

Medieval Arabic background material on the Andalusian *muwaššahāt* : a reassessment

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The most commonly accepted view is that there are two major sources that throw light on the Andalusian *muwaššahāt*: a passage from the *Ḍaxīra* of Ibn Bassām and the Introduction to *Dār al-tirāz* of Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk. It is also thought that a chapter at the end of the *Muqaddima* of Ibn Xaldūn gives some useful, if rather sketchy, general background. To these three I would add a fragment from *Nuzhat al-anfus* by the Valencian savant Ibn Sa'd al-Khayr.

My assessment of what these four writers have to say about the *muwaššah* is as follows:

1. Ibn Bassām (d. 543/1147)

The search for early background information on the *muwaššah* and the *xarja* in Arabic has so far revealed only one passage in a contemporary Andalusian literary source that is more than the briefest scrap. This is a piece in the *Ḍaxīra* of Ibn Bassām (d.1147), vol.1, part 1,¹ where it is part of a chapter on the *adīb* 'Ubāda ibn Mā' al-Samā', two of whose *muwaššahs* survive in other sources.²

Ibn Bassām's piece is normally thought to be an important source of evidence, but there is some disagreement about what that evidence is. Over the years, I have come to a different assessment. It is Ibn Bassām himself who sounds the warning. In his introductory remarks to the *Ḍaxīra* he tells us in his typically exaggerated way that poetry was not his 'thing'³. That does not affect his ability to quote poetry, but shows that it is not his first love. His interest lay in the epistolary style and in rhymed prose, including the *maqāma* genre, whose most influential exponent, al-Ḥarīrī⁴ died only a quarter of a century before Ibn Bassām.

His stance appears to reflect a fashionable attitude in Andalusian literary circles towards the *muwaššah*, one of some disdain; and, with few exceptions, this has remained the prevalent view in the Arab world to the present. Basically, Ibn Bassām has no wish to be seen as an authority on genres such as the *muwaššah* or the *musammaṭ* or the *zajal*. One wonders, too, about his silence about singing and music in general – though singing girls are occasionally mentioned in narratives.

The passage in the *Ḍaxīra* has been translated several times, the best known in English being those of Stern⁵ and Monroe.⁶

My version differs from the latter in some significant details:

They [the muwaššahāt] are measures [awzān] much used by the people of Andalus in gazal and nasīb to great effect, such that carefully guarded bosoms and even hearts are torn upon hearing them.⁷ The first to compose the measures of these muwaššahāt in our country, and to invent this form of composition was, from the information that has reached me, the blind [poet] Muḥammad ibn Maḥmūd al-Qabrī. He used compose them using as a basis hemistichs [ašṭār] of classical poetry, though most of them employed neglected or hitherto unused metrical patterns [a'ārīd],⁸ taking colloquial Arabic and non-Arabic⁹ expressions¹⁰ and calling them¹¹ the markaz, and building¹² the muwaššaha upon them, without any internal rhyme [taḍmīn] in [it/them] or [in the] aḡṣān.¹³ Some say that Ibn 'Abd

Rabbihi, the author of the Kitāb al-‘Iqd, was the first to compose this type of muwaššahāt among us. Next to rise to prominence¹⁴ was Yūsuf ibn Hārūn al-Ramādī. He was the first to make copious use of taḍmīn in the marākīz, inserting it at every pause he came to, but in the markaz in particular.¹⁵ The poets of our age continued after this fashion, such as Mukarram ibn Sa‘īd and Abū I-Ḥasan’s two sons. Then there appeared our ‘Ubāda,¹⁶ who invented the [use of] taḍfīr. He did this by focussing on¹⁷ the pauses in the aḡṣān, and using taḍmīn there, just as al-Ramādī had done with the pauses in the markaz.

The measures of these muwaššahāt lie beyond the scope of this anthology, since the majority of them are not [composed] according the metrical patterns [a ‘ārīd] of the classical poetry of the Arabs.¹⁸

It is over-optimistic to say, as Stern does, that the ‘interpretation of this passage of Ibn Bassām gives us no real difficulties, after we have gained an insight into the form of *muwaššah*’.¹⁹ Corriente, too, is equally sanguine about what he thinks he can extract from the text. He says,²⁰

Summing up, Ibn Bassām, writing at the beginning of the twelfth century, tells us: (1) that the *muwaššah* had been invented by learned people in al-Andalus roughly two centuries earlier, and that they made a somewhat unorthodox use of classical prosody by reducing the length of each line to a single hemistich, and by selecting infrequently used Arabic metres, and (2) that such poems were patterned upon a previously chosen *markaz* (an alternative term for *kharjah*) composed in a vulgar dialect, either of Arabic or Romance; subsequent poets would make the original basic stanzaic structure more complex by introducing inner rhyming, first in the *aqfāl* (*taḍmīn*), and later also in the *aḡṣān* (*taḍfīr*). It should be said that Ibn Bassām’s statement, when checked against the extant texts, appears to be absolutely accurate, albeit rather sketchy. He is unequivocal in his stand on two basic issues, namely, that the metre of the *muwaššah* is a slightly modified version of the Classical Arabic standard system (= ‘*arūd*’), and that the *muwaššah* was metrically patterned after a pre-existing poetical utterance, the dialectal *kharjah*, which necessarily implies that the *kharjah* already exhibited the same “adapted” ‘*arūd*’.

This clear and obvious interpretation of a medieval text, which can by no means be deemed obscure, leaves little room for hypothesizing about a Romance origin of the *muwaššah* or even merely its *kharjah*: Ibn Bassām declares that both were scanned after Arabic metrics.

So what can we reasonably extract from Ibn Bassām’s comments? Much less, I think, than we are normally led to believe.

He certainly tells us that there is a *muwaššah* genre and that a *muwaššaha* has a *markaz* (*xarja*). He also tells us that the two are integral (*wa-yada‘u ‘alay-hi²¹ l-muwaššahata*) – this is so, however we understand *yada‘u*. He also tells us that the *waššāḥs* use colloquial Arabic and non-Arabic²² expressions in the *xarjas*. Most striking is his objection to metrical deviations.

However, there are some major problems here:

- (a) we cannot be sure of the exact meaning of *ya‘xudu* (‘take’ ‘or’ ‘use’) and therefore we cannot assert that the verb implies quotation;
- (b) it is taken for granted that the *xarja* was a feature from the beginning;

(c) the term *lafẓ* cannot reasonably be applied to every hemistich or whole verse, even in theory.²³ The *xarjas* in the extant corpus confirm this.

We may also note various other failures that detract from the value of the piece:

(d) there are no comments about stanzas or the length of the poem;

(e) there is no mention of the *maṭla*’.

(f) there is no mention of *mu’āraḍa*.²⁴

He gives some possible names of the inventor and of those who added *taḍmīn* and *taḍfīr* but he does not tell us at what point the *xarja* began to have its distinctive role.

With its few facts given little context, and with its obscurities, errors and omissions, this piece from the *Daxīra* cannot reasonably be considered a particularly valuable source. Apart from the names of the originators and developers, he tells us nothing that we would not deduce from the extant corpus; and his failure to say anything about the origin and development of the *xarja* is particularly unhelpful.

This is all the more disappointing as it is inconceivable that Ibn Bassām did not hear performances of *muwaššahāt*, and that fairly regularly. The genre was at its zenith during his lifetime, with *waššāhs* such as Ibn al-Labbāna, al-A‘mā and Ibn Baqī all active whilst the *Daxīra* was being compiled.²⁵ He does indeed have sections on those three as poets, but the material recorded is trite and hardly worth reading.

2. Ibn Sa‘d al-Khayr (d. 571/1175)

The virtual disappearance of a work entitled *Nuzhat al-anfus wa-rawḍat al-ta’annus fī tawšīhi ahli l-Andalus*, written by the Valencian *adīb* Ibn Sa‘d al-Khayr is tragic loss. There is a brief and tantalizing quotation from it in the *Tawšī‘ al-tawšīh* of al-Šafadī:²⁶

We have found that some of the most recent [leading] poets, such as Miḥyār al-Daylamī and al-Ḥarīrī and others have derived from these metrical patterns [a ‘ārīḍ] sections composed of different units and linked rhymes, which they called mal‘abas.²⁷ Likewise the people of al-Andalus derived from them [i.e. a ‘ārīḍ] a beat²⁸ which they divided up according to linked measures and which they termed muwaššah, and they made the adornment of utterance and the embellishment of the sections ‘an adornment with rhyme’,²⁹ and they were the first to establish this road and to pursue its path and to make clear its design and its method.

In drawing an interesting parallel between the metrical experiments of such eastern literary giants as Miḥyār al-Daylamī and al-Ḥarīrī and those of the people of al-Andalus with the *muwaššah*, Ibn Sa‘d al-Khayr shows an understanding of and sympathy with the work of the Andalusian *waššāhs* that is so notably lacking in Ibn Bassām.

There is a heartfelt plea by Jareer Abu-Haidar in the *Preface* to his *Hispano-Arabic Literature and the Early Provençal Lyrics*:

The first natural step, as far as Arabic poetry in Islamic Spain is concerned, is to study it as an integral part of the Arabic literary tradition. If this poetry is seen to appertain to its own tradition both in its beginnings and in its subsequent ramifications, any attempt to look for Hispanic formative influences on it would become superfluous or functionless. Any incidental or peripheral Hispanic influences on it, however, would, and should be studied with the utmost care and interest.³⁰

I have the strong impression that this would less of a problem if Ibn Sa‘d al-Khayr’s *Nuzhat al-anfus* had survived. But more to the point, there would hardly be a problem if Ibn Bassām, who mentions a number of the Andalusian *waššāḥs* in addition to those to whom he devotes a section, had not been so narrow-minded.

3. Ibn Sanā’ al-Mulk (d. 608/1212)

For a long time – from his own lifetime onwards in the Levant, and, in the modern west from the time of the publication of Hartmann’s *Das arabische Strophengedicht – I. Das Muwaššah* (Weimar, 1997) – Ibn Sanā’ al-Mulk has been held in high esteem, mainly for the information about the Andalusian *muwaššah* that he gives in the introduction to his *Dār al-tirāz*. Stern did politely criticise his schematic way of putting evidence together and his asserting ‘clear-cut and scholastic rules where there are only vague conventions’;³¹ but on the whole he thought that he was a good source. There are still some who value Ibn Sanā’ al-Mulk’s statements for what they think they can squeeze out of them; but from the 1970s there has been trenchant criticism about their value from a growing number of scholars, one of the earliest and best being Jareer Abu-Haidar.³² I joined this group long ago, not least due to a passage from the *Dār al-tirāz* itself. At the end of his Introduction Ibn Sanā’ al-Mulk writes:³³

Excuse your brother [*i.e.* Ibn Sanā’ al-Mulk], for he was not born in al-Andalus, nor did he grow up in the Maghrib, nor did he live in Seville, nor did he anchor at Murcia, nor did he cross to Meknes; nor did he reach the state of al-Mu‘tamid or of Ibn Ṣumādiḥ, nor did he meet al-A‘mā or Ibn Baqī, nor ‘Ubāda or al-Ḥuṣrī. Nor did he find a *shaykh* from whom to take this knowledge nor a compilation from which to learn this art.³⁴

Such an admission on the part of any Arab writer – no teacher, no ‘set book’, no knowledge of the area under consideration – usually calls for very cautious assessment of the work concerned. This is particularly so with medieval Arab writers. As a devotee of the art of the *muwaššah* Ibn Sanā’ al-Mulk was able to assemble a fair collection of reasonably accurate texts. However, he was clearly unable to get material from any authoritative source (whether *šayx* or *mu‘allaf*); and, if he did get hold of a poem with an ‘*kharja*’ containing ‘*ajamī*’ phraseology, it does not appear in the *Dār al-tirāz*. In his case, too, we might hesitate to translate ‘*ajamī*’ as ‘Romance’,³⁵ as there is a short (and largely ignored) passage from his unpublished *Fuṣūṣ al-fuṣūl wa-‘uqūd al-‘uqūl*,³⁶ which Jawdat al-Rikābī printed as a note in his edition of the *Dār al-tirāz*.³⁷

After becoming a devotee of the Maghribī *muwaššahāt* genre, when I composed a *muwaššah* I would not borrow a *xarja* composed by anyone other than myself; rather I would create and invent it and would not be happy with borrowing it. I followed the same course about it as the Maghribīs had done, and my aims were their aim; and I chose as metres those that they happened to use; everything that they did I did – except for the non-Arabic *xarjas*, for they were Berber; and when I had learned Persian, I composed this *muwaššah* and another made the *kharja* Persian in place of the Berber *kharja*.³⁸

For years I took this second passage simply as confirmation of the evidence of the first passage, that his knowledge of the western *muwaššah* is sketchy and relatively little value, with ‘Berber’ is a loose approximation for ‘*ajamī*’. However, I find it increasingly difficult to do so, with the word Maghribī is used twice in the same passage. Perhaps the passage was written at the start of his studies, when his knowledge was very limited. If so, he never corrected it.

Others, for example Abu-Haidar³⁹ and Corriente,⁴⁰ have expressed different worries about Ibn Sanā’ al-Mulk, but also point to his lack of knowledge and judgement.

Those who want to read more about Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk and the *Dār al-ṭirāz* can find more in *Hispano-Arabic Strophic Poetry* for a favourable view and *Hispano-Arabic Literature and the Early Provençal Lyrics* for an unfavourable view. I shall discuss some of his comments in later sections, showing, I believe, that, like Ibn Bassām, he gives no clear picture of the original *muwašṣaḥ*. He too gives some possible names of the inventor and of those who added *taḍmīn* and *taḍfīr* but he does not tell us at what point the *xarja* began to have its distinctive role.

4. Ibn Xaldūn (1332-1406)⁴¹

It is fortunate that one of Islam's great thinkers, the Tunisian Ibn Xaldūn, was interested in the *muwašṣaḥ* and the *zajal* (and other forms of non-standard poetry) and that he devotes a section to them towards the end of his *Muqaddima*. Ibn Xaldun was a shrewd judge of earlier sources, which he customarily quoted without attribution. In the case of the *muwašṣaḥ*, it has been shown that his main source was the *Muqtataf* of Ibn Sa'īd, who in turn used *al-Muḥib fī garā'ib il-Magrib* of al-Ḥijārī, written in 1136 for the Banū Sa'īd family. From what we find in the *Muqaddima*, it would appear that al-Ḥijārī believed that the originator of the *muwašṣaḥ* had a different name from that given by Ibn Bassām and that he used a different set of words for the terms describing the sections of the *muwašṣaḥ*.

The following passage⁴² gives Ibn Xaldūn's summary on the origins and structure of the *muwašṣaḥ*:

The *muwašṣaḥ* consists of *agṣān* and *asmāt* in great number and different metres. A certain number of *agṣān* and *asmāt* is called a single *bayt* (stanza). There must be the same number of rhymes in the *agṣān* (of each stanza) and the same metre (for the *agṣān* of the whole poem) throughout the whole poem. The largest number of stanzas employed is seven. Each stanza contains as many *agṣān* as is consistent with purpose and method. Like the *qaṣīda*, the *muwašṣaḥa* is used for erotic and laudatory poetry.

(The authors of *muwašṣaḥahs*) vied to the utmost with each other in this (kind of poetry). Everybody, the elite and the common people, liked and knew these poems because they were easy to grasp and understand. They were invented in al-Andalus by Muqaddam b. Mu'āfā al-Qabrī, a poet under the *amīr* 'Abdallāh b. Muḥammad al-Marwānī.⁴³ Ahmad b. 'Abdrabbih, the author of the *Iqd*, learned this (type of poetry) from him. (Muqaddam and Ibn 'Abdrabbih) were not mentioned together with the recent (authors of *muwašṣaḥahs*), and thus their *muwašṣaḥahs* fell into desuetude.

The first poet after them who excelled in this subject was 'Ubāda al-Qazzāz poet of al-Mu'taṣim b. Ṣumādīh, the lord of Almería.

The great disappointment is that Ibn Xaldūn transmits nothing about the *xarja*, and hence nothing about *al-laḥz al-'ammī wa-l-'ajamī*. He does quote the text of four *xarjas*, but only one of them⁴⁴ has clear colloquial features. Romance is not involved. Likewise, he says nothing about the *maṭla'*, though he quotes nine of them. It is hard to think that al-Ḥijārī did not say something about these features. When it comes to the origins and early history, Ibn Xaldūn's suggestion that al-Qabrī was the originator, followed by Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, is more plausible than Ibn Bassām's suggestion that they were alternative originators.⁴⁵ The further suggestion that *muwašṣaḥāt* from before the time of 'Ubāda al-Qazzāz fell into oblivion may also have some substance, though perhaps the pivotal poet is 'Ubāda ibn Mā' al-Samā'.

The mention of Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih (860-940) leads me to a *xarja* to this reassessment. It comes from an article by Professor Ignacio Ferrando,⁴⁶ who draws to our attention a brief passage on the *musammaṭ* found in *al-‘Iqd al-farīd*. Many scholars, including myself must have read the chapter in which it appears. It is entitled *bāb ‘ilal al-a‘arīd wa l-ḍurūb*, dedicated to the study of metrical variants and licenses found in classical Arabic poetry. It is heavy going, and it is easy for a reader to miss the point. Professor Ferrando did not. He makes a further valuable point that it ‘is important to note that the *musammaṭ* is not viewed as "irregular" or "deviant," but merely as a possible variation for the arrangement of poetical material’. His transliteration and translation, based on the Cairo edition of 1965, vol.5, p.428, run as follows:

wa-‘iḍā xtalafati I-qawāfi wa-xtalaṭat wa-kānat ḥayzan ḥayzan min kalimatin wāḥidatin, huwa l-muxammasu. wa-‘iḍā kānat ‘anṣāfun ‘alā qawāfin tajma ‘uhā qāfiyatun wāḥidatun, tumma tu‘ādu li-miṭli ḍālika ḥattā tanqāḍiya l-qaṣīdatu, fa-huwa l-musammaṭu. (emphasis IF)

If rhymes are different and mixed, and they are now this, now that, of one word, this is the *muxammas*. But if the rhymes of the hemistichs are linked by one single rhyme which is repeated after that until the poem ends, this is the *musammaṭ*. (translation IF)

One may well think that the passage is not well expressed, but the thrust is clear. It cannot be doubted that Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih refers to the *musammaṭ*. Given Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih’s mindset, here is a proof that the *musammaṭ* is of eastern origin but known about among the literati of al-Andalus.

NOTES

1. The best available version of the text is to be found in the edition of Iḥsān ‘Abbās, p. 469-70.
2. These are preserved for us by the eastern writers al-Ṣafadī and al-Kutubī.
3. ed. Iḥsān ‘Abbās, 1,1, p.18, l.7: *ma ‘a anna l-ši‘ra lam arḍa-hu markaban wa-ttaxaḍtu-hu maksaban wa-lā aliftu-hu maṭwan wa-lā munqalaban* ‘despite the fact that I did not like poetry as a vehicle nor did I chose it as a means of profit nor was I accustomed to it as a dwelling or field of action’.
4. d.1122. The most authoritative commentary on the *maqāmāt* of al-Ḥarīrī was written in Spain by al-Ṣarīṣī (d.1222).
5. *Hispano-Arabic Strophic Poetry*, p.64.
6. Monroe’s translation is fully quoted in Zwartjes, *Love Songs*, p.322.
7. This is a clause of *extravagant rhymed prose, which means no more than ‘to great effect’*. It implies, however, that the *muwaššahāt* were popular.
8. This possibly indicates the beginning of a quotation.
9. As Ibn Bassām was an Andalusī, we may be sure that for him the word meant ‘Romance’.
10. Arabic *lafẓ* in what appears to be its basic meaning. Abu-Haidar (*Hispano-Arabic Literature and the Early Provençal Lyrics*, p.119) says, ‘*Lafẓ* has no denotations in classical Arabic apart from ‘utterance’, ‘a word’ or ‘words’, ‘a phrase’ or ‘an expression’. It does not even remotely refer to ‘a line of verse’, ‘a couplet’, ‘a ditty or song’, or ‘a snippet’ of the latter.’ It does not appear that the traditional, and much discussed, dichotomy between *lafẓ* and *ma‘nā* is involved here.
11. i.e the *lafẓ*

12. The manuscript version runs: *wa-yaḍa 'u 'alay-hi l-muwaššahaḥata dūna taḍmīnin fī-hā wa-lā aḡṣān*. It is not clear what *yaḍa 'u* means nor what the feminine pronoun in *fī-hā* refers to, as *markaz* is masculine. The most plausible guesses are that it refers to the plural of *markaz* or to *muwaššaha*.

13. The *wa-lā aḡṣān* does not make sense as it stands. There appears to be a textual problem, which might be solved by reading *wa-lā <fī l->aḡṣān*.

14. Arabic *naša'a*.

15. As it stands this phrase does not make sense. *Monroe does his best by translating xāṣṣatan as 'exclusively' (instead of 'particularly'), but I suspect that the problem lies with a piece of carelessness by Ibn Bassām.*

16. Stern (*Hispano-Arabic Strophic Poetry* p.26) assumed that 'our 'Ubāda' means the 'Ubāda of this chapter', i.e. 'Ubāda ibn Mā' al-Samā'. It is hard to disagree with this; but it makes the introduction of *taḍfīr* a quite late development. This seems somewhat implausible.

17. The Arabic has *i'tamada* followed by an accusative.

18. There is another passage in the *Daxīra* that should read with the above passage. It is an even shorter chapter referring to another poet who was also a *waššāḥ*, 'Ubāda ibn al-Qazzāz (vol.1, part 1, pp.801-802). After praising in a couple of typically flowery phrases Ibn al-Qazzāz as a *waššāḥ*, Ibn Bassām rounds off his chapter: *ammā alfāzu-hu fī hāḍihi l-awzāni mina l-tawšīhi fa-šāhidatun lahu bi-l-tabrīzi wa-l-šufūf wa-tilka l-a 'ārīdu xārijatun 'an garaḍi hāḍā l-tašnīf*. The final clause here is more general, and thus less accurate, than the sentiment of *wa-awzānu hāḍihi l-muwaššahāti xārijatun 'an garaḍi hāḍā l-dīwān id aḡṭaru-hā 'alā gayri l-a 'ārīdi aš 'āri l-'arab* of p.470, as it no longer contains the word *aḡṭar*.

19. *Hispano-Arabic Strophic Poetry*, p.64. Stern's optimism was afforded by his belief that the Egyptian Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk was a reliable authority on the Andalusian *muwaššah*, a view I do not share.

20. Corriente, *Op. cit.*, 2009, p.113.

21. The *markaz*.

22. As mentioned in note 9, Ibn Bassām would expect the reader to understand 'ajamī as 'Romance'. It would also be contrary to his approach to be more specific.

23. See note 10.

24. It thus offers no corroboration for the notion of the 'pre-existencia' of the *xarja* so beloved by García Gómez and his ilk.

25. Ibn Bassām mentions in *al-Daxīra* 11 of the 16 poets whose surviving work contains one or more Romance *xarjas*, with brief sections on some such as 'Ubāda, Ibn al-Labbāna, al-A'mā and Ibn Baqī, but all the material is trivial and irrelevant.

26. al-Šafadī, *Tawšī' al-tawšīh* ed. Muṭlaq, Beirut, 1963, pp.20-21. The Arabic is, as usual, in slightly opaque rhymed prose: *wajadnā ba 'ḍa l-muta'axxirīna ka-Mihyāra l-Daylamiyyi wa-Abī Muḥammadin il-Qāsīmī l-Ḥarīriyyi wa-gayri-himā qad istanbaṭū min tilka l-a 'ārīdi aḡṣāman mu'allafatan 'alā fiḡarin muxtalifatin wa-qawāfin mu'talifatin wa-sammū-hā malā 'ib; wa-stanbaṭa min-hā ayḍan ahlu l-Andalusi ḍarban qasamū-hu 'alā awzānin mu'talifatin wa-sammū-hu muwaššahan wa-ja 'alū taršī'a l-kalāmi wa-tanmīqa l-aḡṣāmi tawšīhan. wa-kānū awwala man sanna hāḍā l-ṭarīqa wa-nahaja-hu wa-awḍaha rasma-hu wa-minhaja-hu.*

27. Muṭlaq glosses as a poem with a fourfold or similar rhyme.

28. Arabic *ḍarb*.

29. Muṭlaq reads *tawṣīḥan* for the ms. *muwašṣahan*. For the meaning of *tawṣīḥan/muwašṣahan*, as a parallel to that found in al-Ḥarīrī, *Maqāma* 6:51, see Jareer Abu-Haidar *Hispano-Arabic Literature and the Early Provençal Lyrics*, p.127.
30. *Op.cit.*, p.ix.
31. *Hispano-Arabic Strophic Poetry* p.39.
32. His thoughts on the problems are brought together in *Hispano-Arabic Literature and the Early Provençal Lyrics*, Curzon, 2002.
33. The original is to be found on p.53 of al-Rikābī's edition.
34. *wa- 'dir axā-ka fa-inna-hu lam yūlad fī l-Andalus, wa-lā naša 'a bi-l-Maghrib, wa-lā sakana Iṣbiliyyah, wa-lā arsā 'alā Mursiyyah, wa-lā 'abara 'alā Miknāsah,; wa-lā sami 'a l-urghun; wa-lā laḥiqa dawлата l-Mu 'tamid wa-bna Ṣumādih; wa-lā laqiya l-A 'mā wa-bna Baqiyyi, wa-lā 'Ubāda wa-l-Huṣriyyi; wa-lā wajada šayxan axaḍa min-hu hādā l- 'ilm, wa-lā muṣannaḥan ta 'allama min-hu hādā l-fann.*
35. Clearly with Ibn Bassām 'ajamī can only have meant 'Romance'.
36. The manuscript is in the Bibliotheque Nationale, A3333.
37. Note 2, p.181.
38. *wa-kuntu lammā awla 'tu bi- 'amali l-muwašṣahāti l-magāribah, fa-kuntu idā 'amiltu muwašṣahan lā asta 'tru xarjata gayr-ī bal abtakiru-hā wa-axtari 'u-hā wa-lā arḍā bi-sti 'ārati-hā, wa-qad kuntu naḥawtu fī-hā naḥwa l-magāribati wa-qaṣadu mā qaṣadū-hu wa-xtara 'tu awzānan mā waqa 'ū 'alay-hā wa-lam yabqa šay'un 'amilū-hu illā 'amiltu-hu illā l-xarjāti l-a 'jamiyyah, fa-inna-hā kānat barbariyyah, fa-lammā ttafaqa lī an ta 'allamtu l-fārisiyyah, 'amiltu hādā l-muwašṣaha wa-gayra-hu wa-ja 'altu xarjata-hu fārisiyyah, badalan min al-xarjati l-barbariyyah.*
39. Abu-Haidar, *op.cit.*, p.136.
40. Corriente, in various places, typically *Poesía dialectal*, pp.30-39.
41. For a good, detailed biography, see Rosenthal's translation, 1, xxix-lxvii.
42. Adapted from Rosenthal's translation, 3, 440-1.
43. The 7th Umayyad ruler of al-Andalus, reigned 888-912.
44. *EJ* 241.
45. Ibn Bassām has remarkably few references to Ibn 'Abd Rabbih (860-940) probably because their interests were different. probably apocryphal, a reflection of his importance in producing the first piece of influential rhymed prose in al-Andalus in his introduction to *al- 'Iqd al-farīd*.
46. Ignacio Ferrando, 'Andalusi "Musammāt": Some Remarks on its Stanzaic Metrical Structure', *Journal of Arabic Literature*, vol.30, no.1 (1999), pp.79-80. What is striking is that key Arab scholars such as Iḥsān 'Abbās and Jawdat al-Rikābī never mention it.

[Automated notes]

¹ The best available version of the text is to be found in the edition of Iḥsān 'Abbās, p. 469-70.

² These are preserved for us by the eastern writers al-Ṣafadī and al-Kutubī.

³ ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās, 1,1, p.18, l.7: *ma 'a anna l-ši 'ra lam arḍa-hu markaban wa-ttaxa 'tu-hu maksaban wa-lā aliftu-hu maḥwan wa-lā munqalaban* 'despite the fact that I did not like poetry as a vehicle nor did I chose it as a means of profit nor was I accustomed to it as a dwelling or field of action'.

⁴ d.1122. The most authoritative commentary on the *maqāmāt* of al-Ḥarīrī was written in Spain by al-Šarīfī (d.1222).

⁵ Hispano-Arabic Strophic Poetry, p.64.

⁶ Monroe's translation is fully quoted in Zwartjes, *Love Songs*, p.322.

⁷ This is a clause of *extravagant rhymed prose, which means no more than 'to great effect'*. It implies, however, that the *muwaššahāt* were popular.

⁸ This possibly indicates the beginning of a quotation.

⁹ As Ibn Bassām was an Andalusī, we may be sure that for him the word meant 'Romance'.

¹⁰ Arabic *lafẓ* in what appears to be its basic meaning. Abu-Haidar (*Hispano-Arabic Literature and the Early Provençal Lyrics*, p.119) says, 'Lafẓ has no denotations in classical Arabic apart from 'utterance', 'a word' or 'words', 'a phrase' or 'an expression'. It does not even remotely refer to 'a line of verse', 'a couplet', 'a ditty or song', or 'a snippet' of the latter.' It does not appear that the traditional, and much discussed, dichotomy between *lafẓ* and *ma'nā* is involved here.

¹¹ i.e. the *lafẓ*

¹² The manuscript version runs: *wa-yaḍa'ū 'alay-hi l-muwaššahata dūna taḍmīnin fī-hā wa-lā agsān*. It is not clear what *yaḍa'ū* means nor what the feminine pronoun in *fī-hā* refers to, as *markaz* is masculine. The most plausible guesses are that it refers to the plural of *markaz* or to *muwaššaha*.

¹³ The *wa-lā agsān* does not make sense as it stands. There appears to be a textual problem, which might be solved by reading *wa-lā <fī l->agsān*.

¹⁴ Arabic *naša'a*.

¹⁵ As it stands this phrase does not make sense. *Monroe does his best by translating xāṣṣatan as 'exclusively' (instead of 'particularly'), but I suspect that the problem lies with a piece of carelessness by Ibn Bassām.*

¹⁶ Stern (*Hispano-Arabic Strophic Poetry* p.26) assumed that 'our 'Ubāda' means the 'Ubāda of this chapter', i.e. 'Ubāda ibn Mā' al-Samā'. It is hard to disagree with this; but it makes the introduction of *taḍfīr* a quite late development. This seems somewhat implausible.

¹⁷ The Arabic has *i'āmada* followed by an accusative.

¹⁸ There is another passage in the *Daxīra* that should read with the above passage. It is an even shorter chapter referring to another poet who was also a *waššāh*, 'Ubāda ibn al-Qazzāz (vol.1, part 1, pp.801-802). After praising in a couple of typically flowery phrases Ibn al-Qazzāz as a *waššāh*, Ibn Bassām rounds off his chapter: *ammā al-fāzu-hu fī hādīhi l-awzāni mina l-tawšīhi fa-šāhidatun lahu bi-l-tabrīzi wa-l-šufūf wa-tilka l-a'ārīdu xārijatun 'an garaḍi hādā l-tašnīf*. The final clause here is more general, and thus less accurate, than the sentiment of *wa-awzānu hādīhi l-muwaššahāti xārijatun 'an garaḍi hādā l-dīwān id aḳtaru-hā 'alā gayri l-a'ārīdi aš 'āri l-'arab* of p.470, as it no longer contains the word *aḳtar*.

¹⁹ *Hispano-Arabic Strophic Poetry*, p.64. Stern's optimism was afforded by his belief that the Egyptian Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk was a reliable authority on the Andalusian *muwaššah*, a view I do not share.

²⁰ Corriente, *Op. cit.*, 2009, p.113.

²¹ The *markaz*.

²² As mentioned in note 9, Ibn Bassām would expect the reader to understand *'ajamī* as 'Romance'. It would also be contrary to his approach to be more specific.

²³ See note 10.

²⁴ It thus offers no corroboration for the notion of the 'pre-existencia' of the *xarja* so beloved by García Gómez and his ilk.

²⁵ Ibn Bassām mentions in *al-Daxīra* 11 of the 16 poets whose surviving work contains one or more Romance *xarjas*, with brief sections on some such as ‘Ubāda, Ibn al-Labbāna, al-A‘mā and Ibn Baqī, but all the material is trivial and irrelevant.

²⁶ al-Ṣafādī, *Tawšī‘ al-tawšīḥ* ed. Muṭlaq, Beirut, 1963, pp.20-21. The Arabic is, as usual, in slightly opaque rhymed prose:

wajadnā ba ‘da l-muta ‘axxirīna ka-Mihyāra l-Daylamiyyi wa-Abī Muḥammadin il-Qāsīmi l-Ḥarīriyyi wa-gayri-himā qad istanbatū min tilka l-a ‘arīdi aqsāman mu ‘allafatan ‘alā fiqarin muxtalifatin wa-qawāfin mu ‘talifatin wa-sammū-hā malā ‘ib; wa-stanbaṭa min-hā ayḍan ahlu l-Andalusi ḍarban qasamū-hu ‘alā awzānin mu ‘talifatin wa-sammū-hu muwašṣaḥan wa-ja ‘alū taršī‘a l-kalāmi wa-tanmīqa l-aqsāmi tawšīḥan.²⁶ wa-kānū awwala man sanna hādā l-ṭarīqa wa-nahaja-hu wa-awḍaḥa rasma-hu wa-minhaja-hu.

²⁷ Muṭlaq glosses as a poem with a fourfold or similar rhyme.

²⁸ Arabic *ḍarb*.

²⁹ Muṭlaq reads *tawšīḥan* for the ms. *muwašṣaḥan*. For the meaning of *tawšīḥan/ muwašṣaḥan*, as a parallel to that found in al-Ḥarīrī, *Maqāma* 6:51, see Jareer Abu-Haidar *Hispano-Arabic Literature and the Early Provençal Lyrics*, p.127.

³⁰ *Op.cit.*, p.ix.

³¹ *Hispano-Arabic Strophic Poetry* p.39.

³² His thoughts on the problems are brought together in *Hispano-Arabic Literature and the Early Provençal Lyrics*, Curzon, 2002.

³³ The original is to be found on p.53 of al-Rikābī’s edition.

³⁴ *wa- ‘dir axā-ka fa-inna-hu lam yūlad fī l-Andalus, wa-lā naša ‘a bi-l-Maghrib, wa-lā sakana Isbīliyyah, wa-lā arsā ‘alā Mursiyyah, wa-lā ‘abara ‘alā Miknāsah,; wa-lā sami ‘a l-urghun; wa-lā laḥīqa dawlata l-Mu ‘tamid wa-bna Ṣumādīḥ; wa-lā laqiya l-A ‘mā wa-bna Baqiyyi, wa-lā ‘Ubāda wa-l-Ḥuṣriyyi; wa-lā wajada šayxan axaḍa min-hu hādā l- ‘ilm, wa-lā mušannafan ta ‘allama min-hu hādā l-fann.*

³⁵ Clearly with Ibn Bassām *‘ajamī* can only have meant ‘Romance’.

³⁶ The manuscript is in the Bibliotheque Nationale, A3333.

³⁷ Note 2, p.181.

³⁸ *wa-kuntu lammā awla‘tu bi-‘amali l-muwašṣaḥāti l-magāribah, fa-kuntu idā ‘amiltu muwašṣaḥan lā asta‘īru xarjata gayr-ī bal abtakiru-hā wa-axtari‘u-hā wa-lā arḍa bi-sti‘ārati-hā, wa-qad kuntu naḥawtu fī-hā naḥwa l-magāribati wa-qaṣadu mā qaṣadū-hu wa-xtara‘tu awzānan mā waqa‘ū ‘alay-hā wa-lam yabqa šay‘un ‘amilū-hu illā ‘amiltu-hu illā l-xarajāti l-a‘jamiyyah, fa-inna-hā kānat barbariyyah, fa-lammā ttafaqa lī an ta‘allamtu l-fārisiyyah, ‘amiltu hādā l-muwašṣaḥa wa-gayra-hu wa-ja‘altu xarjata-hu fārisiyyah, badalan min al-xarjati l-barbariyyah.*

³⁹ Abu-Haidar, *op.cit.*, p.136.

⁴⁰ Corriente, in various places, typically *Poesía dialectal*, pp.30-39.

⁴¹ For a good, detailed biography, see Rosenthal’s translation, 1, xxix-lxvii.

⁴² Adapted from Rosenthal’s translation, 3, 440-1.

⁴³ The 7th Umayyad ruler of al-Andalus, reigned 888-912.

⁴⁴ *EJ* 241.

⁴⁵ Ibn Bassām has remarkably few references to Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih (860-940) probably because their interests were different. probably apocryphal, a reflection of his importance in producing the first piece of influential rhymed prose in al-Andalus in his introduction to *al- Iqd al-farīd*.

⁴⁶ Ignacio Ferrando, 'Andalusi "Musammāt": Some Remarks on its Stanzaic Metrical Structure', *Journal of Arabic Literature*, vol.30, no.1 (1999), pp.79-80. What is striking is that key Arab scholars such as Iḥsān 'Abbās and Jawdat al-Rikābī never mention it.