The Music of Obadiah the Proselyte and his Conversion

SINCE the beginning of the present century, scholars have become increasingly aware of the existence of Hebrew manuscript fragments, emanating exclusively from the Cairo Genizah, which have been found to contain the autograph memoirs of a Normannic monk of southern Italian birth who converted to Judaism in 1102 C.E. and thereafter travelled extensively in the Near East.[1] The Christian name of this proselyte was Johannes; he was born, probably in the seventies of the eleventh century, to a nobleman named Dreux, who had settled during the period of the Norman conquest of southern Italy in the town of Oppido.[2] Upon his conversion to Judaism, the causes of which were given by him in his memoirs (see below), Johannes assumed the Hebrew name Obadiah—the name by which he is known to scholars at the present time—and embarked upon his travels, learning in the following years both Hebrew and Arabic.[3]

[1] A bibliography of the text publications pertaining to Obadiah the Proselyte is given by us in *Sefunoth* 8, 1964, p. 102. This includes all textual publications prior to the identification of the Seminary musical fragment as emanating from the hand of Obadiah. Subsequent publications are mentioned in the body of the present article. Whilst this article itself is not motivated by any urge to vindicate priorities, its argument will be the more clearly understood if the chronology of scholarly events is kept in mind. The facts are that the identification of the scribe of MS. JTSA Adler 4096b was arrived at by us in November 1964, and—by a remarkable coincidence—independently by A. SCHEIBER about the same time (*Tarbiz* 34, 1965, pp. 366–71; cf. our remarks *ibid.*, 35, 1965, pp. 81–3). According to N. ALLONY's express statement, he was later (i.e. in the winter of 1964/5) apprised by SCHEIBER of that identification, and being himself at the time in Cambridge he searched for, and succeeded in finding, a further *Obadiah*-fragment containing musical notation. The hypothesis of the Christian origin of the music of the Seminary fragment was first propounded by us in the *Journal of Religion*, 45, 1965, pp. 153–6; its rejection by H. AVENARY, the latest scholar to write on the subject, in *JJS* 16, 1965, p. 104 without specific reference to us as the originator of this hypothesis and effectively in reliance upon earlier investigators (whom he does acknowledge) prompted us to look carefully at their publications once again, and the scrutiny of their arguments and conclusions has resulted in the assessment here offered.

[2] For the name of Obadiah's father, cf. our remarks in the *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*, 34, 1966, p. 10, n. 12, where full documentation is given. A map showing the location of Oppido is conveniently given by H. AVENARY in *JJS* 16, 1965, p. 103. It is located in the Basilicata, on the Bradano River, and approximately half-way between Salerno and Bari.

[3] Among the places to which Obadiah travelled after leaving Italy were Aleppo, Rakkah, Makisin, al-Rahba, Baghdad, Damascus, Dan, Tyre, and finally, the cities of Egypt, or at all events Fusṭāṭ. A few of these places have not been mentioned in previous studies, but we have been fortunate enough to decipher them in

(*continued overleaf*)

The fragments of the memoirs which he subsequently composed make it evident that he was an eyewitness to events which transpired at the time of the First Crusade—the only European, so far as is known, whose autograph description of such events has been preserved.[4] He later settled in Egypt—probably in Fusṭāṭ—and it is with this event that his memoirs break off. The single preserved leaf of a prayer book in Obadiah's own hand[5] evinces his acquaintance with the scribal art, in which he probably indulged after settling in Fusṭāṭ; but his memoirs give evidence that his true interests were those of the chronicler and historian. It will, moreover, be immediately apparent that, having been raised as a Christian and trained as a monk, he possessed a combination of knowledge and disciplines rare in those days: he knew well both Latin and Christian lore, as well as Hebrew, the traditions and laws of Judaism, and the Arabic vernacular and milieu into contact with which he was thrown upon his departure from his native Italy.

Did Obadiah, a child of the West, convey to the East during the period of the First Crusade something of the spirit and essence of his former culture? Or, in other terms, was he a link—a hitherto unsuspected link—in that process of westernisation which for a few brief moments of history was imposed by the European conquerors upon the Levant? This question, tantalising in the possibilities it raises, overrides the many others which are instigated by a perusal of Obadiah's manuscript remains; yet although portions of the memoirs have been known for several decades, scholars have only recently begun to ponder upon it. Furthermore, it is perhaps but a mere

various fragments of the memoirs. We hope to discuss Obadiah's itinerary more fully in another context. The fact that Obadiah learnt Hebrew after his conversion is not only clear from the memoirs themselves, but from the specific statement in the Budapest fragment (discussed below) that he studied this language sitting with schoolchildren in Baghdad. That Obadiah also learned Arabic emerges from the fact that, after his conversion 1102 C.E., he spent at least the following twenty years of his life in the Near East. Throughout his memoirs he describes various events pertaining to Islamic history, for which he must have utilised some Arabic chronicles of the times (although these may have been supplemented by oral information). The single manuscript leaf of the prayer-book written by him (Hebrew Union College Genizah fragment no. 8) contains instructions in Arabic.

[4] Events of the First Crusade are described by Obadiah especially in the Cambridge fragment of his memoirs (T.-S 8. 271) translated by S. D. GOITEIN in *JJS* 4, 1953, pp. 74–84, but also in the Cambridge fragment T-S Loan 31 published by J. MANN in *REJ* 89, 1930, pp. 250–1. We hope to discuss these events more fully in another context.

[5] Hebrew Union College Genizah Fragment no. 8, facsimiles of which are given in *Acta Orientalia Hung.*, 4, 1954, pp. 290–1. Cf. further J. MANN in *REJ*, *ibid.*, pp. 246–7.

accident of research which has caused the question to be raised in a serious way at all.

In discussing, in 1964, the conversion of prominent European Christians to Judaism before and during the period of the First Crusade, we called attention[6] to a passage in the memoirs of Obadiah on which hinged the understanding of an important element in this proselyte's psychological formation during the period of his Christian youth. The passage occurs in folio 1 *verso* of the Budapest fragment published by Scheiber.[7] It is the opening passage in an episode of Obadiah's early life the whole of which, according to the editor, read as follows: "*wa-yehī ba-Shānāh hā-rīshōnāh 'asher niṭmā' bāhh Yohannes teḥillat ṭum'āthō mi-sārē laylāh be-bēth Dreux abīw wa-yehī ba-Shānāh ha-hī ḥālam Yohannes ḥalōm we-hinnē hu mekahēn ba-Bāmāh ha-Gedōlāh 'asher le-Oppido . . . wa-yar' we-hinnē 'īsh 'ōmēd 'al yemīnō neged ha-Mizbēaḥ wa(-Yōmer) 'ēlāw Yohannes . . .*" There is a break in the Budapest fragment at this point; the continuation may have led on to the Cambridge fragment discovered by Goitein[8] the first legible words in which could be rendered "Johannes awoke from his sleep and he was frightened".

According to Scheiber[9], the passage of the Budapest fragment in question meant: "In the year in which Johannes (i.e. Obadiah—N.G.) received his first orders from the 'Princes of the Night' [Priests], in the house of his father De Rochez, in the same year he had a dream: He was officiating in the basilica . . . of his own people, when he saw a man standing at his right hand facing the altar, who called out to him: Johannes!"

It will be noticed that Scheiber translated the first eleven words of this sentence as "In the year in which Johannes received his first orders from the 'Princes of the Night' [Priests]".[10] This presupposed that מסרי לילה (vocalised *mi-Sarey laylah*) was the correct reading, and also assumed that Obadiah, being a convert by choice from Christianity, would naturally refer in opprobrious terms to the instruction of priests as "defilement". Such an interpretation, however, could not be substantiated by any parallel reference from Hebrew literature to

[6] *Sefunoth*, 8, 1964, pp. 102–3; cf. further *JJS* 16, 1965, p. 70.
[7] *Kirjath Sefer*, 20, 1954, pp. 93–8; *Acta Orientalia Hungariae*, 4, 1954, pp. 278–81.
[8] MS. T-S. 8. 271, *JJS* 4, 1953, pp. 74–84.
[9] *Acta Orientalia Hung.*, p. 280.
[10] So also J. L. TEICHER, *JJS* 5, 1954, pp. 32–7, see p. 37 n. 1.

non-Jewish priests as "officers of the night", or even "officers", to say nothing of the unusual spelling מסרי for משרי.[11] The reproductions of the fragment in Scheiber's publications revealed only the faintest outlines of the crucial letters. לילה was legible, but the preceding word could be read either as *mi-Sarey* (מסרי) or *mi-qeri* (מקרי). Students of the memoirs of Obadiah have already become familiar with the peculiarities of his Hebrew handwriting, so that the close similarity of his angular *samekh* and the top portion of his *qōf* need hardly be dwelt upon here. In the photographs there was only a blur or stain beneath the main portion of the crucial letter, but, on the other hand, no certainty whatever that this letter was indeed a *samekh*. We therefore suggested (*Sefunoth*, *ibid.*, p. 102) that the correct reading of the passage must have been *niṭmā' . . . teḥillath ṭum'āthō mi-qerī laylāh*, *viz.*, "It happened in the first year in which Johannes *suffered his initial defilement through a nocturnal emission* in the house of Dreux his father, in that year he dreamed a dream, etc.". In support of this interpretation, we pointed out that the verse was clearly modelled upon *Deut.* xxiii. 11, where a similar expression occurs to indicate a nocturnal pollution (*viz.*, כי יהיה בך איש אשר לא יהיה טהור מקרה לילה); that the mystic dream-type described by Obadiah was, and remains, a phenomenon associated with the beginnings of puberty; and that the new reading of the crucial phrase did not suffer the double embarrassment of a marked solecism in spelling as well as meaning afflicting the earlier reading (for *qeri* cf. e.g. Ben-Yehudah, *Thesaurus*, *s.v.* קרי).

While in Budapest during the summer of 1964 we had the opportunity to examine the original fragment, and spent considerable time on the crucial words described above. We observed that there were indeed faint traces of the lower, vertical portion of a *qōf* directly beneath the letter read by Scheiber as a *samekh*; and that the phrase was indeed מקרי לילה. This tended to encourage us in the view that Obadiah had not used any harsh terms of opprobrium in describing Christianity or its priesthood—an opinion which itself had been formed on the basis of the recognition of the absence of any such opprobrium in the *Obadiah*-fragment published by Goitein (above,

[11] SCHEIBER's claim (*Kirjath Sefer* p. 97, note to line 35, *Acta Orientalia*, p. 277) to have discovered a parallel in T-S. Loan 31, so-called *verso* line 5) founders on the fact that MANN's reading (*REJ* 89, 1930, p. 251) was mistaken. The word there is not *ha-Sārīm*, but *ha-Sārīs*, "the Eunuch", the passage referring to the activities of the eunuch-slave Lūlū who figured in some intrigues in Aleppo in 1114.

note 8) and elsewhere in passages of the fragment at present under discussion, directed either against Christian prelates or the anti-Jewish measures of the Caliph al-Muqtadi.[12]

When we came to appreciate the circumstance that Obadiah, in attempting to describe his vicissitudes as a Christian, had refrained from indulging in polemics, we began to suspect that the Genizah might contain other, indirect evidence of his Christian experience. In November 1964 we identified the musical manuscript of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Adler 4096b (hereafter called the Seminary fragment), as being in the hand of Obadiah the Proselyte. The identification, as mentioned above (note 1), was independently arrived at by Scheiber at approximately that time. In examining the views of musicologists who had written before that date—and therefore without knowledge of the identity of the scribe—regarding the character of this music, it became clear to us that the most responsible opinions until then expressed considered it to have the characteristics of a Gregorian chant; and in our article published in April of 1965[13] we suggested both that the Seminary fragment had been written (not necessarily composed) by Obadiah—an identification which has now become generally accepted—and that he had attempted to adapt melodies learned by him in his Christian youth to Hebrew poetry. The finding of another musical MS. written by Obadiah was announced by Dr. Nehemiah Allony and reported in the Israeli press of 3rd May, 1965. A special session on the music of Obadiah was subsequently held at the Fourth World Congress of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem in July 1965, and several articles were thereafter to appear attempting new interpretations of the discoveries.

The first, to be sure, had been Allony's own non-technical essay, which appeared in the literary supplement of *Ha-Aretz*, 11th June 1965. Here he suggested that "these are the only pages of music which have been left to us from the melodies of our people in the middle ages", ignoring the circumstance that our identification of Obadiah as the scribe of the Seminary fragment of music made it clear that that fragment—the music in which had been declared by competent scholars long before to be Gregorian and Western—was evidence at

[12] We have subsequently been able to determine that a reference to Pope Urban II actually occurs in the last extant line of f. 1a of the Cambridge fragment discovered by GOITEIN (see *infra*, p. 60); once again, no trace of an abusive expression is noticeable.

[13] "Obadiah the Proselyte: Scribe of a Unique Twelfth-Century Hebrew Manuscript Containing Lombardic Neumes", *Journal of Religion*, 45, 1965, pp. 153–6.

the very least for the possibility of mediaeval Jewish employment of Western music as a setting for Hebrew poems. The rejection of our hypothesis that Obadiah had attempted such adaptation was to become a salient point of the subsequent literature dealing with the music of Obadiah.

Already at the Congress it was stated that a "righteous proselyte" such as Obadiah could not conceivably have used music from his Christian past in a Jewish context, especially since—so the argument went—he had gone so far as to speak (in the Budapest fragment) of his Christian training as "uncleanness". During the discussion we emphasised both that there was no palaeographical evidence for the latter assertion, and that moreover it could not be buttressed by appeal to Obadiah's description of Christians as *'arēlīm* (*uncircumcised*), since this was not specifically intended as a term of opprobrium, but rendered in effect inevitable by the pre-emption by Jews in the Near East of the term *gōyyīm* (*gentiles*) for Muslims. Since the identification of Obadiah as the scribe had necessarily reopened the question of the origin and nature of this music, we suggested that critics of our hypothesis should find more solid evidence to support their claim that Obadiah could not conceivably have adapted non-Jewish music to Hebrew poetry after his arrival in the East; or alternatively, that they should demonstrate by objective means and criteria the Jewish origin of this music.

Dr. Israel Adler's subsequent article[14] showed him as being in agreement by then (December 1965) with the view that the music of the Seminary fragment was in the style of Western monodic chant.[15]

[14] *Revue de Musicologie*, 51, 1965, pp. 19–51, cf. especially pp. 36, 46.

[15] The date (December 1965) is of importance, since in July of the same year ADLER had felt able to claim that the music was of Eastern Jewish origin. For example in the *Abstracts of Papers of the Fourth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Jewish Music Section, p. 1, he had written that the identification of Obadiah as the scribe of these fragments was "mainly important for establishing the oriental origin of the source (Obadiah stayed in the east after his conversion). . . ." It was on this basis that the music of Obadiah was sung at the opening of the Congress by a choir of children from oriental countries; cf. ADLER's remarks to the same effect in an interview in *Ma'ariv*, 28th July 1965. During the special session of the Congress devoted to Obadiah's music we read in full a communication from Prof. R. B. MACDONALD (University of Illinois) in which he carefully delineated the Gregorian features of the music of the Seminary fragment—a fact not mentioned in ADLER's article in the *Rev. de Musicologie*. It is somewhat astonishing that despite ADLER's change of mind, the recording of the music of Obadiah recently issued in vol. iv of the *Encyclopédie des musiques sacrées* (see *infra*, note 53) is identical with that made by children of eastern Jewish extraction for the opening of the Congress. The authenticity of this recording, which reflects ADLER's views before his change of mind, is thus subject to the gravest doubts.

Adler did not simply point to the presence of a few Gregorian characteristics, but said quite clearly that "cette pièce (*sc.* the Seminary fragment) représente . . . une composition . . . dans le style du chant monodique occidental, avec des tournures caractéristiques que l'on retrouve dans certaines pièces de chant grégorien . . ." (p. 36). He further stated that ". . . le chant du *piyyut* "*mi 'al har ḥorev*" noté dans le ms. ENA, et celui du fragment "*wa 'eda' mah*" noté au recto du ms. *Cambridge*, sont des compositions dans le style du chant monodique occidental du moyen âge" (p. 46), proceeding then to a detailed analysis of the characteristic Gregorian features of the music. In spite of this, however, Adler refrained from unequivocally recognising its Western, non-Jewish nature, proposing instead the theory that the melody of the Seminary fragment was of Western *Jewish* origin, that it was carried to the East by French or other European cantors seeking employment in the more favourable liturgical markets of Egypt; and that it was such melodies as these of the Western cantors that Obadiah heard in the synagogues of the East and thereupon recorded (pp. 47 f). Our own interpretation he rejected on the necessarily arbitrary assumption that a former Christian would not wittingly have used a melody from his past for any purposes connected with his new religion. This was, of course, a far cry from being a demonstration of the Jewish character of the music, for which Adler could not produce parallels from melodies preserved by any other mediaeval Jewish community. Nevertheless Adler did not feel precluded, despite his recognition of Gregorian characteristics in the music, from asserting at a few points in his article, and indeed implying in the title thereto ("*Les Chantes synagogaux notés au XII^e siècle . . . par Abdias, le prosélyte normand*"), that the music was of Jewish origin.

In discussing the music contained on the *verso* of the Cambridge fragment, Adler did point to certain similarities between its melody and that of several liturgical pieces used in different Jewish communities at the present time. Now in view of the criterion established with respect to the other two pieces, one might have expected him to suggest that this melody of the Cambridge *verso*, although showing similarities to certain pieces of authentic Jewish music, could not on the basis of such similarities be proven to be of that kind, but rather that other explanations were equally possible. Adler however argued instead that the similarities between the Cambridge *verso* and known, later pieces of Jewish music were the result of Obadiah's having recorded

this melody upon hearing it in a Jewish community after his arrival in the East. He thus gave simultaneous expression to the sentiment that the music of the Cambridge *verso* must be authentically Jewish *because* of its similarities to known examples of Jewish music preserved until the present time, and the concomitant assertion that the other two pieces of music were also really Jewish *despite* the lack of such similarities, and notwithstanding their closeness to the style of Gregorian chant. In spite of Adler's reluctance to recognise Obadiah's music as being frankly borrowed, only the discovery of compelling testimony in the pages of the surviving memoirs of Obadiah, pointing to his total rejection of the culture of his Christian past, could dispose of the hypothesis that Obadiah adapted non-Jewish melodies to Hebrew poetry. Such testimony is, however, completely lacking.

And indeed, Adler himself seems to have felt some uncertainty about his own proposal, since he suggested *alternatively* that Obadiah was perhaps the composer of these chants and himself served as a cantor in the East. In elaborating on the latter hypothesis,[16] he later stated that "it has been suggested that they (*sc.* the melodies preserved in the Seminary fragment and on the *recto* of the Cambridge fragment) are pieces from a Gregorian repertoire, borrowed and adapted to Hebrew by Obadiah. But as long as no similar Gregorian chants have been identified, whatever resemblances exist can reasonably be attributed to the influence, natural in a composer, Jewish or Christian, brought up in a Christian environment". Since it was Adler who had himself shown the remarkable similarities of this music to Western monodic chant, it is somewhat inconsistent on his part later to refer to this phenomenon by saying "whatever resemblances exist". Moreover, his suggested attribution of the resemblance to "the influence, natural in a composer, Jewish or Christian, brought up in a Christian environment" makes sense only if by such "influence" we mean the influence, natural in a composer, Jewish or Christian, brought up in a Christian environment, *of that Christian environment on him*—a phrase, however, which is notably absent from Adler's statement. Adler suggested also the additional possibility that Obadiah actually composed the music. His acknowledgment of environmental influence would be equally valid if Obadiah were

[16] "Synagogue Chants of the Twelfth Century", *Ariel, A Review of the Arts and Sciences in Israel*, 15, 1966, p. 37; cf. his earlier statement, *Revue de Musicologie*, pp. 47–8.

recognised merely as the scribe recording melodies that he remembered (which is what we had suggested) rather than as the composer. But he follows on immediately with the assertion that "it would be astonishing for Obadiah, a convert to Judaism, deliberately to borrow a melody from the religious service of the 'uncircumcised' (as he pejoratively referred to his former co-religionists)[17] and introduce it clandestinely into the sanctuary of his new faith" (p. 37).

Adler's argument leads him therefore into a paradox: whereas intentional adaptation on Obadiah's part would be astonishing, on the other hand it is entirely reasonable—assuming that Obadiah was the composer—to attribute the style of his music to the natural influence of the environment upon him. But even then we do not understand why Adler objects to the view which he correctly attributes to us.[18] We explicitly stated[19] that the significance of the identification of the scribe rested in the fact that the Seminary fragment could no longer be used to support the claim that Gregorian chant was of Palestinian or Eastern origin; rather, that if any general phenomenon was implied by this identification, it was that "even the Jews of eastern countries absorbed something of the Gregorian chant from Christianity, namely, through the medium of European converts to Judaism who had fled their homelands after their decision to enter the Jewish fold". We further stated that it could hardly be doubted that Obadiah "had an audience to listen to his Gregorian renderings of Hebrew liturgical poetry". Adler's own formulation, despite the reluctance which his paradox betokens, itself allows as much: it must remain a matter of speculation whether Obadiah did what he did unconsciously, semi-consciously, or with full intent. In short, Adler has, despite the shrouded language, by implication assented to, rather than refuted our own view that the Seminary fragment reveals Obadiah in the role of transmitting an element of Western Christian culture to the Jews of the East. This view contradicts Adler's other one, according to which Obadiah heard, and recorded, melodies brought to the East by Jewish cantors from Western Europe. It is only towards the end of his discussion that he reluctantly moves close to our own interpretation; and one is left with the impression that Adler is embarrassed in having

[17] This, however, is misconceived; see *supra*, p. 48.

[18] *Revue de Musicologie*, p. 47, "N. Golb . . . proclame qu'il s'agit de pièces de repertoire gregorien, etc."; *Ariel*, p. 37, "it has been suggested that they are pieces from a Gregorian repertoire, etc.".

[19] *Journal of Religion*, p. 154.

to entertain the possibility of admitting a non-Jewish origin for the music recorded by Obadiah.

A view somewhat different from either of those suggested by Adler has since been proposed by Dr. Leo Levi.[20] After remarking that "su un punto infatti Golb e certamente nel vero, ed e che e impossibile considerare le musiche trascritte da Ovadia (quella del ms. A, e quindi anche del ms. B) come 'ebraico-orientali'", he, too, proceeds to show that the music, in so far as it was written down by a convert from Christianity, could not conceivably have been of non-Jewish origin. For this he quotes, and embellishes, the opinion of Adler,[21] after which he throws all caution to the winds and suggests that the music was of specifically Italian Jewish origin, and that after having learned it while attending synagogues in Italy, Obadiah subsequently carried it with him to the East. Nothing, as it happens, points to Obadiah's having frequented synagogues in Italy before his decision to convert, whereas he does specifically state in his memoirs (Budapest fragment, f. 2*a*) that he first learned the "Torah of Moses and the words of the prophets in the writing of the Lord and the language of the Hebrews" sitting with schoolchildren in Baghdad: at least a few years, that is, after his decision to convert and his flight from his native Italy. This passage, and the problem raised by it, Levi ignores; his refusal to recognise the possible non-Jewish origin of the music preserved in the Seminary fragment is, it seems, once again based on an *a priori* assumption that because Obadiah converted to Judaism every element of his Christian past was utterly and uncompromisingly rejected by him.

There is, of course, a slight difference of emphasis. Adler had proposed that Obadiah heard and recorded European Jewish music, imported by cantors into Egypt; or alternatively that the music was composed by Obadiah himself, the Gregorian characteristics being the result of the "natural influence" of his Christian environment upon him; while Levi thinks that it is genuine Italo-Jewish music, learned by Obadiah in synagogues in which he allegedly studied prior to his conversion to Judaism. The view of Dr. Scheiber, writing inde-

[20] "Le due piu antiche trascrizioni musicali di melodie ebraico italiane", *Scritti sull' Ebraismo in memoria di Guido Bedarida*, Florence, 1966, pp. 105–36.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 133, n. 110, "Su uno dei frammenti pubblicati da Scheiber i cristiani sono definiti da Ovadia 'incirconcisi' e 'idolatri'; cf. Adler, *Revue de Musicologie*, p. 48."

pendently of these two authors, is somewhat different. He states[22] that "Dieser Proselyt . . . der vom Westen gekommen war, hörte in einer Synagoge von Fustat—in derjenigen der Juden aus Babylonien—an einem Simchat-Tora-Feste diese orientalische Melodie; sie ergriff ihn und er verewigte sie mit seiner bekannten Sorgfalt für seine Bibliothek mit dem Noten in Neumenschrift . . .". In so far as Scheiber continues to maintain[23] his reading מסרי לילה and his interpretation of the passage in which it occurs as an opprobrious reference to the teachings of Christianity, one ought not be surprised to observe him promulgating the view that the music is of Jewish, nay, Eastern Jewish origin. But the musical transcription effected by Prof. K. Szigeti of Pannonhalma that follows immediately on Scheiber's own statement now becomes somewhat baffling; for it bears all the hallmarks of western monodic chant. In a letter to Prof. Szigeti (15th November 1966) we have enquired about the seeming conflict between Scheiber's interpretation and his own. In his reply, Szigeti states that "Das Schema, was ich über diese Melodie aufgeschrieben habe . . . kommt oft bei den gregorianischen Melodie-formen vor. Aber eben so kann man es auch bei späteren Authoren treffen. . . . Gleicherweise kann man es auch bei den alttestamentlichen Israeliten finden. . . . Ich glaube, dass dieser Gesang ein Beweis dafür ist, wie strenge Verwandtschaft zwischen dem alten jüdischen und dem christlich gregorianischen Gesang ist". A clarification, surely, that would have been helpful had it been inserted by Scheiber within the context of his own article.

It is thus perhaps safe to infer that the combined view of Scheiber and Szigeti is that the musical fragments attest the Jewish origin of Gregorian chant. This was the view of Dr. Eric Werner, writing[24] some twenty years before the identification of the scribe, with respect

[22] "Der normannische Proselyt Obadja, der Aufzeichner der ersten herbäischen Melodie", *Studia Musicologica*, 8, 1966, pp. 173–88, especially pp. 182–3.

[23] Cf. *Tarbiz*, 34, 1965, p. 367; *Studia Musicologica*, p. 176, "An der ersten Jahreswende seiner Einweihung hat er einen Traum usw". In *Essays presented to Chief Rabbi Israel Brodie on . . . his seventieth Birthday* (ed. H. J. ZIMMELS, etc., London, 1967), p. 378, n. 11, SCHEIBER states: ". . . I have come to the conclusion that there is no need to change my reading. . . ." We may here remark in passing that the fragment of the proselyte's letter there published by SCHEIBER (pp. 377–80) is evidently another portion—although from a different copy—of the epistle of the anonymous proselyte (T.-S. 12. 732) discussed by us most recently in *JJS* xvi, 1965, pp. 69–74, and not the letter of yet another proselyte, as SCHEIBER appears to believe.

[24] *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*, 16, 1947, pp. 226–7.

to the Seminary fragment. However, as we have tried to indicate,[25] this interpretation is substantially weakened by the recognition that the music, which was admitted by Werner to follow closely along in the style of Gregorian chant, was recorded by one who, himself a proselyte to Judaism, had been a monk in Italy prior to his conversion. In fairness to Dr. Werner it should be pointed out that although this was his view in 1947, he seems later to have become uncertain about it; for writing in 1957 he stated[26] that the "text, and probably also its music, was composed by an otherwise unknown Amr . . . who lived in the eleventh century; it is very much akin to the more elaborate types of Gregorian chant. . . . It seems to have originated at Ravenna, or thereabouts, although it was found in Cairo. . . ." In other words, Werner appears by that date to have been of the opinion that in so far as the music bore the hallmarks of Gregorian chant, it might well be of Western, i.e. Italian, rather than of Eastern origin. But with the identification of the scribe—a former Normannic monk of Italian birth—before him, Werner seems to have changed his mind again, despite having been so close (in his 1957 statement) to the identification of the actual scribe. For in a radio broadcast on the music of Obadiah in 1966[27] he has stated that the epilogue of the melody preserved in the Seminary fragment "has a tune different from that of the preceding stanzas", and that this "new tune of the epilogue bears an unmistakable Oriental ring", being also "much more florid than the preceding verses". Of the melody preserved on the *recto* of the Cambridge fragment Werner went on to say that "it displays a certain melodic monotony which is rare in Gregorian chant", and that it "contains also some echoing motifs", which fact "hints at the Near East". All this—especially in view of Werner's acceptance in the same broadcast of the scribe as Obadiah—represents rather a surprising *volte-face* from the position which he had taken regarding the Seminary fragment in 1957.

Werner now finds in the document "an extremely ambivalent relationship to Gregorian chant and its style. Certain similarities, almost identities, are evident, but we encounter also passages which deviate from strict and classical Gregorian diction. . . ." Werner then

[25] *Journal of Religion*, p. 154.
[26] *New Oxford History of Music*, Oxford, 1957, i, p. 326.
[27] American ABC Network, Sunday, 29th May, 1966. In what follows we quote directly from the tape of that broadcast.

has the following to say about the possibly non-Jewish character of the music in the Seminary fragment:

> "How might this music have sounded in the ears of the Egyptian Jews—strange or familiar? The question was raised by Prof. Golb, who assumed that Obadiah was composer, poet and scribe all in one.[28] For this assumption we have no proof as yet. But even if we did, and it is after all quite a plausible hypothesis, then two answers are possible. The first was suggested by Prof. Golb himself. His music sounded strange in the ears of Oriental Jews, and was new to them, perhaps spicy, in comparison with the old chants which they heard every day. It was, in a word, a diversion, and they liked it. Yet this answer is not tenable, plausible as it sounds, for we possess another musical document, also from the Cairo Genizah, wherein a few verses of the *Song of Songs* are set to music. This manuscript is about 250 years younger than Obadiah's, and yet its style is almost identical with our piece. Can we assume that this musical manuscript was written by another convert, also from Italy or France, over 250 years later? It does not look like it".

Coming as it does immediately after Werner's acknowledgment of the identity of the scribe of the Seminary fragment, this purported refutation of our hypothesis of the non-Jewish origin of its music is something of a *non-sequitur*. Moreover, Werner continues:

> "Yet such a continuity of style is not a coincidence. It suggests a certain stability of the musical tradition, and excludes the idea of Obadiah having introduced basically new material. The second answer says in effect: We know that the oldest part of Gregorian chant originated in the synagogues of Palestine, and that there is still common ground between the chant of the synagogue and that of the church even today, as every musicologist knows. Obadiah used Gregorian light melodies, but either he as the composer, or, if he was not the composer himself, his authors, provided them with oriental flourishes and embellishments. Thus they sounded quite familiar to the Jews of Aleppo, Damascus or Cairo".

Werner, then, claims that "Obadiah used Gregorian light melodies" and that "oriental flourishes and embellishments" were added to them. But the question that calls for answer is this: what is the origin of these "Gregorian light melodies?" Does Werner now believe that they were composed in Palestine, or in Obadiah's country of origin,

[28] In our article we in fact proposed merely that Obadiah was the *scribe* of the Seminary fragment. That Obadiah was the author of the poem was suggested by ALLONY; while it was ADLER who suggested that he might be the composer of the melodies. We find it difficult to accept either of the last two suggestions.

viz. Italy? His answer would seem to be of special importance in view of his earlier statement in the course of the same broadcast, that "if we assume that Obadiah himself was the composer, the similarity with the ecclesiastic chant is easily explained, for Obadiah was educated to become a priest, and was therefore acquainted with the Gregorian repertory". Apparently Werner does indeed appreciate the possibility that the melodies used by Obadiah are of non-Jewish origin, and indeed by the end of his discussion he actually appeared willing to accept it; but he nevertheless feels able to characterise our hypothesis to that effect as "not tenable".

It seems, then, at all events, that Werner now finds the music to be Gregorian in nature, while at the same time containing oriental "flourishes" (which, incidentally, other musicologists seem not to have recognised and which Werner himself does not appear to have known about before);[29] while Szigeti (*pace* his apparent condonation of his colleague Scheiber's reference to "dieser orientalische Melodie") agrees with other musicologists in *not* finding specifically eastern features in the music of the Seminary fragment. Nevertheless Szigeti proposed (as had also Werner originally, in 1947) that the manuscript gives evidence of the Eastern, nay Jewish, origin of the Gregorian chant. This is rather a confusing state of affairs. What is more, the substance of Szigeti's interpretation is that the Jews of Egypt during the first part of the twelfth century were using melodies almost precisely like the Gregorian chant of the monks of Italy (which is effectively what Werner, too, said in 1947, but no longer in 1957): and Werner would now (perhaps) ameliorate the situation by suggesting—for the first time—that the music of the Seminary fragment does in reality betray some oriental features. It should be further remarked that all this contrasts rather strongly with the interpretations of Adler and Levi discussed above (pp. 48–52).

Much light, however, has now been thrown on the musicological and historical aspects of these fragments by Dr. H. Avenary in his recent article on the subject in this *Journal*[30]—an article the keen insight of which must command the gratitude of scholars. Besides showing that Adler's hypothesis regarding the clef-sign in the fragments[31] is not tenable, he has devoted much patient attention to the

[29] Cf. *PAAJR*, pp. 226–7; *New Oxford History of Music*, i, p. 326.
[30] *JJS* 16, 1966, pp. 87–104.
[31] *Ibid.*, pp. 91–3.

scribal character of the neumes and to the subtlest aesthetic aspects of the music. It thus comes rather as a surprise to find him reiterating earlier arguments regarding the possible non-Jewish origin of the music of the Seminary fragment. In so far, however, as his argument introduces a new element, it calls for closer examination here.[32]

"Obadiah the Proselyte", writes Avenary (p. 96), ". . . refers to his former gentile priesthood as 'uncleanness'". In a footnote, while acknowledging that we had ourselves explained the passage otherwise, he states that "the interpretations *moserey laylah*, after *Job* xxxiii: 15–16, and *ṭum'ah* = idolatry, cf. *Hosea* v: 3 etc., are preferred by the writer". He attempts, in other words, to support the explanation of Obadiah's *niṭmā' teḥillath ṭum'athō* as spiritual contamination by the Christian priesthood, by appeal to Hosea's נטמא ישראל—"Israel is defiled"—in combination with the words in *Job*,

בחלום חזיון לילה בנפל תרדמה על אנשים בתנומות עלי משכב:
אז יגלה אזן אנשים ובמסרם יחתם:

thus contending that some form of the obscure penultimate word מסרם lies behind the material passage in Obadiah's memoirs. What, however, is absolutely indispensable to Avenary's argument is a suitable meaning for the word מסרם, or at least for its root—and none is in point of fact proposed by him. We are left therefore to

[32] The very sub-title of Avenary's article describes the music as "Early 12th Century": yet in earlier publications (*Kirjath Sefer* 19, 1942/3, pp. 259, 262–3, 265; *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 7, 1958, cols. 225, 241; *Tatzlil*, 4, 1964, pp. 5–9) he had vacillated between the eleventh to twelfth, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries. In the last-named article he declared that the "decipherment [of the Seminary fragment, its] performance and evaluation were encompassed by a wall of problems". Allony's discovery in Cambridge of an additional musical fragment has, it seems, enabled Avenary to reach the conclusion that Obadiah did possibly record a genuine Jewish melody (*JJS*, pp. 97–100). Adler (*4th Congress of Jewish Studies*, p. 1, *Ariel*, p. 27) likewise attaches great importance to Allony's discovery of a further musical fragment written by Obadiah. Nevertheless, none of the reasons given by Avenary for his hailing of Allony's discovery as an important scholarly event coincides with Adler's own reasons for doing so. (1) the *Daleth*-clef is claimed by Adler to stand for *F*, whereas Avenary equates it with *D* and states that much casuistry is required to substantiate Adler's view. (2) Adler found that two of the melodies were possibily composed by Obadiah, while the third was certainly not composed by him but represents a tradition preserved until modern times by oriental Jews. Avenary makes no similar statement at all, and it seems quite clear that he does not really subscribe to any of the reasons given by Adler, although fully endorsing Adler's enthusiasm regarding Allony's discovery. This seems all the more remarkable in view of the apparent inability of either Adler or Avenary to muster up any similar enthusiasm for the identification of the scribe, which had taken place previously and in reality was the true point of departure for subsequent discussions, as is shown by Adler's and Avenary's own use of the identification in deciding upon the probable time of composition and provenance of the music.

devise for ourselves what he may have had in mind. Scheiber, whom Avenary quotes in support of his argument, did not suggest any connection of the problematic word with the passage here adduced from *Job*, but read it as the equivalent of משרי לילה, meaning "by the officers of the night", an expression allegedly referring to the Christian priesthood. Scheiber's interpretation does at least recognise the necessity of there being a syntactic connection between the verb *niṭmā'* and the preposition *mi-* that precedes the enigmatic, alleged remainder סרי. In Avenary's interpretation, not only is no meaning suggested for this vocable, but there is also a tacit emendation: for it is necessary to presuppose the preposition *min* in front of the supposed word מסרי culled from *Job*, i.e. ממסרי, in order to effect the syntactic connection with *niṭmā'*. All this puts a strain on the credibility of Avenary's interpretation, and justifies us in asking why he feels compelled to adopt, and almost indeed to champion, Scheiber's own dubious reading of the word at issue.

The answer would seem to be that Avenary, when confronted by the established circumstance that the scribe of the musical fragments was Obadiah the Proselyte, erstwhile Italian monk, is as reluctant as are the other scholars whose views have been here scrutinised to allow that the music of the Seminary fragment might conceivably be of non-Jewish origin. Thus he writes:[33] "Whether these pieces were written for public performance or for his private prayer, it is inherently improbable that this ardent proselyte ever felt the necessity or the desire to revert to Christian melodies of days gone by."

Avenary had acknowledged[34] that "arc-shaped melodies" such as the one found in the Seminary fragment "are regarded as a main feature of the Gregorian chant". He thereafter attempts to palliate the consequences of this admission by adding that "this is a trend, not a law", and that plainsong "is in general close to other monophonic styles, and especially to those of Jewish and oriental origin. . . ." This cannot reasonably be permitted to obscure Avenary's own recognition of the acute similarities of the melodic style of the Seminary fragment to Western monodic chant. And it should moreover be observed that in 1964 Avenary had himself suggested, in speaking of the Seminary fragment, that the stream of refugees to the East after the time of the First Crusade "could also have brought eastward a cantor who was

[33] *JJS*, p. 104.
[34] *Ibid.*, p. 97.

expert in European musical doctrine".[35] Now, however, after pointing out the close and distinctive parallels between the music of the Seminary fragment and the known examples of Gregorian chant, and after acknowledging the identity of the scribe, Avenary says that from "the fact of a stylistic relation . . . it does not necessarily follow that the former was influenced by the latter".[36] And yet in describing certain similarities between the *verso* of the Cambridge fragment and melodic patterns used in hymns of several Jewish communities, he states[37] that "with regard to this tune at any rate, one dare say that Obadiah has noted down a genuine Jewish melody that was common in his day". This echoes Adler's reasoning; and here again one may justifiably ask, why is it that if the comparative method has resulted in the conclusion that the melody of the Cambridge *verso* is "a genuine Jewish melody . . . in common use in his day", an analogous conclusion is not drawn for the character of the music of the Seminary fragment and Cambridge *recto*? The contradiction between the treatment accorded by Avenary to these separate pieces is manifest.

In point of fact, the acknowledgment by specialists in Jewish musicology that the music of the Seminary fragment and of the Cambridge *recto* was written down by a former Normannic monk of south Italian origin, when taken alongside the same scholars' technical analysis of it, has greatly enhanced the possibility—indeed the probability—of its non-Jewish origin. Before, therefore, falling back upon the *a priori* assumption of an inherent improbability of the non-Jewish character of the music, and before resorting to a highly questionable reading in Obadiah's memoirs (a reading which, for his own argument, Avenary has even tacitly to emend), Avenary ought surely to have scrutinised more rigorously the evidence of this proselyte's character and personality as afforded by his surviving memoirs.

We know from these memoirs the reasons—some obvious, others more subtle—for Obadiah's conversion to Judaism. Among them were the pain caused by him to his mother in childbirth and its subsequent psychological effect upon him,[38] the conversion of Andreas, Archbishop of Bari, the mystic dream of his own youth,[39] and the cruelties of Christian persecutors of the Jews at the time of the First

[35] *Tatzlil*, p. 6.
[36] *JJS*, p. 97.
[37] *Ibid.*, p. 100.
[38] Budapest fragment, f.1a.
[39] *Ibid.*, f.1a–b.

Crusade which he either witnessed or heard about.[40] His conversion took place in 1102;[41] but he did not, thereafter, totally reject or cancel from his mind the experiences or training of his Christian youth. The excellently formed musical neumes[42] drawn by him as much as twenty or thirty years after his conversion attest both his keen memory of the past and his willingness to use the modes of Christian expression in his own changed spiritual circumstances. We have, moreover, the structural evidence of the memoirs themselves: Obadiah uses the very method and manner of the monastic chroniclers in his recapitulation of the events of his time. Thus, in a passage now partly destroyed[43] he quotes *verbatim*—in Hebrew transcription—the Latin text of *Joel* iii: 4, (*Sol*) *convertetur in tenebra*(*s et luna in sanguinem*) *antequam veniat dies do*(*mini magnus et*) *terribilis*, in reference, it may be surmised, to one of the eclipses which took place just prior to the First Crusade, and about whose portents the Latin chroniclers of the time speak freely.[44] Obadiah, writing in Hebrew, naturally proceeds immediately to give the Hebrew original of that verse. He then passes forthwith to the subject of the Crusade, first speaking, as is evident, of the arrival of Urban II in France in 1095[45] and thereafter describing the beginning of the attacks on the Jews. His manner even in this is similar to that of at least one Latin chronicler.[46] Thereafter he seems to have described other vicissitudes leading up to his arrival in the East, after which he reports upon events connected with the First Crusade which took place at Aleppo and elsewhere.[47] He describes at some length his stay in Baghdad,[48] where, so he tells us, he learned Hebrew[49] and gives a detailed description of the harrowing persecution of the Jews of that city that took place under al-Muqtadi. In all of

[40] T-S. 8. 271.
[41] Hebrew Union College Genizah frag. 8, colophon.
[42] *JJS*, *ibid.*, pp. 89–91.
[43] T-S. 8. 271, f.1[a], cf. GOITEIN in *JJS* 4, 1953, p. 81.
[44] Cf. e.g. Ordericus Vitalis, *Hist. Eccles.*, ed. LE PREVOST, iii, 1845, p. 462 *supra*; Balderic of Dol, in *RHC*, Occ. iv, p. 161; Guibert of Nogent, *Gesta Dei*, in *RHC*, Occ. iv, p. 149.
[45] T-S. 8. 271, *recto*, lines 13–14, where we could make out the words *wa-Yishlaḥ . . . ha-Pappos* (?) *abostolicus . . .*, i.e. (in that year there) sent . . . the Pope Apostolicus. . . .
[46] Cf. *PAAJR*, 34, 1966, p. 31.
[47] T-S. Loan 31, cf. MANN in *REJ* 89, 1930, pp. 250–1; T-S. 8. 271, f.2 *verso*, cf. GOITEIN, *JJS*, *ibid.*, p. 83.
[48] Cf. especially the Budapest fragment, f.2a–b; also MS. ENA 3098 (published by MANN as 4208), *REJ*, *ibid.*, p. 252; T-S. 10 K. 21, Mann, *ibid.*, pp. 253–5; T-S. 8. 271 f.2b, cf. GOITEIN in *JJS*, *ibid.*, p. 83.
[49] Budapest fragment f.2a.

this he never once raises his voice against the enemies of the Jews, but always describes the events in the same calm manner that is adopted by some of the Latin chroniclers, whose works (and whose style) he must have studied during his own monastic years. Even when he is describing the messianic movements that brought an anguished hope to the Jewish society of his time, Obadiah remains relatively forbearing. He has nothing harsh to say about the eccentric Karaite Solomon[50] (although Solomon's messianic pretentions evidently caused, it is true, little turmoil). Against Solomon ibn Rūjī (so, rather than Dūjī), the latter's son Menahem, and their associate Ephraim b. Azariah, whose activities caused rather more harm, the unkindest expression that he sees fit to use is "sons of the violent ones of the people of Israel" (בני פריצי עם ישראל, cf. *Daniel* xi: 14).[51] There was, then, very little of the polemist in Obadiah, and there is nothing whatsoever in his memoirs that unequivocally compels us to understand that he had put his Christian past right out of his mind. On the contrary, he freely described it, and made abundant use of it to illustrate the culture and events of his own period.

When, therefore, Avenary suggests that it is "inherently improbable that this ardent proselyte ever felt the necessity or the desire to revert to Christian melodies of days gone by", he is surely making an unwarranted assumption. He is suggesting, in effect, that Obadiah's attitude with respect to the *music* of his Christian days differed from his attitude with respect to the other experiences of his Christian youth; and in truth, one may ask how it comes about that Obadiah, who in Avenary's view could not conceivably have used a melody familiar from his Christian background, not only had no hesitation in employing the Lombardic neumes used by Italian monks of his own day to provide his text with musical notation, but even had no inhibitions about quoting the Bible in Latin. Moreover, Avenary implies that music as conceived by Obadiah must have been either

[50] MS. ENA 3098 no. 7, cf. MANN, *REJ*, *ibid.*, p. 252.

[51] T-S. 10 K. 21 f.1, cf. MANN, *REJ*, *ibid.*, pp. 253 f. It may be here observed that MANN has misread a highly important passage in this fragment of the memoirs. According to Mann, folio 1a lines 15–16 could be read: וכי שלמה בן ד[וד]וני . . . הוא אל[יהו ובנו] המשיח . . . However, the text clearly reads: וכי שלמה בן רוגי הוא מלך המשיח. According to Obadiah, Solomon ibn Rūjī claimed that he himself was the Messiah, and not his son. It would appear that, in the light of this new reading, students of the messianic movements will have to revise their treatment of the vexing problem of the relationship of the so-called "David al-Roi" to Solomon ibn Rūjī and his son Menahem.

inherently "Christian" or else inherently "Jewish", or "profane"—rather than being a merely objective aesthetic vehicle for the expression of moods and ideas through the addition of words. Yet it is surely the case that it was precisely in this latter way that music was thought of by Obadiah's own Italian contemporaries, so that the same melodies used in a specifically religious, Christian context could also be used in another, and in fact be adopted to a variety of ends and purposes.[52]

It is unfortunate that Avenary and his predecessors have not given closer attention to the memoirs of Obadiah himself. Had they done so, they would perhaps have appreciated that no contradiction exists between the tone, emphasis and character of those memoirs and the role of Obadiah as a transmitter of Western, non-Jewish forms and modes to the East; and that the process of melodic adaptation which, we would again submit, is evident in the Seminary fragment, was not any more foreign to him than it was to his contemporaries in his Italian homeland. Scholars who have been unwilling to entertain that possibility have found themselves involved in a series of mutually contradictory hypotheses, almost each one of which proves to be based upon at least one highly improbable premise. Adler has to put European cantors on a boat to Egypt and have Obadiah meet them somewhere in the East. Levi, in defiance of the express wording and clear chronology of Obadiah's own memoirs, has to make him visit synagogues and study Judaism in Italy rather than after his arrival in the East. Szigeti—as evidently also Scheiber, and perhaps Werner as well—would have us believe in the likelihood that Jews in Eastern countries in the eleventh and twelfth centuries were using the same types of melodies as those employed by the monks of Christian Italy at the time. Avenary (as well as Adler) would seem to propose that the character of the conclusions arising out of a method of research applied to one genre of music is not equally requisite when that self-same method is pursued for another musical genre, even though the two were recorded at the same time and place by one and the same individual. All this is accompanied by, or indeed more probably based on a tenacious clinging to an unwarranted *a priori* assumption that in converting to Judaism Obadiah repudiated absolutely, entirely,

[52] Cf. e.g. throughout the study of F. GENNRICH, *Die Kontrafactur in Liedschaffen des Mittelalters* (Langen bei Frankfurt, 1965).

and permanently all the cultural modes and forms which had been his heritage in the years of his youth and early manhood.[53]

We would submit that these quite unacceptable proposals have their common source in the inability or the unwillingness of their makers to concede the possible correctness of the hypothesis first proposed in our original article on the identification of the scribe of the Seminary fragment, that this manuscript contains Western, non-Jewish music in the style of Gregorian chant adapted by Obadiah the Proselyte to Hebrew poetry with which he became familiar some years after his conversion to Judaism. We have hoped to point out above in explicit terms that a careful study of the memoirs of Obadiah, far from contradicting this interpretation, leads inevitably toward its acceptance. The strongest proof, of course, resides in the character of the music itself, which our colleagues in the field of Jewish musicology now do indeed agree is similar to Western monodic chant. It is this assent which is the crucial factor, and with it the conclusion becomes inevitable that Obadiah the Proselyte, through his conversion to Judaism and his flight eastward, became a factor in the transmission of cultural modes of his European homeland to the inhabitants of the Levantine shore.

Chicago. NORMAN GOLB

[53] Since the above was written it has come to our attention that the programme series of the Jewish Music Research Centre in Jerusalem, which is regularly broadcast by *Qol Yisra'el*, has adopted as its theme the melody of MS. Cambridge T.-S. K5 f. 41v. The same MS. is likewise reproduced for the decorative end-papers of *Yuval, Studies of the Jewish Music Research Centre*, Jerusalem, 1968. Moreover, the *Encyclopédie des musiques sacrées*, publiée sous la direction de JACQUES PORTE, i (Editions Labergerie, Paris, 1968), carries an article by Dr. ADLER, Director of the Centre, that includes a transcription of the *recto* of the Cambridge fragment and a partial transcription of the Seminary fragment (pp. 482–3). Without alluding to the different interpretations discussed above or to the problematic nature of the music, the author states blandly that "Les seuls documents notés de chants synagogaux du Moyen Age connus jusqu' à ce jour, sont dus à Abdias, le prosélyte normand. De son receuil de notations (xiie s.) nous sont parvenus, en dehors de la cantilation biblique: 1°) le *piyyût Mi 'al har horev* . . . 2°) le fragment final d'un *piyyût* non identifié . . . *Wa-eda' mah*. . . ." (p. 483). Included in an accompanying volume of records (*Encycl. des musiques sacrées*, Vol. iv: *Documents sonores*) is one (Disque 1, "Traditions juives. Cantilations, Rituel, Poèmes religieux") which contains, *inter alia*, all three of the musical selections copied down by Obadiah.

These attempts to convince the general public of the truth of an unfounded claim are formidable ones, but they will hardly lead historians astray.