's four wives.

²See Lammeus, Mo'awia 1^{er}, p. 309.

³See Ya'qūbī, Vol. II, p. 276. The question of khilāfa and mulk is discussed in length in Lammeus's book on Mu'āwīya, see pp. 189-213.

religious" innovations and practices introduced by this Caliph, according to al-Ya'qūbī, were: the forming of a Caliphal body guard, the employment of door-keepers, sitting behind a curtain, the employment of Christians as scribes, sitting on the sarīr and letting people sit on lower couches, making guards with spears in their hands walk at the head of his procession, and other things.¹ It might be true that Mu'āwīya introduced some administrative and ceremonial changes and that, in some practices, he departed from the tradition set by the Orthodox Caliphs, but it is equally true that these changes were neither irreligious nor blameworthy. However, there is nothing in al-Ya'qūbī's remark which suggests that a diversion towards worldly pleasures took place at the Court of Mu'āwīya. Thus, the fact remains that the Court of this Caliph was not a place for lahw and that forbidden pleasures did not make their way to it. It is unanimously acknowledged by the sources, regardless of their identities and prejudices, that the founder of the Umayyad dynasty was the only Umayyad sovereign whose name was never associated with unlawful pastimes. Thanks to him, Syria was saved from what Lammens calls: "l'invasion des mœurs Medinoises".²

The Umayyad Court, under Mu'āwīya's son, Yazīd (60-63/680-683), presents a different picture. For the young Caliph, who grew up, and

¹See Ya'qūbī, Vol. II, p.276.

²See Lammens, Mo'awia 1^{er}, p.374.

possibly was born¹ in the refined society of Syria, life was nothing but one continuous stream of pleasures; this, if we are to accept the views of most of the Arab historians who described Yazīd in the darkest colours. Much of it, evidently, is pure exaggeration. One should not forget that Yazīd was the man responsible for the blood of al-Ḥusayn, in the view of the Shi'ites, and the siege of the holy cities of al-Ḥijāz, in the view of Orthodox Muslims. This is to say nothing about the Abbasid influence under which many historians wrote. The fact that our information on Yazīd comes from one-sided sources makes the task of examining the authenticity of this information hard, and leaves one with a limited choice of methods of criticism.

Against this background, we can proceed to examine the information cited in the different sources consulted on the subject of Court life under the second Umayyad Caliph, Yazīd I.

According to Ansāb al-Ashraf, Kitāb al-Aghānī, Murūj al-Dhahāb and other sources, Yazīd I was the first to introduce musical instruments and singers into the Court. His love for wine exceeded anything known before. In his day, qiyan and ghilmān were attached to the Caliphal household, and singers were summoned from Mecca and al-Madīna, the then centres of the art of music and song. His irreligious be-

¹Yazīd was born between 22 and 27 A.H. /642-647 A.D. (See Tabarī, I, 2671, 2810). As for his birth-place, Damascus, where his father settled since the early days that followed the conquest of Syria, is not an impossible suggestion.

haviour and indifference towards the dictates of the religion encouraged people to indulge in wine, with the result that evening parties degenerated into downright drinking-bouts and carouses.¹

Al-Mas'ūdi adds to this that, under Yazīd I, singing and musical instruments appeared for the first time in Mecca and al-Madīna.² In the same way, the sources deal with his love for field sports, his passion for hunting and racing, his pets and hunting animals and his addiction to sports in general.³ His monkey, to whom he gave the dignified title of Abū-Qays, is said to have been his inseparable friend. Yazīd I used to say as a joke that the monkey was an old Jew whom God had metamorphosed on account of his sins.⁴ It was never absent from his drinking parties and would often jump upon his shoulders and sip out of his cup. In the drinking parties at the palace, a special cushion was always reserved for it. Abū-Qays used also to take part in the races and rode on a donkey specially trained for the purpose.⁵ Al-Mas'ūdi gives the following description of a

¹See Ansāb al-Ashraf, Vol. IVB, P.1; Agh.1, Vol. XVI, pp.70-71 and Mas'udi, Vol. V. p.157.

²See Mas'ūdi, Vol. V, p.157. One need not repeat here what was said earlier (Chap. I, Singing during the Umayyad period) about the spread of ghinā' in the two cities of al-Hijāz since the very first days of the Caliphate of Mu'āwiya and long before Yazīd assumed the Caliphate. This part of al-Mas'ūdi's statement, however, should be viewed in the light of his Shi'ite tendencies.

³See Ansāb al-Ashraf, Vol. IVB, pp.1, 30; Agh.1, Vol. XX, p.106 and Ya'qubi, Vol. II, p.271.

⁴See Ansāb al-Ashraf, Vol. IVB, pp.1-2.

⁵Ibid, Loc. cit.

race in which Abū-Qays took part: "... Abū Qays outstripped, took the qaṣaba,¹ and reached the goal before the rest of the horses.

It was dressed in a red and yellow silken garment, with a many coloured cap on its head. The saddle of its donkey was of red silk, and decorated with different colours..."² About his hunting dogs

we read similar stories. According to Ansāb al-Ashrāf Yazīd was "exceptionally addicted to the chase, always amusing himself with it.

He used to put on his hunting dogs bracelets of gold and cloths embroidered with it. He gave each dog a slave to look after it." Abd al-Rahmān b. Umm Burthun claims that, whilst he was sitting in his tent on the outskirts of Damascus, a bitch came up to him in the tent.

He noticed that on its feet were gold bracelets and upon it a cloth worth a large sum and it was not long before he knew that it belonged to Yazīd and that it had become separated from him.³ A number of Madīnans visited Yazīd I in Damascus and returned home to tell their fellow-Madīnans that the Caliph "played with dogs", and asked them to depose him.⁴ Even cockfights were among the pastimes in fashion at the

¹Qaṣaba, lit. means "Cane". It is said in Tāj al-'Arūs that, in the past, the Arabs used to set up in the horse-course, a cane, and he who outstripped, plucked it up and took it, in order that he might be known to be the one who outstripped, without contention. See art. *mei*.

²See Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, p.157.

³See Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. IVB, p.9.

⁴See Ibid., p.31.

time and it is said that the Caliph used to show great pleasure in watching them.¹

In this selection of accounts one reads of Yazīd's addiction to sports, indulgence in wine and music and irreligious behaviour generally, as portrayed by the different sources. In the following pages we will deal with each of these matters separately, and with more detail, and try to throw some light on some of the points which anti-Yazīd writers raise.

Yazīd's love for hunting, racing and similar sports deserves special attention. Lammeus quotes Ibn Shihna, the author of Rawḍ al-Manāẓir,² who says that Yazīd passed his childhood in the Palmyrian desert with his akhwāl, the Banū Kalb.³ Up to exactly what age he stayed with his akhwāl we do not know, but it seems that his stay was long and had great effect on the formation of his habits and character. Yazīd, for the rest of his life, showed great love for the Syrian desert,

¹See Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. IVB, p.1.

²A manuscript in the possession of the Bibliothèque Khediviale in Cairo.

³See Lammeus, Mo'awia 1^{er}, p.326. The habit of sending children to the bādiya for reasons of health, language, and the like, was old-established among the urban population of Arabia. Muhammad himself, when a child, was sent to the Banū Sa'd tribe, as is well known. The habit seems to have continued to exist, at least during the early part of the Muslim era, when Arab conquerors came into closer contact with the foreign elements which threatened the purity of their language, and put them face to face with an entirely new mode of life. In the words of the author of al-'Iqd al-Farīd, the bādiya was "the school of princes". (See 'Iqd, I, p.293).

and it is in this love that one should seek an explanation for his "bedouin" inclinations and fondness for the sports of the desert. What seems inexplicable is the insistence of the anti-Yazīd writers on considering his love for sports, and especially hunting, as irreligious and blameworthy. It is not impossible, however, that these accusations were meant to show his negligence of the duties of his office and his indulgence in pleasure. At any rate, Yazīd was not the only Umayyad sovereign who liked the bādiya, and passed much of his time in it. In fact, Damascus was not really the effective capital of the Umayyad dynasty. As Lammeus put it: "Quand arrivait le printemps, le monarque, ses parents et les principaux hommes d'etat Omayyades aimaient a se retirer au desert pour y jouir des agrements de la saison, reprendre pour quelques semaines la vie des anciens Saiyd Arabes, des Chefs de grande tente."¹ To that one can add the fact that, in the later Umayyad period, not only great state officials and near relatives went with the Caliph for a short stay in the Syrian desert, but the whole of the governmental machine had to be moved to the new Caliphal residences which were, in most cases, in the midst of, or very near

¹See Lammeus, Mo'awia 1er, p.327.

the desert.¹ Thus, Yazīd was no different from many of his successors in his love for the bādiya and its sports, and one does not see why he alone should be blamed for this love.

Of his indulgence in wine and music much was said and some writers regard it as the reason for his political failure. The ungodliness of the Court, in view of some writers, scandalized the strict Muslims and alienated from the Caliph the regard of all the better classes. Yazīd's political enemies, like al-Husayn b. 'Alī,² 'Abd al-Lāh b. 'Umar,³ 'Abd al-Lāh b. al-Zubayr,⁴ and others⁵, used to call him

¹Since the Caliphate of Sulaymān, Damascus began to lose its attraction to the Caliphs. Under Sulaymān, al-Ramla was built and became the unofficial Capital of this Caliph. (See Balādhurī, Futūh al-Buldān, (ed. De Goeje, Leiden, 1866), p.143). In 727 Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik built the luxurious residence in the Palmyrian desert known as the Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbī. Qasr al-Hayr al-Sharqī was also built by Hishām in 729, and both castles had been designed to serve as hunting palaces and fortresses. Al-Ruṣāfa, near al-Raqqa, is another of Caliph Hishām's desert castles. The Caliph died and was buried there. (For further details, see Syria, Problems of preservation and presentation of sites and monuments, Report of the Unesco Mission of 1953, by Paul Collart, Head of the mission, and others, p. 25 FF). Al-Walīd b. Yazīd was also among the Caliphs who preferred to live in the desert. In al-Bakhrā' (in the Syrian desert), al-Qaryatayn (on the desert route between Palmyra and Damascus) and other places in the Syrian desert, he built palaces for his residence and that of his entourage and officials. (See Agh.3, Vol. VI, p.79 and Syria, Report of the Unesco mission of 1953, p.26). This point is further discussed later in this chapter.

²See Ṭabarī, II, p.146.

³See Ya'qūbī, Vol. II, p.271.

⁴See Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. IVB, p.30.

⁵See Agh.1, Vol. XX, p.20.

al-sikkīr al-khimmīr or Yazīd al-khumār and referred to him in the same way in their propaganda speeches. One writer goes to the extent of claiming that, for no other consideration except companionship in wine-drinking, important posts were given away,¹ and another asserts that Yazīd "never slept without drinking, and never woke up without crapula"² (khumār).

Accounts and statements of similar nature appear in connection with his love for music.³

¹According to Abū'l Faraj, the only thing that qualified Salam b. Ziyād for the governorship of Khurāsān was that he was a drinking companion of the Caliph. (See Agh.1, Vol. XIV, p.63). In Ibn al-Athīr's history a different version is given. In Vol. IV, p.82 we read that, in the year 61 A.H. Salam b. Ziyād visited the Caliph Yazīd who asked him if he would agree to take the place of his two brothers 'Abd al-Rahmān and 'Abbād as governor of Khurāsān and Sijistān. Salam accepted the Caliph's offer and was, thus, appointed governor. There is nothing in Ibn al-Athīr's version which suggests that Salam was a drinking companion of the Caliph, or that wine had anything to do with the appointment.

²See 'Iqd, Vol. III, p.403.

³Al-Mas'ūdi, for example, speaks at length about Yazīd's passion for music and ends by stating that the Court of Damascus under this Caliph entertained most of the famous masters of the art of ghinā'. (See Vol.V, p.156). In the Aghānī, it is stated that Yazīd "was the first to introduce musical instruments and singers into the Court." (See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.70). His favourite singer is said to have been Sā'ib Khathir, who used to visit him regularly since the life time of his father, when he was only a young prince. (See al-Kāmil, al-Mubarrad, Vol. I, p.390). In a description of one of the singing parties held at his palace, we read that the Caliph was so pleased with the singing of Sā'ib that he danced till he fell down, and ordered that the singer be covered with khul'as so that nothing of him would be seen. (See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, pp.70-71). The famous Sallāma al-Zarqā', who was a pupil of Jamīla and took part in her celebrated fête, was another favourite of Yazīd. Soon after he assumed the Caliphate, she went to his Court and took part in evening parties. (See Agh.1, Vol. VIII, p.90.)

There is special emphasis in the anti-Yazīd accounts on the question of the "Christianity" of some of Yazīd's drinking companions. Yazīd, according to some sources, had two inseparable drinking companions: the poet al-Akḥṭal, and Sarjūn al-Naṣrānī.¹ In considering this statement, special attention should be paid to the name of Sarjūn. According to the Aghānī, Sarjūn was a mawlā of Yazīd whereas, in Ansāb al-Ashrāf, al-Madā'inī states that Sarjūn was a mawlā of Mu'āwiya.² Both sources, however, give no further details about the personality of this Sarjūn. The only Sarjūn of whom we know is the one whose name appears in connection with the conquest of Damascus. It is said in the Chronicles that Sarjūn b. Mansūr, or Mansūr b. Sarjūn, as he is sometimes called, was the Byzantine official in charge of the finances of Syria during the time of the conquest who, with the Archbishop of Damascus, negotiated the conditions of the surrender of the city with the Arabs. The Arabs, in return, left him in his post and, on his death, his son was given the same post.³ It is doubtful that this Sarjūn (or Ibn Sarjūn) was a drinking companion of Yazīd, because of the

¹See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.70 and Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. IVB, p.2. This, of course, does not mean that all his drinking companions were Christians. In the sources there is mention of Muslim b. 'Amr al-Bāhilī, the father of the famous Arab general Qutayba, as nadīm of Yazīd. (See Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. IVB, p.11.

²See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.70 and Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. IVB, p.2.

³For further details see Lamme's, Mo'awia Ier, pp.386-387 and Hitti, Jirjī and Jabbūr, Ta'rikh al-'Arab, (Beyruth 1950), Vol. II, p.314.

big difference in age between the two, but it is not impossible, as Lammeus and Hitti suggest, that it was Sarjūn's grandson, the famous theologian and defender of the Church, Yūhannā al-Dimashqī (St. John of Damascus) who drank with Yazīd.¹ It is known, however, that this Yūhannā was in charge of the Dīwān of finance until the Caliphate of Hishām, when he retired and lived in the monastery of St. Sabas near Jerusalem until he died in 748.²

The name of al-Akhtal does not raise any problem and there is enough evidence to show that the relation between him and the young Caliph was very strong and cordial. Suffice it to say that the only rithā' in the dīwān of this poet is about Yazīd³ and that, on a certain occasion, he risked his neck to save the honour of the young prince.⁴ Of the many accounts about the sensual life led by Yazīd

¹See Lammeus, Mo'awia Ier., pp.394-395 and Hitti, op.cit., p.314.

²Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Vol. XCIV (1860), pp.429-489, quoted by Hitti, op.cit., p.314.

³See the dīwān of al-Akhtal, p.289.

⁴On one occasion the poet 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Ḥassān addressed a love-song to Ramla, the daughter of Mu'āwiya. On knowing about it, Yazīd, who was then a young prince, got very angry and asked Ka'b b. Ju'ayl, Mu'āwiya's Court-poet, to satirize 'Abd al-Rahmān (who was an Anṣārī) and the Anṣār. Ka'b refused to obey Yazīd's order and suggested the name of al-Akhtal. Al-Akhtal, in a long poem, not only satirized 'Abd al-Rahmān, but all the Anṣār. This aroused the anger of the Anṣār and a deputation from al-Madīna told Mu'āwiya that the only compensation that would satisfy them was the head of al-Akhtal. After a long crisis Yazīd intervened and extended his protection to al-Akhtal and, thus, the poet was saved. See the complete account in Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.148, and Vol. XIV, p.122.

and his friendship with al-Akhtal, the one which deals with the heir-apparent's pilgrimage deserves a close examination. About the year 50 or 51 A.H., we are told, Yazīd was sent by his father to perform the hajj.¹ Apparently, Mu'āwīya wanted to introduce his son to his future subjects and to acquaint him with some of the duties of his future office. However, according to the Aghānī only, Yazīd took with him on this trip a selection of his favourite Syrian wines and his drinking companion, al-Akhtal.² It is possible that Yazīd, being then a young man of about twenty five, and given up to pleasures, was unable to understand the importance which his father attached to the trip as a means of introducing him to the Hijāzīs who showed great opposition to his bay'a and secretly took with him some wine; but it is hard to believe that al-Akhtal was among the members of his party on this trip. The fact that al-Akhtal was a Christian and that the trip took place during the pilgrimage season, makes one inclined to question the authenticity of this account, especially when we recall the measures taken not long ago by 'Umar b. al-Khattāb to make Arabia generally and al-Hijāz especially, a land of a pure Muslim population. To that one can add that, in spite of the fact that Yazīd's pilgrimage is reported in many sources (like Tabarī, Ya'qūbī, Mas'ūdī, and

¹See Tabarī, II, pp.156, 94; Mas'ūdī, Vol. IX, p.57 and Ya'qūbī, Vol. II, p.284.

²See Agh.1, Vol. XIV, p.63 and Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.301.

others), al-Aghānī is the only source to mention that al-Akhtal went with him on his pilgrimage.¹ However, one should not forget that the pilgrimage took place during the Caliphate of Mu'āwīya, when Yazīd was the heir to the throne and when his bay'a was facing great opposition from al-Hijāz. In such circumstances, one would expect to see Mu'āwīya, the man who was always aware of the importance of public opinion and tried always to gain it to his side, take all the necessary precautions to ensure the success of his heir's trip. One, also, cannot but suppose that a dāhiya like Mu'āwīya could not have been negligent of the dangers which might follow the presence of a Christian poet known for his love of pleasures and his satire against the Anṣār among the members of his son's party on an occasion like the hajj. All this suggests that the account in al-Aghānī is of questionable authenticity and that al-Akhtal never made his way to al-Hijāz. This argument, however, is not meant to deny all irreligious activities during the pilgrimage of the young

¹In a long argument, Lammeⁿ tries to assert the authenticity of the Aghānī statement. He claims that 'Umar's measures were directed mainly against the Christians of Najrān and the Jewish centres in the north-west and that, since the Caliphate of 'Uthmān, Christians made their way back to al-Madīna. (See Mo'awia Ier, pp.404-405.) His evidence in support of this argument consists of far-fetched conclusions derived from indirect and, sometimes, unreliable accounts cited in the Aghānī and Iqd. However, in the sources consulted, there is no evidence to support his claim that Christians were to be found in al-Madīna during the Caliphate of 'Uthmān.

prince,¹ nor is it meant to discredit all the information on Yazīd in the Aghānī but, at the same time, it is worth remembering that Abū'l Faraj was a fanatical Shi'ite and that his religious sympathies meant much more to him than his Umayyad descent. Thus, his information on the man responsible for the blood of al-Husayn should be treated with care.

In connection with Yazīd's addiction to wine, there are accounts about his repeated visits to the villages of the Damascene Ghūta. Wanting to escape the strict supervision of his father, Yazīd seems to have found in these beautiful villages a safe refuge where he could quench his thirst for wine, far from the conservatism of the Capital. Of the many Ghūta villages, Dayr Murrān seems to have been Yazīd's favourite.² As its name indicates, this village had a convent and was famous for its

¹There is only one reference in the Aghānī to the "irreligious activity" of Yazīd during his pilgrimage. In it, we are told that, while in al-Madīna, the young prince was once drinking secretly when his door-keeper came and told him that al-Husayn b. 'Alī and 'Abd al-Lāh b. al-'Abbās were at the door. Yazīd ordered the servants to take away the wine and perfume the room and told the door-keeper that he would receive al-Husayn only because he feared that Ibn 'Abbās might discover, by the smell, that he was drinking. (See Agh.1, Vol. XIV, p.63). This story is more evidence on Yazīd's cautious behaviour during his pilgrimage.

²Dayr Murrān was on the top of a knoll near the mountain Qāsyūn, overlooking Damascus. See Masālik al-Absār, I, pp.353, 355-356; Tabarī, II, pp.1270, 1792; Yāqut, Buldān, II, 696-697, and Agh.3, VII, pp.23-24.

wine.¹ From an account in al-Tabarī, it appears that the Umayyads had agricultural land in the vicinity of Dayr Murrān and that the Umayyad Caliphs after Yazīd continued to visit it.² Māṭirūn, another village in the suburbs of Damascus, was also frequently visited by Yazīd.³ No details of his visits to this village are given in the sources but it is highly probable that he liked it for its wine, because Yāqūt tells us that Māṭirūn had a convent⁴ and that it stood next to Dayr Qānūn,⁵ which was, and still is, famous for its grapes. To this Lammeus adds Bayt Rās (very famous for its wine) and Adhra'āt, where Yazīd's son, Mu'āwīya II, was born.⁶ Huwwārīn, although far from Damascus, was also very often visited by Yazīd.⁷ The relatively long distance between this village and Damascus, the desert surrounding it, and the wealth of its land, provided Yazīd with the safe and pleasant

¹See Ibid, loc.cit. In an account in the Aghānī we read of Yazīd drinking the ṣabūh in Dayr Murrān's convent, and composing a poem in praise of its wine. See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.33.

²See Tabarī, II, p.1270.

³See Yāqūt, Buldān, Vol. IV, p.395.

⁴See Ibid, Vol. II, p.694.

⁵See Ibid, Vol. I, p.57.

⁶See Mo'āwīa 1er, p.379. Lammeus's information is taken from a manuscript of Ibn 'Asākir's History and a manuscript by al-'Aynī, to which we did not have access.

⁷According to Yāqūt, Huwwārīn was in the middle of the way between Palmyra and Damascus. See Buldān, Vol. II, p.355.

surroundings which he sought, far from the supervision of his father.¹ After he became Caliph he continued to visit it, and it is said that he met his death there while he was hunting.²

A last item in the list of accusations against Yazīd is that he used "to wear silken clothes",³ and that he was the first to introduce qiyaṇ and ghilmān into the Court.⁴ The question of the lawfulness of wearing silken clothes, like the question of samā' and many others, was the subject of a long controversy among Muslims. Very naturally, both parties appealed to the Qoran and tradition to support their views, as these are fundamental bases of Islām. An interesting aspect of the controversy is that both parties were forced to give special interpretations to the verses they quoted to make them suit their views and that, when they turned to tradition, they had more scope, for it contained material which supported both parties. To sum up the long argument on the subject of silken clothes, it is possible to say that, while some looked with displeasure on wearing silken clothes and quoted verses from the Qoran and examples from the life of the Prophet to support their views, others held

¹About Yazīd's visits to Huwārīn see Agh.1, Vol. XI, p.71 and Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. IVB, pp.1-2; 9. It must be remarked here that the detailed description given by Lammeks³ about Yazīd's life at Huwārīn, and the visits of musicians and poets to his palace there, is not identical with the facts mentioned in the sources he gives as references. See Mo'awia 1er, p.383.

²See Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. IVB, pp.1 - 2 and Yāqūt, Buldān, Vol. II, p.355.

³See Tabarī, II, p.146.

⁴See Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. IVB, p.1.

that there was no sin in doing so and criticized the validity of the traditions and the interpretation of the verses quoted against silken clothes.¹ The controversy was never settled. However, wearing silken clothes, as Yazīd most probably did, does not constitute a very serious accusation and thus we need not devote more space to it. The second part of the above accusation, especially the question of the introduction of ghilman into Court, is more serious and deserves a closer look. Although it is highly probable that Yazīd introduced singing-girls (qiyān) into his household² yet there is nothing to confirm the presence of ghilmān³ at his Court. In this connection, one can say that khisyān (eunuchs) were the only known type of male servants who joined the Caliphal household during the Umayyad period and that the references to these khisyān occur in the accounts relating to the reign of later Caliphs.⁴ It should be noted also that ghilmān, in the Abbasid sense of the word, did not appear at all at the Court of the Umayyads and, even under the Abbasids, one has to wait until the reign of the third or fourth Caliph to feel their presence at the Court

¹See Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, Zād al-Ma'ād, (1950 ed.), Vol. I, pp.34, 37, 102. See also, 'Iqd, (1898 ed.), Vol. III, p.295.

²See above, p.293, note, 3.

³For the lexicographical meaning of the term ghulam, see above, Chapter III, p.202, note, 1.

⁴The question of the presence of khisyān at the Court of the Umayyads is discussed later in this chapter.

of Baghdād. All this, coupled with the fact that Yazīd was never accused of homosexuality,¹ makes one inclined to regard this accusation as an outcome of the anti-Umayyad prejudices which inspired some untrue statements.

A possible question in connection with the so-called "sensual life" led by Yazīd since the life-time of his father is: What was the attitude of Mu'āwīya vis-a-vis the behaviour of his son and heir?

Before trying to answer this question notice should be drawn to the fact that Yazīd's nomination as heir apparent was received with great opposition from the anti-Umayyad party in al-Hijāz and that Mu'āwīya took every care to silence the anti-Yazīd voices and to ensure the success of his nominee. Yazīd's behaviour could have been an important weapon for or against him. Thus, one cannot but imagine that the intelligent Mu'āwīya was aware of the importance of this weapon and tried to keep an eye on his son's public behaviour. Apart from this, there is enough evidence in the sources to make us believe that Mu'āwīya took an active part in the supervision of his son's behaviour and that he did not hesitate to intervene whenever he felt that his reputation was in danger. Yazīd was the first Caliph whose early education was entrusted to a private tutor. Although we do not know the name of this tutor, we can claim that he was severe with the young prince.² His stay

¹See Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. IVB, p.10.

²See in Ibid, p.3, the account about Yazīd and his tutor.

with his akhwāl in the Syrian desert gave him the chivalrous spirit and courage which distinguished him during the siege of Constantinople, in which he took part.¹ When grown up, Yazīd was put under the direct supervision of his father. He was given a special apartment in his father's palace (al-Khadra') and the author of the Aghānī tells us that the door of this apartment opened on the gallery leading to Mu'āwīya's private apartments.² On more than one occasion the author of the Aghānī tells us that Mu'āwīya used to spy on Yazīd during the night and listen at his door to find out what he was doing.³ This strict supervision seems to have been the main reason for Yazīd's repeated absence from the Capital and his frequent visits to the villages of the Ghuta and the Palmyrian desert where he enjoyed the easy and gay life which he liked. Mu'āwīya's constant criticism of some 'Alīds for their indulgence in music and relations with musicians finds a parallel in his fear that his son might come under the effect of the new art of ghinā', and his effort to make him avoid this danger. On more than one occasion we read of Mu'āwīya warning Yazīd against the evil that music and musicians might bring to him and reminding him of the importance of his re-

¹The siege of Constantinople in which Yazīd took part is referred to later in this chapter.

²See Agh.1, Vol. VII, p.104.

³See Ibid, pp.103, 104, 189. See also, al-Kāmil, al-Mubarrad, Vol. I, p.390.

putation in his future career.¹ As for wine-drinking, Mu'āwīya does not seem to have been less serious in his effort to save his son from it. It is said in the Aghānī that Mu'āwīya got very angry once when he heard that Yazīd took the morning drink (ṣabūh) in Dayr Murrān and swore that he would send him immediately to join the Muslim army besieging Constantinople. This he did, and it is said that Yazīd showed great courage in a battle with the Byzantines, so much so that he gained the appellation of Fatā al-'Arab.² Lammeus's claim that, on one occasion, Mu'āwīya scourged his son with the number of stripes prescribed for wine-drinkers³ is untrue because the text in the 'Iqd which he gives as reference does not include the name of Mu'āwīya at all, and speaks of the ḥadd punishment inflicted by the governor of al-Madīna upon Musawwar b. Makhrama, who accused the Caliph Yazīd of being a drinker.⁴ Practically nothing can be said about Mu'āwīya's attitude towards the question of his son's friendship with some members of the Christian community in Syria (like the poet al-Akhtal and St. John of Damascus) which, as we have seen earlier, was

¹See, for example, Agh.1, Vol. VII, pp.103-104, 188, 189; 'Iqd, Vol. III, pp.249-250, 232-233; Tabarī, II, p.214, and others.

²See Agh.1, Vol. XVI, p.33. The siege referred to is the one which took place in 49/669 and was originally led by Fadla b. 'Ubayd al-Anṣārī. See Tabarī, II, p.86; Cf. p.27 of the same source.

³See Lammeus, Mo'awia 1^{er}, p.374.

⁴See the original text in 'Iqd, Vol. III, p.403; or Vol. III, p.292, of the 1898 ed.

regarded by some Abbasid writers as a sign of Yazīd's irreligiousness. It is not impossible, however, that Mu'āwiyā did not pay great attention to it, or consider it a threat to his son's reputation, because of the "cosmopolitan" nature of the Syrian society.

In contrast with the dark picture which most of the writers of the third and fourth centuries of the Hijra present whenever they discuss the subject of Yazīd, al-'Aynī mentions the name of this Caliph among the tabi'ūn traditionists and cites some traditions on his authority.¹ The fact that there is nothing in the sources within our reach to confirm al-'Aynī's statement and that there is no similar information in the works on hadīth consulted² lessens the importance of this statement. It remains true, however, that Yazīd had an adequate knowledge of the Qoran which was essential for the execution of his duties as a head of a Muslim state.³

To sum up, one can say that, whatever doubts we may entertain regarding the impartiality and correctness of the stories related about Yazīd, coming as they do from biassed sources, so much is certain that

¹For the above information we are indebted to Lammeⁿs, who quotes al-'Aynī's manuscript 'Iqd al-Jumān. See Mo'awia 1^{er}, p. 346, note 6.

²See, for example, al-Dhahabī's list of reliable traditionists in Muhammad b. Ahmad al-Dhahabī, Tadh Kirat al-Huffāz, (Haydar Abad ed.).

³See Tabarī, II, pp.377, 381.

the Court life then was not in complete harmony with the strict teachings of Islām, nor with the tradition set by the Orthodox Caliphs, or even Mu'āwīya. In a way, Yazīd was not a "conformist" but a "revolutionary". He liked wine, which neither Islām nor his predecessors approved of. He also listened to music and practised field-sports, which had no place in the lives of earlier Caliphs. But it is untrue to suggest that lahw was all his life.

The Caliphs Mu'āwīya II (64/683) and Marwān I (64-65/684-685) only occupied the throne for a year, too brief a space to have any appreciable influence on the course of life at the Court. The latter, as was pointed out earlier, showed great severity in his dealings with the corrupt elements in al-Madīna when he was its governor during the Caliphate of Mu'āwīya. He banished all the mukhannathūn from the city, inflicted the ḥadd punishment on several drinkers, and tried more than once to abolish ghina'.¹ This, being the only information we possess about his attitude towards lahw, leads one to conclude that he was a serious person and an opponent of sensuality.

Contradiction of statements and information is the main problem that faces any one who wants to discuss Court life under the Caliph 'Abd al-Mālik (65-86/685-705). This contradiction makes it difficult sometimes to find a final answer to some of the questions that arise

¹See what was said about Marwān b. al-Hakam in the previous chapters.

during this study. In this section, however, we shall try to discuss, among other things, two main questions: first, the question of ghinā' at the Court of 'Abd al-Mālik and, second, his attitude towards wine.

As far as the first question is concerned, it should be remarked that it is generally accepted that 'Abd al-Mālik was a serious sovereign and that he did not indulge in pleasures and sensual amusements. In fact, the tragic events that preceded and followed his accession to the throne called for immediate and vigorous action. Had it been left to a sportive or lenient sovereign to deal with these events, history could have had a different course. On the authority of al-Madā'inī, al-Balādhurī says that 'Abd al-Malik said once: "I have never seen this bellied lute of which people talk.". Commenting on this, al-Madā'inī says this statement brought two remarks from people. Some said: "He is right, he only knew pandores (tanābīr, sing. tunbūr)", whilst other accused him of being a liar and claimed that "he even performed on it".¹ Muir confirms this last view and says that 'Abd al-Malik "was a composer of no mean merit",² and Farmer adds that "both Ibn Misjah and Budayh al-Malīh, the best known musicians of the time, were patronized by him."³

¹See Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. XI, p.261.

²See Muir, Caliphate, p.344.

³See Farmer, op.cit., p.61.

At the same time, there are other stories and statements which show that 'Abd al-Malik was not only ignorant of music, but also an opponent of it.¹

In the Aghānī there are only a few references to the subject of 'Abd al-Malik and ghinā'. The following is a resume of a story told in the Aghānī and quoted by some modern writers: The fame of Ibn Misjah, who lived in Mecca during the reign of 'Abd al-Malik, spread rapidly and his popularity became a source of worry for the stricter Muslims who complained to the governor saying that he was seducing the faithful youths by means of his profane art. On hearing of this, the Caliph commanded that Ibn Misjah be sent to the Capital. At the Court of 'Abd al-Malik, where he was summoned after his arrival, we read of the musician singing before the Caliph the different types of Arabic song. He was not only pardoned by the Caliph, but sent back to Mecca loaded with handsome presents.² Von Kremer,³ Farmer,⁴ and possibly other writers who quoted this story to support their different arguments, accepted it as true and paid no attention to the fact that Dahmān al-Ashqar, on whose authority the original story was

¹See, for example, Agh.1, Vol. XIV, p.10; Agh.3, Vol. XI, p.21, al-Mas'ūdi, Vol. V, p.211, and others.

²See the full story in Agh.3, Vol. III, pp.282-283, or Agh.1, Vol. III, p.87.

³See Von Kremer, op.cit., p.45.

⁴See Farmer, op.cit., pp.77-78.

related, claimed that he himself was the governor of Mecca who carried out 'Abd al-Malik's order and sent Ibn Misjah to Damascus. As was pointed out in the previous chapter, Dahmān al-Ashqar was a well-known mawlā singer of the late Umayyad and early Abbasid periods and was mentioned as late as the Abbasid Caliph al-Mahdī and Fadl b. Yahyā, the Barmakide, in the eighth century.¹ He, most probably, was not born when 'Abd al-Malik's reign came to an end and, thus, it is out of the question that he was appointed governor by this Caliph. Apart from this unreliable story, there is mention in the Aghānī of a certain slave-girl singing in the presence of 'Abd al-Malik a certain song, the words of which were composed by the poet al-Uqayshir, whose poetry was appreciated by the Caliph.²

This unsettled picture becomes more confused when we remember that there is nothing in the sources to confirm or discredit the views of a modern writer like Farmer, who claims that 'Abd al-Malik "gave general encouragement to music" and that it was only to "display some appearance of Orthodoxy" that he pretended to be ignorant of music and disapproved of it."³ The fact that it is generally accepted that 'Abd al-Malik was a serious person and that he was not devoted to

¹See above, Chapter IV, p.254.

²See Agh.3, Vol. XI, pp.255-256.

³See Farmer, op.cit., p.61.

pleasures¹ is the only basis on which one can evaluate Farmer's views. Apart from this, one can say that, in the only reliable account we possess on 'Abd al-Malik's listening to what can be termed

¹Al-Mubarrad, for example, makes a clear statement to the effect that 'Abd al-Malik "took great care not to have in his mailis any except dignified and respectable persons." (See al-Kāmil, Vol. I, p.315). In the Aghānī we read of 'Abd al-Malik saying of himself "I am not a playful man". (See Agh.1, Vol. XIV, p.10). In a letter to al-Hajjāj, 'Abd al-Malik says: "...For me, the greatest pleasure is to have a serious conversation with a friend.." (See Agh.3, Vol. XI, p.21). His main interest, when not occupied with the duties of his office, was listening to poets and conversing with scholars. For example, whilst later Caliphs summoned to their Courts famous singers and boon companions, 'Abd al-Malik used to ask his governors to send him men known for their knowledge and experience. In a letter to al-Hajjāj, quoted by many of the literary works, 'Abd al-Malik says: "I have tasted all the pleasures of the worldly life, but for me the greatest pleasure is to have a serious conversation with a friend. 'Āmir al-Sha'bī - (a famous scholar and theologian) - is in your neighbourhood; send him so that I can converse with him." Al-Hajjāj carried out the Caliph's order and al-Sha'bī tells us that he stayed at the Court of 'Abd al-Malik for two years, during which he used to recite for him poetry and narrate akhbār. Before he left for home, al-Sha'bī was loaded with presents and his 'atā' was raised to two thousand dirhams a year. The same 'atā' was also fixed for twenty members of his family. (See Agh.3, Vol. XI, pp. 21-26. See also al-Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, p.211 and 'Iqd, '1898 ed.) Vol. I, pp.105-106). The many accounts and stories about his love for poetry and the visits which famous poets like al-Akhtal, al-Farazdaq, Jarīr and others, used to pay to his Court, are more evidence of his serious use of the hours of his leisure. In the Aghānī there are very many references to the visits which the famous poets of the day used to pay to the palace of 'Abd al-Malik. There are also many accounts and stories relating to the subject of his love for poetry. (See art. " 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān" in Guidi's Tables). He himself was a poet and used to enamel his letters to the governors and other officials with verses of his own composition. (See examples in Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, pp.210, 309, 310 and others).

as "artistic song",¹ there is clear reference to his disapproval of music. It is said in the Aghānī that, on one occasion, 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far visited 'Abd al-Malik and found him suffering from sciatica. To help him forget his pain, 'Abd al-Lāh advised the Caliph to invite to his bed-side someone who was gifted in the art of conversation. 'Abd al-Malik refused the advice. The next day 'Abd al-Lāh, accompanied by the singer Budayh, revisited the Caliph and claimed that his companion was an experienced physician. The so-called "physician" did nothing but sing and the Caliph was so pleased with his performance that he rewarded him with a handsome present.² The fact that 'Abd al-Lāh had to plead that Budayh was a physician can be taken as evidence of 'Abd al-Malik's disapproval of ghinā' or, at least, his little interest in it. It is thus seen that there is little evidence in favour of Farmer's argument that 'Abd al-Malik gave general encouragement to music and the same can be said about his claim that both Ibn Misjah and Budayh were patronized by him. This, however, does not mean that 'Abd al-Malik was an active opponent of music, nor does it mean that he never listened to it. In fact, one cannot even rule out the possibility that he had singing

¹Less artistic types of Arabic song such as hudā' and naṣb were known to 'Abd al-Malik. On many of his journeys, a ḥadī sang verses in his praise while leading his camel. See Agh.1, Vol XV, p.6.

²See Agh.1, Vol. XIV, pp.10, 11.

slave-girls among his household.¹ But it is hard to accept that he was a patron of musicians or that he encouraged the spread of music.

The second question to be discussed in connection with Court life under 'Abd al-Malik is the question of the attitude of this Caliph towards wine-drinking. In a conversation between the famous theologian of al-Madīna, Sa'īd b. al-Musayyab, and 'Abd al-Malik, the latter admitted that, after he became Caliph, he drank wine.² On other occasions, we find him not only disapproving of it and censoring it as "ruinous to honour and debasing to dignity" but even trying to convince a Christian drinker, the poet al-Akhtal, to stop drinking.³ Thus, once again, we are faced with the problem of contradictory statements and accounts. In trying to settle this controversy, it should be remembered that, in his conversation with Sa'īd b. al-Musayyab, 'Abd al-Malik made a clear statement to the effect that he drank wine after he became Caliph. There is nothing to make us doubt the authenticity of this statement. Moreover, in a conversation

¹See Agh.3, Vol. XI, pp.255-256.

²See Ansāb al-Ashraf, Vol. XI, pp.215-216. See also 'Iqd, Vol. III, p.294 (1898 ed.). 'Abd al-Malik's confession in his letter to al-Hajjāj mentioned earlier, that he has tasted "all the pleasures of the worldly life". (See above, p.310, note, 1.), can also be taken as evidence of his drinking of wine. At this stage of the life of the Muslim society, wine could not be excluded from the list of "worldly pleasures". See Agh.3, Vol. XIII, p.305.

³See Agh. Brünnow, p.5. See also Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.290.

between 'Abd al-Malik and al-Akhtal about wine, the Caliph says:

"What makes you drink wine? By God, it has a bitter taste at first, and it makes you drunk in the end."¹ This description of the taste and effect of wine suggests that the Caliph had some kind of experience with it. 'Abd al-Malik gives a similar description of wine in another account.² All this leads one to conclude that he did not abstain from it.

The question whether he used to drink before he became Caliph, or not, however, is hard to answer, although al-'Iqd's version of his conversation with Sa'īd b. al-Musayyab suggests that he only drank after he became Caliph and that, prior to his Caliphate, he was known to have been a very pious man, so much so that he earned the appellation of "the pigeon of the mosque".³

Even after he assumed the Caliphate and developed the habit of drinking, 'Abd al-Malik seems to have maintained great reserve in his attitude towards wine-drinking. It seems that he did not want to acquire the reputation of being a drinker and it is said that he never held a wine-party, or gave drink to his guests. On one occasion, he went to the extent of threatening al-Akhtal with the death penalty because he asked one of the palace servants to give him wine to

¹See Agh. Brünnow, p.5.

²See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.290.

³See 'Iqd (1898 ed.), Vol. III, p.294.

drink.¹ It is in the fact that 'Abd al-Malik was a sovereign devoted to the duties of his office and aware of his responsibilities as the leader of a Muslim community that one might seek an explanation of his cautious attitude towards the question of wine-drinking and his effort not to be known as a wine-drinker. It is not without significance that there is no mention in the sources of any of his drinking-companions or the drinking-parties he held.

In the material on 'Abd al-Malik's Court, references to slave-girls not only become more frequent but also show that slave-girls assumed a higher position than before. Under 'Abd al-Malik we read, for the first time, about slave-girls attending the Caliph's public audiences as part of his entourage. On one occasion, for example, we read of a certain slave-girl whose task was to stand near the Caliph and drive the flies away from him.² On another occasion, there is reference to a slave-girl pressing (or kneading) his feet.³ There is also reference to a slave-girl kneading - (or massaging - the Arabic term used is

¹On one occasion, we are told, al-Akhtal felt thirsty while reciting a poem in front of 'Abd al-Malik, and asked for something to drink. 'Abd al-Malik ordered a servant to give him some water. "But only donkeys drink water", al-Akhtal said. "Then, give him some milk", said 'Abd al-Malik. "I was weaned long ago", replied al-Akhtal. 'Abd al-Malik suggested honey, but al-Akhtal refused it also and asked for wine. 'Abd al-Malik got very angry and said: "Did you ever find that I give my guests wine to drink, may you have no mother! Do it again and you will have your head cut off." See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.294.

²See Ansab al-Ashrāf, Vol. XI, p.16.

³See Ibid, p.185.

taghmizu) - his head.¹ This is to say nothing about other slave-girls who were charged with the service and other domestic affairs, or those who were trained in music and entertained him from time to time.²

Although there is no clear mention in the sources of the subject of his concubines, it is almost certain that some of his slave-girls acquired the status of umm walad. At least, we know that the mother of his well-known son, Maslama b. 'Abd al-Malik, was an ama.³ 'Abd al-Malik, however, was known to have been a great admirer of women and Abū'l Faraj goes to the extent of claiming that, as he grew older and became sexually weaker, his love for them increased.⁴

It occurs only in Kitāb al-Tāj that we read of 'Abd al-Malik's great care in his external appearance and how he liked to see that no one of his subjects was dressed as he was. For an example of this, the author of Kitāb al-Tāj says that, whenever 'Abd al-Malik wore yellow sandals, the rest of the people were not supposed to wear them until he had taken them off.⁵ The fact that this statement finds no

¹See Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. XI, p.185.

²See Agh.3, Vol. XI, pp.255-256.

³See Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. XI, pp.222-223.

⁴See Agh. Brünnow, pp.8-9.

⁵See Kitāb al-Tāj, p.47.

confirmation in other sources¹ makes one less ready to accept it, especially when we take into consideration 'Abd al-Malik's seriousness and wisdom.

Al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik (86-96/705-715) reigned during a relatively calm period.

It is generally agreed that, under al-Walīd I, the art of music and song began to flourish, in spite of the severity of some of the governors.² Although one cannot say that al-Walīd I was a staunch defender of music or a patron of art, yet it is possible to claim that he did not disapprove of them, or censure them. Of the famous singers of the time, he seems to have liked Ibn Surayj. It is said in the Aghānī that, on one occasion, al-Walīd I wrote to the governor of Mecca asking him to send Ibn Surayj to the Capital. At the Court, Ibn Surayj was received with great appreciation and, after he sang three poems in praise of the Caliph, the Caliph commanded that he be covered with khil'as and a purse full of dīnārs was put in front of him.³ It is not clear, however, whether it was

¹The only reference which might have some remote connection with this subject occurs in an account in the Ansāb al-Ashraf in which we read that 'Abd al-Malik used to wear a jubba (a garment) and a ridā' (an outer wrapping garment) whenever he gave a public audience. (See Vol. XI, pp.195-196). The rest of the Ansāb account deals with 'Abd al-Malik's seriousness and his instructions to the tutor of his children regarding their education and behaviour.

²See above, Chapter IV, pp. 255-259.

³See Agh.3, Vol. I, p.301 and Vol. IX, pp.68-69.

the singing that pleased al-Walīd I, or whether it was the eulogy. Al-Gharīd, another famous singer, was also summoned to al-Walīd's Court and, in the Aghani a long account is devoted to the singing party given in h-Aghani¹pur. Apart from these two, there is no evidence that other singers made their way to the Court or were patronised by the Caliph.²

According to al-Kamil, al-Walīd I was a wine-drinker.³ The author of Kitāb al-Tāj confirms this statement and adds that he used to drink once every two days.⁴ No further information on this point is given in the sources consulted.

Large numbers of slave-girls seem to have been among the members of Walīd's household. The fact that some of the Arab generals used to send him the best of their female

¹See Agh.1, Vol. II, pp.145-146.

²Farmer claims that the singer Ma'bad was summoned to al-Walīd's Court (see Farmer, op.cit., pp.62, 81) but fails to give a reference to support his claim. The fact that there is no evidence in the sources consulted to support this claim makes one doubt its validity. Farmer further claims that al-Walīd's "favourite minstrel was Abū Kamil al-Ghuzayyil who, he declared, was indispensable to him". (See Farmer, op.cit., p.62). For reference, he gives Agh.1, Vol. VI, p.144. The Caliph mentioned in this reference is al-Walīd b. Yazīd and not al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik.

³In an account in al-Kamil we read of a visit paid by al-Hajjāj to the Caliph al-Walīd I, who received him in audience. Before al-Hajjāj left, the Caliph asked him to stay and drink wine with him. In a very polite way al-Hajjāj refused and asked the Caliph to give him permission to leave, claiming that he had some urgent business to attend to. See the full account in al-Kamil, al-Mubarrad, Vol. I, p.323.

⁴See Kitāb al-Tāj, p.151.

war-captives, suggests that he had a large harīm.¹ Although there is no mention in the sources of the subject of his concubines, it is almost certain that many of his slave-girls bore him children.² There is also no evidence that he had slave-girls trained in music and Farmer's claim that a certain Shuhda was a singing-girl of his seems unjustifiable in view of the fact that she was a singing-girl of his nephew, al-Walīd b. Yazīd.³

To conclude these remarks about Court life under al-Walīd I, one should not fail to mention two important characteristics of his reign, namely his great interest in the welfare of his people,⁴ and

¹It is said that, on one occasion, Mūsā b. Nuṣayr took three hundred thousand male and female captives from Africa and sent a fifth of them to al-Walīd I. (See al-Maqqarī, Nafḥ al-Tīb, Vol. I, p.218). This Mūsā is said also to have won thirty thousand maidens who were daughters of Spanish kings and nobles, and despatched many of them to the Caliph. (See Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, Vol. IV, p.448). These figures, although obviously exaggerated, suggest that the number of female slaves at al-Walīd's palace was big.

²For the names of al-Walīd's sons whose mothers were not free, see 'Iqd, (1898 ed.), Vol. II, pp.238-239.

³See Farmer, op.cit. p.89. It is clear in the Aghānī account to which he refers to support his claim, that this Shuhda was a slave-girl of al-Walīd b. Yazīd.

⁴See in al-'Iqd (Vol. II, pp.239-240, 1898 ed.), the accounts of the aid he gave to the blind and crippled, the great projects he carried out and the attention he paid to the private affairs of his subjects.

the material prosperity of his Empire.¹ Among other things, these two characteristics suggest that the Caliph was not negligent of the duties of his office, or given up to pleasures. It is true that wine and music made their way to al-Walīd's Court, but it is equally true that they had only a secondary place in his life.

It is generally acknowledged that al-Walīd I committed grammatical mistakes in speech (lahana). Being the youngest and the most liked among his brothers, al-Walīd was the only son of 'Abd al-Malik who was not sent in his early youth to al-bādiya. This seems to have deprived him of the eloquence which all his brothers acquired through their long stays in the desert.²

According to many chroniclers, Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik (96-99/715-717) was a man given to the pursuit of sensual pleasures. Music, food, clothes, and women, were the only things that had his attention. This view is shared by Farmer who, while discussing the attitude of this Caliph towards music, says: "Sulaymān was a man of pleasure. Music was for him not an art to be sought for itself alone, but as a mere concomitant with the joys of the feast or harīm. The singing-girls alone had his attention..."³

¹In the words of al-Tabarī (II, p.1273): "In his time, when people met, some would ask others about buildings and house property..." See also Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, pp.360-361.

²See Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Vol. XI, p.236. See also, 'Iqd, (1898 ed.) Vol. II, p.239.

³See Farmer, op.cit., p;62.

The only account in our material which might show Sulaymān's interest in music occurs in the Aghānī. In this account we read that, when Sulaymān was a young prince, he went to Mecca to perform the hajj. When the hajj season ended, Sulaymān held a competition between the singers of the city and offered the winner - the singer Ibn Surayj - a prize of ten thousand dirhams.¹ Apart from this account, we find no evidence in our material on Sulaymān's interest in music. For example, no reference is made to singers summoned to his Court, nor is there reference to singing-parties held at his palace. It is worth noting also that, when he held the musical competition, he was only a young prince and had no official responsibilities. In fact, one can even claim that, after he assumed the reins of government, Sulaymān took severe measures against some eminent members of the profession of ghinā' and tried to put an end to the spread of the art.² As for the claim that "singing-girls alone had his attention", it is worth mentioning that there is no evidence at all that he had singing-girls, or that he ever bought one.³

¹See Agh.3, Vol. I, p.317. There is another version of the same account in the Aghānī. In this second version we read that the competition was held in al-Madīna. See Ibid, Vol. VII, p.63.

²See what was said above, Chapter III, pp.184-190, about the severe measures he took against the mulhannathūn because they were described to him as "the origin of ghinā'!"

³Farmer (op.cit., p.89) refers to a certain Tanbī as one of the female musicians at the Court of Sulaymān. This Tanbī was, in fact, a singing-girl of a person called Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik b. Tāhīr, and not Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik, the Caliph. See Agh.1, Vol. IX, p.20.

In this way, one can see that Sulaymān was not among those who cultivated music or displayed a predilection for it.

Sulaymān's household seems to have included a large number of slave-girls.¹ In the accounts relating to the subject of life at the Court of this Caliph, we read for the first time about a woman called qayyimāt al-Jawārī, whose task seems to have been to supervise the affairs of the Caliph's slave-girls, and who served as a link between them and the Caliph.² Whether it was Sulaymān who introduced this post, or whether it existed before, we do not know. Nor do we know of what social status was the woman in charge of this post. It is possible to claim, however, that the office of qayyimāt al-Jawārī continued to exist at the Courts of later Umayyad Caliphs, although there is no clear mention of this in the accounts on the period under review. The fact that there are references to this office in the accounts dealing with life at the Court of early Abbasid Caliphs makes the above claim possible.³

The remark made earlier about slave-girls appearing with 'Abd al-Malik in public audiences as part of his entourage⁴ finds parallel in our material on Sulaymān. In an account in the Aghānī we read of a

¹In an anecdote in al-'Iqd it is said that, in one day, Sulaymān freed seventy thousand male and female slaves and gave each one a complete set of clothes. See 'Iqd (1898 ed.) Vol. II, p.240.

²See al-Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, p.404.

³See, for example, Agh.1, Vol. XIV, p.109; Vol. XVII, pp.131, 132; Vol. XX, p.27, and others.

⁴See above, p.3/4.

slave-girl driving the flies away from the head of Sulaymān while he was engaged in a conversation with a group of poets attending his maḥlis.¹

Al-Mas'ūdī speaks at length about Sulaymān's fondness for washī (a kind of variegated or figured cloth). He says that washī was made for him in al-Yaman, al-Kūfa, Alexandria, and other places. Members of his household, government officials, members of his family and courtiers generally had to wear washī garments and turbans before they were admitted to his presence. The servants at the Caliphal palace were also supposed to wear washī whenever they were summoned to his presence. Even his cook, al-Mas'ūdī says, had to put a piece of washī cloth on his chest and a washī cap on his head when he came to see him.²

Sulaymān, according to most of the sources, was a glutton. In speaking about the cause of his death, Ibn 'Abd Rabbih says that, while on a visit to Dābiq, Sulaymān ate a large basket full of eggs and another basket full of figs, and a big quantity of sweets. This caused him a stomach trouble and, shortly afterwards, he died. On a previous occasion, Ibn 'Abd Rabbih says, Sulaymān ate seventy pomegranates, a lamb, six chickens and a great quantity of raisins.³ Al-Mas'ūdī gives

¹See Agh. 3, Vol. X, p.153.

²See al-Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, p.400.

³See 'Iqd, (1898 ed.), Vol. II, p.243.

some more stories and details of Sulaymān's gluttony¹ and, in al-Fakhrī, these stories are repeated and some more are added.² Although little doubt can be entertained regarding the fact that Sulaymān was an excessive eater, it is certain that some of these stories were exaggerated, especially when we remember that many of these stories were circulated by the biassed historians of the Abbasid period who, as a rule, run down the Umayyads on every possible occasion in favour of the Abbasids.

It is worth noting that there is complete silence in our material about the attitude of this Caliph towards wine and, thus, the question whether he drank or not remains unanswered.

Like Yazīd I, Sulaymān passed his early childhood in the bādiya among his akhwāl, the Banū 'Abs.³ Al-bādiya continued to attract Sulaymān after he grew up and it is said that, when al-Wālid I died, he was in al-Ramla, which he himself had founded when commanding the Muslim troops in Palestine. After he assumed the reins of government, al-Ramla continued to be his headquarters.⁴

While on his death-bed, Sulaymān arranged with the theologian Rajā' b. Haywa that his cousin 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz should succeed

¹See al-Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, pp.400, 401-402. See also, Ya'qūbī, Vol. II, p.359.

²See al-Fakhrī, Eng. Trans. p.124FF.

³See 'Iqd, (1939 ed.), Vol. II, p.240.

⁴See Balādhurī, Futūh al-Buldān, p.143.

him. As a Caliph, 'Umar II (99-101/717-720) stands apart. The change he brought to the Caliphate was noticeable even to the biased historians of the Abbasid period who make an exception in his case and give him the highest praise. It is said that after the Abbasid victory, his tomb was the only tomb of an Umayyad Caliph which was left undisturbed, whereas those of other Umayyad Caliphs were turned upside down.¹ Being pious (and to some extent a bigot) and conscious of his responsibility to God, he led a very simple private life distinguished by its piety and frugality. Poets, singers, boon-companions and the like were, therefore, not particularly popular at his Court and found that it was no place for them. In a word, 'Umar II was distinguished from his predecessors and successors alike. His true piety and conscious responsibility to God gathered round his name, in course of time, a whole cycle of pious tales and made of him a legendary figure.²

However, 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz is said to have lived no less luxuriously than other Umayyad princes before he became Caliph. "Before he became Caliph", al-Madā'inī says, "'Umar used to buy a garment for one thousand dīnārs, and yet feel it rough and uncomfortable, but when he became Caliph he considered very luxurious a garment bought for ten dirhams."³

¹The fact that it was 'Umar II who abolished the Cursing of 'Alī whom the Umayyads used to curse in the pulpits, was regarded with appreciation by the enemies of the Umayyad house.

²See the many exaggerated accounts about his piety in al-Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, pp. 416-428 and 'Iqd, (1898 ed.), Vol. II, pp.244-245.

³See al-Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, p.424 and 'Iqd, (1898 ed.) Vol. II, p.244.

In al-Aghānī, it is even claimed that, before he came to the throne, he not only was fond of music, but was himself a composer. In a section entitled: "The songs composed by Caliphs, Caliphs' sons, and Caliphs' grandsons", we read that 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz was the first Caliph to compose songs. "This", Abū'l Faraj says, "was when 'Umar was governor of al-Ḥijāz. He set to music seven poems each of which spoke of a certain Su'ād... some deny that 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz was as skilled as that, and say that the composer of these melodies should have been an experienced and well-trained artist, which 'Umar never was. It was the mughannūn who, falsely, attributed these melodies to 'Umar." Abū'l Faraj ends by declaring his support to those who believed that 'Umar was a composer because, as he puts it, those who denied this fact based their belief on mere suppositions and did not introduce evidence to support their argument, whereas the others cited enough accounts and stories to back their claim.¹ After that, he cites an account related to him by a long chain of transmitters - mostly singers - in which we read that, on one occasion 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz authorized the singer Ma'bad to sing one of the tunes composed by him.² The fact that the transmitters of the above account were mostly singers is, in itself, evidence against Abū'l Faraj because it confirms the view that it was

¹See Agh.3, Vol. IX, pp.250-251.

²See Ibid, p.251. See, also, Ibid, pp.251-252.

the mughannūn who attributed these melodies to 'Umar. Although one cannot rule out the possibility that he listened to ghinā' earlier in his life, especially when he was governor of al-Hijāz and surrounded by a music-loving aristocracy, yet there is little in favour of the argument that he himself was a composer. When he became Caliph, however, listening to ghinā' was forbidden and his governors frequently interdicted the art. According to al-Mas'ūdī, the only occasion on which he listened to ghinā' after he became Caliph, was when it came to his notice that a judge of al-Madīna had become a veritable slave to the accomplishments of one of his singing-girls. He at first dismissed the judge from office but, when it reached him that the judge said that even 'Umar himself could not resist the charming voice of the singing-girl, he sent for both the judge and the singing-girl. Before the Caliph, the singing-girl delivered one of her most touching melodies and the Caliph was deeply moved, so much so that he commanded that the judge be given back his post.¹ Al-Mas'ūdī also claims that 'Umar II bought a singing-girl and gave her to a grandson of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān when it came to his notice that this young 'Uthmānid was deeply in love with the singing-girl and had no money to buy her from her owner.² Apart

¹See al-Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, pp.428-431.

²See Ibid, pp.431-433.

from these two doubtful stories, there is no evidence that 'Umar II listened to ghinā, after he became Caliph; nor is there evidence that he had singing-girls, or even slave-girls.

There is no evidence that 'Umar II ever drank wine. After he assumed the Caliphate, he wrote his famous letter to the governors of the different amṣār in which he warned them against those who claimed that they drank ṭilā, - (another name for wine) - and not khamr, and argued that ṭilā is not unlawful. He ordered them to take the severest measures against any one who took any kind of intoxicating drinks, and asked them to refer to him all cases of drunkenness.¹

The reign of Yazīd II (101-105/720-724) is a striking contrast to that of his immediate predecessor, the pious 'Umar b. 'Abd al-Azīz. Like his grandfather Yazīd I - (Yazīd II's mother was 'Ātika, daughter of Yazīd I) - Yazīd II was a man "without religion" according to most of the sources. He even was called "the black sheep of the Umayyads". Under him, music, wine, and poetry were brought back, not only to the Court, but even to the public life.²

¹See the full text of 'Umar's letter in 'Iqd, (1898 ed.), Vol. III, p.298.

²It is stated in al-'Iqd that, as soon as Yazīd II assumed the Caliphate, he wrote to the governors of the different amṣār ordering them to give no further consideration to the instructions they had received earlier from 'Umar II, and to abolish all the practices he introduced. This, the author of al-'Iqd tells us, had far reaching effect on the course of public life. See 'Iqd, (1898 ed.), Vol. II, p.248.

In the Aghānī and other sources, great space is devoted to the many accounts which illustrate the sensual life led by Yazīd II. According to these sources, the two famous singing-girls, Sallāma¹ and Ḥabbāba,² occupied the whole life of this Caliph. With them he spent all his time and, to their accomplishments he became a veritable slave. According to al-Mas'ūdī, Yazīd II fell at first under the influence of Sallāma, whom he bought for three thousand dīnārs from Suhayl b. 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Awf al-Zuhrī. His grandmother, Umm Sa'id al-'Uthmāniyya, noticing the great influence of this singing-girl upon her grandson, encouraged him to buy another singing-girl in order to free him from the charm of the first one.³ In one of his pilgrimage trips to al-Hijāz during the Caliphate of his brother Sulaymān, he saw Ḥabbāba and loved her but could not buy her because of the opposition of his brother Sulaymān. When he became Caliph, his wife Sa'da, knowing how much he wanted to acquire Ḥabbāba, bought her for him.⁴

¹Sallāma, a Madīnan slave-girl, was trained in music by Ma'bad, Ibn 'Ā'isha and Jamīla. Yazīd bought her during the Caliphate of his brother Sulaymān. For her biography and the accounts of her life, see Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.334 FF.

²Ḥabbāba was also a Madīnan slave-girl and studied under Ibn Surayj, Ibn Muhriz, Mālik, Ma'bad, Jamīla and others. She was an accomplished lute-player, and was known for her beauty and wit. She was originally called al-'Āliya but, when Yazīd bought her, he gave her the name Ḥabbāba. For her biography and the accounts of her life, see Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.154 FF.

³See al-Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, pp.446-449.

⁴See Ṭabarī, II, pp.1464-1465.

It seems certain, however, that these two singing-girls played an important role in the life at the Court of Yazīd II. Of the two, Habbāba had a greater influence upon the Caliph and was his favourite. We possess more than one example of her great influence in the Court and even on her interference in the affairs of State.¹ It is said in the Aghānī that one day Habbāba sang a certain melody and Yazīd II was so pleased that he stretched out his hands as though to fly (i.e. from joy). She said: "Commander of the Faithful, we have need of you." "I will surely fly away", he answered. She replied: "In whose charge will you leave the nation?" "In yours", he answered and kissed her hand.² There are also many accounts in the Aghānī about his outward manifestations of pleasure at hearing her singing. It is said that he used to make violent gestures and move his head and limbs. It is said also that he sometimes used to jump up, shout, dance and sing, until he fell down unconscious.³ Worth noting in this connection is the

¹Habbāba is said to have opposed the appointment of a certain person when Yazīd told her that he had entrusted to him a certain task. Yazīd, we are told, got angry at first and decided to teach her a lesson, but later accepted her view. See Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.159. It is even said that the governorship of al-'Irāq - the most important governorship by far - was given away under the influence of the Caliph's favourite. See Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, Vol. V, p.75. For other examples, see Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.163; Agh.Brunnow, pp. 5, 6, and others.

²See Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.160.

³See Agh.3, Vol. I, pp.68-69; Agh.1, Vol. XIII, pp.159-160, 161 and others.

attitude of the members of the royal family vis-a-vis the behaviour of Yazīd II and the sensual life at his Court. Many of the members of the Caliph's family, we are told, were alarmed at the ungodliness of the Court life, and tried in several ways to convey to the Caliph their displeasure. Most active among them seems to have been Maslama b. 'Abd al-Malik, the Caliph's brother, who did not spare any effort to bring to the notice of his brother the dangerous results which might follow his careless behaviour. In a conversation recorded in the Aghānī and al-Mas'ūdī's Murūj, we read of Maslama explaining to Yazīd the striking contrast between his reign and that of the pious 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, who had died only recently and whose deeds were still alive in many memories. "Your example", Maslama went on, "is being followed by your governors who are imitating you and neglecting their duties. You no longer perform the Friday prayers, nor do you perform the prescribed ablutions. You spend your time with these slave-girls, and neglect the affairs of the nation."¹ The only result of this sharp criticism, we are told, was that Yazīd II returned to normal life for one week, but after that he fell again under the influence of Ḥabbāba.

Ḥabbāba and Sallāma, for their part, took every chance to keep the Caliph under their domination. For example, when Maslama and other

¹See Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, pp.447-449 and Agh.1, Vol. XIII, pp.159-160.

members of the royal family tried to put an end to Yazīd's unbecoming behaviour and to free him from their influence, they arranged with the poet al-Aḥwaṣ to compose a poem in praise of the pleasures of life, set it to music, and sang it while the Caliph was passing near their apartment. The Caliph, we are told, not only responded to the appeal of his beloved singing-girls and resumed his enjoyment of their singing, but went to the extent of cursing Maslama who deprived him of this pleasure for a whole week.¹ On another occasions, when members of Yazīd's family failed to bring him back to the right path and sought the help of an old mawla of theirs who had a great influence upon Yazīd, Ḥabbāba and Sallāma arranged also to fail the mawla's mission.²

To escape remonstrances and scandals, Yazīd II decided to withdraw to the district of al-Balqā, where he settled with his singing-girls and members of his entourage. Shortly afterwards, Ḥabbāba died. The death of his favourite broke his heart. In the Aghanī, Ṭabarī, Mas'ūdī, and other sources, there are many accounts and stories about

¹See Agh.1, Vol. XIII, pp.157-158, 159-160. The same account is given in al-Mas'ūdī, where we read that Ḥabbāba and Sallāma asked the singer Ma'bad to set the poem which al-Aḥwaṣ composed, to music. See Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, pp.448-449.

²The mawla, we are told, was about to convince Yazīd II of the unbecomingness of his behaviour when Ḥabbāba and Sallāma entered the room and said to the mawla that he should first listen to their singing and decide after that whether the Caliph should listen to their ghinā' or not. When they finished their first song the mawla was so moved that he turned to the Caliph and said: "do not leave it". See Agh.1, Vol. XIII, pp.158-159.

how he was overcome by his sorrow and how he lost all control over himself.¹ Yazīd II, however, followed her to the grave a week later at Irbid, in the Balqā' district.²

The evening-entertainment at the Court of Yazīd II was not dependent on the talent of singing-girls only. The Court, we are told, was open to many of the musical celebrities of the day, who were treated with generosity and showered with honours. Among the famous male singers who visited Yazīd's Court were: Ibn Surayj, Ma'bad, Ibn 'Ā'isha, Ibn Abī Lahab, al-Baydhaq al-Anṣārī, and others.³ Ibn Khurradādhba goes to the extent of claiming that Yazīd II himself was a composer of no mean merit. Abū'l Faraj, who discredits most of the narratives related on the authority of this rāwīya, rejects this claim⁴ and states on an-

¹See Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.165, Tabarī, II, pp.1465-1466, Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, p.452, 'Iqd (1898 ed.), Vol. II, p.249, and others.

²See Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, p.446 and 'Iqd (1898 ed.) Vol. II, p.248. In E.I.1, art. "Yazīd son of 'Abd al-Malik", Lammens claims that Yazīd II died at Baytrās, but in another article (E.I.1, art. "Baitrās") he says that Yazīd's tomb is believed to be at Irbid.

³See Agh.3, Vol. I, pp.68-69, Agh.1, Vol. XIII, pp.161, 163, Vol. XVIII, p.201, Agh. Brünnow, pp.5-6. In al-Mas'ūdī (Vol. V, pp.450-451), we read of a conversation between the singer Ibn Abī Lahab and Yazīd II, after the former had pleased the Caliph with his singing. Yazīd asked the singer by whom he had been taught. The musician replied, "my father". Yazīd replied - "Your father left you a considerable fortune". "But", said the singer, "my father was an infidel and an enemy of the Prophet all his life." "Yet", said Yazīd, "he was such an excellent musician that I have a certain sympathy for him." See also Farmer, op.cit.p.63.

⁴See Agh.1, Vol. XIII, p.161.

other occasion that Yazīd II was only capable of passing a right judgement on the artistic value of the different tunes.¹

There is a vague and incomplete description in the Aghānī of two singing and drinking parties held at Yazīd's palace. From this description it can be gathered that Yazīd II, on these occasions, used to sit on a high couch, with Ḥabbāba sitting on a lower one next to him. When Ḥabbāba was not with him, he and his important guests sat on Khazz (silk and wool) carpets. Opposite to where he sat, vessels full of musk would be placed and similar vessels would be placed in front of the guests. From time to time, he would stir the musk, and the guests would do the same.² Wine was served at these parties and, although we have no detailed accounts about Yazīd's love for wine, it is certain that he was a heavy drinker.³

It is essential before bringing these remarks about Court life under Yazīd II to an end, to mention that there are a few references in our material to the effect that, on some occasions, Yazīd tried to conceal his irreligious activities from the public. It is said in the Aghānī, for example, that when a prince, Yazīd went on a pilgrimage visit to Mecca and asked the singer al-Gharīd to come secretly to his place to sing for him a certain melody.⁴ On a second occasions, we

¹See Agh.3, Vol. I, p.68.

²See Agh.1, Vol. XIII, pp.163,164.

³See Ibid, Vol. XIII, pp.159-160, Vol. XX, pp.106-107, and Kitāb al-Tāj, p.30.

⁴See Agh. 3, Vol. II, pp.382-383.

read also in the Aghānī that Yazīd II blamed Ḥabbāba severely once because she invited two singers at one time to the palace, and said to her: "We are in Damascus whose people cannot tolerate what the Madīnans can."¹ This remark, if the story is true, suggests that the Caliph was not totally unaware of his position as the head of a Muslim state and the leader of a Muslim community. This, in turn, leads one to doubt much of the exaggerations that occur in the accounts of the life at the Court of this Caliph. After all, one should not forget that the life-story of Yazīd II was recorded by Abbasid historians.

Immediately after the death of Yazīd II, Ḥishām b. 'Abd al-Malik was proclaimed Caliph (105-125/724-743). The reign of this Caliph is a sharp contrast to that of his immediate predecessor. Son of 'Abd al-Malik, grandson of Ismā'il b. Ḥishām al-Makhzūmī through his mother, he inherited most of the qualities which made his family popular in Syria. Inspired by a true sense of duty, he was very conscious of his responsibility to his subjects and always endeavoured to further what he believed best for them. During his occupancy of the throne, a noticeable change was brought to the Caliphate. He cared little for the delights of worldly pleasures and his Court was no place for musicians, boon companions and the like.² On more than one occasion, Ḥishām showed

¹See Agh. Brünnow, pp.5-6.

²"He was", al-Madā'inī says, "one of three great Umayyad politicians: Mu'āwīya, 'Abd al-Malik, and Ḥishām. Wise policy and good behaviour ceased to exist after his death. The Abbasid Caliph al-Manṣūr was a great admirer of him, and followed his example on many occasions..." See Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, p.479.

his great opposition to indulgence in pleasures,¹ and demanded the same seriousness from members of his family. He is said, for example, to have beaten his son Sa'id - whom he had appointed governor of Hims - very severely, when it came to his notice that he had relations with women and drank wine. He also dismissed him from office.² His nephew, al-Walīd b. Yazīd, also became subject to his severe criticism when he knew of his indulgence in wine and music. In al-Ṭabarī, al-Aghānī, al-'Iqd and other sources, many accounts are related about Hishām's sharp criticism of al-Walīd and his unsuccessful efforts to put an end to his irreligious activities.³

Of his attitude towards music during his long term of office, we get little information in the sources. In the only reference in the Aghānī we read that Hishām was once on his way to al-Hijāz to perform the pilgrimage, when Hunayn al-Hīrī (the Christian Iraqī singer) and his reed-pipe player went out to meet him near al-Kūfa. When Hishām's

¹It is related in al-Mas'ūdī (Vol. V, pp.476-477) that a slave-girl of Hishām mentioned once the name of a certain buffoon in al-Madīna and told the Caliph some of his stories. The Caliph decided at first to invite him to the Court and commanded that a letter be written to the governor of al-Madīna to send him to the Capital. When the scribe wrote the letter and sealed it, Hishām said to himself: "Hishām writes to the City of the Prophet of God asking for a buffoon! No, by God, I will not do that," and, turning to the scribe, he said: "tear the letter".

²See 'Iqd, (1898 ed.), Vol. II, p.251.

³See Ṭabarī, II, pp.1741-1742, Agh.3, Vol. II, p.240 and 'Iqd, (1898 ed.), Vol. II, p.252. These accounts are discussed in detail in the section on al-Walīd b. Yazīd.

procession was in sight, Hunayn and his companion played a beautiful melody. The Caliph, pleased with the music, commanded that Hunayn be given two hundred dīnārs, and the reed-pipe player one hundred dīnārs.¹ The fact that Hishām did not know who Hunayn was, when the latter interrupted his procession, as it is stated in the Aghānī, leads one to deduce that he had not seen him or listened to him before. Apart from this casual meeting with Hunayn, however, we know of no other male musician appearing before him, neither before nor after he became Caliph. As for singing-girls, it is possible that some of his slave-girls were trained in music. No direct reference to this matter is made in our material but, from a story related in the Aghānī, it is clear that at least one singing-girl was to be found among his household.²

The question of Hishām's attitude towards wine receives better attention from the author of Aghānī. In a clear statement on the subject Abū'l Faraj says: "... for Hishām never drank wine, nor ever gave his guests wine to drink. He even disapproved of it, despised it, and inflicted punishments upon those who drank it."³ Statements to the same

¹See Agh.3, Vol. II, pp.341-342.

²In a story in the Aghānī it is stated that, on one occasion, 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Anbasa b. Sa'id b. al-'Āṣ presented Hishām with a slave-girl after he had had her trained in music. See Agh.3, Vol. XI, p.370.

³See Agh.3, Vol. VI, p.77.

effect appear in most of the other sources consulted.¹ Abū'l Faraj, on the other hand, accuses Hishām's wife, Umm Hakīm, of being a wine-drinker. Umm Hakīm, daughter of Yahyā b. al-Hakam b. al-'Āṣ and wife of the Caliph Hishām, Abū'l Faraj says, was addicted to wine and fond of it to the extent of not being able to "part with it".² In a poem attributed to her, Umm Hakīm not only praises wine, but goes to the extent of declaring her readiness to pawn all her jewellery and property in return for a glass of wine.³ "The cup in which she used to take her drink," Abū'l Faraj says, "is still well known to the public today and it is to be found among the possessions of the Caliphs."⁴ After that, Abū'l Faraj cites a poem by al-Walīd b. Yazīd in which the latter asks the sāqī to serve drink to him in Umm Hakīm's cup, which he describes as "a wonderful glass vessel".⁵ Even in later times (under the

¹See, for example, 'Iqd (1898 ed.) Vol. II, pp.250, 251, 252; Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, p.479; al-Fakhrī (Engl. Trans.), p.127, and others. In Kitāb al-Tāj, on the other hand, a statement is made on the drinking habits of the Umayyad Caliphs and, in it, we read that Hishām held his drinking-party every Friday after the Jum'a prayers. (See Kitāb al-Tāj, pp.151-152). The fact that there is no mention in the sources, including Kitāb al-Tāj, of any drinking-party held at his Court, and that we do not know of any of his drinking companions, makes one inclined to give little weight to this statement, especially when we take into consideration Hishām's seriousness and devotion to the duties of his office.

²See Agh.1, Vol. XV, p.50.

³See Ibid, p.48.

⁴See Ibid, p.50.

⁵See Ibid, loc.cit.

Caliphs al-Ma'mūn and al-Mu'tasim) Abū'l Faraj continues, at the treasury at Baghdād a crystal cup of large circumference and golden handle was shown as a curiosity and identified as the cup in which Umm Ḥakīm, the wife of the Caliph Hishām, used to drink wine.¹ Abū'l Faraj, foreseeing that some of his readers might raise the question of the attitude of Hishām towards the behaviour of his wife, hastens to give the following story: When al-Walīd b. Yazīd composed his poem in which he mentioned Umm Ḥakīm's cup and her indulgence in wine, Hishām knew about it and asked his wife: "Is it true that you do what al-Walīd says?" Umm Ḥakīm said: "Do you believe anything the libertine (i.e. al-Walīd) says?" "No," answered Hishām. "This is one of his lies." said Umm Ḥakīm.²

Little doubt can be entertained regarding the reliability of the transmitters of the above accounts, amongst whom are the trustworthy 'Alī b. Sulaymān al-Akhfash, al-Jawharī, and others. Al-Aghānī, on the other hand, is the only source consulted to mention these accounts. To these two facts one should add that Umm Ḥakīm is the only Umayyad lady accused of having been a drinker. Against this background, we can proceed to discuss the above accounts.

Daughter of Yahyā b. al-Ḥakam, Umm Ḥakīm was first married to 'Abd al-'Azīz b. al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik, during the life time of his grandfather, 'Abd al-Malik. After 'Abd al-'Azīz divorced her - because

¹See Agh.1, Vol. XV, p.51.

²See Ibid, p.50.

a rival wife was jealous of her - she married Hishām.¹ She was known to have been a very efficient and authoritative lady² and had great influence over Hishām, so much so that, in some important decisions, her consent was sought before that of Hishām.³ Use and enjoyment of wine by Muslim women, on the other hand, were not common during the Umayyad period. In fact, it was a great insult to attribute them to one's female relations, even if one was a non-Muslim.⁴ In the whole of the twenty one volumes of the Kitāb al-Aghānī, there is only one reference to a free Muslim woman who was a wine-drinker. She was Dawma Bint Rabāh, the wife of the poet 'Ammār Dhūkanāz, who lived in the late Umayyad period and who was himself a very heavy drinker.⁵ Dawma was known for her bad behaviour, and Yūsuf b. 'Umar, the governor of al-'Irāq during the Caliphate of Hishām, inflicted the hadd punishment upon her several times.⁶ Apart from this single reference, our material

¹See Agh.1, Vol. XV, pp.49-50.

²She was sometimes referred to as "the perfect lady". See Ibid, p.48.

³See, in al-Tabarī, for example, how al-Junayd b. 'Abd al-Rahmān presented her with a necklace made of precious jewels before he asked Hishām to give him the governorship of Khurāsan. See Tabarī, II, p.1527.

⁴See in al-Naqā'id, Sālhānī, pp.195-196, the satirical poem composed by Jarīr about al-Akhtal's mother, whom he accused of being a wine-drinker.

⁵See in Agh.1, Vol. XX, p.174 FF, the biography and accounts of the life of the poet 'Ammār Dhū Kanāz.

⁶See Ibid, pp.175-176.

contains no evidence of the spread of the habit of wine-drinking to free Muslim women. In this way, one can see that neither the personal character of Umm Ḥakīm, nor the social practice of the day, suggest that there is ground for the above accusation. Moreover, Umm Ḥakīm's remark that the rumours spread by al-Walīd b. Yazīd about her were mere lies should be seen in the light of the tense atmosphere that surrounded the relations between Hishām and al-Walīd. Hishām's constant criticism of al-Walīd's behaviour, and al-Walīd's counter actions and utterances to revenge himself,¹ resulted in such a strained relation between the two that Hishām expelled al-Walīd from the Capital and cut off his 'aṭā' and al-Walīd, on Hishām's death, and his own enthronement, ordered the treasurer to leave Hishām's body unshrouded, should his family ask for a shroud from the treasury.² Exchange of false accusations may thus be expected in such an atmosphere.

These facts, taken together, lead one to conclude that the validity of the above accusation is not beyond questioning, but do not justify a complete rejection of it. The fact that no counter evidence is available makes it safer to leave the matter under discussion, without a final judgement.

Not wine and music, but slave-girls dominated the scene at the Court of Hishām. It seems that not only large numbers of slave-girls

¹See Agh.3, Vol. II, pp.239-240, and Tabarī, II, pp.1741-1742.

²See Agh.3, Vol. VII, pp.3, 17 and others.

were to be found at the Court of this Caliph, but that great sums were spent to purchase them, educate them, and meet their expenses. Of his favourite, Ṣadūf, we read that she was bought for "an enormous sum of money".¹ Al-Ṭabarī speaks of the ruby worth seventy-three thousand dīnārs which Hishām presented to his slave-girl, al-Rā'iqa.² On a third occasion, Hammād al-Rāwīya tells us that, on one of his visits to the palace of Hishām, he saw two slave-girls wearing golden earrings adorned with precious and rare pearls.³ Accounts about the very expensive clothes which the slave-girls of Hishām used to wear occur in al-Mas'ūdī.⁴

Good education, on the other hand, was essential for the slave-girls who joined Hishām's harīm. Poetry, music, the art of conversation and the like seem to have been the most important items of this education.⁵ Educated slave-girls, it should be remarked, played, at this stage of the life of the Muslim society, a remarkable role. They not only made their way to distinguished households and assumed higher social positions, but began to occupy the place left by the elimination of free-women from men's social life. As it is well-known, the elimination of free-women from public and social life, which started in the days of the Orthodox Caliphs

¹See Agh.1, Vol. XV, p.122.

²See Ṭabarī, II, p.1739.

³See Agh.3, Vol. VI, p.76.

⁴See Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, pp.476-477.

⁵See Agh.3, Vol. XI, p.370; Vol. XII, pp.292-293 and others.

and was completed by the time of Hārūn al-Rashīd, offered from the beginning an ample opportunity to slave-girls to step in and take up the wife's place in social circles. But this supersession by slave-girls did not become complete until cultured slave-girls appeared on the scene. During the long reign of Hishām, the first signs of this change began to appear. In contrast with earlier times - (like the times of 'Umar b. Abī Rabi'a, al-'Arjī, and others) - when men's social life was shared only with free women, under Hishām more and more free men shared their intellectual interests and enjoyments with a set of women entirely separate from those with whom they shared their family lives.¹ Hishām himself was no different from many of his contemporaries. On more than one occasion we find him engaged in serious conversations with his slave-girls, or receiving in their presence poets, literateurs, and the like.²

This, however, does not mean that slave-girls had all Hishām's attention, or that they had influence over him, but it shows that the remarkable social changes which took place during the early Abbasid period had their preliminaries in the Caliphate of Hishām and at his very Court.

According to al-'Id, Hishām was "the best dressed among the Marwānid kings". On the occasion of his pilgrimage, Ibn 'Abd Rabbih says

¹See in Agh.3, Vol. XII, pp.292-293; Vol. XIII, pp.289, 290-291, 281-284; Agh.1, Vol. XII, p.170, and many others, the accounts about the role played by slave-girls in the lives of contemporaries of Hishām.

²See, for example, Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, pp.476-477; Agh.3, Vol. VI, p.76, Vol. XI, p.370 and Agh.1, Vol. XV, p.122.

the Madīnans saw six hundred camels, loaded with different kinds of clothes, enter their city. On asking to whom they belonged, they were told that they were for Hishām's personal use during his stay in al-Hijāz.¹ Al-Mas'ūdī and al-Ya'qūbī state that Hishām promoted the production of textiles and carpets, and that silks of various colours and velvets were manufactured for him.² Similar statements dealing with his magnificent palaces and their luxurious furniture occur in other sources. Worth mentioning is a description of one of the halls at Hishām's palace given by Hammād al-Rāwiyā. Hammād, we are told, was summoned to the Capital to advise Hishām on some questions connected with poets and poetry. He describes his first meeting with the Caliph as follows: "When I arrived, I found the Caliph sitting in a large saloon, the floor of which was of marble. The floor of the Caliph's sitting-place was also of pieces of marble separated from one another by golden bars. The walls also were of marble and gold. Hishām was sitting on a red carpet, and was dressed in a red silken garment scented with perfume. In front of him, there were golden vessels filled with musk. From time to time, he stirred the musk and a very pleasant smell spread in the saloon..."³ In Kitāb al-Diyārāt, there is a description of one of the carpets which covered the floor of one of the halls of

¹See 'Iqd, (1898 ed.), Vol. II, p.250.

²See Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, pp.466-467 and Ya'qūbī, Vol. II, pp.393-394.

³See Agh.3, Vol. VI, p.76. See also Ṭabarī, II, p.1739.

Hishām's palace. It was, we are told, one hundred dhirā's in length and fifty dhirā's in width, and was made of silk and gold threads. During the time of the Abbasid Caliph, al-Mutawakkil, many merchants offered to buy it for ten thousand dīnārs, but al-Mutawakkil refused to sell it.¹ These reports and the ones mentioned earlier about his slave-girls, lead one to deduce that Hishām lived in great luxury.

Hishām's favourite pastime, according to al-Mas'ūdī, was horse races. "He organized horse-races assembling for them up to four thousand horses of his own and others", al-Mas'ūdī states. "no one, in pagan or Islamic times, had been known to arrange anything of this kind, and the poets spoke of the many horses he had gathered."² Lastly, Hishām had a squint, and was described by some writers as "untractable, rude in his manners and harsh."³ With the end of his reign and the occupancy of the throne by al-Walīd b. Yazīd, the glorious period of the Umayyad dynasty closed.

Al-Walīd b. Yazīd (125-126/743-744) was about thirty seven when he succeeded his uncle Hishām.⁴ His short reign, which did not last for more than one year, attracted the attention of the different writers who dealt with the subject of the Umayyad Caliphate. Apart from the

¹See Al-Shābushtī, Kitāb al-Diyārāt, (ed. Korkīs 'Awwād, Baghdād, 1951). pp.96-97.

²See Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, p.467.

³See Ibid, p.466.

⁴Al-Walīd II was born at about 88 A.H. See Tabarī, II, p.1192. On al-Walīd II, see F. Gabrieli, R.S.O., 1934, pp.1-64 and R. Blachere, Melanges Gaudefroy-Demombynes, pp.103-123.

very many accounts that occur in the different sources about his indulgence in worldly pleasures, a whole chapter in the Aghānī is devoted to the details of the "sensual" life he led.¹ The central fact in all these accounts is that this Caliph was absorbed in pleasures, addicted to sport and drink, and was an open-handed patron of the arts. Knowing that the Abbasid hatred of the Umayyads could not find a weaker target than al-Walīd b. Yazīd, we shall try, while examining the Court life under this Caliph, to be as critical as possible. In dealing with this kind of material, one also has to be selective, because the same facts are conveyed in different forms and within different contexts.

When Yazīd II died, his son al-Walīd was only seventeen. Of his early youth, we know practically nothing. But when Hishām was called to the throne, al-Walīd began to attract attention for his personal courage, love of letters, and patronage and practice of poetry.² According to al-Tabarī, al-Aghānī and other sources, all went well at the beginning between Hishām and al-Walīd b. Yazīd but, when Hishām saw al-Walīd's addiction to forbidden things and his intentness on pleasures, he changed attitude and began to criticize him openly.³ The turning point in the

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VII, pp.1-84, or Agh.1, Vol. VI, pp.101-141.

²See Agh.3, Vol. VII, pp.1-2.

³See Tabarī, II, p.1741, Agh.3, Vol. II, p.239. In Agh.3, Vol. VII, p.3. we read that the reason for the change in Hishām's attitude towards al-Walīd was that the former wanted the Caliphate for his son, Maslama b. Hishām.

relations between the two, as more than one author put it, was the occasion of al-Walīd's pilgrimage to Mecca.

In the year 116/734,¹ Hishām appointed al-Walīd as his representative in the hajj ceremonies, and commanded him to leave immediately for Mecca. What Hishām aimed at, we are told, was to separate al-Walīd from his bad associates and to train him in the duties of his future office. On his trip to Mecca, al-Walīd is said to have taken with him dogs, wine, and a tent large enough to cover al-Ka'ba. (It is said that he intended to pitch the tent on the roof of al-Ka'ba and drink wine with his companions.) In Mecca, he completely ignored his religious duties and passed his time with singers, boon companions, and the like. He also charged his client, 'Isā, with the task of leading the hajj ceremonies. This provoked such indignation that the enemies of the house of Umayya took the opportunity to further their propaganda against the Umayyad regime. On hearing of this, Hishām flew into a rage and, from that day, relations between him and al-Walīd began to take a new turn.² Although we need not believe all the exaggerated details given in the accounts dealing with al-Walīd's pilgrimage, the fact remains that his trip to Mecca was not a successful event in his early career, at least from the point of view of the fanatic

¹This date is given in al-Tabarī (II, pp.1572, 1741) but, in the Aghānī, (Agh.3, Vol. II, pp.239-240) the date is given as 110/728.

²See Tabarī, II, pp.1741-1742; Agh.3, Vol. II, pp.239-240; Vol. VII, p.3, and Ya'qūbī, Vol. II, p.400. Al-Ya'qūbī alone states that al-Walīd wanted to build a house on the roof of al-Ka'ba and use it for his drinking-parties during his pilgrimage.

Muslims. After that, however, al-Walīd, together with his close associates, left Damascus and retired to the desert called al-Azraq (between Balqayn and Fazāra) where he stayed till the death of Hishām.¹

Among his drinking companions who retired with him to al-Azraq was 'Abd al-Samad b. 'Abd al-A'lā, whom Abū'l Faraj describes as his (i.e. al-Walīd's) tutor. According to more than one source, it was this tutor, who is said to have been an atheist, who taught him to drink wine and led him to despise religion.²

Hishām, however, died unexpectedly and al-Walīd II succeeded him. After a brief appearance in Damascus for the enthronement, the new Caliph hastened to resume, in the desert, the free life that he had led as a prince, without worrying about affairs of State or the interdictions of the Qoran. The singer Hakam al-Wadī claims that he and other singers were with al-Walīd when he first received the news of the death of his uncle and his enthronement. He says that the first thing al-Walīd II did after receiving the news was to order them to sing a certain melody he liked.³ It is even said that, in the first family meeting he held after his enthronement, he told the members of the royal family that he had summoned them to tell them that he did not intend to give up drinking and listening to music.⁴ Whatever doubts we may entertain regarding

¹See Agh.3, Vol. II, p.240.

²See Tabarī, II, p.1741, and Agh.3, Vol. II, p.239; Vol. VII, p.3.

³See Agh.3, Vol. VII, p.17.

⁴See Ibid, p.22.

the reliability of such accounts, coming as they do from Abbasid and Sh'ite sources, the fact remains that al-Walīd's entourage consisted of drinking companions and singers, and that the Court life then was very sensual. At his Court, musicians from all parts were welcomed. Among the famous artists of the time who visited his Court and were received with much consideration were: Ma'bad, Ibn 'Ā'isha, Dahmān al-Ashqar, Mālik, Ḥakam al-Wādī, al-Hudhalī, Yūnus al-Kātib, 'Aṭarrad, 'Umar al-Wādī, Abū Kāmil al-Ghuzayyil, Ash'ab, al-Abjar, Yahyā Fīl, and others.¹ There is more than one reference in our material to each one of these singers, the singing-parties they held in the presence of this Caliph, and the honours showered upon them. The Caliph himself was a good artist, and is said to have been both a player and composer. Besides being a good singer and a performer on the 'ūd (lute) and tabl (drum), he is said to have composed many melodies.² Of his music tutors one can name Yahyā Fīl, who gave him music lessons during a stay in Mecca.³

Al-Walīd II, it is said, was only very exceptionally sober and, even as Crown Prince, he indulged in wine every day. Immediately after

¹See Agh.3, Vol. II, p.210; Vol. IV, p.400; Vol. VI, pp.79, 80; Vol. VII, p.46; Agh.1, Vol. XVII, pp.100, 167; Vol. XIX, p.92, and many others. The singer Ash'ab, we are told, used to wear trousers made of monkey skin and attach a monkey's tail to them before singing for al-Walīd. See Agh.3, Vol. VII, p.46 and 'Iod, (1898 ed.), Vol. II, p.256.

²See Agh.3, Vol. IX, pp.274-275 and Vol. VII, p.60.

³See Ibid, Vol. IX, p.275.

he was called to the throne, Abū'l Faraj says, the names of Mutī' b. Iyās, Hammād 'Ajrād,¹ al-Mutī'ī al-Mughannī, were added to the list of his courtiers, for their long experience with wine and wine-parties.² An eye-witness claims that, on one occasion, from evening to dawn, al-Walīd II drank seventy cups of wine.³ Reports of similar nature occur very often in our material. The fact that the reliability of our sources is questionable does not justify the rejection or negligence of these reports. It might be true that the biassed writers of the Abbasid period overcharged, or forged, many of the facts, but it is equally true that good wine was always an irresistible temptation for al-Walīd II.

Like Yazīd I, al-Walīd II is said to have paid many visits to monasteries and convents around Damascus, for the only purpose of enjoying their much-praised wine. The author of Masālik al-Absār supplies us with a detailed list of the monasteries and convents visited by al-Walīd II, and cites many of the incidents that took place during these visits. According to this author, al-Walīd visited the following

¹Hammād, a poet and a rāwīya, lived in al-'Irāq during the late Umayyad and early Abbasid periods. Known for the sensual and immoral life he led, Hammād was described by some writers as "dissolute and without religion". For his biography and the accounts of his life, see Agh.1, Vol. XIII, pp.73-101.

²See Agh.1, Vol. XIII, pp.79-80.

³See Tabarī, II, pp.1311-1312, and 'Iqd (1893 ed.), Vol. II, p.255.

monasteries: Dayr Ḥanna,¹ Dayr Ṣalībā,² Dayr Bawannā,³ Dayr Sam'ān,⁴ Dayr Murrān,⁵ and others. In all of them he drank wine, and enjoyed the beauty of the Damascene countryside. It is even said that he used to pay visits to public wine-shops if their wine was recommended to him.⁶

¹Dayr Hanna, near al-Hīra, was famous for the gardens surrounding it and attracted many visitors. See Masālik al-Absār, Vol. I, pp.319, 321-22. See also Yāqūt, Buldān, Vol. I, p.345, Vol. II, pp.640, 656 681.

²Dayr Ṣalībā, or Dayr al-Sā'ima, as it was sometimes called, was near Damascus and overlooked al-Ghūṭa. Al-Walīd, we are told, used to accompany members of his household on his visits to this monastery. See Masālik, Vol. I, pp.349-350. See also Yāqūt, Buldān, Vol. II, p.674, Vol. V, p.20.

³Dayr Bawanna, in the Damascene Ghūṭa, was one of the oldest monasteries in Syria. Al-Walīd's visits to this monastery are recorded in his poetry. See Masālik, Vol. I, p.351, and Yāqūt, Buldān, Vol. II, p.649.

⁴Dayr Sam'ān, also in the Ghūṭa of Damascus, was situated on a hill surrounded by gardens and rivers. It must be noted that this Dayr Sam'ān is not the same Dayr Sam'ān near which the Caliph 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz was buried. This last was near Hims. See Masālik, Vol. I, pp. 351-352. See also, Ṭabarī, II, pp.1360, 1362, 1371; Yāqūt, Buldān, Vol. II, p.671, Vol. III, p.139, and Agh.3, Vol. VII, p.47.

⁵Dayr Murrān was on the top of a knoll near the mountain Qāsyūn, overlooking Damascus. See Masālik, Vol. I, pp.353, 355-356. See also Ṭabarī, II, pp.1270, 1792; Yāqūt, Buldān, Vol. II, pp.696-697, and Agh.3, Vol. VII, pp.23-24.

⁶The author of Masālik al-Absār (Vol. I, p.398) claims that al-Walīd II used to pay regular visits to a wine-shop in Damascus owned by a woman called Hushayma. This Hushayma is said to have been the most experienced wine-seller in Damascus.

Should this be true, al-Walīd II can be considered the only Umayyad Caliph who drank in a public wine-shop.

Both he and Yazīd I are the only Umayyad Caliphs who are said to have had the habit of taking the ṣabūh.¹

From the many stories of his eccentricities given in the Aghānī, and other sources, one can form an incomplete idea of the scene and etiquette at drinking parties held at his palace. It seems that, at the Court of this Caliph, female cup-bearers were introduced for the first time. They acquired the name of waṣīfa, and shared with their male colleagues (sāqī or, sometimes, waṣīf) the service at wine-parties. On one occasion, we read of forty male and female cup-bearers serving the guests attending a drinking-party given by al-Walīd II.² At evening entertainment, the Caliph sat on a soft cushioned throne in the middle of the saloon where a curtain was let down.³ In the centre of the saloon there seems to have been a sort of marble basin filled with a mixture of wine and water and, from time to time, it is said, al-Walīd II used to plunge himself in this basin and take out a draught of the mixture.⁴ The male and female cup-bearers held, with the decanters, handkerchiefs of various colours and, with each drink, guests were given a handkerchief to wipe their mouths.⁵

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VII, pp.67-68, and Agh. 1, Vol. XIX, p.92.

²See Ibid, loc.cit.

³See Agh.3, Vol. I, p.52, and Vol. II, pp.67-68.

⁴See Ibid, Vol. III, pp.307-309, Vol. I, pp.52-53.

⁵See Ibid, Vol. VII, pp.67-68, and Masālik, Vol. I, pp.321-322.

It must be remarked here that the use of handkerchiefs in wine-parties is referred to only in accounts relating to al-Walīd II. Whether they were in use before, or not, we do not know but it might be relevant to note that, up to the present day, the habit of offering a handkerchief with the different kinds of sherbet still exists in Damascus. For drinking-parties, we are told, al-Walīd II used to wear special clothes scented with perfume.¹ On one occasion, we find him dressed in two yellow coats and, round his waist, he had a girdle and on his shoulders a saffron-coloured mantle.² It appears from an account that the Caliph only used to take his drink in a golden cup and that the rest of his guests used to take their drinks in ordinary glass cups.³ It appears also from several accounts relating to the drinking habits of this Caliph that he insisted on having his cup washed after every drink and on having a clean handkerchief with every drink.⁴

The sensual life led by al-Walīd II offered an excellent opportunity for the Abbasid faction to further their propaganda against the "ungodly usurpers", as they termed the Umayyads. Later, when the Abbasid victory was achieved and biased historians began to record the events of the previous era, al-Walīd's private life continued to be an

¹See Agh.3, Vol. I, pp.52-53.

²See Ibid, Vol. VI, p.79; Vol. I, pp.52-53, and Vol. III, p.308.

³See Ibid, Vol. XIII, p.278.

⁴See, for example, Masālik, Vol. I, pp.321-322, 398 and others.

excellent medium for anti-Umayyad propaganda. The reign of al-Walīd II was short, but a great deal was written about his eccentricities. Not only does the much-exaggerated tone of many of the stories related about his private life arouse one's suspicions,¹ but very often they

The following stories show the kind of exaggerations one faces in the accounts dealing with the Court life during the reign of this Caliph: It is said in the Aghānī, for example, that on one of his visits to a monastery near al-Ramla, al-Walīd II drank several large marble basins full of wine. (See Agh.3, Vol. VII, p.47.) On another occasion, we read that he, once, committed sexual intercourse with one of his daughters. (see Agh.3, Vol. VII, p.61). Speaking of his little care for religious affairs, the authors of Aghānī and 'Iqd claim that al-Walīd II once sent a beautiful slave-girl with whom he was amusing himself, to the mosque, covered in his cloak, to preside in his stead at the prayers of the assembled community, when the call to morning prayer was sounded. (See Agh.3, Vol. VII, p.47, and 'Iqd, (1898 ed.), Vol. II, pp.256-257). These authors, and some others, all agree that al-Walīd II opened the Qoran one day to take an augury and there came out "They asked victory (from God) and every obstinate tyrant was deceived." He threw it down and shot arrows at it, saying: "You threaten me as an obstinant tyrant. I will be that obstinant tyrant. When you come to your Lord on the day of resurrection, say: Lord, al-Walīd has torn me to bits." (See Agh.3, Vol. VII, p.49, 'Iqd, (1898 ed.), Vol. II, p.257, Mas'ūdī, Vol. VI, pp.10-11, and others.).

contradict statements made or remarks given in the course of other stories. For example, in contrast with what was mentioned in the

(cont.) Al-Mas'ūdī cites more stories about his mockery of religion and comes to the conclusion that he was an atheist (See Vol. VI, pp. 11-12). To show that al-Walīd II cared little for state affairs, al-Tabarī, Abū'l Faraj, and other authors, quote his letters to Naṣr b. Sayyār ordering him to choose the best lutes, pandores, and instrumentalists in Khurāsān and to send them to the Capital, together with the dignitaries and nobles of that region. (See Tabarī, II, pp. 1765, 1766, and Agh.3, Vol. V, p.56.). It is even claimed in the Aghānī that the poem which Naṣr b. Sayyār addressed to Marwān b. Muḥammad and which spoke of the appearance of the musawwada in Khurāsān, was addressed to al-Walīd II and that al-Walīd's answer to Naṣr was : "I give you Khurāsān as a fief. Leave me alone, for I am busy with Ibn Surayj, Ma'bad and al-Gharīd. (See Agh.3, Vol. V, p.56). These few examples give an idea of the kind of exaggerations that occur in the accounts related about Court life during the reign of al-Walīd II.

different sources about his irreligious behaviour during his pilgrimage to Mecca, we read in the Aghānī that on one occasion, al-Walīd II said to one of his courtiers that he wanted to perform the pilgrimage, but the fact that the Madīnan singers might receive him with their beautiful melodies and thus entice him to listen to them makes him refrain from visiting al-Madīna.¹ In al-Ṭabarī, al-'Iqd, and other sources, where there are accounts about his little care for religion and his atheistic views, it is stated that he used to perform the daily prayers and that he drank only after he performed the last prayer.² Moreover, in the Aghānī and other sources, there is more than one reference to the careful measures he took to conceal his unbecoming activities from the public. It is said, for example, in the Aghānī, that one of al-Walīd's first acts as sovereign was to summon to his Court the famous Meccan and Madīnan singers. He ordered them to come separately and during the night, so that no one could see them. The only singer to enter Damascus by day was Ibn 'Ā'ishā. The Caliph not only gaoled him, but ordered that he should be fettered and beaten. At this stage, Abū'l Faraj hastens to remark that, in the early days of his reign, al-Walīd II concealed his irreligious activities from the public.³ On another occasion, we hear al-Walīd II saying

¹See Agh.3, Vol. IX, p.236.

²See Ṭabarī, II, pp.1811-1812, and 'Iqd (1898 ed.), Vol. II, p.255.

³See Agh.3, Vol. IV, pp.318-319. See also 'Iqd (1898 ed.), Vol. II, p.254.

to the singer 'Atarrad, who spent three nights at his palace singing and performing on the lute: "When you return to al-Madīna, you may be inclined to say: I have sung before the Commander of the Faithful and so entranced him that he tore his garments, but, by Allah, if a word escapes your lips of what you have seen, you will lose your head for it."¹ In al-'Iqd, one should add, there is a clear statement to the effect that al-Walīd II retired to the desert shortly after his enthronement because he did not want his subjects to know that he drank and listened to ghinā.² It is thus seen that, in spite of his love for pleasure and amusement, al-Walīd II was careful enough to take measures to keep his reputation as far as possible from public criticism.

On the other hand, one should not fail to remark that al-Walīd's short reign was not devoted only to sensual pleasures, as some writers tend to show. In al-Tabarī there is a long account of the many good deeds with which he opened his reign. He is said to have fixed an allowance for all chronic invalids (zamnā), gave each of them a complete set of clothes, raised the 'atā' of all Muslims by ten dirhams, and that of Syrians by twenty dirhams. To members of his family, he doubled the pay they used to receive from the treasury. Since he was a Crown Prince, al-Tabarī says, he used to offer complete hospitality for three

¹See Agh.3, Vol. III, pp.308-309. In Agh.3, Vol. IX, pp.274-275, we read that he threatened the singer, Khālīd Sāma, with the same punishment if he knew that he had uttered a word about what he saw at a singing party held at the palace.

²See 'Iqd, (1898 ed.), Vol. II, p.257.

days to all those who were on their way to Mecca during the pilgrimage season.¹ The foregoing facts, taken together, lead one to suggest that the dark picture of al-Walīd II presented by the Abbasid writers is not altogether true and that, although he indulged in wine and was an open-handed patron of the arts, he did not forget to take the necessary precautions to save his reputation.

Like his uncle Hishām, al-Walīd II was fond of jewellery, clothes, and field sports. It is stated in the Aghānī that this Caliph used to wear round his neck gold chains set with precious stones, which he changed daily.² On several occasions we find him wearing gold rings set with rubies, or necklaces set with precious jewels, or other kinds of jewellery.³ It is said also that he took an immense delight in the splendour of dresses and costumes, and that on ceremonial occasions his dress was exceedingly brilliant. He was so fond of washī that it came into general fashion.⁴

Fond of field sports, and especially horse-races, al-Walīd had, in the lifetime of his uncle Hishām, taken part in several horse-races. His horse, al-Sindī, is described by al-Mas'ūdī as "the most famous

¹See Tabarī, II, p.1754.

²See Agh.3, Vol. VII, p.59.

³See Ibid, Vol. VI, p.281, Vol. VII, p.88, Vol. XIII, pp.278-279, and others.

⁴See Ibid, Vol. I, p.52, Vol. II, p.210, Vol. III, pp.307-309, Vol. VI, pp.79, 281, Vol. XIII, p.278.

horse of the time."¹ After he became Cliph, al-Walīd II organised several horse-races and, on one occasion it is said that he assembled one thousand horses in al-Ruṣāfa for one race.² Al-Mas'ūdī goes to the extent of crediting al-Walīd II with the introduction of new practices in horse-races, and claims that these practices were followed later by the Abbasid Caliph al-Mahdī.³

In the little fort of Bakhrā', south of Palmyra, al-Walīd II was assassinated by a group of rebels headed by Yazīd b. al-Walīd, or Yazīd III.

Yazīd III occupied the throne for only a very short period (127/744). We know practically nothing about Court life during his short reign. In Kitāb Dhamm al-Malāhī, by Ibn Abī al-Dunyā, it is stated that Yazīd III said: "O, Umayyads, avoid singing for it decreases shame, increases desire, and destroys manliness, and verily it takes the place of wine and does what drunkenness does. But if you must engage in it, keep the women and children away from it, for singing is the instigator of fornication."⁴ Apart from this single reference, we have no inform-

¹See Mas'ūdī, Vol. VI, p.13.

²See Ibid, p.14.

³See Ibid, p.15.

⁴See J. Robson, Tracts on listening to music, p.27. Muir claims (and Farmer quotes him) that this Caliph instructed the governor of Khurāsān, Naṣr b. Sayyār, to furnish him "with every kind of musical instrument, as well as a number of singing-girls." (See Muir, Caliphate, p.406, and Farmer, op.cit.p.65). According to al-Ṭabarī, it was al-Walīd II, and not this Caliph, who sent such instructions to Naṣr. (See Ṭabarī, II, 1765, 1766).

ation on the private life of this Caliph, or his attitude towards forbidden pleasures.

His successor, Marwān b. Muhammad (127-132/744-749), the last Umayyad Caliph, was too busy with the internecine strife which ended with the battle of al-Zāb and his death. The political and military events which took place during his occupancy of the throne seem to have left him with little or no time for social activity. Our material contains no reference to Court life during his reign.

Some general remarks about Court life and etiquette under the Umayyads.

The first thing that attracts one's attention when considering the general information about the Umayyad Caliphs is their love for the desert and their little interest in town life. It seems that most of the Umayyad Caliphs were nomads in their instincts for, although Mu'āwīya, the founder of the dynasty, resided in Damascus, many of his successors visited it only when ceremonial occasions made their presence necessary. At other times, they preferred the bādiya, especially during spring. K.A.C. Creswell sums up in the following way the love of the Umayyad Caliphs for desert and the development of their desert residences: "Each Umayyad Khalif, the members of his family, and the principal men of state, each possessed their camping ground. These encampments, at first no doubt of tents, gradually increasing in luxury, developed into a standing camp, and later on buildings of a permanent nature came to be erected. In some cases they even occupied Byzantine

forts... Thus from bādiya developed hira, an agglomeration of buildings, half mobile, half permanent.

Mu'āwiya's successor, Yazīd,, lived at Hawārīn, about twelve miles north-west of Qaryatain which is a little over fifty miles north-east of Damascus on the road to Palmyra. Marwān I lived amongst the Bedawīn, especially with the tribe of Kalb. 'Abd al-Malik resided, according to the season, at Damascus, Sinnabra (...south of lake Tiberias...), Ba'albek, and Jābiya. Al-Walīd I., lived in Belqā., and his son¹ and successor Sulaymān... who was brought up in the desert, founded Ramla and held his Court there. 'Umar... was buried at Dayr Sim'an (which appears to have been near Ma'arrat an-Nu'mān, c. forty miles north of Hama), from which I concluded that this region was his favourite place of residence... Yazīd II... liked to spend his time at Muwaqqar (between Mshattā and Qasr Kharāna...)... His successor Hishām lived and died at Rusāfa. Theophanes says that he began to build palaces and lay out plantations, parks, and fountains, and Qasr al-Hair... must be one of them. His dissolute successor Walīd II.. had lived in the desert for twenty years before he became Khalif, and it is expressly stated that even when he was Khalif he never set foot in a town. He himself in his verses speaks of the desert as the scene of his feasts.

¹Sulaymān is al-Walīd's brother, and not his son.

Tabarī speaks of his going to Azraq (c. twelve miles east of Qusayr 'Amra) and of his staying at the water of al-Aghdaf... After the murder of Walīd II, the Khalifate passed to his cousin Yazīd III... who had to promise that he would live in Damascus and 'lay neither stone on stone nor brick on brick'.... Marwān II seized the Khalifate a few months later. Damascus was neglected once more, for the new Khalif took up his residence at Harrān in northern Mesopotamia..."¹

Another general remark is that, at the Court of the Umayyads, some of the Sasanid customs were retained with slight variations. For example, the Sasanid custom of having a thin curtain between the performers and the monarch during the entertainment was retained at the Court of the Umayyads. It was the custom of the Sasanid monarchs since the days of Ardashīr, we are told, to place a curtain between themselves and the performers, nudamā', and other guests. The man in charge of the curtain was supposed to be a son of a Knight and was called khorrām bāsh. The khorrām bāsh, apparently, was the link between the two sides of the curtain, and was in charge of passing on the monarch's instructions to the musicians.² In a statement condemning the irreligious innovations introduced by Mu'āwīya, al-Ya'qūbī claims that this Caliph was the first in Islām "to let down curtains"

¹See Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture, Vol. I, (Oxford, 1932), pp.265-267.

²See Mas'ūdī, Vol. II, pp.158-159. See also A. Christenson, L'Empire des Sassanides, (1907), p.97.

(arkhā al-sutūr).¹ Al-Ya'qūbī's statement, it should be remarked, does not include any reference to the occasion on which Mu'āwiya used to "let down curtains". The author of Kitāb al-Tāj, on the other hand, quotes a statement attributed to the Abbasid singer Ishāq, son of Ibrāhīm al-Mawsilī, who claims that the only Umayyad Caliphs who used to place a curtain between themselves and the nudamā' and performers, were: Mu'āwiya, Marwān I, 'Abd al-Malik, al-Walīd I, Sulaymān, Hishām and Marwān II. The rest (i.e. Yazīd I, Yazīd II, al-Walīd II and Yazīd III) used to sit with the nudamā' and performers, and do everything in front of them. As for 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, the author of Kitāb al-Tāj says, singers never had access to his palace.² Besides the strong Shi'ite and Abassid prejudices which, no doubt, influenced the writings of both al-Ya'qūbī and Ishāq al-Mawsilī, the information given in other sources leads one to doubt much of the details contained in the above statement. First, there is no evidence that the Caliphs: Mu'āwiya, Marwān I, 'Abd al-Malik, Hishām and Marwān II, ever held singing-parties,³ and thus the claim that they placed a curtain between themselves and the rest of the guests rests on very shaky ground. Second, there is more than one

¹See Ya'qūbī, Vol. II, p.276.

²See Kitāb al-Tāj, pp.31-33.

³See what was said in the previous pages about the attitude of these Caliphs towards ghinā'.

reference in our material to the effect that Yazīd II and al-Walīd II (who, according to the above statement, did not use the curtain) used to sit behind a curtain during singing-parties.¹ Thus, it is difficult to state under which Caliph curtains came into use for the first time, but it is almost certain that the custom existed at the Court of Yazīd II.

It seems that there were two main reasons for observing this Sasanid custom: First, to seclude the ladies of the harīm who attended the singing-parties with the Caliph from the rest of the male attendance² and, second, to conceal from the nudamā' and performers the unbecoming movements or noises which the Caliph might make while listening to singing.³ Outside the Court, male musicians performed face to face with their audience⁴ but singing-girls, both at Court

¹See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.345; Tabarī, II, pp.1811-1812; Iqd. (1898 ed.), Vol. II, p.255, and Mas'ūdī, Vol. VI, p.8.

²See Agh.3, Vol. VIII, p.345, and Vol. VII, pp.45-46.

³See Kitāb al-Tāj, p.32.

⁴Only when they entertained female audiences were male singers supposed to sing from behind a curtain. In fact, the only occasion on which male singers had the chance to sing for a female audience was when someone died and elegy-singers were invited to his house to sing their elegies. On these occasions, male elegy-singers were supposed to sing from behind a curtain. (See Agh.3, Vol. II, p.360). The only reference in our material to a male singer performing without a curtain in the presence of ladies occurs in the Aghānī, where we read that on one occasion, Ibn Surayj and 'Azza al-Maylā' sang together at the house of Sukayna bint al-Ḥusayn before the entire company, quite openly. (See Agh.1, Vol. XV, pp.131-132.).

and in private households, did not usually entertain guests without the customary curtain.¹

The influence of the Sasanids appears also in another sphere, namely the order of sitting at the general audiences given by Caliphs. A. Christenson says that, under the Sasanids "les hommes de cour etait divisés en trois classes: 1. Les Chevaliers et les princes qui se tenaient a dix coudées a droite du trône, a savoir les amis intimes du roi, et ses courtisans et recitateurs parmi les nobles et les savants; 2. Les Marzbâns, les rois tributaires qui vivaient à la cour du grand roi, et les spāhbedhs auxquels etait confié a cette époque le gouvernement des provinces; ils se tenaient a dix coudées de la première classe. Dix coudées plus loin encore se tenaient. 3. Les bouffons et les familiers, amis du plaisirs et de la gaîté; mais les gens d'une origine obscure et infime étaient exclus, ainsi que ceux qui avaient des infirmités physiques ou qui étaient souillés par des crimes contre nature, ou dont le père exerçait une profession vile (comme celles de tisserand, de chirurgien etc.)."² A roughly similar order was adopted under the Umayyads. On the occasion of a public audience, we are told, the Caliph sat at the front in the great reception hall. On his right

¹There are only few references in our material to slave-girls entertaining male audiences without a curtain. For example, on the occasion of the fete prepared by the famous songstress Jamīla for 'Abd al-Lāh b. Ja'far and his entourage, we are told, the singing-girls studying at Jamīla's house were gaily attired and performed without any curtain and in full view of the audience. (See Agh.1, Vol. VII, p.144).

²See Christensen, L'Empire des Sassanides, pp.96-97. See also Mas'ūdī, Vol. II, pp.152-154.

sat his paternal relatives, and on the left sat his maternal relatives.¹ When this order was first introduced, we do not know, but it seems that it was followed at the Courts of the Caliphs who preceded Yazīd II because the author of Kitāb al-Tāj accuses this Caliph of not observing social distinctions in the order of sitting at public audiences given at his palace.²

Even the custom of bestowing khil'as on distinguished persons is in the view of Christensen a Sasanid custom adopted later by the Umayyads and other Courts in the Islāmic orient.³

It is said that every Umayyad Caliph had a special sign of his own for indicating the dissolution of his majlis. Mu'āwīya, we are told, used to say: "The night has passed.", Yazīd I: "with the blessing of God", 'Abd al-Malik used to drop his staff, and al-Walīd I used to say: "I entrust you to God."⁴

In imitation of the ancient orient and of the Byzantine Empire, the Umayyad Caliphs introduced eunuchs into their households.⁵ According to Von Kremer and Von Grunebaum, the main task of these eunuchs was to guard the women of the Caliphal household or, as Von Kremer put it, they were the "custodians of female honour!"⁶ Von Kremer holds that

¹See Agh.3, Vol. IV, p.316.

²See Kitāb al-Tāj, p.30.

³See Christensen, L'Empire des Sassanides, p.100.

⁴See Kitāb al-Tāj, p.119. See also 'Iqd (1898 ed.), Vol. I, pp.117-118.

⁵See A. Mez, The Renaissance of Islam, p.353; von Kremer, op.cit., p.171, and von Grunebaum, Medieval Islam, pp.175-176.

⁶See von Kremer, op.cit., p.171, and von Grunebaum, op.cit., p.175.

"under Walīd II, for the first time, commenced the actual harem system", and that "he (i.e. Walīd II) in imitation of the Byzantine custom, introduced eunuchs into his household".¹ Although it is difficult to state when eunuchs were first introduced into the households of Umayyad Caliphs, yet it is almost certain that al-Walīd II was not the first Caliph to employ them in his palace. Their existence is referred to on more than one occasion in the accounts relating to life at the Courts of earlier Caliphs. For example, there is mention in al-'Iqd and al-Mas'ūdī of a certain khaṣī (eunuch) who seems to have been one of the servants at the palace of 'Abd al-Malik.² There is also another reference to a eunuch in charge of the expenses of the palace of the Caliph Hishām.³ It is, therefore, possible to suggest that at least since the Caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik, eunuchs were to be found at the palaces of the Umayyad Caliphs.⁴ It is important

¹See von Kremer, op.cit., p.171.

²See 'Iqd, (1898 ed.), Vol. I, p.105, and Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, p.274.

³See Agh.3, Vol. VII, p.17, and Vol. X, p.157.

⁴ For the trade in eunuchs, their origin, and their tasks, in the period under review, the sources are of very little help. For the trade in and origin of eunuchs in the third and fourth centuries of the Hijra, see Mez, op.cit., p. 353FF. It should be remarked in this connection that eunuchs were not unknown in the Arabian Peninsula before the Umayyad period. On one occasion in the 'Iqd we read of a certain eunuch called 'Alqama al-Khaṣī witnessing against the famous Qudāma b. Maz'ūn upon whom the Caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb inflicted the ḥadd punishment for wine-drinking. See 'Iqd, (1898 ed.), Vol. III, p.293.

to note in this connection that the Byzantine Court seems to have had little influence over the course of life at the Court of Damascus. Compared with the Byzantines, the Sasanids had a much greater effect on the Umayyad Court's social practices. Although no definite explanation can be given, it is not altogether untrue to suggest that the traditional relations that existed between the Arabs of the Peninsula since the pre-Islamic period and the Persian Court, coupled with the old established Persian influence in al-Irāq, were the main factors behind the penetration of some of the Persian customs into the Court of the Umayyads.

The author of Kitāb al-Tāj divides the Umayyad Caliphs into two categories: 1. Those who wore the same garment more than once and used perfume only occasionally, and 2. Those who wore the same garment only once - unless it was of extraordinary quality - and used perfume every day. Of the first category were: Mu'āwīya, 'Abd al-Malik, al-Walīd I, Sulaymān, 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, Hishām, and Marwān II, whereas Yazīd I, al-Walīd II and Yazīd III were of the second category.¹

The custom of kissing the hands of the Caliph, which became a part of the Court etiquette under the Abbasids, seems to have had its preliminaries at the Court of the Umayyads. Although this custom was not a common practice, in this period, some Caliphs appreciated it

¹See Kitāb al-Tāj, pp.154, 155.

and took it as a manifestation of loyalty.¹ 'Abd al-Malik and Hishām, however, are the only Caliphs whose names appear in accounts relating to this custom.² As for the custom of kissing the feet of the Caliph, which also became a part of the Court etiquette under the Abbasids, the sources consulted give no evidence that it was observed during the reign of the Umayyads. On only one occasion we read that Muṭī' b. Iyās kissed the feet of the Caliph Walīd II, after the latter embraced him to express his admiration of his poetical talent.³

A last point in these general remarks is that, unlike the Abbasid Caliphs, none of the Umayyad Caliphs was ever accused of being a homosexual. Even the "ungodly" and "atheist" Walīd II escaped this accusation. The conclusion that one can draw from this, is that, in the Umayyad period homosexuality was not as widespread as in the Abbasid period, as we suggested before.⁴

It remains for us to say that the present study of Court life contains many gaps we could not fill. The fact that our sources maintain complete silence about many matters makes it hard to find even incomplete answers to some of the essential questions that relate to the subject under study. The insignia of sovereignty, the ṭirāz, the Caliphal body-guard, the ceremonial occasions and other important

¹See (Iqd., (1898 ed.), Vol. I, p.118.

²Ibid., loc.cit.

³See Agh.3, Vol. XIII, pp.277-278.

⁴See above, Chapter III, p. 201.

questions, received very little or no attention from our authors and, therefore, we had to leave them out. It is almost certain, however, that life at the Court of the Umayyads was less formal than that at the Court of the Abbasids, and thus it is not impossible that many of the practices and ceremonials that were observed later at the Court of Bagh^hdad never made their way to the Court of Damascus.

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note: The above works are only those to which reference has been made in the preceding footnotes.