

THE BIBLICAL *NEBEL**

BATHJA BAYER, *Jerusalem*

The *nebel*, mentioned 27 times in the Bible, is generally supposed to have been a *harp*, and probably of the upper-chested type (i.e. with the resonator held upright against the body of the player).¹ We have been led to doubt this for several reasons, of which three seemed to be the most important. First — the sources did not necessarily prove the *nebel* to have been a harp, if one did not assume *a priori* that they ought to do so. Secondly — the archaeological evidence now available for the Syropalaestian area showed *no* representations of harps before the hellenistic period; those that then appeared were few in number, and in both form and context belonged to the “cosmopolitan” hellenistic background.² Even granting the random factors of survival and discovery a correspondence between “textual” and “material” frequency was evident for most of the other identifiable Biblical instruments such as *tôf* (frame drum), *mešiltayim* (cymbals) and — most important — *kinnôr* (lyre). How could this silence of the archaeological record be explained for the supposed *nebel* = harp? One could not but be reminded of the curious incident of the dog in the night-time (“*The dog did nothing in the night-time.*” — “*That was the curious incident*”, remarked *Sherlock Holmes*). Lastly — some of the most “decisive” sources did not seem to be in the nature of evidence at all, although it was they which were supposed to prove the equation of *nebel* = harp. They were much later than the Biblical or even the Second Temple period (Hieronymus at the beginning of the fifth century CE, or Se’adyah Ga’ôn in the ninth!), and therefore belonged to the history of exegesis.

In the following we shall attempt to gather whatever direct evidence can be found on the *nebel* in its time, and to draw such conclusions as this may

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¹ The latest resumé is that of O. Kinkeldey, *Kinnôr, Nebel — Cithärä, Psalterion*, in *The Joshua Bloch Memorial Volume* (New York, 1960), pp. 40–53.

² B. Bayer, *The Material Relics of Music in Ancient Palestine and its Environs — An Archaeological Inventory* (Tel Aviv, 1963), pp. 32–33.

allow. The sources will be arranged and defined chronologically, and the informants, tradents or traditions identified, as far as the nature of the text and the state of research permit.

The sources have been grouped into sections. Each source is numbered so as to make cross-references and reminders easier to locate (thus, [III, 12] is no. 12 in section III). Care has been taken to make the translations as non-committal as possible, especially for all musical terms and for any other element which has or could have a direct bearing on the problem.

I. THE BIBLE

The Hebrew text, in the Massoretic form in which it has come down to us (referred to in the following as MT) is our basic source, or rather collection of sources. As stated in the introduction, each source has to be examined by certain criteria and the material must be defined and ranged chronologically. For MT (and for the ancient translations of the Bible) we should be able to draw on the results of Biblical scholarship, which of course depend on similar methods. Biblical scholarship, however, is a raging battlefield with very few respites of consensus. There is no way but to follow present majority opinion, with all possible reservations. Fortunately none of the conclusions have been achieved through examination of those musical terms which are the subject of our present enquiry.

[I, 1] I S 10, 5 Samuel describes the prophets whom Saul is to meet at Gibeah.

וּפְגַעַת חֶבֶל נְבִיאִים יורדים מהבמה ולפניהם נבל ותף וחליל וכנור הממה
מתנבאים:

... and thou shalt meet a band of prophets descending from the High Place, and before them be *nebel* and *tôf* and *halil* and *kinnôr*, and they be prophesying.

Literary location: early monarchy? Tradition: basically oral — re-edited “Popular History”? One of several narrative strands, each describing Saul’s accession to the kingship in a different way.³ The description of the cultic prophets at Gibeah is probably factual and appropriate to the time of reference, ca. 1020 BCE.⁴ It may possibly be doubted whether all the instruments were already present in the original narrative. This is the only instance, among all descriptions of multi-instrumental scenes, in which *nebel* and *kinnôr* are not mentioned in apposition but separated by *tôf* and *halil*. Is 5, 12 [I, 6] which has the same “orchestration” keeps the logical sequence *kinnôr-nebel-tôf-halil*. Now *tôf* and *halil* — drum and pipes⁵ —

³ Cf. I S 10, 17 f., and 11, 15. Note also I S 19, 24 which transfers the possession-scene to a different context.

⁴ This is also the earliest Biblical reference to ecstatic propheticism.

⁵ Double clarinet/oboe?

are the traditional ecstasies' stimulants; and they were not admitted into the Temple at Jerusalem.⁶ The editor may have wished to make this scene appear less "pagan", especially since the purpose of the narrative is to establish Saul as a king by divine grace. *Neḅel* and *kinnôr* could thus have entered the description as a kind of pious complement.

[I, 2] II S 6, 5 David and the people transport the Ark from Kiryat Yearim(?) to the house of Obed Edom — the penultimate stage of the progress to Jerusalem. Parallel see I Ch 13, 8 [I, 16].

ודוד וכל־בית ישראל משחקים לפני יהוה בכל עצי ברושים ובכנרות ובנבלים
ובתפים ובמנענעים ובצלצלים:

And David and all the house of Israel be playing before YHWH be-ḵôl 'ašê berôšîm⁷ and with kinnorôṭ and with neḅalîm and with tuppîm and with mena'ane'im⁸ and with ṣeḷselîm.⁹

Literary location: early monarchy? The instruments are described as played by the people, not by Levites. Even the Chronicler who edited this passage rather drastically did not follow his usual bent here, and did not involve any cultic personnel in this scene [I, 16].

[I, 3] I R 10, 12 Solomon has architectural decorations(?) and musical instruments made of the precious *almuggîm*-wood imported through the commercial agreement with Hiram of Tyre. Parallel see II Ch 9, 11 [I, 24].

ויעש המלך את־עצי האלמגים מסעד לבית יהוה ולבית המלך וכנרות ונבלים
לשקרים לא בא־כֶּן עצי אלמגים ולא נראָה עד היום הזה:

And the king (ordered) made of the almuggîm-wood¹⁰ a mis'ad¹¹ for the house

⁶ The *ḥalîl* was admitted on popular festivals only, perhaps not earlier than the latest period of the Second Temple ("twelve days a year", *m' Araḵîn*, II, 3). The *tôf* was not admitted at any time. Cf. n. 162 and text there.

⁷ This is a well-known crux, but does not have to be discussed here; cf. the parallel I Ch 13, 8 [I, 16] *be-ḵol 'oz û-be-šîrîm*. A. Soggin, "Wacholderholz 2 Sam VI 5a gleich Schlaghölzer, Klappern?" in *VT*, 14 (1964): 374–377 lacks the musicological foundation which is necessary for such an enquiry.

⁸ See B. Bayer, "Mena'ane'im — Pottery Rattles?" (Hebrew, with English summary), in *Tatzlil*, 4 (1964): 19–22. ⁹ Probably cymbals.

¹⁰ On the identification of *almuggîm* see: *CAD*, IV, pp. 75 f. (1958, with bibliography for previous publications); *AHW*, I, p. 196 (both *s.v. elammakku*); A. Salonen, *Die Möbel des alten Mesopotamien* (Helsinki, 1963), pp. 215 f.; *Enc. miqra'îṭ*, *s.v.*

א. מלמט, "מסעותיהם של מלכי מסופוטמיה לחוף הפניקי לפני הקמת האמפריה האשורית", בתוך מערבנו של גליל וחוף הגליל... (ירושלים, תשכ"ה), ע' 79–82.

The *almûg* is beyond doubt a tree which grew in the Lebanese mountains. While the botanical identification has not yet been achieved it is at least clear that the traditional interpretation *sandalwood* must be discarded. Although the present verse seems to locate the source of the *almuggîm* in Ophir, the extra-Biblical evidence points decisively to the Lebanon. The derivation from Ophir is probably due to the jumbling of three different narratives (see above, and n. 12 below). Cf. also the interpretations of this passage in the LXX [III, 3], [III, 24], and Josephus' description of the wood (n. 150 and text there). ¹¹ A kind of paneling?

of YHWH and for the house of the king, and *kinnorôṭ* and *neḥalîm* for the singers: no such *almuggîm*-wood had come and had been seen (in Jerusalem?) until this day.

Literary location: early monarchy? Tradition: "Court History", at least for the transactions with Hiram (note jumbling of the Hiram and Queen of Saba narratives).¹² While the *mis'ad* is made for both the Temple and the palace, the musical instruments are made for the *šarîm*, with no further indications. Both the present context and certain parallels allow us to assume that these *šarîm* are Solomon's court entertainers.¹³ Had the instruments also been intended for the Temple musicians the narrator would surely not have omitted to say so.

[I, 4] Amos 5, 23 Condemnation of showy rites.

הסר מעלי המון שרִיךְ וזמרת נבליך לא אשמע:

Remove from me the clamour¹⁴ of thy songs/singers,¹⁵ and the playing¹⁶ of thy *neḥalîm* let me not hear.

[I, 5] Amos 6, 5 Condemnation of voluptuaries.

הפרטים על-פי הנבל כדוד חשבו להם כלי-שיר:

The interpretation of this passage will be discussed in detail later on. Almost all terms admit of several alternative translations; our "working translation" here is in fact a statement of the problem:

Who [make a silly noise] to the sound of/accompaniment of

OR

Who [make a silly noise] on the *neḥel*

Inventing for themselves (a) musical instrument(s) like (another) David.

Both "woes" are generally assumed to be authentic. The first (5, 23) refers most probably to the cult at Bethel. It may perhaps be datable soon after 760 — alternatively 750 — BCE. The second (6, 5) refers to the idle rich at Samaria. The main sanctuary and the capital of the Northern Kingdom are

¹² Actually three separate *res gestae* are narrated here: the two joint enterprises with Hiram — bringing timber from the Lebanon and the Ophir expeditions — and the visit of the Queen of Sheba. Note reference to the "Book of the History of Solomon" in the next chapter [I R 11, 41].

¹³ Cf. II S 19, 36 Barzillai the Gileadite's refusal to be a pensioner at David's court: ...אם-אשמע עוד בקול שרים ושרות.

¹⁴ *Hamôn* translated thus in accordance with the many other uses of the term. Also suitable are: roaring, bellowing, booming. Hieronymus chose *tumultus* here, which must be understood in its original "acoustical" sense.

¹⁵ MT vocalizes *širêka*. The strongly assonant structure of the verse might equally justify *šarêka* and thus make the image even more vivid; but it is a moot point whether Amos could have called the cult-singers *šarîm* (see above, [I, 3] and n. 13).

¹⁶ The correlation throughout MT between *ZMR* and instrumental terms is decisive. So is the correlation between *NGN* and vocal terms. I S 16, 23 f. ולקח דוד את הכנור ונגן בידו. I S 16, 23 f. seems an exception; but since *be-yadô* is also very probably not "with his hand", it only furthers our contention that the enquiry on this celebrated scene should be re-opened.

castigated in these two “woes”, and both times the *neḅel* is singled out and made a symbol.

Amos never mentions the *kinnôr*, although it was as common in his time as it had always been — the stringed instrument *par excellence* of Greater Canaan. His musical sensibility was considerable: the world of sound is an important element in his choice of terms and images. One gains the impression that the *neḅel* must have attracted him particularly. But why? It is obvious that these two passages contain important clues for our quest, all the more since their terminology is so very specific. Yet the skeletal translation given above (especially for 6, 5) already indicates how difficult it is to unravel these clues.

The meaning of 5, 23 is relatively clear. Its importance is considerable. As stated above, the appearance of *neḅel* and *kinnôr* in I S 10, 5 [I, 1] could be an editorial complement. If this reservation is kept in mind, Amos 5, 23 establishes a terminus around 760 BCE for the earliest “guaranteed” evidence of the *neḅel* in the instrumentarium of a regular and official Israelite cult. The cult is that of Bethel, not of Jerusalem, but both sanctuaries were at that time of equal importance and legitimacy in their respective regions.¹⁷ Similarly “guaranteed” evidence of the *neḅel* in the Temple at Jerusalem will be encountered only when we reach the Psalms/Chronicles material. Amos knew the cult in Jerusalem well, being a native of Tekoah in Judea. Since he seems to have been prophetically active only in the Northern Kingdom it is advisable not to draw any conclusions about the cult in Jerusalem from Amos *ex silentio*. But our next witness, Isaiah, a Jerusalemite who was apparently connected with Temple circles, also does not mention the *neḅel* in a Temple context. Relevant studies have shown that the service in the First Temple was much simpler than in the Second. Amos’ reaction to the *neḅel* may thus imply that it was something *new* to him, and that it was not as yet in use in the Jerusalem Temple. The two passages attest its use in the Northern Kingdom for both cultic and secular purposes. Since the interpretation of *ke-dawid ḥašebû lahem kelê-šîr* (6, 23b) is problematical (see below), there is not sufficient evidence to *prove* that the *neḅel* had just lately been introduced or invented in the North. Moreover, I S 10, 5 [I, 1] and II S 6, 5 [I, 2], taken in conjunction, do not allow us to decide that the *neḅel* was unknown in the South during the time of the early monarchy. While *neḅel-kinnôr* in I S 10, 5 may be a later addition, one hardly dares to assume a similar editorial interference in II S 6, 5, even though ‘*ašê berôšîm*’ already indicates that the passage may not be intact.

הַפְּרִטִים עַל-פִּי הַנְּבֵל כַּדִּיּוֹד חֲשָׁבוּ לָהֶם כְּלִי-שִׁיר [I, 5] must now be discussed in detail.

(a) *hap-poršîm* ‘*al-pî*. It seems to us that the presumed *hapax legomenon* (term of singular occurrence) can be related to Ps 22, 8 כַּל-רֹאֵי יִלְעָנוּ לִי כַּל-רֹאֵי יִלְעָנוּ לִי יִפְטִירוּ בְּשֵׁפָה יִנְעֹו רֹאֵשׁ. Whether the metathesis has occurred here or in Amos may be left aside for the moment. That *yafšîrû* meant the production of a derisive sound, either of the “boo” or of the “razzberry” kind, is far

¹⁷ It should be emphasized that Amos condemns the cult not as such, or because it is at Bethel, but because under the circumstances — sinfulness in everyday life — it is nothing but hypocrisy.

more natural to the mood and the action than the usually accepted silent “push out/curl the lip”.¹⁸ The audible implication of $\sqrt{P\bar{T}R}$ was still known in the third and second centuries BCE, since the LXX translates the expression in Ps 22, 8 as ἐλάλησαν ἐν χεῖλεσιν *chatter* (?) *with the lip*.¹⁹ In both Ps 22 and Amos the meaning is clearly “make some kind of silly noise”. What noise — depends on the interpretation of *al-pi*.²⁰ If this means here “to the (accompaniment of)”, *hap-portim* refers to singing. Keeping in mind the context and intention of Ps 22, 8 we look for verbs equally applicable to “ridiculing noises” and “ridiculous singing” and find *bleat*, *bray*, *squawk*, *grunt*, *hoot*, *splutter*. If, on the other hand, *al-pi* here means “on” — directional — then *hap-portim* refers to playing and describes the sound of the *nebel* itself. Following the same procedure as above, we look for verbs equally applicable to “ridiculing noises” and “ridiculous playing” and find *buzz*, *grunt*, *caterwaul*, *wheeze*. The choice of terms is somewhat difficult since most of those applied to bad playing are a transfer from the vocal domain and their use here might confuse the issue. If *al-pi han-nebel* could be proved to mean (*play*) *on the nebel*, we would have here a description of the tone — *raucous* — and of the mode of playing — *superposed*, *hand above the corpus*.²¹ In view of what the Greek sources say about the tone of the *nabla*, and of our proposed archaeological identification, this would certainly be convenient. But since *al-pi* may just as well mean (*sing*) *to the nebel* it seems more prudent to suspend the enquiry, especially because there is some danger of circular reasoning here.²²

(b) *Ke-dawid hašebû lahem kelê-šîr*. Many commentators have held this to be a gloss, mainly because the sentence in its present form is *extra metrum*, and also because its rendition in the Greek translations is different from the “original” (see below, and [III, 5]).²³ Others accept it as part of the text and as an indication of the novelty of the *nebel* in Amos’ time.²⁴ This agrees with our own conclusion, which was based on the two verses without

¹⁸ The reader is recommended to try the *experimentum ad hominem*.

¹⁹ See the still earlier (middle fourth century BCE) μαγάδι λαλεῖν (*magadis!*), Anaxandrides 35, which is also meant derogatorily (quoted by Athenaios, *Deipnosophists*, IV, 182 d and XIV, 634 e).

²⁰ As for the attempts to etymologize $PR\bar{T}/P\bar{T}R$ through Arabic, we can only note that the dictionaries offer such a plethora of possibilities that one may choose whatever suits one’s intention. See, e.g., V. Maag, *Text, Wortschatz und Begriffswelt des Buches Amos* (Leiden, 1951), pp. 186–187, as well as the usual commentaries. Cf. L. Kopf, “Das arabische Wörterbuch als Hilfsmittel für die hebräische Lexikographie”, in *VT* 6 (1956): 286–302.

²¹ Not above the strings, since the zither was not to reach the Near East until more than a thousand years later. For semantic reasons *al-pi* cannot be applied to position over a harp-corpus either. In any case our study shows that the *nebel* was not a harp.

²² The meanings of *al-pi* in the Bible, as ascertainable from the contexts, are variously *pro ratione*, *ad iussum*, *ad vocem*, *super orificium*.

²³ See, e.g., W. R. Harper, *Amos-Hosea* (Edinburgh, 1905), pp. 147–148 (*The International Critical Commentary*).

²⁴ See, e.g., W. Nowack, *Amos* (Göttingen, 1922), p. 151. A convenient survey of the discussions and literature on Amos 6, 5 may be found in A. Weiser, *Die Prophetie des Amos*, (Giessen, 1929), pp. 239–240.

the *ke-dawid*... passage (see above). Taken thus literally, the passage might be rendered into colloquial English as follows: (*Look at those snobs with that neḅel of theirs!*) *Who do they think they are, setting up new fashions²⁵ in instruments — David?* The problem is whether the concept of David as “auctor instrumentorum” was already current in Amos’ time, since it appears explicitly (and with much elaboration) only in the Chronicler’s work which is much later.²⁶ Moreover, the interpretation of this clause is so very different in the Greek versions that one must consider the possibility of interference in the text: there seems no reason for the Septuagintan translator to have put here ὡς ἐστῶτα²⁷ ἐλογίσαντο καὶ οὐχ ὡς φεύγοντα *reckoning them (the instruments) as permanent/firm and not as fleeting*, if the Hebrew which he saw before him had *ke-dawid ḥašeḅû lahem kelê-šîr*. A word resembling (K)DWYD and meaning “permanent” may be DWR or even the enigmatic KYDWD of Job 41, 11.²⁸ It is even possible to think of *dūd* — a kind of basket for transporting building materials (cf. Ps 81, 7). If so, the first part of the verse, the sarcastic *hap-portîm ‘al-pî han-neḅel* — who grunt with the *neḅel* — might have continued with equal sarcasm *ke-dūd ḥašeḅû lahem keli-šîr* — fashioning for themselves an instrument like a basket. The possibility is tempting, but we prefer not to pursue it.

[I, 6] Isaiah 5, 12 Condemnation of voluptuaries, in a series of “woes” with prophecy of conquest and exile.

והיה כנור ונבל תף וחליל ויין משתייהם ואת פעל יהוה לא יביטו ומעשה ידי
לא ראו:

And there be kinnôr and neḅel, tôf and ḥalîl and wine [at] their banquets, and they do not regard the deeds of YHWH and the work of His hands do they not see.

This “woe” is assumed to be authentic and to belong to the early period of Isaiah’s activity, around 730 BCE. Isaiah probably lived and prophesied in Jerusalem. The society described here may well be that of Jerusalem’s rich. It should be noted that Isaiah’s frequent references to the Temple and its worship nowhere include mention of any instruments. The “Trishagion” scene in ch. 6, in which the prophet receives his vocation, has often been thought to reflect an actual moment of the liturgy (*we-qara’ zeh el-zeh we-amar* – antiphonal singing?). One cannot adduce this and other sources *ex silentio*

²⁵ *Ḥašeḅû* = set up/fashioned/adopted, all equally suitable here.

²⁶ I Ch 23, 5 בכלים אשר עשיתי להלל בכלי-שיר יהוה אשר עשה דויד המלך... II Ch 7, 6 בכלי-שיר יהוה אשר עשה דויד המלך... II Ch 29, 6 בכלי-שיר יהוה אשר עשה דויד המלך... Neh 12, 36 בכלי-שיר יהוה אשר עשה דויד המלך... Note the frequency of the term *kelê-šîr*, which is also the one used in Amos 6, 5. See also note 48 and text there.

²⁷ Variants: ἐστηκότα.

²⁸ On *kidôd* in Job 41, 11 and its possible relation to Ugaritic *KDD* “child, foster child” see M. Dahood in *Mélanges Tisserant*, I (Rome, 1964), p. 91. However, cf. the accadian *dār, dārānu, dārû* etc. (CAD), which all imply “permanency”, “eternity”. For a parallel case of alternative *KDWD-KDWR* cf. Is 29, 3 which has *KDWR* in MT (vocalised *kadûr*), and the LXX reading implying *KDWD=ke-dawid* (we owe this reminder to Mrs. O. Lipschitz-Ligum).

to prove that no instruments were used in the First Temple, but at least it seems very likely that the role of music there was minimal. The threat of syncretism was constant and powerful. It is quite possible to assume that the priesthood at Jerusalem would have hesitated to admit instrumental music which would necessarily have been dependent on — and reminiscent of — the pagan cults.²⁹ That a different attitude prevailed at Bethel is attested by Amos, as we have seen. Isaiah's extraordinary sensitivity to acoustical and musical phenomena, which also made him enumerate the instruments at the banquet of the rich where Amos mentions only the most "interesting" instrument, makes it somehow improbable that he should have omitted any mention of instruments in those of his descriptions and experiences which are connected with the Temple.

The similarities in language and subject-matter between the early prophecies of Isaiah and those of Amos have often been remarked. Here, too, Isaiah's "woe" against the rich resembles Amos' condemnation of the rich at Samaria [I, 5]; but Isaiah mentions four instruments where Amos mentioned only one. The combination appears twice in the Biblical text: here in Isaiah, as *kinnôr*, *neḫel tōf*, *ḥalil*, and in I S 10, 5, the description of the *bamah*-prophets, as *neḫel*, *tōf*, *ḥalil*, *kinnôr*. We have already suggested that *neḫel* and *kinnôr* there may be interpolations (see at [I, 1]). *Tōf-ḥalil* is the standard order of reference, similar to *tōf-maḥôl* (cf. Ex 15, 20; Jud 11, 34; Ps 150, 4 — but not Ps 149, 3; Jer 31, 4).³⁰ The problem of a similar standard sequence for *neḫel* and *kinnôr* will be discussed later. Isaiah's ensemble seems to be true to reality, and adds to the limited evidence on secular use of the *neḫel* during this period at least. Some of the roughly contemporary "Phoenician" silver bowls show similar ensembles consisting of one lyre, one drum and one double pipe being played by women at banquets.³¹ A relief from Karatepe in Asia Minor, dated ca. 700 BCE and thus also contemporary, which is supposed to show "Aramaean influence", has four men playing two differently

²⁹ Cf. R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel* (New York, 1965), II, pp. 331–339 (revised translation of his *Les institutions de l'Ancien Testament*, Paris, 1958–1959).

³⁰ The reason for this sequence could be a phonetic-rhythmic law, similar to the laws governing the formation of such pairs in other languages; cf. English: *good and proper*, *lord and master*; German: *gang und gäbe*, *Land und Leute*, which also have the longer word in the second place. Note also the Biblical *beḳi û-misped*, *reḳeḅ û-farašim*, *mar we-nimhar*, *yôm šarah û-mešûqah* etc. On the other hand one might consider *song-and-dance*, *pipe-and-tabor*, *drum-and-fife*, which seem to have been "shaped" by the realities of performance in their respective cultures. The drumming usually begins before the dancing, so as to establish the mood and the rhythm; thus *tōf û-maḥôl* may also have been "shaped" by the sequence of action.

³¹ Bowls from Idalion (Dali) in Cyprus and Olympia in Greece, see F. Behn, *Musikleben im Altertum und frühen Mittelalter* (Stuttgart, 1954), Figs. 76, 77; G. Perrot and Ch. Chipiez, *History of Art in Phoenicia and its Dependencies* (London, 1885), II, Figs. 206, 274. For a comparison of all such "orchestral" scenes located until now see B. Aign, *Die Geschichte der Musikinstrumente des ägäischen Raumes bis um 700 vor Christus* (Frankfurt a.M., 1963), pp. 64–69, 158–161.

shaped lyres, one drum and one double pipe.³² This combination seems to be typical of the Western Semitic area: the Mesopotamian orchestras have no pipes, and on the other hand contain harps or are even made up exclusively of harps. This aspect of the archaeological record should be kept in mind; we shall refer to it again in our summary of the textual evidence.

[I, 7] Isaiah 14, 11 The prophecy against the King of Babylon.

הורד שאול גאוןך המית נבליך תחתך יצע רמה ומכסיך תולעה:

Cast down into the underworld is thy pride|high estate [and] the roaring of thy neḫalîm; spread below thee is vermin and thy covering is the worm.

This prophecy is most probably not authentic (see below), and many have become attached to the Isaian collection because of its high literary merit. The form is that of a *mašal* — a formal mocking-song. It describes the king's ruin and descent into the underworld where other kings, fallen before him, address him in a dantesque scene "Thou, too, art become like us". Verse 11 probably belongs to this address of the fallen kings. There are doubts whether the poem was indeed addressed to the king of Babylon and not to the king of Assyria (cf. the similar *wē-hûrad ge'ôn aššûr*, Zach 10, 11). If Babylon was meant, the poem should date from shortly before its conquest by Cyrus in 539 BCE; if Assyria, this may be a reflection of the fall of Nineveh and the end of the Assyrian empire in 612 BCE. Since Isaiah lived in the last decades of the eighth century, and this kind of prophecy never referred to events one or two hundred years in the future but to imminent catastrophes — the prophecy cannot be attributed to him. This is the only mention of the *neḫel* in a Mesopotamian context. We do not know who the poet-prophet was, but the proposed dates are both after the fall of the Northern Kingdom: he might have seen one of the Assyrian or Babylonian court orchestras with his own eyes, or perhaps heard a description of their splendour. We may assume that he chose the term *neḫel* because these instruments did not look to him or to his informant like the *kinnôrôt* he knew, and there was only one other term for a stringed instrument in his vocabulary. The iconographical choice is too wide to permit an identification. The "roaring" (*hemyah*) of the *neḫalîm* (plural!) is reminiscent of the noisy cult at Bethel described by Amos [I, 4]; although *hamôn* is there applied to the singing, the *neḫalîm* are similarly plural.

[I, 8–15] The Psalms

Eight psalms mention the *neḫel*. It will be seen that they also have other elements in common, which, taken together, may add considerably to our information. The placing of this group here should not be taken to mean that it actually fills a temporal and literary gap between Amos-Isaiah—"Pseudo Isaiah" and Chronicles-Nehemiah. The chronology of the Psalms is notably a matter of *quot homines tot sententiae*. However, a comparison of opinions on these eight psalms shows almost complete agreement: they are "relatively late" to

³² Orthostat from South portal. See E. Akurgal, *The Art of the Hittites* (New York, 1962), Pl. 142.

“late”.³³ An important criterion for this dating is the high incidence of expressions which also appear in Chronicles, especially in the Chronicler’s descriptions of the Temple music (see below, [I, 16–26]). The exact dating of the Chronicler’s activity is still in dispute, but the limits are: after the beginning of the fourth century and before the beginning of the second century BCE.³⁴

Our quotations follow the canonical order, except for the juxtaposition of Ps 57 and Ps 108 in order to compare the doublets. The quotations have been given in their context because of its direct relevance to our enquiry. The common elements which are to be discussed in the summary are spaced out. We have had to limit the translation to the “locus verse” only, since otherwise both text and notes would have been overburdened with qualifications and discussions.

[I, 8] Ps 33, 2

לישרים נארה תהלה:	רננו צדיקים ביהוה	1
בנבל-עשור זמרו-לו:	הודו ליהוה בכנור	2
היטיבו נגן בתרועה:	שירו-לו שיר חדש	3

Give thanks³⁵ to YHWH with³⁶ the kinnôr, with the nebel-^casôr play³⁷ to Him.

[I, 9] Ps 57, 9

אשירה ואזמרה:	בכון לבי אלהים נכון לבי	8
עורה כבודי עורה הנבל וכנור אעירה שחר:		9
אזמרך בלאמים:	אודך בעמים אדני	10

³³ A convenient summary of recent opinion is to be found in H.-J. Kraus, *Psalmen*, Neukirchen, 1962.

³⁴ *Eissfeldt*, p. 540. For a comparison between the language of the Psalms and that of the Chronicler see M. Tsevat, *A Study of the Language of the Biblical Psalms* (Philadelphia, 1955), especially pp. 23–24 (“Grammatical number of words for musical instruments”).

³⁵ Equally: sound a thanksgiving hymn. See H. Grimme, “Der Begriff von hebr. תודה וְהוֹדָה”, in *ZAW*, 58 (1940/41): 234–240; G. Rinaldi, “Alcuni termini ebraici relativi alla letteratura”, in *Biblica*, 40 (1959): 286 f. For the gradual change of *tôdah* from the concept of material sacrifice to that of spiritual sacrifice — prayer and song — see H.-J. Hermisson, *Sprache und Ritus im altisraelitischen Kult* (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1965), pp. 30–59, and earlier literature cited there.

³⁶ Or: to the accompaniment of ?

³⁷ See n. 16. *Naggen bit-terû’ah* in v. 3 is “chant the *acclamatio*”. In Biblical Hebrew, *terû’ah* does not mean the sounding of the *šôfar* as such, much less the technical-musical term for a motive sounded on it. The basic meaning seems to be a glad clamouring of the people, and this is later narrowed down to the *acclamatio* of a king and also the shout of rejoicing which by now seems to have obtained a formal place in the liturgy of the communal feasts; cf. P. Humbert, *La “Terou’a”...*, Neuchâtel, 1946.

[I, 10] Ps 108, 3

אשירה ואזמרה אף-כבודי:	נכון לבי אלהים	2
אעירה שחר:	עורה הנבל וכנור	3
ואזמרה בלאמים:	אודך בעמים יהוה	4

Conjectural translation of 108, 3: *Strike up, O neḥel and kinnôr, I shall strike up (my music) in the dawn.*

Ps 108 is thought to be a late compilation, since it is almost wholly identical with Ps 57, 8–12 (= Ps 108, 2–6) and Ps 60, 7–14 (= Ps 108, 7–14). We need consider only the two passages common to Ps 57 and Ps 108.

[I, 11] Ps 71, 22

	תרב גדלתי ותסוב תנחמני:	21
אמתך אלהי	גם-אני אודך בכלי-נבל	22
קדוש ישראל:	אזמרה לך בכנור	
ונפשי אשר פדית:	תרננה שפתי כי-אזמרה-לך	23

Thus I give thanks to Thee with the neḥel instrument [for?] Thy grace(?) my God, I play to Thee with the kinnôr, Holy One of Israel.

[I, 12] Ps 81, 3

הריעו לאלהי יעקב:	הרנינו לאלהים עזנו	2
כנור נעים עם-נבל:	שאו-זמרה ותנו-תף	3
בכסה ליום חגנו:	תקעו בחדש שופר	4

Intone the instrumental music³⁸ and sound the tōf, the pleasing kinnôr with the neḥel.

[I, 13] Ps 92, 4

ולזמר לשמך עליון:	טוב להודות ליהוה	2
ואמונתך בלילות:	להגיד בבקר חסדך	3
עלי הגיון בכנור:	עלי-עשור ועלי-נבל	4

(To praise Thee) with 'asôr and with neḥel, by higgayôn³⁹ with the kinnôr.

[I, 14] Ps 144, 9

אלהים שיר חדש אשירה לך בנבל עשור אזמרה-לך:

O God, a new song shall I sing to Thee, with the neḥel asôr shall I play to Thee.

Verses 1–8, 10–11 of this psalm have several parallels in Ps 18, and both are “thanksgiving songs of David”. Verses 12–15 of Ps 144 are a thanksgiving song, perhaps for the first-fruit or harvest festival. Verse 9, quoted here, is clearly not in its proper place. It may be the truncated remnant of an exordium to the communal thanksgiving psalm represented by vv. 12–15.

³⁸ *Še'û* is perhaps related to *mašša'* in the sense implied in I Ch 15, 22.27 — a kind of leader's action in the liturgical “choir and orchestra” performance. Cf. M. Gertner, “The Masorah and the Levites”, in *VT*, 10 (1960): 252–255.

³⁹ “Art music” or “composition”? Cf. the late syriac *héghtiané* “mesures du vers” (!); see F. Martin, *De la métrique chez les Syriens* (Leipzig, 1879), p. 21.

This might explain the absence of *kinnôr* which appears in all psalms where the exordium-passage is intact.

[I, 15] Ps 150, 3

הללוהו בנגבל וכנור:	הללוהו בתקע שופר	3
הללוהו במנים ועוגב:	הללוהו בתף ומחול	4
הללוהו בצלצלי תרועה:	הללוהו בצלצלי-שמע	5

Praise Him with the blowing of the šôfar,

Praise Him with neḅel and kinnôr.

Praise Him with drum and dance,⁴⁰

Praise Him with minnîm and 'ûgab⁴¹.

Praise Him with signalling cymbals

Praise Him with cymbals of acclamation.⁴²

In addition to *neḅel* itself, the elements common to at least two of the eight (or rather seven) psalms are as follows, in descending order of frequency: lateness (6, including Ps 108); combination *neḅel-kinnôr* (6); \sqrt{ZMR} play stringed instruments (6); “instrumental” exordium (5, including Ps 150); \sqrt{YDH} thanksgiving song or ceremony (4); \sqrt{RNN} musical rejoicing?(3); \sqrt{SWRR} sing (3); ‘*asôr* apposed to *neḅel* (3); \sqrt{HLL} praise (2); \sqrt{RW} ; shout in *acclamatio* (2); *šîr ḥadaš* new song (2); *šôfar* (2). Only Ps 33 contains in itself the majority of these common elements (*neḅel-kinnôr*, \sqrt{ZMR} , “instrumental” exordium, \sqrt{YDH} , \sqrt{RNN} , \sqrt{SWRR} , ‘*asôr* apposed to *neḅel*, \sqrt{HLL} , \sqrt{RW} , ‘*šîr ḥadaš*; missing: *šôfar*). The enigmatic ‘*asôr* appears nowhere in the Bible but in three of these eight psalms (Ps 33, 92, 144). The “Sitz im Leben” of these psalms becomes obvious when one compares them with the Chronicler’s descriptions of the cult at Jerusalem in his time (see below [I, 16–27]). It is the post-exilic Temple of Jerusalem, with its “guilds” of musicians fostering the practice of elaborate instrumental music; a practice which does not seem to have existed in the pre-exilic Temple. It is these musicians who compose hymns with an “instrumental” exordium (who else but a proud professional musician-poet would put such technicalities into the “libretto”?). The feeling of “musica nova”, “ars nova”, is very much in evidence, and two of the psalms mention *šîr ḥadaš* explicitly. This concept, of the *šîr ḥadaš*, links our group with another group of psalms which also show many of the common factors listed above. These are: Ps 40 (v. 4), a late compilation (its vv. 14–18 are a doublet of Ps 70); Ps 96 (v. 1), which reappears in the “psalm mosaic” of I Ch 16, 8–26 said to have

⁴⁰ We do not think *maḥôl* to have been an instrument (cf. n. 30). We also do not think that this psalm is intended as a description of the musical practice of the Temple. It is “musicians’ poetry” (which of course does not preclude its singing at a joyful and festive service).

⁴¹ Our hypotheses: *minnîm* = lute, ‘*ûgab* = harp (two exotica for the composer of Ps 150); alternatively: the two terms are synonyms and carry out the parallelism for the preceding verse, i.e. *minnîm* = syn. *neḅel*, ‘*ûgab* = syn. *kinnôr*. We hope to discuss the problem of the ‘*ûgab* in a later study.

⁴² Cf. *mešiltayîm mašmi’îm|le-hašmi’a* “sounding to attention”? (Ch I 15, 16. 19. 28; I Ch 16, 5. 42). For another interpretation see H. Avenary, מצלחים משמיעים, in *Tatzlil*, 6 (1966): 24–25. For *terû’ah* see n. 37.

been intoned by Asaph and his "guild" at the deposition of the Ark in Jerusalem "with *neḅalîm*-instruments and *kinnôrôṭî*" (see below, [I, 20]); Ps 98 (v. 1) which, except for the absence of *neḅel*, has an exordium especially similar to that of Ps 81 [I, 12]; Ps 149 (v. 1), again in an exordium; Isaiah 42, 10 ("Deutero-Isaiah") in what is probably part of a psalm composition.⁴³ It seems very probable that these festive hymns were composed for the great feasts of pilgrimage at which the people assembled in Jerusalem in what had now, after the Restoration, become the only sanctuary for all Israel.⁴⁴ The sequence *neḅel-kinnôr* also does not seem to be accidental. Of the six psalms mentioning the two instruments (excluding the doublet section of Ps 108 and the probably truncated verse with *neḅel* only in Ps 144 [I, 14]), four have the sequence *neḅel-kinnôr*; only Ps 33 [I, 8] and Ps 81 [I, 12] have *kinnôr-neḅel*. *Neḅel-kinnôr* is also the prevailing sequence in Chronicles and Nehemiah, and it appears as well in I S 10, 5 [I, 1] where the two stringed instruments may have been interpolated by a later redactor. *Kinnôr-neḅel* appears in II S 6, 5 [I, 2], I R 10, 12 [I, 3], Ps 33 [I, 8], Ps 81 [I, 12], Is 5 [I, 6], I Ch 25, 6 [I, 22], and in the Chronicler's two quotations from Samuel and Kings (see [I, 16], [I, 24]). The precedence of *neḅel* could either reflect a certain usage in performance, similar to the one proposed above for *tôf û-mahôl* (see note 30), or — the particular pride which the temple-musicians took in their *neḅalîm*. It seems that the "grand string orchestra" was instituted in the Second Temple by the newly established guilds of professional musicians, and it is probably they who were responsible for the introduction of the *neḅel*. The idea of such an orchestra may have been brought back from Babylon by the Asaphites.⁴⁵ The *neḅel* itself was already known in Palestine before the exile, as we have seen, and even used for cultic purposes in the Northern sanctuary of Bethel; perhaps this was one of the contributions of the "Northern tradition" to the "unified service" at Jerusalem. The following quotations from Chronicles and Nehemiah describe the "grand string orchestra" within a historical narrative and complete the impression already gained from the eight "*neḅel-psalms*" and their related sources.

[I, 16–27] Chronicles — Nehemiah

As stated above, the limiting dates for Chronicles are: after the beginning of the fourth century and before the beginning of the second century BCE. At least a part of Ezra-Nehemiah is also attributed by many scholars to the Chronicler (some postulating Ezra himself to have been the Chronicler). For our quotation from Nehemiah, at least, [I, 27] the resemblance to Chronicles in style and content is obvious. All studies of the Chronicler point to his "pronounced love for everything cultic, and particularly for cultic singing and the Levites... the Chronicler is probably to be sought in the circles of... the Levites and singers".⁴⁶ This is indeed to be seen very clearly in the following

⁴³ Cf. the standard commentaries.

⁴⁴ Cf. De Vaux (see n. 29), pp. 336–337.

⁴⁵ Cf. De Vaux, *ibid.*, p. 392.

⁴⁶ *Eissfeldt*, p. 539. See also *ibid.*, pp. 535, 537–538.

quotations. Of particular interest is the Chronicler's version of situations and deeds already described in Samuel and Kings. We follow the consensus and assume that whatever the Chronicler relates about the cult, the musicians and cultic music, when he does not quote known earlier sources (and such cases are in the minority), reflects the practice of his own times.

[I, 16] I Ch 13, 8 David's transport of the Ark. Parallel see II S 6, 5 [I, 2].

וּדְוִיד וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִשְׁחָקִים לִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים בְּכֹל־עֵז וּבְשִׁירִים וּבְכַנְרֹת וּבְנִבְלִים
וּבְתַפִּים וּבְמִצְלָתִים וּבַחֲצֹצְרוֹת:

And David and all Israel be playing before God with all (their) might and with songs⁴⁷ and with kinnorôṭ and with neḅalîm and with tuppîm and with mešiltayîm and with ḥašošetayîm.

Of the instruments mentioned in the two parallel passages, only *kinnorôṭ*, *neḅalîm* and *tuppîm* are identical in both. Since an earlier source has been re-worked here, the order *kinnôr-nebel* has been kept as well; as we shall see, the later sources generally prefer the order *nebel-kinnôr*.

[I, 17–22] Davids' liturgical appointments and ordinances. The Ark is borne into Jerusalem and a thanksgiving service is held. Further ordinances.

[I, 17] I Ch 15, 16

וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד לְשָׂרֵי הַלְוִיִּם לְהַעֲמִיד אֶת אַחֵיהֶם הַמְשֹׁרְרִים בְּכֹל־שִׁיר נְבָלִים
וּכְנֹרֹת וּמִצְלָתִים מִשְׁמִיעִים לְהַרִים־בְּקוֹל לְשִׂמְחָה:

And David told/ordered the prefects of the Levites to station/appoint their brethren the singers with instruments of music⁴⁸ — neḅalîm and kinnorôṭ — and mešiltayîm signalling to sound loudly for joyful celebration.⁴⁹

[I, 18] I Ch 15, 20–21

20 וּזְכַרְיָה וְעֹזִיאל וְשִׁמְרֹת וַיְחִיאל וְעִנִּי וְאַלְיָאֵב וּמַעֲשִׂיהוּ וּבְנֵיהוּ בְּנִבְלִים
עַל־עֲלָמוֹת: 21 וּמַתִּיָּהוּ וְאַלְיֶפְלֹהוּ וּמִקְנִיָּהוּ וְעֹבֵד אֲדָם וַיַּעֲיָאל וְעֹזִיָּהוּ בְּכַנְרֹת
עַל־הַשְּׁמִינִית לְנֹצַח:

And Zeḅaryah and 'Azî'el... and Ma'ašeyahû and Benayahû with neḅalîm 'al-'alamôṭ. And Mattiṭyahû and Elifelehû ... and Ye'i'el and A'zazyahû with kinnorôṭ 'al-ḥaš-šemînîṭ⁵⁰ to direct (?)/play the tune.⁵¹

The list contains eight *neḅel* players as against six *kinnôr* players; their names

⁴⁷ "Playing" in the general, not musical sense. For *be-šîrîm* cf. the parallel [I, 2], *be-ḵol 'ašê berošîm*, and n. 7 here.

⁴⁸ Cf. n. 26 and text there; the expression seems to be relatively late, and is perhaps linked in some way with the introduction of "accompanied psalmody" into the Temple.

⁴⁹ "Signalling": cf. n. 42 and text there. The division of the sentence is our own interpretation: the interpretation of the last clause and its relation to the entire sentence are open to discussion. For *leharîm* (*be*)*qôl lešimḥah* cf. Ezra 3, 12.

⁵⁰ This is the only mention of *'al-'alamôṭ* and *'al-ḥaš-šemînîṭ* outside the Psalms

are identical with the fourteen gate-keepers in verse 18, except for *ben* (?) which seems superfluous in v. 18 and 'Azazyahû who only appears in v. 21. The order is also similar in both listings: *neḅel* players first, *kinnôr* players second; but the problematical verb *le-naṣṣeah* apparently belongs with the *kinnôr* players. Verses 19–23 give the complete constitution of the Temple orchestra: three *meṣiltayîm* (probably cymbals), fourteen stringed instruments (8 *neḅel* + 6 *kinnôr*), together with the priests' ensemble of seven *ḥaṣoṣerôṭ* (trumpets); but cf. below [I, 20].

[I, 19] I Ch 15, 28

וכל-ישראל מעלים את-ארון ברית-יהוה בתרועה ובקול שופר ובחצוצרות
ובמצלתים משמיעים בנבלים וכנרות:

*And all Israel be carrying up the Ark of the Covenant of YHWH with shouts of acclamation*⁵² *and with the sound of the šofar and with ḥaṣoṣerôṭ and with signalling meṣiltayîm,*⁵³ *with neḅalîm and kinnorôṭ.*

[I, 20] I Ch 16, 5

אסף הראש ומשנהו זכריה יעיאל ושמירמות ויחיאל ומתתיה ואליאב ובניהו
ועובד אדם ויעיאל בכלי נבלים ובכנרות ואסף במצלתים משמיע:

*Asaf the chief and second to him Zeḳaryah... and 'Obēd Edom and Ye'î'el with neḅalîm-instruments*⁵⁴ *and with kinnorôṭ, and Asaf be giving the signal*⁵⁵ *with the meṣiltayîm.*

(*'alamôṭ* Ps 46, 1; *ṣemîniṭ* Ps 6, 1 and 12, 1). Only here in I Ch 15 are the two terms associated with names of instruments. None of the many hypotheses regarding the Psalm-titles in general, and *'alamôṭ* and *ṣemîniṭ* in particular, are truly capable of proof at present. We have therefore decided not to attempt an explanation here, precisely because many of these hypotheses purport to offer some tempting but entirely unprovable "information" on the tonal quality or range of the *neḅel*.

⁵¹ In the Psalms *la-menaṣṣeah* is not explainable by context, since it appears in the headings. Otherwise *NṢḤ* seems to denote quite clearly some kind of "direction" (1 Ch 23, 4; 2 Ch 2, 1; 2 Ch 34, 12–13; Ezra 3, 8–9). Although the explanation of *le-naṣṣeah* in the present verse would help to understand not only what the *kinnôr* players did but also, by exclusion, what the *neḅel* players did, the available hypotheses are again so contradictory and unprovable that we prefer not to make use of any of them. "Play the tune" is our own hypothesis. Cf. M. Gertner (see n. 38), p. 255.

⁵² Cf. n. 37.

⁵³ Cf. n. 42 and text there.

⁵⁴ Cf. also *keli-neḅel* in Ps 71, 22 [I, 11]. *Keli* is applied both to vessels and to instruments (in both the mechanical and musical sense); cf. *kelê-šîr* and *kelê-dawîd* (see notes 26 and 48). Is 22, 24 *mik-kelê ha-agganôṭ we-'ad kol-kelê han-neḅalîm* "from the big basins to all the small flasks" (?) has often been interpreted, as seen already in the Targum, as a word-play implying "from the ritual basins to the *neḅalîm* of the Temple musicians".

⁵⁵ Cf. n. 42 and text there.

As against the enumeration of the instrumentalists in I Ch 15, 21 [I, 19]) the “orchestra” here contains only nine string-players altogether, (if the doubled *Ye’i’el* is considered, by comparison with the previous lists, as one *Ya’azi’el*/*Azi’el*/*Azazyahû* and one *Ye’i’el*) with one cymbal player and — in verse 6 — two and not seven priests with trumpets. Of the nine players, seven appear in the previous list as *neḅalîm* players. The proportion of seven *neḅalîm* to two *kinnorôṭ* seems unrealistic. Although the Chronicler is clearly attempting to set up a “duty roster” in order to make his description seem as “true” as possible, the comparison — here and in various genealogical lists — shows that several conflicting traditions or opinions are present in the text. It is therefore advisable not to take the information too literally.

[I, 21] I Ch 25, 1

ויבדל דויד ושרי הצבא לעבדה לבני אסף והימן וידותון הנביאים בכנרות בנבלים
ובמצלתים ויהי מספרם אנשי מלאכה לעבודתם:

And David and the commanders of the army(?) appointed/selected(?) for the temple-duty(?) the sons of Asaf and Hêman and Yedûtûn, those prophesying | the prophets⁵⁶ with kinnorôṭ, with neḅalîm and with meṣiltayîm, and their number was, workmen according to their duty(?).

Either the text is corrupt here, or the sentence is continued in the next verse. As in the preceding quotations, exact numbers and “duty rosters” are attempted: verse 3 here lists six sons of *Yedûtûn* as *kinnôr* players, but except for *Mattiṭyahû* none are identical with the six *kinnôr* players in I Ch 15, 21 [I, 19].

[I, 22] I Ch 25, 6

כל-אלה על-ידי אביהם בשיר בית יהוה במצלתים נבלים וכנרות לעבודת בית
האליהים על ידי המלך אסף וידותון והימן:

All these beside(?)/according to the instruction of (?) their father (performing?) the song/music(?) of/in (?) the house of YHWH with meṣiltayîm, neḅalîm and kinnorôṭ for duty/worship of/in (?) the house of God according to the instruction/ ordinance (?) of the king, Asaf and Yedûtûn and Hêman.

The entire text from the beginning of the chapter to the end of v. 6 seems to be an unresolved conflation of several sources. It is therefore advisable to disconnect the “fourteen sons and three daughters” of *Hêman* mentioned in v. 5 from “all these” in v. 6, thus restoring the three daughters to the genealogy where they properly belong — and taking them out of the temple orchestra where they definitely do not.

[I, 23] II Ch 5, 12 Solomon inaugurates the Temple.

12 והלויים המשררים לכלם לאסף להימן לידתון ולבניהם ולאחיהם מלכשים בוך
במצלתים ובנבלים וכנרות עמדים מזרח למזבֶּח ועמהם כהנים למאה ועשרים
מחצצרים בחצצרות:

⁵⁶ MT has the consonantal spelling *NBY’YM*—prophets but vocalizes it *nibbe(y)’tm* — those that prophesy, an interpretation also followed by the Septuagint, Targum and Vulgata.

And the Levites-musicians,⁵⁷ all of them, Asaf, Hēman, Yedûṭûn⁵⁸ and their sons and their brethren, dressed in būṣ cloth,⁵⁹ with meṣiltayîm and with neḅalîm and kinnorôṭ, be standing to the east of the altar, and with them priests (numbering) a hundred and twenty trumpeting on haṣoṣerôṭ.

This is the only Biblical reference to the position of the instrumentalists, here associated with a thanksgiving sacrifice. We cannot know whether they were always stationed there. A later reference, in the Mishnah, has them standing on the fifteen steps leading from the "Court of Israel" to the "Court of Women", again on a special occasion — the *šimḥat beṭ haš-šō'ebah* festival (see [VIII, 1]. The rest of the quotation is more or less on the standard pattern.

[I, 24] II Ch 9, 11 Solomon's precious furnishings. Parallel see I R 10, 12 [I, 3].

ויעש המלך את-עצי האלגומים מסלות לבית-יהוה ולבית המלך וכנרות ונבלים
לשָׁרִים ולא-נראו כהם לפנים בארץ יהודה:

And the king (ordered) made of the algûmmîm wood mesillôṭ for the house of YHWH and for the house of the king, and kinnorôṭ and neḅalîm for the singers, and there had not been seen the likes of them hitherto in the land of Judah.

The earlier text is followed faithfully, except for *mis'ad* which has become *mesillôṭ* (both not yet known), the metathesis *almuggîm* – *algûmmîm*, and the justified transfer of the "novelty" to the past tense. Similar to the parallels II S 6, 5 / I Ch 13, 8 [I, 2 / I, 16] the old order *kinnôr-neḅel* has been kept.

[I, 25] II Ch 20, 28

Jehoshaphat's army returns to Jerusalem after the victory over the Moabites, Ammonites and Me'unites.

ויבאו ירושלם בנבלים ובכנרות ובהצצרות אל-בית יהוה:

And they came to/entered Jerusalem with neḅalîm and with kinnorôṭ and with haṣoṣerôṭ to the house of YHWH.

This orchestra is apparently made up of temple musicians (cf. v. 21) who have accompanied the army into the field. The entire narrative is taken as a typical "chronistic" composition.^{59*} Although the details do not appear

⁵⁷ The double designation "Levites-musicians" may testify to a stage at which the levitic status of the musicians was not yet fully established. On the "status struggle" of the musicians see, e.g., R. H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (New York, 1941), pp. 797–798, 801. Note also the two lists in I Ch 15, where the same persons are designated in v. 18 as "gatekeepers" and in vv. 20–21 as musicians (see [I, 18]). For a recent treatment of the problem see A. H. J. Gunneweg, *Leviten und Priester* (Göttingen, 1965), and its critique by R. E. Clements in *VT*, 17 (1967): 128–130.

⁵⁸ The prefix *le*, here and in I Ch 25, 1 [I, 21], is difficult to explain.

⁵⁹ Another trace of the "status struggle" (cf. n. 57). In the Chronicler's description of David transporting the Ark and dancing before it he, too, is wearing a coat or cloak of *bûṣ*. See also Josephus, *Antiquities*, XX, 216.

^{59*} For its analysis see *Eissfeldt*, pp. 536–537.

in the Jehoshaphat-narrative in II R 3, it should be noted that there, too, a victory against the Moabites is achieved by divine intervention and preceded by musically inspired prophecy (Elisha). The differences between the two narratives are greater than the similarities; but it does seem that a now un-retrievable tradition of importance to the musical history of Jehoshaphat's time and the Jerusalem cult has left its trace here.

[I, 26] II Ch 29, 25 Hezekiah purifies the Temple and reforms the cult. A celebration is held.

25 ויעמד את-הלרים בית יהוה במצלתים בנבלים ובכנרות במצות דויד וגד הזה-
המלך ונתן הנביא כי ביד-יהוה המצוה ביד-נביאיו: 26 ויעמדו הלרים בכלי דויד
ההכנים כחצרות:

And he stationed/appointed the Levites (in) the house of YHWH with mešiltayîm, with neḅalîm and with kinnorôṭ according to the precept of David⁶⁰ and Gad the king's seer and Nathan the prophet, for the precept is through God through his prophets.⁶¹

[I, 27] Nehemiah 12, 27 Festive dedication of the rebuilt wall of Jerusalem.

ובחנכת חומת ירושלם בקשו את-הלרים בכל-מקומתם להביאם לירושלם לעשה
חנכה ושמחה ובתודות ובשיר מצלתים נבלים ובכנרות:

And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought out the Levites from all their places to bring them to Jerusalem to carry out (the) dedication and (the) rejoicing, and with thanksgiving⁶² and with song/music⁶³ (with) mešiltayîm, (with) neḅalîm and with kinnorôṭ.

This is often considered as an insertion by the editor (the Chronicler?) into the original "Memoirs of Nehemiah".⁶⁴ The vocabulary and order of the instruments are obviously in the chronistic style.

From the twelve quotations in Chronicles-Nehemiah we may deduce the following information. The prevalent impression is that of a standard "grand string orchestra" of at least six *neḅalîm* and six *kinnorôṭ* — an orchestra which may not impress the modern concert-goer as "grand" but which was considered by the Temple musicians and the Chronicler as an extraordinary cultural and cultic achievement. As already implied above (p. 97), the direct inspiration must be sought in Mesopotamia, in those palace orchestras which the exiles surely had occasion to hear and observe. It is there that we find the homogenous ensembles made up of one or two kinds of stringed instruments

⁶⁰ The reform is interpreted as a restoration; the image of David as founder of the Temple music is already fairly stabilized, but has still to be "buttressed" by Gad and Nathan; cf. *Eissfeldt*, pp. 538–539.

⁶¹ This use of *be-yad* whether in the sense of "through" or "by the order of", should be borne in mind for the solution of the crux *we-dawid niggen be-yadô* (I S 16, 14 f.; cf. n. 16).

⁶² Cf. n. 35.

⁶³ Cf. *kelê-šîr* (see n. 54).

⁶⁴ See *Eissfeldt*, p. 542.

only, for which no iconographical or documentary parallels have as yet been found in the Syropalaestinian area or in Egypt. The instruments themselves, we emphasize, were already known before the exile — the *kinnôr* autochthonous and ancient, the *neḫel* a relatively late invention. It was only the “idea of a string orchestra” that was new (nothing can be deduced about the tonal contents, for lack of evidence). As a legitimation, the historical image of David was overlaid with the legendary attribution that it was he who ordained everything connected with the Temple music and even invented or at least established the use of the *kinnôr* and *neḫel*. This may well be explained not only by the struggle of the musicians to achieve levitical status, and indeed status as such⁶⁵, but also by the need for legitimizing the new and ambitious practice against the objection of those who saw it as a foreign cultural import smacking of heathenry. The Chronicler’s standard wording, also followed in most of the “*neḫel* psalms”, is the order *neḫel-kinnôr*, as against *kinnôr-neḫel* in older sources. The references themselves are also standardized in form (*with meṣiltayîm, neḫalîm and kinnorôṭ*). This probably implies a particular consciousness of the rôle of the *neḫel*, and, through the standardization of verbal expression — a standardization of practice. The Temple instrumentarium was now fixed. While the exact number of instruments and their possible reduction or augmentation on specific liturgical occasions are not known, the general scheme is clear: (a) an orchestra of *neḫalîm* and *kinnorôṭ*, played by professional musicians who now had the status of holy Levites, to accompany the singers who had the same status; (b) a small group of *meṣiltayîm* players (often only one), who were the “prefects of the levites” and both supervised and “punctuated” the ceremony (the signalling clash being equally useful for introducing the public’s responsoria); (c) a separate group of priests with trumpets, whose “entry” was probably also signalled by the *meṣiltayîm*. This consciousness of a well-ordered musical “agenda” and its impressive musical content — quantitatively and no doubt also esthetically — gave rise to the unusual phenomenon of cultic chants which are not only a praise of the Divinity but also an assembly of self-glorificatory compositions unequalled in the musicianly profession before or since. “Praise God with music” was, in itself, a new concept. It soon became “We, the musicians, praise God with our music and look what geniuses we are...”

The evidence, plentiful and instructive as it is, yet lacks three vital components. Except for the *’almûggîm* reference we do not know what the *kinnorôṭ* and *neḫalîm* were made of. There is no description of their form and size. And, except for the controversial *porṭîm* in Amos 6, 5 [I, 5] — nothing is said about the handling and/or tone quality of the *neḫel*. Fortunately the non-Biblical

⁶⁵ Cf. n. 57.

sources begin to speak just where the Biblical record leaves off, and we may take the responsibility of assuming that the information which they contain can be applied to the Palestinian-Biblical *nebel*. These sources will be examined in the following sections.

II. GREEK SOURCES, FIFTH TO THIRD CENTURY BCE

At present we have been able to locate five references, within this period, to an instrument called *νάβλα*.

Passages or sections of terminological importance are quoted in the original and in translation. Where the text offers no particular difficulty only the translation has been given.

[II, 1] Sophocles (d. ca. 406 BCE). Fragment of an unknown tragedy, as quoted by Plutarch (ca. 45–125 CE).⁶⁶

οὐ *νάβλα* κωκυτοῖσιν οὐ *λύρα* φίλα.

Nor to the mourners (wailers) is the nabla, nor the lyra pleasing.

[II, 2] Sopater (fl. ca. 300 BCE), comic poet, Alexandria. Fragment of the comedy “The Portal”, as quoted by Athenaios.⁶⁷

οὔτε, τοῦ Σιδωνίου *νάβλα* λαρυγγόφωνος ἐκκεχόρδωται τύπος.

Nor has the throaty thrum⁶⁸ of the Sidonian nabla passed from the strings.

[II, 3] Sopater, v.s. Fragment of the comedy “Mystacus’ Hireling”, as quoted by Athenaios.⁶⁹

νάβλας ἐν ἄρθροις γραμμάτων οὐκ εὐμελής, ᾗ λωτὸς ἐν πλευροῖσιν ἄψυχος παγεῖς ἔμπνουν ἀνίει μοῦσαν. ἔγρετ’ οὐδέ τις τὸν ἠδονῆς μελωδὸν σῦάζων χορόν.

In the articulation of its lines the nabla is not pretty;⁷⁰ fixed in its ribs is lifeless lotus-wood, which gives forth a breathy music. None was ever stirred (by it?) to hail with cries of evoe the melodious band of pleasure.⁷¹

⁶⁶ Sophocles fragm. 849 (Plutarch, *Moralia*, 394 B).

⁶⁷ Sopater fragm. 16 (*Deipnosophists*, IV, 175 c). All quotations from Athenaios follow the Loeb Classical Library edition (in the following abbreviated to LCL), edited and translated by Burton Gulick. We have followed Gulick’s translation, except for some slight adjustments necessary for musicological reasons and omitting the translation of musical — especially instrumental terms. The numeration of the fragments follows that of the compilations referred to in LCL (*q.v.*); other compilations have different numerations.

⁶⁸ LCL *deep-toned*, amended here to *throaty* which is more literal and extremely important for the present enquiry as well.

⁶⁹ Sopater fragm. 10 (*Deipnosophists*, IV, 175 c, immediately after the foregoing quotation [II, 2]).

⁷⁰ Pun on εὐμελής *graceful/melodious* (LCL *pretty*).

⁷¹ The sentence is corrupt and has been reconstructed; see the translator’s remark in LCL.

[II, 4] Philemon (361–263/2 BCE), comic poet, Greece. Fragment of the comedy “The Fancy Man”, as quoted by Athenaios.⁷²

*A: We ought to have with us, Parmenon, an auletris or a nablas.*⁷³ *P: And what is the nablas? A: You don't know, lunatic? P: Not I, by Zeus. A: What can you mean? You don't know a nablas? Then you don't know what anything good is. Don't you even know what a sambucistria is?*⁷⁴ (End of quotation.)

[II, 5] Euphorion of Chalcis (b. 275 BCE), epic poet, head of the royal library of the Seleucids at Antioch in Syria. Fragment of his treatise on the Isthmian games, as quoted by Athenaios.⁷⁵

The persons now called nablístai, pandourístai and sambykístai use no newly invented instrument; for the baromos and the barbiton which Sappho and Anacreon mention, the magadis, the trigonon and the sambyke are old.

For the Sophoclean fragment [II, 1] neither title nor context are given. If it is genuine it may at best serve as evidence that the *nebel* was already known to a Greek writer shortly before the beginning of the fourth century. The designation *nabla* remains constant, with only occasional orthographic variations. As the more explicit texts indicate, the instrument remained an exotic and kept both its name and its Near Eastern connotations. Of the Greek, Hellenistic and Roman sources mentioning the *nabla*, most are Near Eastern as well, especially Alexandrian (in the present group Sopater is Alexandrian and Euphorion a denizen of Antioch). Athenaios himself, our main tradent, was a native of Naucratis — the old Ionian commercial colony-port in the Egyptian delta. The so-called “Deipnosophístai” is a curious miscellany in fifteen books, in the form of a symposium, and was written shortly after 192 CE. The main topics of discussion are cookery, the demi-monde, and music. Since many classical and hellenistic writings have been preserved only through quotation in the Deipnosophísts the book is an invaluable source, not the least for musicology.⁷⁶

The quotations from Sopater [II, 2–3] are put into the mouth of the musician Alceides of Alexandria, who extols the Alexandrian hydraulis while “having a dig” at another symposiast, the Roman jurist and official Ulpian of Tyre: *How much better, wisest Ulpian, this hydraulis is than the so-called nablas*

⁷² Philemon fragm. 44 (*Deipnosophísts*, IV, 175 d).

⁷³ αὐλητρίς,νάβλας (for ναβλίστρια?) *aulos-player, nabla-player*, both fem.

⁷⁴ The editor's explanation of *sambuca* (LCL, II, p. 297, note c) repeats the conventional opinion and should be disregarded.

⁷⁵ Euphorion fragm. 32 (*Deipnosophísts*, IV, 182 e).

⁷⁶ The quotations in musicological literature are generally identified as “Athenaios, Deipnosophísts” only, without distinguishing between Athenaios' own evidence and his quotations from the works of others. These constitute in fact the major part of his work — and often antedate his time by several centuries, as seen here.

which the parodist Sopater... says is likewise⁷⁷ an invention of the Phoenicians. These are his words... (quotation follows). Ulpian's reaction to this mockery of his "national instrument" is not given, but the two quotations from Sopater furnish some very important information. The *nabla* is called *Sidonian*, and the Alexandrian Greeks hold it to be a Phoenician invention. Neither in these nor in later Greek or Roman sources is the *nabla* ever associated with a cultic function, whether Greek or Oriental (the LXX and Josephus are of course neither Greek nor Roman cultural documents). The assertion that the Phoenicians invented the *nabla* can be found several times.⁷⁸ On the combined evidence of the Biblical and hellenistic sources it may be concluded that sometime in the first half of the first millennium BCE a stringed instrument was invented, or at least came into use, in the Syropalaestian area; it was called *nebel* in Palestine and probably *nabla* in Phoenicia;⁷⁹ adopted into the Israelite cultic instrumentarium — first in the Northern Kingdom and only much later in Judea, it also continued in secular use in the entire region, and became known in Hellenistic Egypt and mainland Greece as a Phoenician "export".

The *nabla*, as known to Sopater in Alexandria, had a "throaty thrum", a "breathy" tone. Its form was not considered elegant — probably as compared with the *lyra* or *kithara*. The construction included "ribs" of lotus wood. Apparently it was not in favour for merrymaking on the traditional Greek pattern. It was an outsider, and never achieved any social status. The quotation from Philemon [II, 4] is frustrating: it breaks off just where a description of the *nabla* and the *sambyke* is expected to follow. For a similarly frustrating passage see Josephus [VI, 1].

III. THE SEPTUAGINT, THIRD TO SECOND CENTURY BCE

Each of the translations ("versions") of the Bible is a witness for its own period, locality and cultural context. The Septuagint (in the following denoted as LXX), too, does not tell us what the *nebel* was: it shows how its respective translators thought fit to render what they understood for the benefit of those for whom their work was intended.

The textual situation is extremely complicated. We shall have to take for granted the basic assumptions in the field of Septuagintan studies, since a detailed exposition — and the application to each reference — is beyond

⁷⁷ Like the *gingras*-pipes mentioned before, § 174 f.

⁷⁸ But note Philo Byblius [VII, 3]!

⁷⁹ Cf. n. 160.

the scope of this enquiry.⁸⁰ A specific study of the treatment of musical terms and descriptions in the LXX (and in the later Greek versions) is not yet available.

The quotations will be given in running order, without translation except where the LXX obviously differs from MT. The “working translation” of MT can easily be located through the co-ordinated numbering of each quotation: e.g. [III, 1] parallels [I, 1]. However, for all musical terms each MT term has been inserted in the LXX quotation after its translation. We have not taken the variant readings of the manuscript tradition into account, except where directly relevant to the translation of *nebel* and its parallel “tracer element” *kinnôr*.

[III, 1] I S 10, 5⁸¹ καὶ ἀπαντήσεις χορῶν προφητῶν καταβαινόντων ἐκ τῆς βαμα, καὶ ἔμπροσθεν αὐτῶν νάβλα (נבֿלא) καὶ τύμπανον (תֿת) καὶ αὐλὸς (לֿילת) καὶ κινύρα (רֿונר)...

[III, 2] II S 6, 5⁸² καὶ Δαυὶδ καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ παίζοντες ἐνώπιον κυρίου ἐν ὄργανοις ἡρμσοσμένοις ἐν ἰσχύι (“בכֿלי־עוֿ”) ⁸³καὶ ἐν ῥοδαῖς καὶ ἐν κινύραις (רֿונר) καὶ ἐν νάβλαις (נבֿלֿים) καὶ ἐν τυμπάνοις (תֿתֿים) καὶ ἐν κυμβάλοις (מנענעֿים) καὶ ἐν αὐλοῖς (MT צלצֿלים!).⁸⁴

[III, 3] I R 10, 12⁸⁵ καὶ ἐποίησεν ὁ βασιλεὺς τὰ ξύλα τὰ πελεκτὰ (“hewn timber”)⁸⁶ ὑποστηρίγματα τοῦ οἴκου κυρίου καὶ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ νάβλας καὶ κινύρας (MT ונבֿלֿים תֿרונר) τοῖς ῥοδοῖς.

[III, 4] Amos 5, 23⁸⁷ μετὰστησον ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ ἤχον ῥῶδων σου, καὶ ψαλμὸν ὀργάνων σου (תֿזמר נבֿלֿים) οὐκ ἀκούσομαι.

[III, 5] Amos 6, 5 οἱ ἐπικροτοῦντες/ἐπικρατοῦντες⁸⁸ (תֿפרֿטת) πρὸς τὴν φωνὴν (עלֿ-פי) τῶν ὀργάνων (נבֿל), ὡς ἐστῶτα/ἐστηκότα⁸⁹ ἐλογίσαντο καὶ οὐχ ὡς φεύγοντα (“regarding them as permanent, not as fleeting”?).⁹⁰

⁸⁰ For a convenient summary see *Eissfeldt*, pp. 702–715. Our basic text is the Göttingen edition, supplemented by Rahlfs for Chronicles.

⁸¹ LXX I Kings 10, 5.

⁸² LXX II Kings 6, 5.

⁸³ Apparently influenced by the parallel I Ch 13, 8, although MT there reads *bekol-’oz* and not *bikeley ’oz* (for which see II Ch 30, 21).

⁸⁴ Probably an application of the “standard combination” to terms which were no longer understood (cf. also the difference between the two parallels II S 6, 5 [I, 2] and I Ch 13, 8 [I, 16] in MT).

⁸⁵ LXX III Kings 10, 12.

⁸⁶ Instead of MT *almuggim*. Some Mss (chiefly Vaticanus) have ἀπελέκτα “unhewn”.

⁸⁷ Numeration for Amos identical in MT and LXX.

⁸⁸ Two of the many variant readings each giving different meanings for *hap-porṭim*.

⁸⁹ Variants.

⁹⁰ The difference between MT and LXX is discussed above at [I, 5].

[III, 6] Isaiah 5, 12⁹¹ μετὰ γὰρ κιθάρας (כנור) καὶ ψαλτηρίου (נבל) καὶ τυμπάνων (תק) καὶ αὐλῶν (לילח) τὸν οἶνον πίνουσιν...⁹²

[III, 7] Isaiah 14, 11 κατέβη δὲ εἰς ἕδου ἢ δόξα σου, ἡ πολλή σου εὐφροσύνη (“thy great mirth”).⁹³

[III, 8] Ps 33, 2⁹⁴ ἔξομολογεῖσθε τῷ κυρίῳ ἐν κιθάρα (כנור) ἐν ψαλτηρίῳ δεκαχόρδῳ (נבל עשר) ψάλατε αὐτῷ.

[III, 9] Ps 57, 9⁹⁵ ἐξεγέρθητι, ἡ δόξα μου, ἐξεγέρθητι, ψαλτήριον (נבל) καὶ κιθάρα (כנור), ἔξεγερθήσομαι ὄρθρου.

[III, 10] Ps 108, 3⁹⁶ ἐξεγέρθητι, ψαλτήριον (נבל) καὶ κιθάρα (כנור)...

[III, 11] Ps 71, 22⁹⁷ καὶ γὰρ ἔξομολογήσομαί σοι ἐν σκεύει ψαλμοῦ (כלי-נבל) τὴν ἀλήθειάν σου, ὁ θεός, ψαλῶ (המרה!) σοι ἐν κιθάρα (כנור), ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ Ἰσραηλ.

[III, 12] Ps 81, 3⁹⁸ λάβετε ψαλμὸν καὶ δότε τύμπανον (תק), ψαλτήριον τερπνὸν μετὰ κιθάρας (MT נבל עם ניגון).

[III, 13] Ps 92, 4⁹⁹ ἐν δεκαχόρδῳ ψαλτηρίῳ (MT לע-י-עשר ונבל) ¹⁰⁰ μετ’ ᾧδῆς ἐν κιθάρα (כנור על-הגיטרה).

[III, 14] Ps 144, 9¹⁰¹ ὁ θεός, ᾧδὴν καινὴν ἄσυμαί (אשר) σοι, ἐν ψαλτηρίῳ δεκαχόρδῳ (נבל עשר) ψαλῶ (המרה) σοι.¹⁰²

[III, 15] Ps 150, 3–4¹⁰³ ...ἤχῳ σάλπιγγος (תקע שופר) ... ψαλτηρίῳ (נבל) καὶ κιθάρα (כנור) ... τυμπάνῳ (תק) καὶ χορῶν (לחמ) ... χορδαῖς (מנים) καὶ ὄργάνῳ (עוגב).

⁹¹ Numeration for Isaiah identical in MT and LXX.

⁹² LXX “straightens out” MT: “For with kitharas and psalterion and tympanon and aulos do they drink wine...”.

⁹³ The substitution of “great mirth” for *hemyaṭ neḥalēka* may demonstrate an exegetical tendency, which was to grow stronger with the subsequent versions, especially the Targums.

⁹⁴ LXX Ps 32, 2.

⁹⁵ LXX Ps 56, 9.

⁹⁶ LXX Ps 107, 3.

⁹⁷ LXX Ps 70, 22. Note the superscription here which is not in MT: “Of David. Of the sons of Ionadab and the first of the captives”. Cf. the problem of “new songs”, discussed above after [I, 15].

⁹⁸ LXX Ps 80, 3.

⁹⁹ LXX Ps 91, 4.

¹⁰⁰ Some Mss have “and”, as in MT. δεκαχόρδῳ ψαλτηρίῳ may be a harmonization with *neḥel ’asōr* in Ps 33, 2 [III, 8] and Ps 144, 9 [III, 14] as the easiest way out of what was obviously a problem for the translator.

¹⁰¹ LXX Ps 143, 9.

¹⁰² Note the translation of *ašīrah* and *azammerah* (cf. n. 16).

¹⁰³ Numeration identical in MT and LXX. For the apocryphal Psalm 151 see below, at [IV].

[III, 16] I Ch 13, 8 καὶ Δαυιδ καὶ πᾶς Ἰσραηλ παίζοντες ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν πάσῃ δυνάμει (ע-בכל)¹⁰⁴ καὶ ἐν ψαλτωδοῖς (“שירים”, MT שירים) καὶ ἐν κινύραις (כנרות) καὶ ἐν νάβλαις (נבלים), ἐν τυμπάνοις (תפים) καὶ ἐν κυμβάλοις (מצתים) καὶ ἐν σάλπιγγιν (תוצצת).

[III, 17] I Ch 15, 16 ...ἐν ὄργανοις ᾠδῶν (כלי-שיר)¹⁰⁵ νάβλαις (נבלים) καὶ κινύραις (כנרות) καὶ κυμβάλοις (מצתים)...

[III, 18] I Ch 15, 20–21 ...ἐν νάβλαις ἐπὶ αλαιμῶθ (על-עלמωθ) (נבלים)... ἐν κινύραις (כנרות) αμασειθ (על-שמשיני) τοῦ ἐνισχυσαι (לנצח)¹⁰⁶.

[III, 19] I Ch 15, 28 ...ἐν φωνῇ σωφερ (שופר) καὶ ἐν σάλπιγγιν (תוצצת)¹⁰⁷ καὶ ἐν κυμβάλοις (מצתים), ἀναφωνοῦντες νάβλαις (נבלים) (משמיעים) καὶ ἐν κινύραις (כנרות).

[III, 20] I Ch 16, 5 ...ἐν ὄργανοις, νάβλαις (ככלי נבלים) (MT) καὶ κινύραις (כנרות)...

[III, 21] I Ch 25, 1 ...τοὺς ἀποφθεγγομένους (“הנבאים”) ¹⁰⁹ ἐν κινύραις (כנרות) καὶ ἐν νάβλαις (נבלים)...

[III, 22] I Ch 25, 6 ... ἐν νάβλαις (נבלים) καὶ ἐν κινύραις (כנרות)...

[III, 23] II Ch 5, 12 ... καὶ ἐν νάβλαις (נבלים) καὶ ἐν κινύραις (כנרות) ἔστηκότες κατέναντι τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου (“standing opposite the altar”, MT תוכח למזבח)¹¹⁰...

¹⁰⁴ Cf. the parallel II S 6, 5 [III, 2] and n. 83.

¹⁰⁵ Some variants have ὄργανοις only.

¹⁰⁶ The variants, all of them quasi-transliterations, need not be enumerated. They may imply either of two possibilities: that the translator knew the meaning of *‘alamōt* and *šemīnīt* no more than we do, or that he had no Greek equivalent for these concepts available. This may again imply either that there was indeed no equivalent, or — that the translator was not sufficiently versed in Greek culture... For *le-naššeah* the translator seems to have been equally at a loss.

¹⁰⁷ *Šōfar* – σωφερ is unusual, the LXX generally having κέρας. As in the case of *‘alamōt* and *šemīnīt* (see above, n. 106) various explanations are possible. Against the supposed predilection of the translator of Chronicles for transliterations (or transcriptions) see G. Gerleman, *Studies in the Septuagint, II. Chronicles* (Lund, 1946), Ch. 2. See also there, Ch. 4, on the “Alexandrian-Ptolemaic” milieu which the translation is thought to reflect; but if so, the translator had still another term at his disposal, namely the graeco-egyptian χνούη: see H. Hickmann, *Musicologie pharaonique* (Kehl, 1956), p. 35 (the reference to Eustathius ad Iliadem should be 18,219 instead of 18,495). The question is then — why did he not use it but kept the Hebrew term?

¹⁰⁸ Alexandrinus: ἐν ὄργανοις ἐν νάβλαις.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. n. 56.

¹¹⁰ But Alexandrinus and Vaticanus have κατὰ ἀνατολᾶς — against the sunrise (= East), as in MT.

[III, 24] II Ch 9, 11 καὶ ἐποίησεν ὁ βασιλεὺς τὰ ξύλα πεύκινα (“pine timbers”)¹¹¹ ἀναβάσεις τῷ οἴκῳ κυρίου καὶ τῷ οἴκῳ τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ κιθάρας (כנרות) καὶ νάβλας (נבלים) τοῖς ᾄδοις...

[III, 25] II Ch 20, 28 ...ἐν νάβλαις (נבלים) καὶ ἐν κινύραις (כנרות)...

[III, 26] II Ch 29, 25 ...ἐν νάβλαις (נבלים) καὶ ἐν κινύραις (כנרות)...

[III, 27] Nehemiah 12, 27¹¹² ... ποιῆσαι ἐγκαίνια καὶ εὐφροσύνην (הנכה ושמחה) ἐν θωδαθα (ובתודת)¹¹³ καὶ ἐν ᾠδαῖς, κυμβαλίζοντες (MT ובשיר ובמזלתיים καὶ ψαλτήρια (נבלים) καὶ κινύραι (כנרות).

Our source is of course the presently available text, overlaid with later recensions, and not the “original” LXX. Nevertheless, an analysis may be attempted. The translators of Samuel, I Kings and Chronicles chose *nabla-kinyra* for *nebel-kinnôr*. The translators of Isaiah and Psalms chose *psalterion-kithara*. Exceptional are: *nabla-kithara* in II Ch 9, 11 [III, 24] and *psalterion-kinyra* in Neh 12, 27 [III, 27]. In Amos [III, 4–5] the non-committal *organon* was chosen for *nebel*. Ps 71, 22 [III, 11] has the even more non-committal “instrument of (string)-accompanied song(?)” for *keli-nebel*, while Isaiah 14, 11 [III, 7] substitutes “great mirth” for “sound of *nebalim*”. Thus in 26 references (Psalms 57/108 counted as one) *nebel-nabla* occurs 14 times; *nebel-psalterion* 8 times; *nebel-organon* 2 times; once “instrument of (string) accompanied song (?)”; once no translation.

Now an examination of Greek sources up to, including and even later than this period (third-second century BCE) shows that ψαλτήριον was not, at that time, the name of a specific instrument. It was a general designation for “string-plucking/plucked instrument”.¹¹⁴ This designation was chosen in the LXX in eight cases, and *organon* in two, wherever the policy of translation was, in all other respects as well, what might be called assimilationist. The fourteen cases of *nabla* are found wherever the policy was what might be called conservative. The situation for *kinnôr-kinyra-kithara* is exactly parallel, and

¹¹¹ As in the parallel I R 10, 12 [III, 3] *almuggim* — here *algummim* — is not translated; but here it is at least interpreted as a kind of wood (cf. n. 86). For a further metamorphosis of πελεκτά-πεύκινα into “elektron” see below, Josephus [VI, 2].

¹¹² LXX editions usually III Esdras 22, 27; Rahlfs’ edition II Esdras 22, 27.

¹¹³ Variants θωλαθά; a case probably similar to the transcriptions in the translation of Chronicles (but not by the same translator). Sinaiticus has ἐν ἐξομολογήσει added but not substituted (gloss).

¹¹⁴ The detailed examination of the evidence will be carried out in a separate study. Only one “proof” for the identification of *psalterion* as a harp must be mentioned here; the constantly adduced two words from Pseudo-Aristoteles’ *Problemata*, 919b, 12. (Problema XIX, 23:9 on p. 91 in Jan *Scriptores*). Actually these do not define the *psalterion* as triangular: τριγώνοις ψαλτηρίοις means no more than “the triangular string-instruments”.

serves as further proof. Even when *kinnôr* was “explained” as “very much like a *kithara*” — the most that could be done for *nebel* was *psalterion*, “a string-plucked instrument”. In Section II we have seen that the *nabla* was known in the hellenistic world; some of the writers who mention it were actually Alexandrians. But these sources also show the status of the *nabla* in hellenistic culture: it was associated with the demi-monde. In the earlier period of the LXX translation, within the “hebraizing” and conservative style, *nabla* could be tolerated as a transcription similar to its constant neighbour *kinyra*. In the later period and within the “graecising” and assimilationist style, when Egyptian Jewish society had become more hellenized and sophisticated, *kinnôr* could now be represented by the noble *kithara*, but the almost infamous *nabla* could not be allowed to represent the *nebel* of the Temple. *Psalterion* and *organon* are an evasion. This very evasion is proof that *nebel* and *nabla* meant the same instrument at that time. Since our Greek sources are practically contemporary with the formative period of the LXX, the Greek evidence on the form and tonal quality of the *nabla* can thus be applied without hesitation to the *nebel* of the Temple — notwithstanding the difference in social status of the instrument in the two neighbouring cultures. It is also obvious that, at least until this chronological point in our survey of the sources — approximately to the end of the second century BCE — there is no evidence for the supposed *nebel-harp*.¹¹⁵

IV. THE APOCRYPHA, CA. SECOND TO FIRST CENTURY BCE¹¹⁶

At the present writing, three sources from the apocryphal tradition offer the promise of evidence on the *nebel*: Ps 151, Ben Sira (“Ecclesiasticus”) and I Maccabees. Ps 151 does so by exclusion. The Greek version, which was the only one — together with the Syriac — to be known until a short time ago, had in its second verse the following statement of David: αἱ χεῖρές μου ἐποίησαν ὄργανον, [καὶ] οἱ δάκτυλοί μου ἤρμωσαν ψαλτήριον. This was usually re-translated as *ידֵי עֲשׂוּ עוּגָב, וְאַצְבְּעוֹתַי נִבְּל*.¹¹⁷ In 1956 the lost Hebrew text was discovered in the “Psalms Scroll” of Qumran cave 11. There this verse reads: *ידֵי עֲשׂוּ עוּגָב וְאַצְבְּעוֹתַי כְּנֹר*.¹¹⁸ The relationship between the Qumran text and the Greek version is somewhat complicated.¹¹⁹ It there-

¹¹⁵ We doubt if the few sources we may have overlooked, or those yet to be discovered, will be able to supply a refutation.

¹¹⁶ This dating refers only to the sources discussed here.

¹¹⁷ E.g., E. S. Artom, ed.: *הספרים החיצונים: כתובים אחרונים* (Tel Aviv, 1962), p. 41, who reads *כל־י-עוּגָב*, but we suspect a misprint for *כל־עוּגָב*.

¹¹⁸ J. A. Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll from Qumran Cave 11* (Oxford, 1965), pp. 49, 54–64, Pl. XVII.

¹¹⁹ See Sanders, *op. cit.*, pp. 54–55, 58–61.

fore seemed advisable to wait for further evidence before applying the correspondences *organon-ʿugab psalterion-kinnôr* to the problem of the *neḅel* and to that of the *ʿugab* (which, in our opinion, is not a wind-instrument). As for Ben Sira, the recent find of a part of the Hebrew text in the Masada excavations¹²⁰ has raised a host of problems which must be discussed in a separate study. The references to *neḅel*, in the Masada scroll and in the Genizah fragments known since the end of the last century,¹²¹ number at least three: in ch. 39, 22; 40, 25; 43, 10.¹²² However, their informational content cannot be evaluated without a thorough paleographic examination and a comparison with the Greek version and its traditions (which do not seem to use the term *nabla* at all). We have therefore had to forego the examination of Ben Sira at present. The only source which can be discussed here is thus I Maccabees.

The First Book of Maccabees is thought to have been written around 110 BCE in Palestine, perhaps in Jerusalem, and in Hebrew (no Hebrew version has as yet been found). The Greek translation was probably made not much later. The translator does not seem to have been eager to “graecise” all Hebrew terms.

[IV, 1] I Macc 4, 54 The dedication of the Temple.

...ἐν ᾠδαῖς καὶ κιθάραις καὶ κινύραις καὶ κυμβάλοις...
... with songs and kitharas and kinyras and cymbals...

Since κινύρα can stand for nothing else but *kinnôr*, κιθάρα must stand for *neḅel*.

[VI, 2] I Macc 13, 51 Simeon takes the main fortress (the “Accra”) in Jerusalem (142 BCE).¹²³

...ἐν κινύραις καὶ ἐν κυμβάλοις καὶ ἐν νάβλαις καὶ ἐν ὕμνοις καὶ ἐν ᾠδαῖς...

They entered it (the fortress) on the third day of the second month, in the 171st year, with praise and palm-branches, with kinnorôt and cymbals and neḅalîm and hymns and songs, because Israel had been ridden of a great enemy.

This seems to be dependent, on purpose, on Neh 12, 27 [I, 27]: לעשות... : חנוכה ושמחה ובתורות ובשיר מצלתיים ונבליים ובכנרות. The LXX for Neh 12, 27 [III, 27] has the mixed form *kinnôr-kinyra*, *neḅel-psalterion*; the translator of I Macc was probably orthodox enough not to know, or care, about the implication of *nabla*. We see that he also used *kithara* for *neḅel* [IV, 1]. This must not necessarily be interpreted as a mistake, in view of our proposed identification (see below).

¹²⁰ Y. Yadin, *The Ben Sira Scroll from Masada* (English and Hebrew), Jerusalem, 1965.

¹²¹ Bibliography see *Eissfeldt*, p. 599.

¹²² Numbered as in M. Z. Segal, *ספר בן סירה השלם*, Jerusalem, 1958. In the editions of the Greek version: 39, 15²; 40, 21; 43, 8.

¹²³ Perhaps 141 BCE.

V. THE WRITINGS OF THE QUMRAN COMMUNITY
(DEAD SEA SCROLLS)¹²⁴

The community of sectarians at Qumran came to its end during the war of 67–73 CE. While the settlement may already have existed at the beginning of the second century BCE, the sect itself is assumed to have been founded earlier than this and most probably not at Qumran. Although the manuscripts are datable palaeographically (not without controversy), no decisive or unambiguously accepted evidence has until now been furnished as to the dates of composition of the sect's writings. It is possible to survey the relevant material here without attempting any chronological precision: a minimal range coinciding with the last two centuries of the Second Temple period may be assumed more or less safely. The apocryphal sources discussed in section IV above may therefore be contemporary in part with at least some of the Qumranic material.

[V, 1] 1 QS X, 9 "The Manual of Discipline".¹²⁵ Second part of the scroll, containing prayers and hymns. First strophe of a hymn. Written continuously, rearranged here.¹²⁶

לפרי תהלה	חוק חרות בלשוני
[-] אומרה בדעת	ומנת שפתי [- -]
לכבוד אל	וכול נגינתי
	וכנור נבלי
לתכון קודשו	[ואער] כה נבלני <i>fragm. d</i>
בקו משפטו.	וחליל שפתי אשא

The translation offered here is an attempt to preserve the multiple meanings and associative linkages which are to be found, in our opinion, in the original.

The Law Engraved is on my tongue | for a fruit-offering of praise

The portioned utterance of my lips | with knowledge shall I ply its sound

And all th'expression of my song | to the great gloriousness of God

¹²⁴ The honour of the first musicological confrontation belongs to the scholar to whom the present volume is dedicated, Professor Eric Werner ("Musical Aspects of the Dead Sea Scrolls", in *MQ*, 43 [1957]: 21–37, and subsequently in others). The second to enter the field was H. Avenary ("Pseudo-Jerome Writings and Qumran Tradition", in *RQ*, 4 [1963]: 3–10). We have not been able to consult S. Scorza, "Praise and Music in the Qumran Community; A Study of Terminology", in *The Reformed Review*, 11 (1958): 32–36.

¹²⁵ M. Burrows et al., *Plates and Transcriptions of the Manual of Discipline* (New Haven, 1951), Pl. X (*The Dead Sea Scrolls of St. Mark's Monastery*, II, fasc. 2). For the fragment variants see below, notes 127 and 128.

¹²⁶ S. Talmon, "The Manual of Benedictions", *RQ*, 2, (1959/60): 475–500, sees the beginning of a separate literary unit at IX, 26 (similar opinions of other scholars mentioned

And kinnôr-neḥel mine address

[*And I shall s[et] [my] neḥel to* *the nomos of His sanctity*

And on my lips' ḥalil intone | the measure of His ordinance.

In 1960 several newly found fragments of the “Manual” were published provisionally.¹²⁷ Of these, the so-called *fragment f* has *KNWR NPLY* as in the scroll. But *fragment d* reads כה נבלני [].¹²⁸ The editor states that “the left foot of an aleph” is just barely visible before the *KH*. He proposes the reading *W'KH NPLY* since “though not attested in Biblical Hebrew, this is a frequent mishnaic term for ‘to play an instrument.’” Actually *hikkah* is not at all frequent in the Mishnah in a musical-instrumental context; when it does appear it refers only to playing the *ḥalil*, never to other instruments.¹²⁹ We propose “*RKH*, since it accords with the “sacrifice = song” amalgam of the poem, and also with the “nomos” concept which is equally decisive here. If this is the correct version, or at least a legitimate variant, a direct or indirect reference to tuning may probably be assumed.

[V, 2] 1 QM IV, 4–5 “The War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness” (“War Scroll”). The devices on the standards of the levitical “Merari regiment”.¹³⁰

על אות העשרה יכתובו רנות אל בנבל עשונר] ואת שם שר העשרה ואת שמות אנשי תעודתה.

Upon the banner of the ten they shall write “Rejoicings¹³¹ of God upon the

ibid. p. 475). Talmon’s recognition of the similarity between the concluding passage of the “Psalm of the Appointed Time”, which precedes the hymn-strophe discussed here, and certain passages in the Book of Jubilees, has furnished us with what we hold to be decisive evidence for locating the initium of our hymn at *HWQ ḤRWT*; we assume the preceding passage to have ended originally in something like *WBKL HYWTM KHWQ ḤRWT*, and haplography to have occurred at the juncture.

¹²⁷ J. T. Milik, “The Manual of Discipline...”, in *Revue Biblique*, 67 (1960): 410–416. From p. 411 onwards some newly discovered fragments of the “Manual” are described. The existence of ten manuscripts of the “Manual” in Cave 4 and one in Cave 5 has been inferred from the fragments found until now.

¹²⁸ No photographs of the fragments were available at present. See also Y. Licht, מגילת הסרכים (Jerusalem, 1965), pp. 32, 215, n. 9. He discusses *KNWR NPLY* as a pleonasm, and mentions the similarity of *kinnôr* and *neḥel* proposed in *ySukkah*, V, 6.

¹²⁹ *mBikkûrîm*, III, 3–4; *m’Araḳîn*, II, 3.

¹³⁰ Y. Yadin, *The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness*, translated by B. and Ch. Rabin (Oxford, 1962); text and translation, p. 265; commentary, pp. 53–57. All following references are to this edition and not the earlier Hebrew one (Jerusalem, 1955). Photographs of the scroll are to be found in Sukenik-Avigad, *Oṣar ham-megillôṭ...* (see n. 134). The Rabin–Yadin translation has been followed here, except for leaving *neḥel ‘asôr* untranslated.

¹³¹ *Rinnah* seems to have a much more “acoustical” implication than just “rejoicing”. See also N. E. Wagner, “רנה in the Psalter”, in *VT*, 10 (1960): 435–441.

neḅel 'asôr" and the name of the commander of the ten and the names of the (nine) men in his charge.

The section (IV, 1–8) deals with a special part of the army, the "cultic brigade", which was apparently divided into four "regiments": Priests, Gershonites, Kehatites, and Merarites.¹³² Only the standards of the Merarites are described: those of the others were not found in 1 QM¹³³ and may, it is to be hoped, come to light one day in additional copies or fragments of the War Scroll.

While the *neḅel 'asôr* here is no less allegorized than the *neḅel* in other passages, there is of course a reality behind the allegory: we are not yet in the Middle Ages, and the Temple with its music is not so very far from Qumran (although the sectarians object to its cult for doctrinal reasons). *Neḅel 'asôr* appears only in the Psalms: Ps 33, 2 [I, 8], Ps 144, 9 [I, 14] have *neḅel 'asôr*, while Ps 92, 3 [I, 13] has *'aley-'asôr wa-'aley-neḅel*. The prototype for the Qumran "device" is surely Ps 33, 2, which has both the root *RNN* and the identification of the praising personages as *šaddiqim* and *yešarim* — well suited to the belief of the sectarians in their own righteousness. As with the passage in the "Manual" [V, 1], the instrument is personified, but here not as one person but as a group of ten. For the author of this passage, at least, *neḅel 'asôr* meant a "*neḅel-of-ten*" and he must have understood this as ten strings. Whether a ten-stringed *neḅel* existed in his own time, or in the Psalmists' (whenever that may have been), we cannot know. Josephus mentions only a twelve-stringed *neḅel* and a ten-stringed *kinnôr* [VI, 1]. This passage in 1 QM must be added to the *'asôr*-passages of the Psalms as another item of contributory evidence which will reveal its meaning only after at least one more specific source will have been found. The publication of the Psalm-collection from cave 4 (4 QPs^a) must be awaited, since this is the only find reported until now which contains the beginning of Ps 92. We shall then know at least whether *'aley-'asôr wa-'aley-neḅel* was also the reading at Qumran.

[V, 3] 1 QH XI, 23–25 "The Thanksgiving Scroll" (*Hodayôt*).¹³⁴ Passage of a hymn beginning at line 20. Written continuously, rearranged here.

בכנור ישועות

לאין כלה

לאין השבת.¹³⁵

And then I shall play

And on a neḅel of rejoic[cing]

And on a ḥalil of praise

ואז אזמרה

ונבל שמחה

וחליל תהלה

on a kinnôr of salvation

unen]dingly

unceasingly.

¹³² Yadin, *op. cit.*, pp. 55–56 (about the extent of the section), pp. 53 f. (three or four "regiments").

¹³³ There is a lacuna between the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth sheet, but it is too small to have included a description of three or even two "regiments".

¹³⁴ E. L. Sukenik and N. Avigad, *אוצר המגילות הגנוזות* (Jerusalem, 1954), Pl. 45, fol. 11.

¹³⁵ A. Habermann, *מגילות מדבר יהודה* (Jerusalem, 1959), p. 127, vocalizes *השִׁבֵּת*.

There is a gap of about 8 mm. between $\acute{S}M\acute{H}$ and LH , because of damage in the manuscript.¹³⁶ Two alternative reconstructions accepted by most scholars are: Licht's $\text{גבל שמחלה ותוף גילה}$,¹³⁷ or Dupont-Sommer's $\text{גבל שמחה ועוגב גילה}$.¹³⁸ Bardtke¹³⁹ proposes $\text{גבל שמחה ועוגב גילה}$. The assumption is that the conceptual field "instruments-praise" extends until just before the end of the sentence, to be qualified there briefly by "unceasingly". We have allowed ourselves to doubt this.¹⁴⁰ In our opinion the structure favours $L'YN KLH$: in view of the parallelistic and pleonastic tendencies of the Qumranic poets, it would have been quite unusual for $L'YN H\acute{S}BT$ at the end not to have had its parallel within the clause itself (the contents of the sentence that follows are quite different).

If our reconstruction is correct, this passage repeats the "instrumentarium" already noticed in 1 QS X, 9 [V, 1], in the same order *kinnôr-nebel-ḥalil*. A standard allegorical idiom is thus established. It corresponds to the augmented Temple instrumentarium described in the Mishnah (see below), except for the absence of the *mešiltayim*. The adjacence of *kinnôr* and *nebel*, noted in practically all of our MT sources, is carried on faithfully, and so is the association of the instruments with praise and joy.¹⁴¹

¹³⁶ The photograph shows that it was impossible even to place the two parts of the line exactly opposite each other, probably because of the unequal shrinkage of the material. Our measurement is therefore only approximative.

¹³⁷ Y. Licht, *מגילת ההודיות ממגילות מדבר יהודה* (Jerusalem, 1957), p. 167. Also accepted by W. Mansoor, *The Thanksgiving Hymns, translated and annotated...* (Leiden, 1961), p. 170, n. 8, and J. Carmignac and P. Guilbert, *Les Textes de Qumrân, traduits et annotés...* (Paris, 1961), pp. 259–260, notes 15–16.

¹³⁸ A. Dupont-Sommer, *Le Livre des Hymnes... traduction intégrale...* (Paris, 1957), p. 80, n. 4.

¹³⁹ H. Bardtke, "Die Loblieder von Qumran, III", in *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, 81 (1956): 723, n. 180. The translation does not show whether $\acute{S}MHW\acute{T}$ or $\acute{S}MHH$ is proposed. M. Delcor, *Les hymnes de Qumran <Hodayot>* (Paris, 1962), p. 241, presents the reconstructions of Licht, Dupont-Sommer and Bardtke. He notes that $GYLH$ is most probable because of parallelism with $\acute{S}M\acute{H}H$, and that all three scholars are in fact agreed on the solution.

¹⁴⁰ Our arguments are as follows: (a) the maximum of 9 mm. available cannot contain, in our opinion, the 11 letter-spaces demanded by Dupont-Sommer's reconstruction or the 10 demanded by Licht or Bardtke; (b) the supposed analogies with Is 5, 12 [I, 6] or I S 6, 5 [I, 1] do not seem suitable, because of the difference in context. There is no Biblical parallel for $TWP GYLH$ (Licht): the inspiration for this proposal is probably Tur-Sinai's amendment of $PTYGYL$ in Is 3, 24 to $TWPYGYL$, with which we find ourselves unable to agree (N. H. Tur-Sinai, "Unverständene Bibelworte, I", in *VT*, 1 (1950): 307; previously in his *הלשון [II] כרך הספר; כרך הספר* [Jerusalem, 1950], p. 129). While the absence—until now—of the *tôf* in the Qumran writings cannot be wholly decisive, it does seem that *kinnôr-nebel-ḥalil* were the exclusive "instrumentarium" there (see [V, 1].) Bardtke's *'ugab* rests upon a supposed double parallelism *kinnôr-nebel* || *'ugab-ḥalil*, i.e. *'ugab* = wind instrument, which is, to put it bluntly, wrong: the *'ugab* was a string instrument (cf. our forthcoming article *נגינה וזמרה* in *Enc. Miqra'î, V*). See also n. 41.

¹⁴¹ The association of *kinnôr* and mourning implied in *Hôdayôt*, XI, 23 must be examined separately. There is a scribal complication in the manuscript which might even permit the rectification of $BKNWR$ to $BKY MR$ "bitter weeping".

The allegorizing of the instruments has been carried even further here: in the "Manual of Discipline" [V, 1] the poet-singer "is" three instruments, in the "War Scroll" [V, 2] ten Levites "are" one instrument, and in the *Hodayôt* [V, 3] the instruments seem to merge into the state of salvation, rejoicing and praise. In brief, the instruments have become a *typos*. The instrumental typology of the Church Fathers is thus furnished with a precedent, or rather, foundation.¹⁴² However, the typology of the Qumranic poets can also help to elucidate the reality behind the *typos* — if further material becomes available.

VI. JOSEPHUS, FIRST CENTURY CE¹⁴³

Joseph ben Mattityahû — Flavius Josephus was born in Jerusalem in 37/38 CE and died ca. 100 CE (in Rome?). He belonged to the priestly caste, and his descriptions of the Temple and its service are those of an eyewitness. Such eyewitness descriptions are also worked into the narrative of his *Antiquities*, even when he purports to refer to the distant past.

[VI, 1] *Antiquities*, VII, 305–306 David's ordinances for the Temple service (based on I Ch 16 and 25, cf. [I, 20–21]).

ὄργανά τε κατασκευάσας ἐδίδαξε πρὸς αὐτὰ τοὺς Ληουίτας ὑμνεῖν τὸν θεὸν κατὰ τε τὴν τῶν καλουμένων σαββάτων ἡμέραν καὶ κατὰ τὰς ἄλλας ἑορτάς. ἡ δὲ τῶν ὀργάνων ἐστὶν ἰδέα τοιαύτη τις τὸν τρόπον· ἡ μὲν κινύρα δέκα χορδαῖς ἐξημμένη τύπτεται πλήκτρῳ, ἡ δὲ νάβλα δώδεκα φθόγγους ἔχουσα τοῖς δακτύλοις κρούεται, κύμβαλά τε ἦν πλατέα καὶ μεγάλα χάλκεα. καὶ περὶ μὲν τούτων ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ἡμῖν, ὥστε μὴ τελέωσ ἀγνοεῖν τὴν τῶν προειρημένων ὀργάνων φύσιν, ἀρκείσθω λελέχθαι.

He also made musical instruments, and instructed the Levites how to use them in praising God on the so-called Sabbath day and on the other festivals. Now the forms of these instruments were somewhat as follows. The kinyra had ten strings fixed to it, (which were) struck with a plektron; the nabla had twelve strings,¹⁴⁴ struck/played¹⁴⁵ with the fingers; and the kymbala were large broad plates of bronze.¹⁴⁶ But now that our readers are not altogether unacquainted with the nature of the above-mentioned instruments let this much about them suffice.

¹⁴² Cf. E. Werner, *loc. cit.* (see n. 124), and the passages from Philo quoted there.

¹⁴³ Quotations and translations according to H. St. J. Thackeray and R. Marcus (ed. and tr.), *Josephus*, London–Cambridge, Mass., 1941–1965 (LCL). The translations have been modified so as not to bias the enquiry.

¹⁴⁴ Not "twelve tones". δώδεκα φθόγγους is also used for twelve strings in Dio Chrysostomus, 10. 9, contemporary with Josephus.

¹⁴⁵ The verb is applicable to both. τύπτεται/κρούεται are obviously used as elegant variations, and we shall not attempt to draw any musical conclusions from them.

¹⁴⁶ LCL: brass.

[VI 2] *Antiquities*, VIII, 94 Solomon furnishes the Temple (based on I R and II Ch, but with additions by Josephus);¹⁴⁷ cf. [I, 3], [I, 24]. All the numbers given for the vessels, clothes and instruments are highly fanciful.

καὶ τὰ ὄργανα τὰ μουσικὰ καὶ πρὸς τὴν ὕμνωδιαν ἐξηρρημένα, ἃ καλεῖται νάβλας καὶ κινύρας, ἐξ ἠλέκτρου κατεσκεύασε τετρακισμύρια.

And of the musical instruments (and those?) invented for hymning,¹⁴⁸ which are called nablas and kinyras, he made forty thousand of elektron.¹⁴⁹

[VI, 3] *Antiquities*, VIII, 176 Solomon imports precious stones and wood (based on I R and II Ch, as above).

...καὶ ξύλων πευκίνων, τοῖς ξύλοις εἰς ὑποστήριγμα τοῦ τε ναοῦ καὶ τῶν βασιλείων κατεχρήσατο καὶ πρὸς τὴν τῶν μουσικῶν ὀργάνων κατασκευὴν κινύρας τε καὶ νάβλας, ὅπως ὕμνωσιν οἱ Ληουῖται τὸν θεόν.

... and pine wood,¹⁵⁰ which wood he used for supports¹⁵¹ for the temple and the palace and for constructing musical instruments — kinyras and nablas — with which the Levites might hymn God.

Josephus apparently did not use the term νάβλα except in these three passages.¹⁵² In the *Jewish War* II, 321 there also seems to be an allusion to the *nebel* which must be mentioned here. Josephus describes the priests and Temple personnel going out in their regalia with all the “sacred vessels” and instruments, to implore the people not to rise against Florus (66 CE). The procession includes κιθαρῖσταί τε καὶ ὕμνωδοὶ μετὰ τῶν ὀργάνων — *kithara-players and hymn-singers with their instruments*. Probably, but not certainly, *kithara* stands for *kinnôr* and *organon* for *nebel*. There seems to be a relationship between this passage and *Ant.* VIII, 94 [VI, 2]: together they might imply a differentiation

¹⁴⁷ Cf. LCL, V, p. 621, footnotes.

¹⁴⁸ LCL: and of the musical instruments devised for singing psalms. A thorough scrutiny of this clause is obviously called for, but this should be undertaken within an overall study on “Josephus and music”.

¹⁴⁹ The number is of course absurd (previously 200,000 trumpets are mentioned). *Elektron* is either the famous gold-silver alloy, or amber. But this is probably an error due to faulty textual transmission: it might be connected with the πελεκτὰ/ἀπελέκτα ms. variant for MT *almuggim* in LXX I R 10, 12 [III, 3]; cf. n. 86.

¹⁵⁰ Immediately afterwards Josephus explains that he does not mean ordinary “pine” wood but another, similar to fig-wood but whiter and more gleaming.

¹⁵¹ ξύλων πευκίνων follows II Ch 9, 11 [III, 24]; but ὑποστήριγμα follows I R 10, 12 [III, 3].

¹⁵² LCL index s.v. *nabla*: *Ant.* VII, 306 and VII, 94, omitting *Ant.* VIII, 176. The index of Niese’s edition is only for personal and place names. Thackeray’s unfinished lexicon to Josephus did not reach the letter *N*, and Rengstorff’s concordance has not yet been published. Our own check-list of musical references in Josephus is as yet provisional.

between “musici” and “cantores”, and between their instruments as well. It must always be remembered, though, that the linguistic and stylistic form of Josephus’ work is greatly indebted to his Greek assistants.¹⁵³

We shall limit ourselves to the discussion of *Ant.* VII, 305–306 [VI, 1]. Josephus says that he intends to describe the “form” of *kinnôr* and *neḅel*. The only information actually given, as the text stands now, is on the number of strings and by what means they are made to sound. But this is explicit: the *kinnôr* has ten strings, which are sounded with a *plektron*; the *neḅel* has twelve strings, which are sounded with the fingers. The conventional explanation of *neḅel*-as-harp draws heavily on this passage: since there were as yet no zithers in the Near East, the only other instrument which affords the space for twelve strings is the harp. Several arguments may be advanced against this. If we accept Josephus on the *neḅel*, we have to accept him on the *kinnôr* as well. The *kinnôr* was a lyre, and the Temple *kinnôr* which Josephus describes as an eyewitness had ten strings.¹⁵⁴ The *neḅel* had just two more. This already implies a rather big size for the *kinnôr*-lyre, which must have been an alto or tenor instrument. Such lyre-types are known.¹⁵⁵ The *neḅel* must have been somewhat bigger, probably in the tenor or bass range but it does not necessarily have to be a harp. If we correlate this “twelve-stringed” instrument with the Greek evidence on the “growling thrum” of the *nabla* (section [II]), it seems that it must have had thicker strings, which were under relatively stronger tension — and thus quite naturally had to be plucked by the fingers. Striking, or rather “scratching” with a *plektron* of horn, ivory or even wood would hardly have been practical.

Josephus was apparently not very musical, and had no musical education. But he was a good observer and reporter of visual forms. If the *neḅel* had been a harp, he would have mentioned the formal distinction between it and the *kinnôr*-lyre — a distinction obvious even to a layman, and surely necessary in an “Introduction to Jewish culture” addressed to Gentiles. We should not use this as an argument *ex silentio*, but the reservation must be kept in mind.

A further statement in this passage [VI, 1] is important for any enquiry on the place of instrumental music in the Temple: Josephus says that David

¹⁵³ Cf. H. St. J. Thackeray, *Josephus, the Man and the Historian* (New York, 1929), pp. 100–124, and the studies cited in L. H. Feldman, *Studies in Judaica: Scholarship on Philo and Josephus, 1937–1962* (New York, 1963), pp. 52–54.

¹⁵⁴ Any influence of ψαλτήριον δεκαχόρδον can be discounted, since this is an eyewitness account, not a mediaeval exegesis. In any case, ψαλτήριον δεκαχόρδον applies to the *neḅel*, not the *kinnôr*.

¹⁵⁵ A “giant” lyre with sea-turtle shell corpus in a contemporary Pompeian fresco; see A. Maiuri, *Roman Painting* (Lausanne, 1953), p. 108 (nine or ten strings?). An earlier asymmetrical box-lyre from Alexandria has at least ten strings; see H. Hickmann, “*Leier*”, in *MGG*, 8 (1960), Pl. 20, Fig. 4.

instructed the Levites how to play on the instruments on Sabbath days and festivals. Does this mean that no instruments were played in the weekday service?

Another Jewish writer of the period who mentions the *nabla* is the so-called Pseudo-Philo, who is thought to have lived around 70–100 CE. His work, which has survived only in Latin but was probably written in Hebrew, is a re-telling of Biblical history permeated with much known and unknown mid-rashic material. *Nablas* and *cyneras* are mentioned several times, but the narrative yields no factual information for our enquiry.¹⁵⁶

VII. WRITERS OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE, FIRST CENTURY BCE TO FIRST CENTURY CE

[VII, 1] Strabo, 63/64 BCE– ca. 30 CE. Geographer and historian, born in Pontus (Asia Minor). *Geography* 10.3.17., a discussion of the Asiatic origin of certain kinds of music, and of the names of instruments.

καὶ τῶν ὀργάνων ἔνια βαρβάρως ὀνόμασται νάβλας καὶ σαμβύκη
καὶ βάρβιτος καὶ μαγάδις καὶ ἄλλα πλείω.

Some instruments also have barbarian names, (such as) nablas and sambyke¹⁵⁷ and barbitos and magadis and many others.

[VII, 2] Ovidius (Publius Ovidius Naso), 43 BCE–17 CE. Roman poet. *Ars amatoria*, III, 327–328. Advice to the ladies to cultivate musical proficiency.

*Disce etiam duplici genialia nablia palma
Verrere; conveniunt dulcibus illa iocis.*

Also learn to sweep with both hands the enjoyable/jolly nabla; it is apt for sweet pastime.

In the preceding lines 317–320 Ovid advises the lady to be able to sing the tunes “heard in the marble theatres and those who come from the Nile (= Egypt), and not to be ignorant of holding the *plectrum* in the left and the *cithara* in the right (= playing the *cithara*.” The evidence parallels that of Josephus [VI, 1]: the *nabla* was plucked with the fingers, not with the plectrum. “Sweeping with both hands” may imply that the strings were not dampened selectively with one hand and plucked with the other, as the graeco-roman lyres are supposed to have been,¹⁵⁸ but were plucked with both hands, apparently with a certain swiftness of motion. The plural form *nablia* was most probably chosen for metrical reasons.

¹⁵⁶ See G. Kisch, *Pseudo-Philo's Antiquitatum Biblicarum* (Notre Dame, Ind., 1949), pp. 114, 170, 247.

¹⁵⁷ A separate study of the *sambyke* is in preparation. We may anticipate its conclusion here: the *sambyke* was most probably a late survival of the asymmetrical box-lyre (cf. the Alexandrian instrument mentioned in n. 155).

¹⁵⁸ Like the Alexandrian instrument mentioned in n. 155.

[VII, 3] Philo Byblius, ca. 64–141 CE. Historian, of Byblos in Syria. Fragments of his *History* have survived in quotations. The present is from Book II, as quoted by Eusebius.¹⁵⁹

καππαδόκων πρῶτοι εἶρον τὴν νάβλαν καλουμένην, ὃν τρόπον καὶ τὸ δίχορδον Ἀσσύριοι... διὰ τε τρογλοδύται καλούμενοι σαμβύκην εἶρον, ὄργανον μουσικόν.

The Cappadocians invented the instrument called nabla, and the dichordon — the Assyrians... the Troglodytes [cave-dwellers by the Red Sea] invented the so-called sambyke, an instrument of music.

It seems curious that Philo of Byblos, a native of Phoenicia, should attribute the invention of the *nabla* to the Cappadocians of Asia Minor. Philo's "Cappadocia" belongs no doubt to the same tradition which several times put *καππαδοκία* and *aram. קפּוּטק* for MT כּפּוּר (Crete?) in the LXX, Vulgata, *Targumim* and Peshitta, and apparently also in some of the apocrypha. The *kaftor-cappadokia* problem has lately been raised again, since the Aramaic Genesis apocryphon from Qumran has "Ariok king of *KPTWK*" for Gen 14, 9 "king of *ellasar*". Philo Byblius' reference should be added to the material for this discussion.¹⁶⁰

VIII. THE MISHNAH

The last and latest source to be used for our enquiry is that of the eyewitness accounts of the Temple to be found in the Mishnah. We do not mean to imply that the *nebel* went out of use in the entire ancient world with the destruction of the Temple. But our purpose is to find out what the *nebel* of the Temple orchestra was like; and the subsequent sources are not eyewitness accounts to this, rather passing, gradually but surely, into the realm of exegesis.

Tradition sets the date of codification of the Mishnah at ca. 200 CE. The

¹⁵⁹ Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*, X. 6. 7. The passage about the Cappadocians was also quoted before Eusebius by Clemens Alexandrinus, *Stromata*, I. 16. 75.

¹⁶⁰ See N. Avigad and Y. Yadin, *A Genesis Apocryphon* (Jerusalem, 1956), p. 34 [English]/*קפּוּטק* [Hebrew]. C. A. Wainwright, "Captor-Cappadocia", in *VT*, 6 (1956): 199–210, has some weighty arguments against the identification of *kaftôr* with Crete; the "Cappadocian hypothesis" is further strengthened by his "Some Early Philistine History", in *VT*, 9 (1959): 73–84. For the archaeological discussion of the problem see M. L. and H. Erlenmayer, "Über Philister und Kreter", in *Orientalia*, 29 (1960): 121–150; 241–272; 33 (1964): 199–237. Since Philo Byblius is our only native Phoenician witness, and since he has proved trustworthy on several ancient traditions (as verified by the discoveries at Ugarit), his statement on the origin of the *nabla* must be taken seriously. No instrumental type analogous to our proposed identification of the *nebel* can so far be identified in Asia Minor in the period before the *nebel* appeared in Syria and Palestine (i.e., before ca. 700 BCE); but a close variant does seem to appear in Crete and Cyprus, cf. B. Aign (see n. 31), pp. 43, 63, 80. It should be noted that no harp-type instruments have so far come to light in the iconographical material of pre-hellenistic Asia minor, while lyre-types are both plentiful and variegated.

tractates referring to feasts and festivals, and to various liturgical occasions, contain much evidence on the Temple. This is often documented by giving the names of the tradents, going back to sages who were contemporary with the last years of the existence of the Temple, i.e. whose youth at least falls in the period before 70 CE.

[VIII, 1] *mSukkah*, V, 4 The Festival of Water Drawing (*simḥat bêt haš-šo'eḇah*).

...והלויים בכנורות ונבלים ובמצלתיים ובחצוצרות ובכלי שיר בלא מספר, על חמש עשרה מעלות היורדות מעזרת ישראל לעזרת הנשים...

And the Levites with kinnôrôt and with neḇalîm and with mešiltayîm and with ḥašôšerôt and with musical instruments without numbers [unlimited], on the fifteen steps that lead down from the Court of Israel to the Court of the Women...

[VIII, 2] *m'Arakîn*, II A discussion of canonical numbers.

3 ...אין פוחתין משני נבלין, ולא מוסיפין על ששה. אין פוחתין משני חלילין, ולא מוסיפין על שנים עשר...

5 ...אין פוחתין משתי חצוצרות (ומוסיפין עד לעולם. אין פוחתין) מתשעה כנורות, ומוסיפין עד לעולם. והצלצל לבד.

6 ...אין פוחתין משנים עשר לויים עומדים על הדוכן, ומוסיפים עד לעולם. אין קטן נכנס לעזרה לעבודה אלא בשעה שהלויים עומדים בשיר. ולא היו אומרים בנבל וכנור אלא בפה, כדי ליתן תבל בנעימה...

3 ...not less than two neḇalîm are employed (in the Temple), and not more than six. Not less than two ḥalilîm are employed, and not more than twelve...

5 ...not less than two ḥašôšerôt are employed, and more can be employed in infinite numbers. Not less than nine kinnôrôt are employed, and more can be employed in infinite numbers. And the šilšal [cymbal] is alone|one.

6 Not less than twelve Levites are employed standing|to stand on the podium (?), and more can be employed in infinite numbers. A minor may not enter the court to serve (in the liturgy) but while the Levites are performing their singing|music. And they (the minors) did not make music|join the hymning (?) with neḇel and kinnôr but with the mouth (= vocally) only, to "spice" the sound (?) ...

[VIII, 3] *mMiddôt*, II, 6

ולשכות היו תחת עזרת ישראל, ופתוחות לעזרת הנשים, ששם הלויים נותנים כנורות ונבלים ומצלתיים וכל כלי שיר.

And chambers there were beneath the Court of Israel, open towards the Court of the Women, where the Levites put|kept (their) kinnôrôt and neḇalîm and mešiltayîm and all instruments of music.

[VIII, 4] *mQinnîm*, III, 1

אמר רבי יהושע, זה הוא שאמרו, כשהוא [האיל], חי קולו אחד וכשהוא מת קולו

שבעה. כיצד קולו שבעה, שתי קרניו, שתי הצוצרות. שתי שוקיו, שני חלילין.
 עורו, לתוף. מעיו, לנבלים. בני מעיו, לכנורות...

Rabbi Joshua said: this is analogous to what they said: Alive, his (the Ram's) voice has one sound; dead, his sound is sevenfold. How so his sound is sevenfold? His two horns — two ḥašôšerôṭ. His two leg-bones—two ḥalilîm. His skin — for a drum. His intestines — for neḥalîm (strings). His small intestines — for kinnôrôṭ (strings).

The tradent is Rabbi Joshua ben Hananyah of the second generation of Tannaites, who had been a Temple singer.^{161*} The saying may well have been current among the musicians of his time: it smacks of the “professional riddle-joke”.

mKelîm mentions among the implements capable of ritual uncleanness, the coverings of *neḥalîm* and of *kinnôrôṭ* (*tiq*-bag, XVI, 7; *miṭpaḥaṭ*-wrapping XXIV, 14). *Ibid.* XV, 6 mentions that *niḥlê ḥaš-šarah*, the *neḥalîm* of the singing girl(s) (?), are capable of uncleanness, while *niḥlê benê levî*, the *neḥalîm* of the Levites, are not (the context is a discussion of vessels).

The evidence of the Mishnah can be summed up as follows. Outside of the popular *bêṭ ḥaš-šo'eḥah* festival, the number of instruments in the Temple orchestra was standardized as to its minimum: two *neḥalîm*, nine *kinnôrôṭ*, one *šilšal* and two *ḥašôšerôṭ* of the priests. The *ḥalil* was employed only on special festivals.¹⁶² The minimum orchestra of twelve musicians (except for the priests) is confirmed by *m'Araḳîn* II, 6 [VIII, 2]. Not more than six *neḥalîm* were allowed, in contrast to the *kinnôrôṭ* who could be augmented “infinitely”. The minors — levitic apprentices — were not allowed to play instruments but only to sing. The strings of the *kinnôr* were made of thin intestines and those of the *neḥel* of thick intestines.

With the last eyewitness accounts of the Temple orchestra we now close our survey of the evidence, and proceed to its analysis.

CONCLUSION

The evidence on the *neḥel*, as adduced here, ranges through approximately 700 years. The social history of the *neḥel* in Israelite culture until 70 CE can now be reconstructed at least in outline (see especially above, p. 110). Its organological history still lacks sufficient evidence. Our more explicit references extend only from ca. 300 BCE¹⁶³ to ca. 100 CE, thus covering only approxim-

¹⁶¹ A later tradition states that several things “reversed their designation after the destruction of the Temple”, including *šôfar-ḥašôšerah*: see *b'Sabbaṭ*, 36a; *b'Sukkah*, 34a.

^{161*} *Sifre Numeri*, 115, ed. Horowitz; the same in *b'Araḳîn*, 11b.

¹⁶² *m'Araḳîn*, II, 3, immediately after our reference [VIII, 2].

¹⁶³ Excluding the obscure reference attributed to Sophocles [II, 1].

ately half of the time-span. No evidence is available for possible changes in form, size and tonal quality of the *nebel* during the entire period or even part of it. Analogies can be found to suggest that the *nebel* did not necessarily have to change appreciably, at least during the Second Temple period, and that it could have changed very much. One possibility at least can be ruled out: the *nebel* was not hellenized, since the hellenistic and posthellenistic sources continuously emphasize its peculiar Near Eastern and non-hellenistic characteristics, and its non-acceptance in polite Greek or graecized society. The two main social locations of the *nebel*, the demi-monde and, *mutatis mutandis*, an established and consciously orthodox cult — are both known to exert a strongly conservative force on instrumental forms. Moreover, the earlier and later sources never contradict one another. We therefore feel highly confident that all of the evidence for the entire Second Temple period, at least, may legitimately be correlated and that the image or outline obtained may be proposed as a valid reconstruction.

Before proceeding to this reconstruction, a digression must be made in order to avoid any misunderstanding on the part of non-specialist readers. The terms “harp”, “lute”, “lyre” etc., and indeed all instrumental designations, are used with the utmost freedom outside of modern musicological literature, from the great European Bible translations to reference works in such fields as Biblical scholarship, archaeology, classical studies and the various branches of anthropology. In the present study these terms stand for certain definite typologic concepts, according to the generally used organological system of Sachs-Hornbostel.¹⁶⁴ The definitions of “lyre” and “harp” will have to be recapitulated here.

“A *lyre* has a body with a yoke... that is, two arms projecting upward, the upper ends of which are connected with a crossbar. The strings are stretched over the soundboard and are fastened to the crossbar at the top... the *harp* is the only instrument in which the plane of the strings is vertical, not parallel, to the soundboard; the strings are attached to the soundboard but run vertically away from it, and not along it, [ending in the arm which curves or angles out from the body].¹⁶⁵

The *nebel* must have been either a harp or a lyre.¹⁶⁶ None of our sources, as we understand them, indicate the *nebel* to have been a harp; but this is a

¹⁶⁴ A convenient summary can be found in C. Sachs, *A History of Musical Instruments* (New York, 1941), pp. 463–465.

¹⁶⁵ Definitions according to C. Sachs, *op. cit.*, pp. 464–465, except for our supplement in square brackets.

¹⁶⁶ Zither or lute can be excluded, for both historical and technical reasons. Moreover, it is well known that not all four types are necessarily in use in any one culture at the same time.

circumstantial, not a material argument. What they do indicate can be summed up as follows:

(a) *Explicit-inductive evidence.*

The instrument has a rather raucous and “breathy” tone. Its strings are thicker than those of the *kinnôr*, being made of the coarser intestines of rams. It is sounded with the fingers, while the *kinnôr* is sounded with a *plektron*. The *neḥel* used in the Temple has twelve strings, while the *kinnôr* of the Temple has ten. The minimal size of the “string orchestra” of the Temple, at least during its last period, is two *neḥalîm* and nine *kinnorôṭî*. The *neḥalîm* may be increased to no more than six, the *kinnorôṭî* “infinitely”. As stated above, only one *šilšal* (pair of cymbals) is used, for signalling purposes, and the *hašošet* (trumpets) are considered as a separate tonal body. In Israelite culture the *neḥel* is not thought of as a solistic instrument, again in contrast to the *kinnôr* (David!).¹⁶⁷ To the Greeks its form is “unaesthetic”, i.e. not elegant and well-proportioned.

(b) *Implicit-deductive evidence.*

The *neḥel* sounds in a range somewhat lower than that of the *kinnôr*. Since the ten-stringed *kinnôr* is probably an alto/tenor instrument, the *neḥel* is a tenor/bass one. The strings of the *neḥel* are under relatively greater tension than those of the *kinnôr* and must probably be plucked with a certain effort. The Temple string orchestra gives the impression of a “chamber ensemble” of moderate tone volume. Two *neḥalîm* and nine *kinnorôṭî* are probably thought a properly balanced combination (although one should hesitate to assume that the acoustic ideals of bygone times were similar to those of the present). It is at least highly probable that one *neḥel* is louder than one *kinnôr*. Since the strings are thicker and slightly more numerous, and the sound deeper, the soundbox of the *neḥel* is bigger in volume than that of the *kinnôr*. Although greatly estimated by the professional musicians, its role in the ensemble is that of a “seconding” or accompanying instrument — a “string bass”. Since drums were not used in the Temple, and the *šilšal* served for intermittent signalling, not for rhythmic pulsation, the *neḥel* very probably took over at least some of the rhythmic functions of the *tôf*. This assumption of course depends on another one — that the accompanied chant in the Temple, especially when non-solistic, was not limited to free recitatives but was no less rhythmic than the contemporary Greek *orchesis* (although not necessarily governed by the same theoretical principles). The tonal and acoustical image of the *neḥel*

¹⁶⁷ Cf. also the many appearances of *kinnôr* alone in the Psalms, which do not give the impression of truncated quotations.

in the Temple orchestra reminds us of nothing so strongly as the modern jazz bass.

We now return to the problem of archaeological evidence posed at the beginning of our study. No harps have appeared until now in the archaeological conspectus of the indigenous Syropalaestian culture. Can any other instruments be found which corresponds to the properties indicated or deducible for the *nebel* ?

Until now we have been able to locate only one group of representations which were obviously intended to evoke the Temple instrumentarium. These are the instruments on the well-known coins of the Second Revolt, 132–135 CE (Bar Kokhba). The repertoire comprises one type of trumpet (always represented in pairs), and two types of lyres.¹⁶⁸

Primitive cultures may have only one general term for all their “stringed instruments”, but the culture of Israel in the Second Temple period was not a primitive culture. The two types of stringed instrument depicted on the coins are as different in shape as a violin and a mandolin, and more different than the *qanûn* and the *santûr*. To a musicologist it is simply unthinkable that both should have been designated by the same term. We know that the Temple orchestra had two stringed instruments: the *nebel* and the *kinnôr*. One of the two representations surely stands for the *kinnôr*, and the other for the *nebel*.

The exigencies of miniaturization, and the relatively low artistic standard, must certainly be taken into account when attempting to elucidate the *realia* of the Bar Kokhba coins. It must also be remembered that the Temple was destroyed in 70 CE and these coins were struck in 132–135 CE. Yet eyewitnesses were still alive, and their evidence could be supplemented by existing similar instruments. With all these reservations, the coins still yield the recognizable images of two real types of instrument. One has a narrow “bucket”-shaped corpus with thin out-and-incurving arms, not too dissimilar to the hellenistic “elegant” small lyre. Of the approximately sixteen designs, all except one, which has four, show three strings. The other type has a broad “sack”-shaped corpus, sometimes studded with round “bosses”; in some designs this corpus has the outline of a rather thin curved sausage, in others it is thicker in the centre and looks like a bent pillow. The outcurving arms resemble animal horns, and a sort of sleeve is noticeable at their juncture with the body. The strings issue from a lenticular or round stringholder (?) above the corpus, which sometimes touches the corpus and sometimes seems to be connected to it by an intermediate narrower base. Of the approximately ten designs, six show four strings, one shows five (?), one shows six and two show three

¹⁶⁸ See B. Bayer, *The Material Relics...* (see n. 2), pp. 29–31, 38–39.

PRESUMED *NEBEL*

Coins of Bar Kokhba (132–135 CE)



Fig. 1

2nd year. Bronze, \emptyset 22–24 mm
 Reverse. שבלחר ישראל
 Y[ear] b of the fr[ee]dom of Israel
MR 233 (p. 30, no. 7)
 Israel Museum



Fig. 2

1st year. Bronze, \emptyset 23 mm
 Reverse. שנתאחחלוגאלתישראל
 Year one of the redemption of Israel
MR 228 (p. 29, no. 2)
 Israel Museum



Fig. 3

1st year. Bronze, \emptyset 21–24 mm
 Reverse. שנתאחחלוגאלתישראל
 Year one of the redemption of Israel
MR 227 (p. 29, no. 1)
 British Museum (after G. F. Hill, *Greek
 Coins of Palestine*, London, 1914,
 Pl. XXXVI, no. 5)

PRESUMED *KINNÔR*



Bar Kokhba coin
3rd year. Silver, \varnothing 19–20 mm
Reverse. לְחֵירוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם
Of/for the liberty of Jerusalem
Israel Museum

strings.¹⁶⁹ No similar instrument can be found in the Graeco-Roman instrumentarium. The number of strings is clearly symbolical, not representational: the design is meant to imply that the "sack"-shaped instrument has more strings than the "bucket"-shaped one. One design, at least, achieves the representation of six strings. The "sack" instrument looks much sturdier than the "bucket" one, chiefly because of the horn or horn-shaped arms. Its corpus resembles the shape of the traditional Near Eastern animal-skin container for liquids, with the sleeve-like remnants of the skin at the leg-joints. In view of the theoretical reconstruction of the *nebel* given above, we think it highly probable that this "sack" lyre on the Bar Kokhba coins represents the *nebel* of the Second Temple (see Pl. I). The strong resemblance of its corpus to the skin-container, also called *nebel*, makes it also highly probable that the etymological relationship of *nebel*-instrument and *nebel*-container is extremely close, and that the instrument invented in Palestine or Southwestern Syria many centuries previously was called *nebel* because what it most resembled was the well-known skin-bag.¹⁷⁰ The designation *keli-nebel*,¹⁷¹ "*nebel*-instrument", may reflect an "aesthetical" attempt at differentiation (as "bag pipes"/"Sackpfeife" against "Bag"/"sack"); or it may be the survival of the instrument's original name, before the *keli* prefix was sloughed off by usage.¹⁷²

The hypothesis proposed here, as a hypothesis and with no claim to have achieved absolute proof, is thus that the *nebel* of the Biblical and Second Temple period was a lyre type, and that it can be identified as one of the two lyre types represented on the Bar Kokhba coins. We have not yet been able to locate earlier representations. Only further discoveries of contemporary literary and material evidence will furnish the proof of our hypothesis — or refute it. The problem of the *nebel* remains open.

¹⁶⁹ B. Bayer, *op. cit.*, p. 30 (no. 9).

¹⁷⁰ Note that the apparently earliest mention of the *nebel*-bag is in I S 1, 24 and 10, 3, adjacent to the first mention of the *nebel*-instrument [I, 2].

¹⁷¹ Ps 71, 22. A hypothesis perhaps applicable to *keli-nebel* is that of Staples, who considers such "classificatory" terms as influenced by the use of determinatives in the Mesopotamian cuneiform writing; see W. E. Staples, "The reading of Hebrew", in *American Journal of Semitic Languages*, 55 (1941): 139–145 (*keli* not mentioned).

¹⁷² A source which is at least in part contemporary with the Mishnah is *ySukkah*, V, 6 (fol. 55, c-d of ed. Krotoschin) which states that "*nebel* and *kinnôr* are identical, but one has more strings... the *nebel* has/is made of (?) unworked skin".

YUVAL

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Edited by

ISRAËL ADLER

in collaboration with

HANOCH AVENARY AND BATHJA BAYER

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ABBREVIATIONS

(N.B.: The special abbreviations and sigla used by N. Allony are listed at the end of his article.)

<i>AHw</i>	W. von Soden, <i>Akkadisches Handwörterbuch</i> , Wiesbaden, 1959 →
<i>AL</i>	M. Steinschneider, <i>Die arabische Literatur der Juden</i> , Frankfurt a.M., 1902
<i>AMl</i>	<i>Acta Musicologica</i>
<i>b</i>	Babylonian Talmud
<i>CAD</i>	<i>The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i> , Chicago, 1956 →
<i>CB</i>	M. Steinschneider, <i>Catalogus librorum Hebraeorum in bibliotheca Bodleiana</i> , Berlin, 1852–1860
<i>CS</i>	E. de Coussemaker, ed., <i>Scriptores de musica medii aevi...</i> , Paris, 1864–1876
<i>DTO</i>	<i>Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich</i>
<i>Elssfeldt</i>	O. Elssfeldt, <i>The Old Testament — An Introduction</i> (tr. from the 3rd German edition by P. R. Ackroyd), Oxford, 1965
<i>Enc. Mus. Fasquelle</i>	<i>Encyclopédie de la musique</i> , Paris, Fasquelle, 1958–1961
<i>Erlanger</i>	R. d'Erlanger, <i>La musique arabe</i> , Paris, 1930–1949
<i>Farmer, Gen. Fragm.</i>	H. G. Farmer, <i>The Oriental Musical Influence and Jewish Genizah Fragments on Music</i> , London, 1964; repr. of two art. from <i>Glasgow University Oriental Society, Transactions</i> , 19 (1963): 1–15 (“The Oriental Musical Influence” = pp. 7–21 of repr.); 52–62 (“Jewish Genizah Fragments on Music” = pp. 22–32 of repr.)
<i>GS</i>	M. Gerbert, ed., <i>Scriptores ecclesiastici de musica...</i> , Sankt Blasien, 1784
<i>HOM</i>	A. Z. Idelsohn, <i>Hebräisch-orientalischer Melodienschatz</i> , Leipzig–Berlin–Jerusalem, 1914–1932
<i>HU</i>	M. Steinschneider, <i>Die hebräischen Übersetzungen des Mittelalters</i> , Berlin, 1893
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
<i>IMS</i>	International Musicological Society
<i>IQ</i>	<i>Islamic Quarterly</i>
<i>JA</i>	<i>Journal Asiatique</i>
<i>JAMS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Musicological Society</i>
<i>JIFMC</i>	<i>Journal of the International Folk Music Council</i>
<i>JMT</i>	<i>Journal of Musical Theory</i>
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>KS</i>	<i>Kirjath Sepher</i>
<i>m</i>	Mishnah

<i>MD</i>	<i>Musica Disciplina</i>
<i>MGG</i>	<i>Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i> , Kassel, 1949 →
<i>MGWJ</i>	<i>Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums</i>
<i>MQ</i>	<i>Musical Quarterly</i>
<i>NOHM</i>	<i>New Oxford History of Music</i> , London, 1955 →
<i>PAAJR</i>	<i>Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research</i>
<i>PL</i>	<i>Patrologia Latina</i> (ed. Migne)
<i>1Q</i>	Dead Sea Scrolls, Qumran Cave 1
<i>1QH</i>	“Thanksgiving Scroll”
<i>1QM</i>	“War Scroll”
<i>1QS</i>	“Manual of Discipline”
<i>REI</i>	<i>Revue des Etudes Islamiques</i>
<i>REJ</i>	<i>Revue des Etudes Juives</i>
Riemann, <i>Hbd. Mg.</i>	H. Riemann, <i>Handbuch der Musikgeschichte</i> , Leipzig, 1919–1922
Riemann, <i>ML</i>	H. Riemann, <i>Musik-Lexikon</i> (quoted edition indicated by exponent)
<i>RM</i>	<i>Revue de Musicologie</i>
<i>RQ</i>	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
<i>SIMG</i>	<i>Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft</i>
Steinschneider, <i>Cat.</i> Berlin	M. Steinschneider, <i>Verzeichnis der hebräischen Handschriften [der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin]</i> , Berlin, 1878–1897
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
<i>y</i>	Jerusalem Talmud
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZDMG</i>	<i>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>
<i>ZfMW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft</i>
<i>ZGJD</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland</i>