

# ANDALUSIAN *MUWAŠŠAH* POETRY

by Alan Jones (Oxford)

edited and introduced by Kinga Dévényi (Budapest)

## Abstract:

This article, published posthumously, re-examines the origins, structure, and development of Andalusian *muwaššah* poetry through a close reading of the surviving corpus and the medieval critical tradition. By analysing stanzaic structure, metre, rhyme, and the relationship between poetic composition and musical performance, the study argues for a more precise understanding of the formal evolution of the genre. Particular attention is given to the role of *tasmīṭ*, the expansion of Arabic metrical practice, and the structural importance of the *ḥarġa*. The article also challenges approaches that isolate the *ḥarġa* from the poem as a whole, advocating instead the study of the *muwaššah* in its entirety as an integrated literary form. Through detailed textual examples drawn from the surviving corpus, it proposes a clearer framework for interpreting the formal and historical development of this distinctive poetic tradition.

## Keywords:

Andalusian poetry; *muwaššah*; *ḥarġa*; Arabic metrics; stanzaic poetry; music and poetry; al-Andalus; medieval Arabic literature

## 0 Editor's introduction

This article is based on part one of an unfinished manuscript by Alan Jones (1933–2021), Emeritus Fellow of both Pembroke College and St. Cross College and Emeritus Professor of Classical Arabic at the University of Oxford, prepared for publication after his death.<sup>1</sup> The files from which the text was assembled were entrusted to the editor by the author's family to ensure the publication of his final scholarly project in a form befitting both its scope and the author's intentions.

Alan Jones's main research was in early Arabic, particularly pre-Islamic poetry and the Qur'ān, and in Andalusian Arabic stanzaic poetry. His translation of the Qur'ān was published in 2007. He also wrote *Arabic through the Qur'ān* to help

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<sup>1</sup> For his obituary and personal bibliography, see Kinga Dévényi and Tamás Iványi, "In Memory of Professor Alan Jones". *The Arabist* 42 (2021) vii–xv. doi: 10.58513/ARABIST.2021.42.1.

those who wish to learn Qur'ānic Arabic. His interest in *muwaššahāt* was kindled by his colleague, Samuel M. Stern. He produced critical editions of the two main collections of Andalusian Arabic *muwaššahāt*, the *Uddat al-ġalīs* of Ibn Bišrī (1992) and the *Ġayš at-tawšīh* of Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb (1997). Prior to his final illness, he was working on his own anthology of Andalusian Arabic *muwaššahāt*, with texts, English translations and an extended introduction. He was also working on the *beta* version of a computerised corpus of all the Andalusian Arabic *muwaššahāt*.

Even though the author had discussed several aspects of this projected publication with the editor, it is always difficult to reconstruct the intentions of an author; accordingly, the decision was made not to publish material that appeared too sketchy. The present text therefore represents, as far as possible, Alan Jones's own sustained arguments. No attempt has been made to reconstruct passages from fragmentary notes. Draft notes, outlines, and duplicative fragments have been omitted. The order of the material reflects the most coherent arrangement recoverable from the surviving files.

Editorial intervention has been kept to a minimum. Apart from minor normalisation of spelling, references, and formatting, the text has been left unchanged. Arabic transliteration, even in passages quoted from other authors, has been adjusted to conform to the system used in *The Arabist*. Square brackets are used to indicate editorial interventions, including the completion of missing references and other clarifications where unavoidable. The abstract and keywords have been supplied by the editor.

Alan Jones envisaged a substantial volume on the *muwaššahāt* as a synthesis of his earlier work on the subject, combining analytical discussion with original texts, translations, and notes. Considering the nature of *The Arabist*, a decision was taken to publish the work in two parts: (1) Study, (2) Texts (in transliteration and translation with notes).

His projected plan, preserved in one of the files, was as follows. This outline also indicates if sections are missing or incomplete.

- A. Preface [unfinished]
- B. Introduction [reconstructed as far as possible from several surviving versions]
- C. Glossary and abbreviations [the abbreviations used by the author have been resolved]
  1. Arabic background texts [= Early Arabic sources on the *muwaššahāt*]
  2. Prehistory
  3. The Primary Corpus [= The extant Andalusian *muwaššahāt*]
  4. Authors
  5. Constituent features
    - (a) stanzaic structure
    - (b) rhyme
    - (c) metre
    - (d) themes [missing]

(e) linguistic registers and the *ḥarġa* [Only the topic of *ḥarġa* was developed, the linguistic registers survive in tables but were not developed into an analysis.]

- D. Texts, Translations and Notes [This part will be published separately in *The Arabist* 50 (forthcoming).]
- E. Bibliography [Not preserved as such; compiled from references in the notes.]
- F. Index [Not preserved; the publication of a relevant index is envisaged together with the texts in *The Arabist* 50 (forthcoming).]

Despite its slightly unfinished state, the work represents a significant and mature contribution to the study of the *muwaššahāt*, above all in its insistence that the poems should be read as whole compositions and within the context of the surviving corpus.

## A Preface

This is a further attempt to encourage the serious study of the Andalusian Arabic *muwaššah*. My first, *an Emperor's New Clothes* [Jones 1980], drew attention to the unsafe and deceitful nature of the texts published by García Gómez [1965] in *Las Jarchas Romances*. The second, *Romance Kharjas in Andalusian Arabic Muwaššah Poetry* [Jones 1988], presented facsimile texts from the manuscripts containing the 'Romance *ḥarġas*', together with a palaeographical commentary and some background notes, so that scholars might see for themselves what was in the manuscripts. I went on to publish editions of the two main anthologies of Arabic *muwaššahāt*, the *Uddat al-ġalīs* of Ibn Bišrī and the *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* of Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb, so that a central corpus of just over 550 poems was available. An effort to produce a computerised version of this corpus ran into serious technical problems (a linked series of machine errors destroyed the first version), but it is at last nearing completion. The availability of the texts has attracted far too little attention, as the eyes of most scholars have remained fixed on '*ḥarġa* studies'. In a few cases this is justified. As a specialist in the Arabic dialects of al-Andalus, Federico Corriente [e.g. 1997, 2009] rightly paid special attention to the *ḥarġas*. Others have no reason for ignoring the main part of the poems and treating the *ḥarġas* as independent poems. They are not. Before one hears or reads the *ḥarġa* one will have heard or read eighteen lines at a minimum, more likely twenty-five or a few more. The poets did not write the lines that preceded the *ḥarġa* as long-winded introductory material. Each poem is a whole, with a carefully designed linear structure, metre and rhymes, and the *ḥarġa* rounds it off.

The present book<sup>2</sup> aims to encourage readers to read whole *muwaššahāt*, with such background material as is adequate to put the poems and the corpus into perspective. For instance, the section on metres will deal with the general problems but point to other books if the reader wants the minute details of technical variations, and the like. The poems<sup>3</sup> have been chosen to include pieces by the most famous *waššāhs*, but also an appropriate number of anonymous poems and of poems with 'Romance *ḥarġas*'. Poems by named poets stretch from c. 1030 to the end of the Almohad period (1223), with the exception of the poem by Ibn Ḥātima (d. 1369), which has some unusual features.

I say little about the irreconcilable split between those who believe that the *muwaššahāt* have an Arabic origin and those who believe that they have a Romance origin. I favour the former view and think that is the only plausible explanation, but a diversion into this morass would detract from the purpose of the book.

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<sup>2</sup> [The word "book" was not changed to reflect the author's original intention to publish the study and the poems together.]

<sup>3</sup> [To be published separately in *The Arabist* 50 (forthcoming).]

## B Introduction

[*The musammaṭ, the muwaššah and the zağal*]

It was in al-Andalus that stanzaic poetry first flourished in Arabic. Three forms became popular: the *musammaṭ*, the *muwaššah* and the *zağal*. Exactly when and how they developed is unknown – and much disputed. There are two main propositions, both of which rely more on argument than on evidence: (a) Arabic origin, with *musammaṭ* leading to the *muwaššah*, followed by the *zağal*; (b) Romance origin with *zağal* giving rise to the *muwaššah*, with the *musammaṭ* irrelevant.

The most likely time for their appearance is the late ninth/early tenth centuries, which, in the case of the *muwaššah*, fits with the information given by Ibn Ḥaldūn<sup>4</sup> that it occurred in the reign of ‘Abdallāh b. Muḥammad al-Marwānī, the seventh Umayyad ruler of al-Andalus (reigned 888 to 912). The *muwaššah*, however, appears to have developed into the forms that have reached us no earlier than the last decades of the tenth century and the earliest documented examples date from some years into the eleventh century.

Apart from its stanzaic form, the *musammaṭ* seems to have followed the norms of classical Arabic poetry. Very little of the genre survives, either in the east or the west,<sup>5</sup> though two poems by one of the greatest of Andalusian poets, Ibn Zaydūn (1003–1070) do survive.<sup>6</sup> If we are to judge by extant material, the *musammaṭ* seems to have drawn more attention from Andalusian Hebrew poets. There are also a few lines on the *musammaṭ* in the famous anthology *al-‘Iqd al-farīd*, compiled by Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih (860–940), the earliest literary scholar of al-Andalus.<sup>7</sup>

The *muwaššah* and the *zağal* differed from the *musammaṭ* in one striking feature. Both allowed, in quite different ways, the use of non-classical Arabic – either colloquial Arabic [or, most often, pseudo-colloquial Arabic] or Romance [or pseudo-Romance] or a mixture of the two. In the *muwaššah* such material was confined, with only one or two exceptions, to the last section of the poem, the *ḥarġa*, whereas the standard language of the *zağal* was non-classical, with Romance words and phrases appearing intermittently. Limits also applied to the number of stanzas in the *muwaššah*, but not to the *musammaṭ* or the *zağal*.

Both genres were lyric, primarily intended to be sung, though there is some evidence that they were also simply recited. Unfortunately, the music to which they

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Ḥaldūn, *Muqaddima*, ed. II, 425 “*al-Muwaššahāt wa-l-azğāl li-l-Andalus*”, Eng. tr. III, 440 ff. “The Spanish *muwashshahs* and *zajals*”.

<sup>5</sup> See Schoeler 1993. The survival rate was better in Andalusian Hebrew poetry.

<sup>6</sup> There are several editions of the *Dīwān*. The text I refer to here is on pages 197–205 of the well-known edition of Kāmil Kīlānī and ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān Ḥalīfa, Cairo, first printed in 1932/1351 and reprinted in 1956 and 1965.

<sup>7</sup> [Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih, *Iqd* V, 428.]

were set is entirely lost. Accompaniments from the nineteenth century and later do survive in the Mağrib, but that is no guide to the music of Arab al-Andalus some nine hundred years earlier.

Together with its allied form the *zağal*, the *muwaššah* had considerable success over several centuries. The genres were well received in the Mağrib, and one of the most prominent of the later *waššāḥs*, Ibn Zuhr [al-Ḥafīd] (d. 1198), though born in Seville, spent much of his life in Fes.

Later both genres found a second home in the east, when, in the twelfth century, stanzaic poetry managed to move first to Egypt, then to Syria and Iraq. However, the eastern devotees never acquired a proper understanding of the norms by which the Andalusians had composed their poems, probably because the poems appear to have travelled to the east in written form and without any of their accompanying music. Thus, when eastern literary figures, beginning with Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk (d. 1202), started to produce their own efforts, they had to do so without access to the music and without any understanding of the *milieu* that had encouraged the use of the non-classical material. Though the popularity of the *muwaššahāt* is well attested, they never won the approval of Arab literary critics, and they suffered badly from neglect.

[*The history of modern muwaššah studies*]<sup>8</sup>

Prior to 1950 there was only one western source available, and that of limited value: Hartmann's *Das arabische Strophengedicht – I. Das Muwaššah*, published in Weimar in 1897, the main source of which was the Leiden manuscript of Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk's *Dār at-tirāz*.<sup>9</sup>

A very small number of *muwaššahāt* had been found in biographical dictionaries,<sup>10</sup> and some latish examples, such as those in the *Dīwān* of Ibn Sahl,<sup>11</sup> were available in libraries; and the all too brief quotations to be found towards the end of the *Muqaddima* of Ibn Ḥaldūn<sup>12</sup> became well known.

In a short period (1948–1950) the situation was revolutionised, first by the work of my former colleague Samuel Stern. In an article published in *al-Andalus* in 1948, Stern's 'Les Vers finaux en espagnol dans les *muwaššahs* hispano-hebraïques: une contribution à l'histoire du *muwaššah* et à l'étude du vieux dialecte espagnol

<sup>8</sup> [Some parts of the forthcoming section were incorporated into Alan Jones's article, published posthumously on 23 November 2021.]

<sup>9</sup> An excellent edition of Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk's *Dār at-tirāz* was published in 1949 by the Syrian scholar Ġawdat ar-Rikābī. It has since been reprinted several times in Damascus.

<sup>10</sup> In his Arabic literature Gibb translated a *muwaššah* by Ibn Zuhr found in the '*Uyūn al-anbā'* of Ibn Abī Uṣaybī'a (Gibb 1963:111).

<sup>11</sup> Religious poems by Ibn al-'Arabī, aš-Šuštārī and others form a distinct but overlapping corpus.

<sup>12</sup> [See note 4.]

“mozarabe””, set out his attempts to make sense of some twenty Hebrew *ḥarġas* containing Romance material. This aroused great excitement amongst Romance scholars, which intensified with the next issue of *al-Andalus* [1949] in which he published ‘Un *muwaššah* arabe avec terminaison espagnole’. This gave the Arabic text of a poem beginning *dam ‘un safūḥun wa-ḍulū ‘un ḥirār* by al-A‘mā, found in the *Tawšī‘ at-tawšīḥ* of aṣ-Ṣafadī.<sup>13</sup>

This changed in the 1950s, when manuscripts were discovered that brought the number of surviving poems to over six hundred, including about fifty that contained Romance material in the poems’ final section.

More specifically, in 1950 *al-Andalus* was able to announce the acquisition by Georges Colin, a great French specialist on the Maġrib, of an anthology of 354 *muwaššahāt*, the ‘*Uddat al-ġalīs*’ of Ibn Bišrī.<sup>14</sup> Colin found twenty-four poems ending with *ḥarġas* containing Romance material, and he supplied transcriptions of these and some notes to Emilio García Gómez in Madrid. Some additional notes were supplied to the latter by the Egyptian professor ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Ahwānī.

Using these materials, García Gómez published in *al-Andalus* his famous article ‘Veinticuatro jaryas romances en muwaššaḥas arabes’ [1952]. The texts of the *ḥarġas* were printed in a standard modern Arabic font (not Maġribī), and even García Gómez called for caution as he was not working with the original manuscript, though he implied that he had done a good job. This was not the case, but none of his readers could judge that – and what they were interested in was the importance of the new material for Romance studies.<sup>15</sup> *Harġa* studies had been born, much to the detriment of *muwaššah* studies. It was to be forty years before the full text of the ‘*Uddat al-ġalīs*’ was published. The Spanish scholar Federico Corriente summed up the situation as follows:<sup>16</sup>

When the foreign-language *kharajāt*, referred to as “Romance,” began to surface, Western scholars, in particular Spanish ones, began to consider this issue as more akin to their interests, and to become ideologically and even

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<sup>13</sup> In a rare act of kindness García Gómez sent Stern a microfilm of a manuscript in the Escorial, never worked on and misattributed in the catalogue. Stern established that this was the *Tawšī‘ at-tawšīḥ* of aṣ-Ṣafadī, a work similar to, but slighter than, the *Dār aṭ-ṭirāz*. It contained only fourteen *muwaššaḥs*, but one of them *dam ‘un safūḥun wa-ḍulū ‘un ḥirār* had a Romance *ḥarġa*, and this was the poem that Stern published. The whole work was not produced until Muṭlaq published his edition in 1966.

<sup>14</sup> García Gómez 1950:157–158.

<sup>15</sup> The zeal is understandable, but the lack of perspective, the ignorance and the *hubris* that all too often accompanied it are inexcusable. For example, how seriously can one take the emendations of [Peter] Dronke, [at that time] Lecturer in Medieval Latin at Cambridge, a scholar with no proper knowledge of Arabic or Hebrew, however great his general erudition, however appropriate in theory his suggestions? [See, e.g. Dronke 1968:86].

<sup>16</sup> Corriente 2009:114–115.

emotionally involved in the solution of the sociolinguistic, aesthetic, and literary problems posed by the texts. The tinge of elation and national pride is clearly detectable in Menendez y Pelayo (1894), upon disclosing his discovery of what he took for Castilian words in a *kharjah* of a Hebrew poem by Yehudah Halevi. In a field tilled and sown by Francisco Javier Simonet's fiery anti-Islamic discourse, and his nationalistically biased interpretation of Al-Andalus as a Spanish country only superficially Islamicized, it is hardly surprising that another Spanish Arabist, Ribera (1912), would develop a theory of the Hispanic origins of Andalusian stanzaic poetry, and that, finally, Ribera's countryman and disciple, García Gómez, would risk his hard-earned prestige by supporting this theory, defending the Romance scansion of not only *kharajāt*, but also the remaining parts of *muwaššahāt* and *azjāl*, propounding stress-based rhythms that simply do not match the true phonetic features of either language, Romance or Arabic. This ideological ingredient of the *kharjah* debate must be taken into account in the assessment of ensuing research. [...]

After García Gómez published [the *ḥarġas* of] those texts in 1952, many scholars rushed in where Stern had wisely feared to tread too heavily. There was an additional impetus in this instance, as revealed by Hilty's clever remark (Hilty 2000:975) to the effect that, in the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War, and with the emergence of a dictatorial rightist regime which was shunned by most Western democracies, the discovery of supposedly ancient poetry came as a windfall to those who believed and proclaimed that Spain had always been the cultural and moral vanguard of the West.

This Romance material gave rise to a surge of frantic academic activity (or, in some cases pseudo-academic propaganda) that took nearly sixty years to subside.

### *The anatomy of the muwaššah*

From 1950 onwards the study of the *muwaššah* has been dominated by '*ḥarġa* studies'. In some cases, the evidence gathered from the *ḥarġas* provides ample justification. One has only to read the illuminating work of Corriente on the study of dialect material to be convinced that this is so. Somewhat less solid is the claim that the '*Romance ḥarġas*' also deserve to be studied alone – this is patently not the case in many areas, particularly the palaeographical studies that try to establish what is actually written in the manuscripts. In any case, one's knowledge is better informed by study of the whole poem and not just 6% of it, and the whole poem is better understood by looking at the whole corpus.

My focus is on examining the key features of the *muwaššah* as we know it, using the corpus of surviving poems from the period from c. 1030, the date of the death of

the author of the two earliest surviving attributed poems, to the end of the twelfth century, a total of roughly 550 poems. The starting date is about a century and a quarter after the invention of the *muwaššah*, and another quarter of a century was to pass before the time of the composition of the first surviving *muwaššah* with a Romance element in its *ḥarġa*. None of these early survivals shows any sign of being less than fully developed. There may of course be some anonymous poems that are earlier than that, but anonymity precludes dating. In any case all the anonymous poems are also fully developed.

The notion of ‘full development’ is possible only if we can recognise a considerable amount of underlying homogeneity, even if the poems provide a plethora of patterns and sizes.

Full development in the case of the *muwaššah* gives us a five- or six-stanza lyric composed in classical Arabic, with an optional *maṭla*‘ and with the possibility of non-classical material in the *simṭ* of the final stanza, the *ḥarġa*.

[As has been established, the *muwaššahs* can be classified and differentiated according to several categories:]

- Language
  - a) classical language
  - b) non-classical language
- Origin of poets
- Format
  - a) use of stanza
  - b) number of stanzas
- Metre
- Rhyme
- Music

## C Glossary

<i>aġṣān</i>	plural of <i>ġuṣn</i> , <i>q.v.</i>
‘ <i>aġamī</i>	non-Arabic; in the context of Muslim Spain it normally means Romance.
<i>aqra</i> ‘	‘bald’: the technical term used to describe a <i>muwaššah</i> that begins without a <i>maṭla</i> ‘.
<i>asmāṭ</i>	plural of <i>simṭ</i> , <i>q.v.</i>
<i>bayt</i>	used by some medieval writers to mean a stanza; alternative term for <i>dawr</i> .
<i>dawr</i>	a stanza.
<i>ġuṣn</i>	one of the lines in a stanza linked by that stanza’s rhyme (or rhymes).
<i>ḥarġa</i>	the final part of the <i>muwaššah</i> , normally the final <i>simṭ</i> but not always so.

<i>markaz</i>	an alternative term for the <i>ḥarġa</i> .
<i>maṭla</i> ´	a <i>simṭ</i> line preceding the main part of the <i>muwaššah</i> ; sometimes referred to as a prelude, but strictly the term means ‘opening line’.
<i>mu`āraḍa</i>	‘imitation’; the composition of one poem in imitation of another. This was a common practice in both Arabic and Hebrew poetry, particularly when music was involved. The <i>mu`āraḍa</i> could be complete, in which case <i>simṭ</i> rhymes and metre (and, presumably, the music) would be retained, or partial. It is uncommon for material from the original poem to be quoted in the <i>mu`āraḍa</i> , except for the <i>ḥarġa</i> , which may be quoted wholly or in part, either as a <i>maṭla</i> ´ or as a <i>ḥarġa</i> .
<i>musammaṭ</i>	the earliest and simplest form of stanzaic poem in Arabic, with a rhyme pattern AAAB or AAAAB etc.
<i>muwaššah</i>	a stanzaic poem ending with a <i>ḥarġa</i> ; over 90% have five stanzas; a fair majority have non-classical material in the <i>ḥarġa</i> , but the number of poems with classical <i>ḥarġas</i> is higher than is normally believed to be the case. The proportion of Andalusian Arabic <i>muwaššahs</i> with Romance material in the <i>ḥarġa</i> is about 8% (and 5–6% of the whole poem will be Romance). The Arabic plural is <i>muwaššahāt</i> .
<i>qaṣīda</i>	a classical Arabic ode.
<i>qufl</i>	alternative term, less common but interchangeable, for a <i>simṭ</i> .
<i>simṭ</i>	line (later, sometimes pair of lines) at the end of a stanza with rhymes common to all stanzas. A <i>simṭ</i> preceding the first stanza is called a <i>maṭla</i> ´.
<i>ṣaṭr</i>	a hemistich; sometimes in Andalusian writers a whole line.
<i>ši`r</i>	classical poetry.
<i>taḍfīr</i>	insertion of an extra rhyme into a section of a <i>ġuṣn</i> .
<i>taḍmīn</i>	insertion of an extra rhyme into a section of a <i>simṭ</i> ; not to be confused with the use of <i>taḍmīn</i> in <i>ši`r</i> to describe the use of a quotation to end a poem (final <i>taḍmīn</i> ).
<i>tāmm</i>	‘complete’: a <i>muwaššah</i> or a <i>musammaṭ</i> with a <i>maṭla</i> ´.
<i>waššāh</i>	a composer of <i>muwaššahāt</i> .

## 1 Early Arabic sources on the *muwaššah*

The most commonly accepted view is that there are two major sources that throw light on the Andalusian *muwaššahāt*: a passage from the *Daḥīra* of Ibn Bassām and the Introduction to the *Dār aṭ-ṭirāz* of Ibn Sanā` al-Mulk. It is also thought that a chapter at the end of the *Muqaddima* of Ibn Ḥaldūn 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-Ḥayr, a short piece from the *Talḥiṣ kitāb aš-ši'r* of Ibn Rušd, and a short and slightly indirect piece from *al-'Iqd al-farīd* of Ibn 'Abd Rabbih.

### 1.1 Ibn Rušd (born Cordoba 1126, died Marrakesh 1198)

One of the greatest scholars of al-Andalus has a small but significant passage in his *Talḥiṣ kitāb aš-ši'r*. The work was edited by Butterworth and Harīdī in 1986 and translated by Butterworth as *Averroes' Middle Commentary on Aristotle's Poetics* in the same year. His translation is given here with the key Arabic terms included.<sup>17</sup>

With respect to poetical statements, imitation (*taḥyīl*) and representation (*muḥākāt*) come about by means of three things: harmonious tune (*naḡam muttafiqa*), rhythm (*wazn*), and comparison (*tašbīh*) itself. Each of these may occur separately from the others—like tune (*wuḡūd an-naḡam*) in flute-playing (*mazāmīr*); rhythm (*al-wazn*) in dance (*raqs*); and representation (*muḥākāt*) in utterances (*lafz*). I mean, in imitative non-rhythmic statement (*al-aqāwīl al-muḥayyila al-ḡayra mawzūna*). Or all three may be brought together—as is found among the kind of poems called *muwaššahāt* and *azḡāl*, these being the ones the people of this peninsula have devised (*istanbaṭahā*) in this tongue. For it is in natural poems that the three things are brought together, and natural things are to be found only among natural nations. There is no melody (*lahn*) in the poems of the Arabs. Indeed, they have either metre (*wazn*) alone or metre and representation (*al-wazn wa-l-muḥākāt*) together.

Ibn Rušd is writing in a technical and rather difficult way, as is normal with any Arabic commentary on Aristotle. Nevertheless, it is clear that he believes that:

1. The *muwaššah* and *zaḡal* are genres of Arabic poetry;
2. They are of Andalusian origin;
3. Melody plays an intrinsic role in them; something not found in classical Arabic poetry.

### 1.2 Ibn Bassām (d. 543/1147)<sup>18</sup>

The search for early background information on the *muwaššah* and the *ḡarḡa* 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 *Daḥīra* of Ibn Bassām

<sup>17</sup> Ibn Rušd, *Talḥiṣ*, Eng. tr. 1986: 63–64, ed. 1986:57.

<sup>18</sup> There is a sympathetic and useful article by Amin Tibi (1999).

(d. 1147), vol. I, part 1, where it is the second paragraph<sup>19</sup> of a section on the *adīb* ‘Ubāda ibn Mā’ as-Samā’, two of whose *muwašṣaḥs* survive in other sources.<sup>20</sup>

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 *Daḥīra* he tells us in his typically exaggerated way that poetry was not his ‘thing’.<sup>21</sup> 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-Ḥarīrī<sup>22</sup> died only a quarter of a century before Ibn Bassām.

His stance appears to reflect a fashionable attitude in Andalusian literary circles towards the *muwašṣaḥ*, 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 great wish to be seen as an authority on genres such as the *muwašṣaḥ* or the *musammaḥ* or the *zaḡal*. One wonders, too, about his silence about singing and music in general – though singing girls are occasionally mentioned in narratives.

The passage in the *Daḥīra* has been translated several times, the best known in English being those of Stern<sup>23</sup> and Monroe.<sup>24</sup> My version differs from the latter in some significant details:

They [the *muwašṣaḥāt*] are measures [*awzān*] much used by the people of Andalus in *ḡazal* and *nasīb* to great effect, such that carefully guarded bosoms and even hearts are torn upon hearing them.<sup>25</sup> The first to compose the measures of these *muwašṣaḥāt* 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 to compose them using as a basis lines [*aštār*]<sup>26</sup> of classical poetry [*aš‘ār*], though most of them employed

<sup>19</sup> The best available version of the text is to be found in the edition of Iḥsān ‘Abbās, I/1, 468–470.

<sup>20</sup> These are preserved for us by the eastern writers aṣ-Ṣafadī [*Tawṣī‘ at-tawṣīḥ* poem 32] and al-Kutubī. [*Fawāṭ* II, 151–153].

<sup>21</sup> Ibn Bassām, *Daḥīra* I/1, 18, l. 7: *ma‘a anna š-ši‘ra lam arḍahu markaban wa-ttaḥaḍtuḥu maksaban wa-lā aliftuḥu maṭwan wa-lā munqalaban* ‘despite the fact that I did not like poetry as a vehicle nor did I choose it as a means of profit nor was I accustomed to it as a dwelling or field of action’.

<sup>22</sup> d. 1122. The most authoritative commentary on the *maqāmāt* of al-Ḥarīrī was written in Spain by aṣ-Ṣarīṣī (d. 1222).

<sup>23</sup> Stern 1974:64.

<sup>24</sup> [James T.] Monroe’s translation [1985–1986:136] is fully quoted in Zwartjes 1997:322.

<sup>25</sup> This is a clause of extravagant rhymed prose, which means no more than ‘to great effect’. It implies, however, that the *muwašṣaḥāt* were popular.

<sup>26</sup> This meaning of *aštār* is an Andalusian usage. The more common usage, ‘hemistichs’, only makes sense in a limited way.

neglected<sup>27</sup> or hitherto unused metrical patterns [*a ʿarīd*],<sup>28</sup> taking colloquial Arabic and non-Arabic<sup>29</sup> expressions<sup>30</sup> and calling them<sup>31</sup> the *markaz*, and building the *muwaššaha* upon them, without any internal rhyme [*taḍmīn*] in it or [even] *ağṣān*. Some say that Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, the author of the *Kitāb al-ʿIqd*, was the first to compose this type of *muwaššahāt* among us. Next to rise to prominence<sup>32</sup> was Yūsuf ibn Hārūn ar-Ramādī. He was the first to make copious use of *taḍmīn* in the *marākīz*,<sup>33</sup> inserting it at every pause he came to, but in the *markaz* in particular.<sup>34</sup> The poets of our age continued after this fashion, such as Mukarram ibn Saʿīd and Abū l-Ḥasan’s two sons. Then there appeared our ʿUbāda,<sup>35</sup> who invented the [use of] *taḍfīr*. He did this by focussing on<sup>36</sup> the pauses in the *ağṣān*, and using *taḍmīn* there, just as ar-

<sup>27</sup> The text has the technical term *muhmal*, *i.e.* not used in the original Ḥalīlian system. For a brief piece on the metres in al-Ḥalīl’s circles that were not used by him (*muhmala*) but were taken up later, see van Gelder 2012:127–131.

<sup>28</sup> Stern, 1974:63–64, thinks that this is the start of a quotation from ‘*Ubāda ibn Mā’ as-Samā’*. His point that Ibn Bassām himself could hardly have written the words *fī ʿaṣri-nā* ‘in our age’ is valid, but I find demarcation of the beginning of the quotation problematic. I think that *wa-qīla* ‘some say that’ is more likely.

<sup>29</sup> As Ibn Bassām was an Andalusī, we may be sure that for him the word [*ʿağamī*] meant ‘Romance’.

<sup>30</sup> Arabic *lafẓ* in what appears to be its basic meaning. Abu-Haidar (2001:119) 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.” *The Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics* [Kouloughli 2011:623] has the following definition: “Taken substantively, *lafẓ* is not to be understood as a singular noun but rather as a collective one. This collective and consequently generic meaning implies a globalizing comprehension of the utterance perceived as a whole, as opposed to the words that make it up. This means that *lafẓ* must not be understood as referring to an isolated word but rather to the global result of the uttering process. When single units making up this whole are intended, one uses the singulative form *lafẓa* ‘term, word’ and its plural *alfāz*.”

It does not appear that the traditional and much-discussed dichotomy between *lafẓ* and *maʿnā* is involved here.

<sup>31</sup> *I.e.* the *lafẓ*

<sup>32</sup> Arabic *našaʿa*.

<sup>33</sup> This is the spelling printed by Iḥsān ʿAbbās. [Cf. Dozy 1881: I, 595.]

<sup>34</sup> As it stands this phrase does not make sense. Monroe [1985–1986:136] does his best by translating *ḥāṣṣatan* as ‘exclusively’ (instead of ‘particularly’), but I suspect that the problem lies with a piece of carelessness by Ibn Bassām.

<sup>35</sup> This phrase has already been used in the previous paragraph and can only mean ‘‘Ubāda of this chapter’, *i.e.* ‘Ubāda ibn Mā’ as-Samā’. It makes the introduction of *taḍfīr* a rather late development. However, it is also the case that ar-Ramādī died less than twenty years before him. [See also note 74 and 5a3.]

<sup>36</sup> The Arabic has *i tamada* followed by an accusative.

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 to the metrical patterns [*a ʿarīd*]<sup>37</sup> of the classical poetry of the Arabs.<sup>38</sup>

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*’.<sup>39</sup> Corriente, too, is equally sanguine about what he thinks he can extract from the text. He says:<sup>40</sup>

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 *ḥarġa*, 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 *aġṣān* (*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 (= *ʿarūd*), and that the *muwaššah* was metrically patterned after a pre-existing poetical utterance, the dialectal *ḥarġa*, which necessarily implies that the *ḥarġa* already exhibited the same “adapted” *ʿarūd*.

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 *ḥarġa*: Ibn Bassām declares that both were scanned after Arabic metrics.

<sup>37</sup> Again, referring to the metres set out by al-Ḥalīl. See note 27.

<sup>38</sup> There is another passage in the *Daḥīra* 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 (I/1, 801–802). After praising in a couple of typically flowery phrases Ibn al-Qazzāz as a *waššāh*, Ibn Bassām rounds off his chapter: *ammā alfāzuhu fī ḥādīhi l-awzāni mina t-tawšīhi fa-šāhidatun lahu bi-t-tabrīzi wa-š-šufūf wa-tilka l-a ʿarīdu ḥārīġatun ʿan ġaraḍi ḥādā t-tašnīf*. The final clause here is more general, and thus less accurate, than the sentiment of *wa-awzānu ḥādīhi l-muwaššahāti ḥārīġatun ʿan ġaraḍi ḥādā d-dīwān id aḵṭaru-hā ʿalā ġayri l-a ʿarīdi aš ʿari l-ʿarab* of p. 470, as it no longer contains the word *aḵṭar*.

<sup>39</sup> Stern 1974:64. Stern’s optimism was reinforced by his belief that the Egyptian Ibn Sanā’ al-Mulḳ was a reliable authority on the Andalusian *muwaššah*, a view I do not share.

<sup>40</sup> Corriente 2009:113.

I do not consider Corriente's interpretation to be 'clear and obvious'. 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* (*ḥarġa*). He also tells us that the two are integral (*wa-yada'u 'alayhi*<sup>41</sup> *l-muwaššahata*). He also tells us that the *waššāḥs* use colloquial Arabic and non-Arabic<sup>42</sup> expressions in the *ḥarġas*. Most striking is his strong objection to what was '*alā ġayri l-a'ārīdi aš'āri l-'arab*. However, he does not expand on that statement, nor, given his approach, could we reasonably expect him to do so.

One has to presume that he objected to the use of such features as post-Ḥalīlian metres (*muṣṭafīl*, *muštabih*, *mumtadd*, *mutta'id*, *muṭṭarid* and *munsarid* all occur, but only occasionally<sup>43</sup>); the splitting of hemistichs and verses to form sections; and the scattered irregular variations in quantity.

Other problems are that:

- a. we cannot be sure of the exact meaning of *ya'ḥudu* ('take' 'or 'use') and therefore we cannot assert that the verb implies quotation;
- b. it is taken for granted that the *ḥarġa* was a feature from the beginning;
- c. the term *lafẓ* cannot reasonably be applied to the whole of a hemistich or a verse, even in theory.<sup>44</sup> The *ḥarġas* 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*.<sup>45</sup>

However, he does give some possible names of the inventor and of those who popularized *taḍmīn* and invented *taḍfīr*, but his comments are brief and vague; and he indicates that the *ḥarġa* was playing a role before *taḍmīn* and *taḍfīr* were introduced.

With its few facts given little context, and with its obscurities, errors and omissions, this piece from the *Daḥīra* cannot reasonably be considered a particularly valuable source. Apart from the names of the originators and developers, he tells us nothing that he could not have scribbled down about the *muwaššahāt* of his contemporaries; and his failure to say anything about the origin and development of the *ḥarġa* is particularly unhelpful. It is revealing that he tells us in the sentences preceding the passage under consideration – sentences that are rarely quoted – that

<sup>41</sup> The *markaz*.

<sup>42</sup> As mentioned in note 29, Ibn Bassām would expect the reader to understand '*aġamī* as 'Romance'. It would also be contrary to his approach to be more specific.

<sup>43</sup> See van Gelder 2012:127–131.

<sup>44</sup> See also note 30.

<sup>45</sup> Thus, the piece offers no corroboration for the notion of the 'pre-existencia' of the *ḥarġa* so beloved by García Gómez and his ilk.

‘Ubāda ibn Mā’ as-Samā’ sorted out the genre and that what came before was as nothing.<sup>46</sup> Thus Ibn Bassām has an excuse for the early period. That is not so for his own lifetime. It is inconceivable that Ibn Bassām did not hear performances of *muwaššahāt*, and that fairly regularly. The genre was then at its zenith, with *waššāhs* such as Ibn al-Labbāna, al-A‘mā and Ibn Baqī all active whilst the *Daḥīra* was being compiled.<sup>47</sup> He does indeed have sections on those three as poets, but the material recorded is trite and hardly worth reading.

### 1.3 Ibn Sa‘d al-Ḥayr (d. 571/1175)

The virtual disappearance of a work entitled *Nuzhat al-anfus wa-rawḍat at-ta’annus fī tawšīhi ahli l-Andalus*, written by the Valencian *adīb* Ibn Sa‘d al-Ḥayr, is a tragic loss. There is a brief and tantalizing quotation from it in the *Tawšī‘ at-tawšīh of aṣ-Ṣafadī*.<sup>48</sup>

We have found that some of the most recent [leading] poets, such as Mihyār ad-Daylamī and al-Ḥarīrī and others have derived from these metrical patterns [*a‘ārīd*] sections composed of different units and linked rhymes, which they called *mal‘abs*.<sup>49</sup> Likewise the people of al-Andalus derived from them [*i.e. a‘ārīd*] a beat<sup>50</sup> 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’,<sup>51</sup> 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 Mihyār ad-Daylamī and al-Ḥarīrī and those of the people of al-

<sup>46</sup> [Ibn Bassām, *Daḥīra* I/1, 469].

<sup>47</sup> Ibn Bassām mentions in the *Daḥīra* eleven of the sixteen poets whose surviving work contains one or more Romance *ḥarḡas*, 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.

<sup>48</sup> aṣ-Ṣafadī, *Tawšī‘* 20–21. The Arabic is, as usual, in slightly opaque rhymed prose: *waḡadnā ba‘da l-muta‘ahḥirīna ka-Mihyāra d-Daylamiyyi wa-Abī Muḥammadini l-Qāsīmi l-Ḥarīriyyi wa-ḡayrihimā qad istanbaṭū min tilka l-a‘ārīdi aqsāman mu‘allafatan ‘alā fiqarin muḥtalifatin wa-qawāfin mu‘talifatin wa-sammaw-hā malā‘ib; wa-stanbaṭa min-hā aydan ahlu l-Andalusi ḍarban qasamūhu ‘alā awzānin mu‘talifatin wa-sammaw-hu muwaššahan wa-ḡa‘alū taršī‘a l-kalāmi wa-tanmiqa l-aqsāmi tawšīhan. wa-kānū awwala man sanna hādā t-ṭarīqa wa-nahaḡahu wa-awḍaḡa rasmahu wa-minhaḡahu.*

<sup>49</sup> Muṭlaq [aṣ-Ṣafadī, *Tawšī‘* 20] glosses as a poem with a fourfold or similar rhyme.

<sup>50</sup> Arabic *ḍarb*.

<sup>51</sup> Muṭlaq [aṣ-Ṣafadī, *Tawšī‘* 20] reads *tawšīhan* for the ms. *muwaššahan*. For the meaning of *tawšīhan/muwaššahan*, as a parallel to that found in al-Ḥarīrī, *Maqāma* 51, no. 6, see Abu-Haidar 2001:127.

Andalus with the *muwaššah*, Ibn Sa‘d al-Ḥayr shows an understanding of and sympathy with the work of the Andalusian *waššāḥs* 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.<sup>52</sup>

I have the strong impression that this would be less of a problem if Ibn Sa‘d al-Ḥayr’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.

#### 1.4 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 in 1897 – 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 at-ṭirāz*. 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’;<sup>53</sup> 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.<sup>54</sup> I joined this group long ago, not least due to a passage from the *Dār at-ṭirāz* itself. At the end of his Introduction Ibn Sanā’ al-Mulk writes:<sup>55</sup>

Excuse your brother [*i.e.* Ibn Sanā’ al-Mulk], for he was not born in al-Andalus, nor did he grow up in the Mağrib, 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

<sup>52</sup> Abu-Haidar 2001:ix.

<sup>53</sup> Stern 1974:39.

<sup>54</sup> His thoughts on the problems are brought together in Abu-Haidar 2001.

<sup>55</sup> Ibn Sanā’ al-Mulk, *Dār at-ṭirāz* 39.

‘Ubāda or al-Ḥuṣrī. Nor did he find a *ṣayḥ* from whom to take this knowledge nor a compilation from which to learn this art.<sup>56</sup>

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 *muwašṣaḥ*, 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 *ṣayḥ* or *mu’allaḥ*); and, if he did get hold of a poem with a *ḥarġa* containing ‘*aġamī*’ phraseology, it does not appear in the *Dār aṭ-ṭirāz*. In his case, too, we might hesitate to translate ‘*aġamī*’ as ‘Romance’,<sup>57</sup> as there is a short (and largely ignored) passage from his *Fuṣūṣ al-fuṣūl wa-‘uqūd al-‘uqūd*,<sup>58</sup> which Ġawdat ar-Rikābī printed as a note in his edition of the *Dār aṭ-ṭirāz*.<sup>59</sup>

After becoming a devotee of the Maġribī *muwašṣaḥāt* genre, when I composed a *muwašṣaḥ* I would not borrow a *ḥarġa* 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 Maġribīs 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 *ḥarġas*, for they were Berber; and when I had learned Persian, I composed this *muwašṣaḥ* and others, and made its *ḥarġa* Persian in place of the Berber *ḥarġa*.<sup>60</sup>

For years I took this second passage simply as confirmation of the evidence of the first passage, that his knowledge of the western *muwašṣaḥ* is sketchy and of relatively little value, with ‘Berber’ as a loose approximation for ‘*aġamī*’ or *maġribī*. However, I find it increasingly difficult to do so, with the word *maġribī* being used twice in the

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<sup>56</sup> *wa-‘dir aḥāka fa-innahu lam yūlad bi-l-Andalus, wa-lā naṣa’a bi-l-Maġrib, wa-lā sakana Iṣbīliyya, wa-lā arsā ‘alā Mursiyya, wa-lā ‘abara ‘alā Miknāsa; wa-lā sami’a l-urġun; wa-lā laḥiqa dawlata l-Mu’tamid wa-bna Ṣumādih; wa-lā laqiya l-‘amā wa-bna Baqiyyi, wa-lā ‘Ubāda wa-l-Ḥuṣriyyi; wa-lā waġada ṣayḥan aḥada minhu hādā l-‘ilm, wa-lā muṣannaḥan ta’allama minhu hādā l-fann.*

<sup>57</sup> Clearly with Ibn Bassām ‘*aġamī*’ can only have meant ‘Romance’.

<sup>58</sup> [Ibn Sanā’ al-Mulk, *Fuṣūṣ*]. The manuscript is in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, A3333. Edited by M. M. ‘Abd al-Ġawād, Cairo, 2005.

<sup>59</sup> [Ibn Sanā’ al-Mulk, *Dār aṭ-ṭirāz*] 135, note 2.

<sup>60</sup> *wa-kuntu lammā awla’ tu bi-‘amali l-muwašṣaḥāti l-maġāriba, fa-kuntu idā ‘amiltu muwašṣaḥan lā asta ṭru ḥarġata ġayrī bal abtakiru-hā wa-aḥtari’u-hā wa-lā arḍā bi-sti ‘arati-hā, wa-qad kuntu naḥawtu fihā naḥwa l-maġāribati wa-qaṣadtu mā qaṣadūhu wa-ḥtara’ tu awzānan mā waqa’ū ‘alay-hā wa-lam yabqa ṣay’un ‘amilūhu illā ‘amiltuhu illā l-ḥaraġāti l-‘aġamiyya, fa-inna-hā kānat barbariyya, fa-lammā ttafaqa lī an ta’allamtu l-fārisiyya, ‘amiltu hādā l-muwašṣaḥa wa-ġayrahu wa-ġa’altu ḥarġatahu fārisiyya badalan min al-ḥarġati l-barbariyya.*

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-Haidar<sup>61</sup> and Corriente,<sup>62</sup> have expressed different worries about Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk and also point to his lack of knowledge and judgement.

The new work of Professor Dwight Reynolds<sup>63</sup> will persuade many to see Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk in a more favourable light. On the grounds set out above, I personally feel that we should not take Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk too seriously as a commentator on the Andalusian *muwaššah*. Yet it is fair to say that western scholars have been responsible for the overestimation of his worth. When the *Dār at-tirāz* was our main source for Andalusian *muwaššahāt*, this was perhaps understandable, though mistaken. But no adjustments were made when the main corpus grew to over 550 poems. By then, however, more attention was being paid to 'harġa studies', where Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk's selection is not prominent. The selection is, however, a good one: twenty-seven of its thirty-four *muwaššahāt* are by renowned *waššāhs* including 'Ubāda, Ibn al-Labbāna, al-A'mā, Ibn Baqī and Ibn Zuhr. His zeal in collecting Andalusian material that was difficult to find and in establishing the genre in the east deserves our respect.

He was certainly respected in the Maġrib and al-Andalus. The second part of [Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb's] *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* starts with ten poems that are found in the *Dār at-tirāz*. Six are from the Andalusian section, followed by four of Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk's own poems.<sup>64</sup>

### 1.5 Ibn Ḥaldūn (1332–1406)<sup>65</sup>

It is fortunate that Ibn Ḥaldūn, one of Islam's great thinkers, was interested in the *muwaššah* and, to an even greater extent, the *zaġal* (and other forms of non-standard poetry) and that he devotes sections to them towards the end of his *Muqaddima*, written in 1377. Ibn Ḥaldūn was a shrewd judge of earlier sources, which he customarily quoted without attribution. In the case of the *muwaššah*, it has been shown that his main source was the *Muqtaṭaf* of Ibn Sa'īd [al-Andalusī/al-Maġribī, d. 1286], who in turn used *al-Muḥib fī ġarā'ib al-Maġrib* of ['Abdallāh ibn Ibrāhīm] al-Ḥiġārī [d. 1155], written in 1136 for the Banū Sa'īd family, another work sadly lost. From what we find in the *Muqaddima*, it appears that al-Ḥiġārī believed that the

<sup>61</sup> Abu-Haidar 2001:136.

<sup>62</sup> Corriente, in various places, typically 1997:30–39.

<sup>63</sup> [Reynolds 2021, esp. 163–174, 185–186.]

<sup>64</sup> *Dār at-tirāz* 3, 4, 7, 13, 29 and 34 of the Andalusian section, and 6, 7, 16, and 21 from the section devoted to Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk's own poems.

<sup>65</sup> For a good, detailed biography, see Rosenthal's translation, I, xxix-lxvii.

originator of the *muwaššah* had a different name from that given by Ibn Bassām<sup>66</sup> and that he used a different set of words for the terms describing the sections of the *muwaššah*.

The following passage<sup>67</sup> gives Ibn Ḥaldūn's summary on the origins and structure of the *muwaššah*:

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

(The authors of *muwaššahas*) 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.<sup>68</sup> Aḥmad b. 'Abd Rabbih, the author of the *Iqd*, learned this (type of poetry) from him. (Muqaddam and Ibn 'Abd Rabbih) were not mentioned together with the recent (authors of *muwaššahas*), and thus their *muwaššahas* fell into desuetude.

The first poet after them who excelled in this subject was 'Ubāda al-Qazzāz,<sup>69</sup> poet of al-Mu'taṣim b. Ṣumādih, the lord of Almería.

The great disappointment is that Ibn Ḥaldūn transmits nothing about the *ḥarġa*, and hence nothing about *al-lafẓ al-'āmmī wa-l-'aġamī*. He does quote the text of four *ḥarġas*, but only one of them<sup>70</sup> has clear colloquial features. Romance does not occur in his quotations. Likewise, he says nothing about the *maṭla*, though he quotes nine of them. It is hard to think that al-Ḥiġārī did not say something about these features. Nor does he say anything about the metres of the *muwaššahāt*, though in the sections on *zaġals*, he has an interesting, though largely overlooked, comment:

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<sup>66</sup> Stern (1974:65–66 and 92–93) believes, on the basis of brief references elsewhere, that there were two poets from al-Qabra, but the evidence seems insufficient.

<sup>67</sup> Adapted from Rosenthal's translation, III, 440–441.

<sup>68</sup> The 7th Umayyad ruler of al-Andalus reigned 888–912.

<sup>69</sup> This is, of course, wrong. See below.

<sup>70</sup> Ibn Bišrī, *Uddat al-ġalīs* 241.

At the present time, the *zağal* method is what the common people in Spain use for their poetry. They even employ all fifteen metres<sup>71</sup> for poems in the vulgar dialect and call them *zağals*.<sup>72</sup>

When it comes to the origins and early history, Ibn Ḥaldūn'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.<sup>73</sup> The further suggestion that there was a slump in the composition of *muwaššahāt* from before the time of 'Ubāda al-Qazzāz is not accurate, as the list of poets in Section 4 will show. As Ibn Bassām tells us with relative clarity,<sup>74</sup> the pivotal poet is 'Ubāda ibn Mā' as-Samā', not 'Ubāda ibn al-Qazzāz.

### 1.6 Ibn 'Abd Rabbih (860–940)

Here we come to a "*ḥarğa*" for this reassessment. It is indirect evidence, but it needs to be taken into account. There is a brief passage on the *musammaṭ* found in *al-'Iqd al-farīd*, in a chapter entitled *Ilal al-a'ārīd wa-ḍ-ḍurūb*, dedicated to the study of metrical variants and licenses found in classical Arabic poetry. It was first drawn to the attention of those who read Arabic by Professor Sayyid Ġāzī in his valuable *Fī uṣūl at-tawšīḥ*,<sup>75</sup> and has since been made more accessible by Professor Ignacio Ferrando.<sup>76</sup> The latter 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, V, 428, run as follows:

*wa-'idā ḥtalaḥfati l-qawāfi wa-ḥtalaḥat wa-kānat ḥayzan ḥayzan min kalimatin wāḥidatin, fa-huwa l-muḥammasu. wa-'idā kānat 'anṣāfun 'alā qawāfin tağma 'uhā qāfiyatun wāḥidatun, tumma tu'ādu li-miṭli dālika ḥattā tanqadiya l-qaṣīdatu, fa-huwa l-musammaṭu. (emphasis IF)*

<sup>71</sup> I.e. the Ḥalīlian system in some form.

<sup>72</sup> Adapted from Rosenthal's translation, III, 460. This follows on from an earlier piece about metre in general: "The metres are governed by certain conditions and rules. They are the subject of the science of prosody. Not every metre that may occur in nature was used by the Arabs in poetry. The (metres used) are special ones called metres (*buḥūr*) by the prosodists, who restricted their number to fifteen, indicating that they did not find the Arabs using other natural metres in poetry" [Ibn Ḥaldūn, *Muqaddima*, Eng. tr.] III, 374.

<sup>73</sup> Ibn Bassām has remarkably few references to Ibn 'Abd Rabbih (860–940), probably because their interests were different.

<sup>74</sup> [Ibn Bassām, *Daḥīra* I/1, 469. The passage where the reference "*Ubādatu ḥādā*" occurs forms part of the chapter on 'Ubāda ibn Mā' as-Samā'.]

<sup>75</sup> Ġāzī 1976:25.

<sup>76</sup> Ferrando 1999:79–80. What is striking is that key Arab scholars such as Iḥsān 'Abbās and Ġawdat ar-Rikābī never mention it.

If rhymes are different and mixed, and they are now this, now that, of one word, this is the *muḥammadas*. 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, this is proof that the *musammaṭ* is of eastern origin and is known among the literati of al-Andalus.

## 2 Prehistory

### 2.1 Origins

The earliest Andalusian Arabic *muwašṣaḥs* that survive in any datable time frame are two poems by ‘Ubāda ibn Mā’ as-Samā’, who died in 1028/1030. Both of ‘Ubāda’s poems are fully fledged and thus throw no light on the early history of the genre.<sup>77</sup> Some anonymous poems<sup>78</sup> do have a simpler format that might antedate the two, but their anonymity means that they provide no datable evidence to show that this is so.

No date of origin for the *muwašṣaḥ* is given by Ibn Bassām (d. 1147),<sup>79</sup> the sole Andalusian literary critic of whom more than a couple of sentences about the genre have survived. He tells us:

The first to compose the measures of these *muwašṣaḥāt* 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 tempers this with an alternative that is generally thought to be implausible:

Some say that Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih, the author of the *Kitāb al-‘Iqd*, was the first to compose this type of *muwašṣaḥāt* among us.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>77</sup> The first poem survives in aṣ-Ṣafadī, *Tawṣī‘ at-tawṣīḥ*, poem 32 and al-Kutubī, *Fawāt*, II, 151–152, the second poem only in al-Kutubī, *Fawāt* II, 152–153. In the case of the first one, *man walī*, there is a slight problem. In *al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt*, III, 156 aṣ-Ṣafadī ascribes it to ‘Ubāda ibn al-Qazzāz.

<sup>78</sup> Close to a third of the corpus of extant Andalusian Arabic *muwašṣaḥāt* survives anonymously.

<sup>79</sup> For a full analysis of the piece by Ibn Bassām (*Daḥīra* I/1, 469–470) see 1.2 above.

<sup>80</sup> Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih (860–940) was the author of the most famous literary encyclopaedia from al-Andalus, *al-‘Iqd al-farīd*. It is remarkable for its concentration on the east and evinces no interest in al-Andalus at all. However, he does show in one brief passage knowledge of the *musammaṭ* in Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih, *‘Iqd* V, 428. See also 1.6 above.

Though I have no great regard for Ibn Bassām's information on the origins, I do suspect that he is technically correct here. Some people *did* say precisely that, through simplification or misunderstanding of such information as had come down to them.

A possible source for this is [Muḥammad b. Futūh] al-Ḥumaydī (born Majorca about 420/1029, died Baġdād in 488/1095) who tells us in his sole surviving book, *Ġaḍwat al-muqtabis*, that he had seen more than twenty *ġuz*' of Ibn 'Abd Rabbih's poetry and that these included *muwaššahāt* and also a didactic *urġūza* on the history of Islam.<sup>81</sup> al-Ḥumaydī was admired as a scholar, but there are obvious problems as he dictated *al-Ġaḍwa* from memory in Baġdād. However, the statement that he had seen *muwaššahāt* by Ibn 'Abd Rabbih is not implausible.

The main source for the comments on the *muwaššah* by the much later Ibn Ḥaldūn<sup>82</sup>, [as we have seen] was the *Muqtaṭaf* of Ibn Sa'īd [and his sources]. Ibn Ḥaldūn gives a different name for the originator: Muqaddam b. Mu'āfā al-Qabrī. He also places the origin of the *muwaššah* in the reign of 'Abdallāh b. Muḥammad al-Marwānī, the seventh Umayyad ruler of al-Andalus (reigned 888 to 912). As al-Ḥiġārī and his contemporary Ibn Bassām were writing over two centuries after the reign of 'Abdallāh b. Muḥammad, the suggestion that the *muwaššah* first came into being about 900 is a very rough guess. However, it is not implausible if one thinks of the stages of development that must have taken place by the time that 'Ubāda ibn Mā' as-Samā' re-established the genre.

Neither al-Qabrī appears to be entirely legendary – the scanty references are collected by Stern 1974:92–93 – and we cannot rule out the possibility that one of them was the originator. If anything, the date might have been earlier, but this is what the Qur'ān terms 'guessing at the unknown'.<sup>83</sup>

As we have seen [in the Introduction], two main propositions have been put forward for the origins of the *muwaššah*. The first of these is in favour of an Arabic origin, with *musammaṭ* leading to the *muwaššah*, followed by the *zaġal*. The second favours a Romance origin for both the *muwaššah* and the *zaġal*, with the *musammaṭ* irrelevant. I can see neither evidence nor logic to support the second proposition. I accept the importance of the Romance material, but the earliest surviving *muwaššah* containing Romance material cannot be dated earlier than 1050, again leaving us with no evidence earlier than the corpus.

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<sup>81</sup> [al-Ḥumaydī, *Ġaḍwa* ed. Cairo 101, ed. Tunis 151, no. 172. Both editions mention the twenty *ġuz*' of Ibn 'Abd Rabbih's poetry, but neither contain any reference to *muwaššahāt*. Since Alan Jones did not mention the exact reference for his information, it seems impossible to establish his source. His caution concerning Ibn 'Abd Rabbih's *muwaššahāt*, however, seems to be well-founded.]

<sup>82</sup> Ibn Ḥaldūn, *Muqaddima*, Eng. tr. III, 440-465.

<sup>83</sup> *raġman bi-l-ġayb* (Q. 18:26).

The amount of Romance that has survived is limited by its being normally confined to the *ḥarġa*. It will thus be less than 10% of the poem. Thus, in the splendid poem by ‘Ubāda ibn al-Qazzāz, *min mawridi t-tasnīm*,<sup>84</sup> there are roughly twenty Romance words<sup>85</sup> in a poem containing just over 300 words altogether. However, one cannot merely say that the poem is 93.3% Arabic and 6.7% Romance. The *simṭ* rhyme pattern *-īm .. -ġi .. -īb .. -ti ... -iṣ .. -īb .. -ūb .. ti* is highly complex, and, in my view, works better in the *ḥarġa* than in the other stanzas, in which some of the (Arabic) rhymes are strained.

Similarly, the *ḥarġa* of ‘*Uddat al-ġalīs* 349 has seven sections all ending in *-aš*, representing the Romance feminine plural ending *-as*. Whilst this works well in the *ḥarġa*, the other *asmāṭ* are sometimes strained, as Arabic rhymes ending in *-aš* are difficult in any quantity. Less demanding but still causing difficulties with the Arabic rhyme words is the *ḥarġa* of ‘*Uddat al-ġalīs* 178, which uses the Romance diminutive *-ello* (*-illu* in written Arabic). Such *ḥarġas*, I think, indicate a telling influence, but they are far from the equivalent of DNA.<sup>86</sup>

For that it is logical to go back to *šī‘r* and its developments and to the 99+% of the corpus that is in Arabic, beginning with the *musammaṭ*.

## 2.2 *The musammaṭ and its origins*

The structure of Arabic poetry (*šī‘r*), built as it is on metre and rhyme, has from earliest times grown by slow evolution of those features. Poets by their nature are free-thinking beings, and they have always experimented, somewhat more in diction and thought than in structure, though there was scope here too. Success might range from the invention of a new metre<sup>87</sup> to a minor deviation in rhyme usage; whilst failure can sometimes be discerned in pieces composed in a metre used once or twice by early poets and then never again. However, it is rare for the texts themselves to yield such information. Instead, we have to turn to the minute analyses and schemata produced by the great ‘Abbāsīd savants. The scope of this book precludes detailed examination of such points, and those interested in them and indeed in metre and rhyme in general should read Geert Jan van Gelder’s *Sound and Sense in Classical Arabic Poetry* (2012). Unfortunately, Professor van Gelder’s remit did not include stanzaic poetry, and he rarely mentions it; but on the general point I am making here, the continued occurrence of experimentation, examples galore are to be found in the

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<sup>84</sup> Ibn Bīšrī, ‘*Uddat al-ġalīs*, poem 22, A1.

<sup>85</sup> The exact number depends on whose realisation one is reading.

<sup>86</sup> I judge there to be an influence on the rhymes in a dozen poems, with several more involving the Romance diminutive.

<sup>87</sup> One has only to think of the Anacreontic, Alcaic and Sapphic metres, named after the Greek poets Anacreon, Alkaios of Mytilene, and Sappho.

section on ‘Further Metrical Experiments’ (pp. 123–136) and also in the section on ‘Rhymes Rich and Richer’ (pp. 252–268).

Alterations to conventions on rhyme normally made little difference to the structure of a poem. One, however, did. This was the changing of the rhyme pattern of two hemistichs from AQ to AAAQ by the use of internal rhyme. It would appear that the impetus for the earliest experiments, which are pre-Islamic, stemmed from the desire to add extra strength to some passages in laments (*marāṭī*). Several examples exist, the most vivid one in my view being Ġanūb al-Hudaliyya’s lament on her brother, lines 22–24.<sup>88</sup>

22. *wa-ḥayyin abaḥta wa-ḥayyin šabaḥta* || *wa-ḥayyin manaḥta manāyā ‘iḡālā*  
 23. *wa-ḥarbin waradta wa-ṭaḡrin sadadta* || *wa-‘ilḡin šadadta ‘alayhi l-ḥibālā*  
 24. *wa-mālin ḥawayta wa-ḥaylin ḥamayta* || *wa-ḍayfin qarayta yaḥāfu l-wakālā*

We may read this as:

<i>wa-ḥayyin abaḥtā</i> <i>wa-ḥayyin šabaḥtā</i> <i>wa-ḥayyin manaḥtā</i> <i>manāyā ‘iḡālā</i>	Many is the tribe you have despoiled, many the tribe you have attacked in the morning, many the tribe you have delivered to swift fates.
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<i>wa-ḥarbin waradṭā</i> <i>wa-ṭaḡrin sadadā</i> <i>wa-‘ilḡin šadadṭā</i> <i>‘alayhi l-ḥibālā</i>	Many is the war you took part in, many the gap you blocked [against an enemy], many is the strong warrior on whom you tied the ropes [of captivity].
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<i>wa-mālin ḥawaytā</i> <i>wa-ḥaylin ḥamaytā</i> <i>wa-ḍayfin qaraytā</i> <i>yaḥāfu l-wakālā</i>	Much is the wealth you acquired, many the horses you protected, many the guest for whom you provided food when he was afraid of [the consequences of] slow travel.
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The metre of the poem is *mutaqārib*, and the lengthening of the internal rhyme syllables from *ta* to *tā* is in accordance with its norms.

The earliest such pieces are found embedded within longer poems and thus must be partly fortuitous. Eventually, others were to survive that were entirely stanzaic. We may ignore the spurious piece attributed to Imru’ al-Qays, and the almost equally doubtful one attributed to Ḥammād ar-Rāwiya, though we may note that the literary

<sup>88</sup> The text is in my *Early Arabic Poetry*, I, 49–50 [Jones 1992]. A similar piece in a *riṭā’* by al-Fāri’ a bint Šaddād (in Cheikho 1897:99) has four such lines. For other pieces featuring internal rhyme, see van Gelder 2012:252 ff.

critics who transmitted the pieces take the genre for granted.<sup>89</sup> An earlier critic who describes a simple *musammaṭ* is al-Layṭ b. al-Muẓaffar (d. ca. 187/803).<sup>90</sup> The first *musammaṭ* to survive as a separate entity is not without its problems. It is a fourteen-stanza poem with a somewhat corrupt text, attributed to Abū Nuwās. The poem is probably not by him, but it is quoted in the *Aḥbār Abī Nuwās* compiled by Abū Hiffān (d. 255/869). Here are the first two stanzas, as given by van Gelder:

<i>sulāfu dannī</i>	Vintage wine in a jug
<i>ka-šamsi dağnī</i>	Like the sun in the dark
<i>ka-dam 'i ġafnī</i>	Like the tears on my eyelids,
<i>ka-ḥamri 'adnī</i>	Like the wine of Eden;
<i>ṭabīḥu šamsī</i>	Concocted by the sun,
<i>ka-lawni warsī</i>	Dyed as if with wars,
<i>rabību fursī</i>	Fostered by the Persians,
<i>ḥalīfu siğnī</i>	Prison inmate! <sup>91</sup>

Early pieces like the above are rare, but there are enough for the basic patterns to be clear. *Musammaṭāt* tend to have three lines with separate rhyme and one line with common rhyme (*murabba* ' ) or four lines with separate rhyme and one line with common rhyme (*muḥammas*). They may be either acephalous or cephalous. In the latter case the poem begins with a *maṭla* ' , and in the former it does not. This gives us the following basic forms for the *musammaṭ murabba* ' :

- 1 (acephalous). AAAQ BBBQ CCCQ etc.
- 2 (cephalous). QQ AAAQ BBBQ CCCQ etc.

and for the *musammaṭ muḥammas*

- 1 (acephalous). AAAAQ BBBBQ CCCCQ etc.
- 2 (cephalous). QQ AAAAQ BBBBQ CCCCQ etc.

There is no limit to the number of stanzas.

When we turn to the question of the arrival of the *musammaṭ* in al-Andalus, information about the early period is minute. There is only one reference, and its importance lies more in who says it than in what it says. [The passage in question is found in Ibn 'Abd Rabbih's *al-'Iqd al-farīd*.]<sup>92</sup>

Hebrew *musammaṭāt* composed in al-Andalus also provide further corroboration for the Andalusian Arabic *musammaṭ*, but this is hardly needed when we can leave

<sup>89</sup> The redoubtable Ibn Rašīq [ 'Umda] and Abū l-Farağ al-Iṣfahānī [Ağānī].

<sup>90</sup> Quoted in al-Azharī, *Tahqīb* XII, 348, s.v. *simṭ*.

<sup>91</sup> van Gelder 2012:264. The metre is *muḥalla* ' *al-basīt*.

<sup>92</sup> See 1.6 above.

the last words on the subject to Ibn Zaydūn, whose two surviving *musammaṣ*s<sup>93</sup> are among the most pleasing poems of the eleventh century. They are substantial pieces, the first being ten stanzas in length, the second double that. Both are of the *muḥammas* pattern and are composed in the *basīṭ* metre. Gibb translated stanzas 3, 8 and 10 of the first poem, and I give the text and Gibb's translation:<sup>94</sup>

- 3     *saqā ḡanabāti l-qaṣri ṣawbu l-ḡamā`imi*  
       *wa-ḡannā `alā l-aḡṣāni wurqu l-ḡamā`imi*  
       *bi-qurṭubata l-ḡarrā`i dāri l-akārimi*  
       *bilādun bihā ṣaqqa ṣ-ṣabābu tamā`imi*  
       *wa-anḡaba-nī qawmun hunāka kirāmu*

Still round thy towers descend the fertile rain!  
 Still sing the doves in every leafy den!  
 Córdoba, fairest home of gallant men,  
 Where youth my childhood's trinkets snapped in twain,  
 And noble sires begat me noble, free!

- 8     *wa-`akrim bi-ayyāmi l-uqābi s-sawālifi*  
       *wa-lahwin aṭarnāhu bi-tilka l-ma`āṭifi*  
       *bi-sūdi aṭīṭi ṣ-ṣa`ri bīḍi s-sawālifi*  
       *iḍā rafalū fī waṣyi tilka l-maṭārifi*  
       *fa-laysa `alā ḡal`i l-iḍāri malāmu*

Happy those days with purer pleasures blest,  
 Those winding vales we roamed with boyish zest,  
 White-throated, raven-haired, all mirth and jest;  
 Chide not the trailing robes, the silken vest,  
 The reckless pride of youth—no wantons we.

- 10    *fa-qul li-zamānin qad tawallā na`imuhu*  
       *wa-raṭṭat `alā marri l-layālī rusūmuhu*  
       *wa-kam raqqa fīhi bi-l-`aṣiyyi nasīmuhu*  
       *wa-lāḡat li-sārī l-layli fīhi nujūmuhu*  
       *`alayka mina ṣ-ṣabbi l-maṣūqi salāmu*

Say to an age whose joys long since are fled,  
 Its traces by the lapse of nights now faint and mouldered  
 (Softly the breeze its evening fragrance shed!

<sup>93</sup> There are several editions. The text I have used here is on pages 197–205 of the much-used edition by Kāmil Kīlānī and `Abd ar-Raḡmān Ḥalīfa, Cairo, 1932/1351, first printed in 1932 and reprinted in 1956 and 1965.

<sup>94</sup> Gibb 1963:113.

Bright shone its stars o'er the night-traveller's head!):  
 'Farewell from one whose love still burns for thee!'

### 2.3 *E tenebris*

We must now turn and sketch as best we can the components and characteristics of the original *muwaššah*. The crucial source is the corpus of surviving material. Clearly, the poems in that corpus can only tell us about compositions from the 11th century onwards; but features that show up in the corpus as variables point to them being optional, whilst those that are invariable are obligatory. Secondly, we can turn to Ibn Bassām's brief comments in the *Daḥīra* on the introduction of first *taḍmīn* and later *taḍfīr*. These indicate that they brought about structural changes through *tasmīṭ*, i.e. by the addition of extra rhymes. There is only one interpretation: that the original stanza structure had the minimum possible number of sections in the *asmāṭ* and in the *aḡṣān*. Given that this cannot be AAAAQ, since this is the *musammaṭ* form, we have to conclude that another iteration of the rhyme variation that turned *bayts* into *musammaṭs* was involved, taking the basic pattern to AAAQQ (or AAAQR).<sup>95</sup> For more on this see 5a below.

The corpus contains some examples of *muwaššahāt* with this structure that have a *maṭla*<sup>6</sup> and others that do not, showing that there is no difference from the *musammaṭ* in the use of this particular variable; and, leaving aside for the moment the *ḥarḡa*, we find a continuity of language and metre, though the metres of the *muwaššah* inevitably become more complex after the introduction of *tasmīṭ* (*taḍmīn* and later *taḍfīr*).

The corpus also indicates that, with a small number of exceptions, the *muwaššah* has a length of five or six stanzas, each stanza having a minimum of five hemistichs [QQQ AA and, perhaps, QQQ AB]. (Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk reaches the same conclusion from his much smaller sample.) This limitation of stanzas is a new feature found in neither the *musammaṭ* nor the *zaḡal*.

So far, we have the following essential features:

- (a) use of the language and ideas<sup>96</sup> of *šī'r*;
- (b) use of an expanded form of the Arabic metrical system;
- (c) use of a stanzaic format;
- (d) a norm of five or six stanzas, each stanza having a minimum of five hemistichs, the basic patterns being QQQ AA and, perhaps, QQQ AB;

This latter was a new feature, as was

- (e) the accompanying music.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>95</sup> Or, of course, AAAAQ etc.

<sup>96</sup> For an important background article, see Kennedy 1991.

<sup>97</sup> Apart from Ibn Rušd [*Talḥīṣ*, Eng. tr. 1986: 63–64, ed. 1986:57] the evidence is incidental. [See also 5a2.]

There is no doubt about

(f) the special role and importance of the final *simṭ* of the *muwaššah*.

For Ibn Bassām it is the *markaz*, the centrepiece, of the poem, whilst for Ibn Ḥaldūn and Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk it is the *ḥarġa*, the *envoi*, the rounding off. Moreover, Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk tells us that *ḥarġas* are his basis for writing the rest of the poem.<sup>98</sup>

This of course tells us nothing about the role of the final *simṭ* in the very first *muwaššahāt*. Of all the missing material this is the greatest loss. There is no way of knowing whether the earliest '*ḥarġas*' were composed in the same language as *ši'r* or contained non-classical material from the outset. This will be discussed further in the section on the *ḥarġas* [5e].

There are three developments to the *muwaššah* that occurred before we get to the extant material. Using the Arabic terms, they are *taḍmīn*, *iktār at-taḍmīn* and *taḍfīr*. Ibn Bassām does not link any poet with the introduction of *taḍmīn*, but he ascribes *iktār at-taḍmīn* to ar-Ramādī and *taḍfīr* to 'Ubāda Ibn Mā' as-Samā' [see 1.2].

ar-Ramādī, once a court poet to al-Ḥakam (r. 961–976), fell into disgrace after the ruler's death, when he was imprisoned and exiled amid subsequent court intrigues. Although later allowed to return to Cordoba, he remained marginalized until his death in 1012. It would seem unlikely that the *iktār at-taḍmīn* post-dated this disgrace.

'Ubāda Ibn Mā' as-Samā' lived until 1028/1030, but Ibn Bassām classes him as a poet of the 'Āmirid and Ḥammūdīd periods, *i.e.* for the period up to 1018–1019. This was when he was likely to have been most influential, not least because, like the Ḥammūdīds he was of Šī'ī persuasion.

The paragraph in Ibn Bassām about the *muwaššah* does mention 'Ubāda's invention of *taḍfīr*, but it would seem that the most important information about him has already appeared a few lines earlier, slightly obscured by the use of rhymed prose:<sup>99</sup>

*kānat šan'atu t-tawšīhi llatī nahaġa ahlu l-Andalusi ṭarīqatahā, wa-waḍa 'ū  
ḥaqīqatahā, ġayra marqūmati l-burūdi, wa-lā manzūmati l-'uqūdi, fa-aqāma  
'Ubādatu hādā mun'ādahā wa-qawwama maylahā wa-sinādahā wa-  
ka'annahā lam tusma' bi-l-Andalusi illā minhu wa-lā uḥīḍat illā 'anhu*

Put simply, in the time of 'Ubāda Ibn Mā' as-Samā' the conventions of the *muwaššahāt* were not well defined and he sorted them out, thus consigning earlier material to oblivion.

At the beginning I said that some anonymous poems do have a simpler format that might antedate or at least reflect a situation prior to the poems of 'Ubāda Ibn

<sup>98</sup> 'I say it precedes [the poem] because it should be the first thing that comes to mind.' Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk, *Dār aṭ-ṭirāz* 43.

<sup>99</sup> [Ibn Bassām, *Daḥīra* I/1, 469; see also 1.2 and 1.5 above.]

Mā' as-Samā', but their anonymity prevents them from providing evidence to show that this is so. We see this in the anonymous 'Uddat al-ġalīs poem 283.<sup>100</sup>

It has a number of other features that take it out of the ordinary. It begins and ends with stanzas of nostalgia, with amatory material intervening. There is no panegyric, nor is any patron referred to. It is written with clarity and relative simplicity, well within the conventions of *ši'r*, with few hyperbolic phrases. Further, the poet uses a rigorous form of the *madīd* metre, XLSL \* LSL \* SSL.

The linkage of expressions is notable: each *simṭ* ties in with the preceding *aġṣān*.<sup>101</sup> The final stanza also looks back to the *matla'*, picking up *arbu'* by *rab'*, thus rounding off the poem as a whole, while the final *simṭ* summarizes the general mood of the poem.

*qif bi-tilka l-arbu' i d-durusi \*\* wa-hmi dam'an bi-n-naġī' i ma'ā*

*ayna šāra r-rakbu yā ṭalalu  
a-tarāhum'an qilan raḥalu  
wadda'ū li-l-bayni fa-ḥtamalu*

*kam ḥabībin qad na'ā fa-nusi \*\* wa-ḥadītin bāna fa-nqaṭa'ā*

*bittu rahna d-dam' i wa-s-sahari  
wa-'ašiqtu amlaḥa l-bašari  
šādinan yazhū'alā l-qamari*

*law ra'āhu l-ġuṣnu lam yamisi \*\* aw ra'āhu l-badru mā ṭala'ā*

*yā ġazālan bi-š-sudūdi qasā  
hā anā qad dubtu fika asā  
wa-murād-ī min lamāka'asā*

*an tudāwī š-šabba bi-l-la'asi \*\* aw bi-zalmi ṭ-ṭaġri qad qani'ā*

*kam qaṭa'nā dālīka z-zamanā  
bi-ġazālin yuhġilu l-ġuṣunā  
wa-mudāmin tuṭribu š-šaġanā*

*nūruhā fī l-kāsi ka-l-qabasi \*\* aw ka-barqin fī d-duġā lama'ā*

*ayyu rab'in ġayyara z-zamanu  
kāna fīhi l-ḥillu wa-s-sakanu  
wa-maḥat āṭārahu l-hutunu*

<sup>100</sup> [Ibn Bišrī, 'Uddat al-ġalīs 425–426.] The format is QQ AAA QQ BBB QQ CCC QQ DDD QQ EEE QQ, with neither a verb of transition nor a final *simṭ* with the features of a *ḥarġa*.

<sup>101</sup> This is presumably the reason for the use of enjambment between *ġuṣn* 3 and the *simṭ* of stanza 3.

'āda ba 'da n-nuṭqi dā ḥarasi \*\*fa- 'tabir li-d-dahri mā ṣana 'ā

Stop by the encampments whose traces are now erased;  
and shed tears and blood together.

Where have the riders gone, O remains of the encampment?  
Do you see them journeying away out of hatred?  
They said goodbye to move to a distance and went away.

How many a loved one has moved to a distance and become forgotten;  
How many a topic of conversation has gone away and been cut off!

I have spent the night as a hostage to tears and sleeplessness,  
having fallen in love with the most handsome of mankind,  
a fawn that shines above the moon.

If the branch were to see him it would not swagger;  
if the moon were to see him it would not rise.

O gazelle, pitiless in shunning me,  
here I am, having melted in love for you.  
My wish from your red lip is that

Perhaps you will cure my love with the crimson of those red lips;  
or it will be content with the whiteness of your teeth.

How much of that time did we spend  
with a gazelle that puts slender branches to shame  
and with wine which brings delight out of sadness!

whose light in the wine cup is like a lighted brand or like lightning in the dark.

What an excellent encampment has been changed by time,  
where the friend and his dwelling used to be,  
whose traces have been erased by continual rain.

After speech has been heard there, the place has become soundless.  
Consider Fate and what it has done.

### 3 The Extant Andalusian *Muwaššahāt*

When Stern was writing his thesis on the Old Andalusian *Muwaššah* in the late 1940s, he worked largely with manuscripts, particularly one of the *Dār at-ṭirāz* of Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk housed in Leiden. There were a few poems scattered around

elsewhere, very rarely in printed form, though the *Ṣūfī muwašṣahāt* of Ibn ‘Arabī<sup>102</sup> had been published as early as 1850.<sup>103</sup>

The situation was revolutionised in the 1950s when two major anthologies came to light in Morocco and Tunisia. The first was the *‘Uddat al-ġalīs* of ‘Alī ibn Bišrī (dates unknown), which contains 354 poems, including 288 not found in full elsewhere<sup>104</sup> and twenty-six with ‘Romance’ *ḥarġas*. The second was the *Ġayṣ at-tawšīḥ* of Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb (d. 1375), which contains 175 Andalusian poems,<sup>105</sup> including over 130 not known elsewhere and sixteen with ‘Romance’ *ḥarġas*. There are also twenty-eight poems that occur in both works but nowhere else.

Thus 446 poems survive only in these two works, and they contain all but three of the Arabic ‘Romance’ *ḥarġas* (though some of these *ḥarġas* recur in the Hebrew series). When we count all the poems that survive both in these two and in other sources the total rises to 484, over 85% of the total.

To these we can add poems found solely in the following:

Nine from *al-Muġrib* of Ibn Sa‘īd (from a total of twenty-six);

Nine from the *Dār aṭ-ṭirāz* of Ibn Sanā’ al-Mulk (from a total of thirty-four Andalusian poems);

Nine (eight from the *Tawšī‘ at-tawšīḥ* of aṣ-Ṣafadī, from a total of fourteen Andalusian poems, plus one elsewhere);

Twenty-one from the *Dīwān* of Ibn Sahl (from a total of twenty-four);

Fourteen from the *Dīwān* of Ibn Ḥātima (from a total of eighteen).

Ibn Ḥātima (d. 1369) has not been given much attention, but in one respect he is important. The principal surviving manuscript of his *dīwān* was written by the author himself.<sup>106</sup> It therefore gives us his personal attempts to render ‘colloquial language’ in the *ḥarġas*.

One from al-Kutubī [*Fawāt*] (from a total of two Andalusian poems);

Two from al-Ḥillī [*‘Āṭil*] (from a total of two Andalusian poems);

One from Ibn Abī Uṣaybi‘a, ‘*Uyūn al-anbā*’ (from a total of three Andalusian poems);

One from Ibn Diḥya, *al-Muṭrib*;

One from an-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab* (from a total of two Andalusian/Maġribī poems);

<sup>102</sup> [Ibn ‘Arabī (d. 1240) was a highly influential and prolific Andalusian *Ṣūfī* author.]

<sup>103</sup> [See Stern (1974:83–89), who quotes the poems on the basis of the 1850 *Būlāq* edition of Ibn ‘Arabī’s *Dīwān*. This part of the volume is an abridgement of Stern’s doctoral dissertation, submitted at Oxford in 1950 and entitled *The Old Andalusian Muwashshah*.]

<sup>104</sup> Brief fragments of some survive.

<sup>105</sup> Excluding four eastern poems.

<sup>106</sup> [MS Escorial 381, which formed the basis of the 1994 edition of his *dīwān*.]

One from *ar-Rawḍa l-ġannā*<sup>107</sup> (*hāti bnata l-‘inabi* by Ibn Zuhr).

This gives a total of some 553 poems for what I treat as the primary corpus. However, there are some poems which have lost their endings, and for rough working a total of 550 suffices.

One cannot draw up objective criteria for any cut-off point for this corpus, if only because of the number of anonymous poems. It is tempting to point to the increase in the number of stanzas that took place in the fourteenth century as a good indicator. However, the *‘Uddat al-ġalīs* includes a poem by Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb<sup>108</sup> and the *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* has three by Ibn Ḥātima. If those are included so must others by the same authors. Further, the links with the Maġrib mean that poems written in the Maġrib or for rulers from the area might also be included. This is particularly so with the poems of Ibn Bišrī, the author of the *‘Uddat al-ġalīs*, whose dates are unknown.

There is also the question of the religious poems, in particular those by Ibn ‘Arabī, aš-Šuštārī<sup>109</sup> and [Ibn] aš-Šabbāġ.<sup>110</sup> My preference is to place these in a secondary corpus, also including poems from later anthologists and collections, the most important being al-Maqqarī, whose *Nafḥ at-ṭīb* contains twenty-six poems not found in earlier sources. Unfortunately, the majority of these, including fifteen by Ibn Zamrak,<sup>111</sup> are late.<sup>112</sup> This is also where we should put material found only in later anthologies, such as those of an-Nawāġī<sup>113</sup> and also as-Saḥāwī,<sup>114</sup> with unreliable texts. If on a rare occasion they provide a poem with a good text, that poem can be allocated to the main corpus. As previously indicated, I have done this with Ibn Zuhr’s *hāti bnata l-‘inabi* from *ar-Rawḍa l-ġannā* ‘[fī maḥāsīn al-ġinā’]. The texts from this anthology are generally in poor condition, but it appears that in this poem short lines have facilitated better transmission.

The value of the corpus itself lies in its sufficient size to be searched for meaningful data that can be effectively scrutinized. But that means asking the right questions.

<sup>107</sup> [The manuscript of this anthology, attributed to an unknown author and held in Rabat at the National Library of Morocco, is cited by ‘Inānī (1982), who quotes Ibn Zuhr’s poem from it.]

<sup>108</sup> Poem 135, eight stanzas.

<sup>109</sup> [Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Šuštārī (d. 1269), a famous Andalusian Sūfī poet, philosopher, and mystic.]

<sup>110</sup> [Scarce information survived concerning the poet Ibn aš-Šabbāġ al-Ġudāmī, except for his *Dīwān*. He seems to have been active in the middle of the 13th century.]

<sup>111</sup> [Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf Ibn Zamrak (d. 1393) was a leading Andalusian poet and statesman of the Nasrid kingdom of Granada.]

<sup>112</sup> There are also half a dozen *muwaššahāt* in al-Maqqarī’s *Azhār ar-riyād*.

<sup>113</sup> [Šams ad-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan an-Nawāġī (d. 1455), *‘Uqūd al-al-la’āl fī l-muwaššahāt wa-l-azġāl*.]

<sup>114</sup> [Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān as-Saḥāwī (d. 1497) *Saġ ‘al-wurq al-muntaḥiba fī ġam ‘al-muwaššahāt al-muntaḥaba*.]

#### 4 Authors

Of the 550 Arabic *muwaššahāt* that I use as my primary corpus, no fewer than 188 (fractionally over 1/3 and including twelve poems with ‘Romance *ḥarġas*’) have survived anonymously. The main culprit for this is Ibn Bišrī, whose information about authors seems to have been very patchy. When he gives an attribution, it usually seems reasonably reliable, though quite often contradicting the attribution in another anthology, mainly disagreeing with the *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ*. One might have hoped that Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb would have done better, as the majority of the *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* consists of sections devoted to named poets, but he does not seem particularly reliable and many of his poems are attributed to different poets elsewhere. Hence, we are left with a group of poems that we can only label ‘Doubtful’. Irritatingly, two of the major *waššāḥs*, al-A‘mā at-Tuḥlī and Ibn Baqī, whose paths frequently crossed, are at the centre of this confusion.

Occasionally it appears to be a copyist who gets the name wrong, as with ‘*Uddat al-ġalīs* 145, which the manuscript attributes to Ibn Sahl instead of Ibn Šaraf.

A further problem is the scanty quantity and mediocre quality of the biographical information about the *waššāḥs*. Iḥsān ‘Abbās<sup>115</sup> tartly comments that we can get more information from the *Dīwān* of al-A‘mā at-Tuḥlī, the only *waššāḥ* whose *Dīwān* has survived, than from the normal sources.<sup>116</sup> Normally biographical entries provide some information about the families for whom the poets wrote and the year of a poet’s death – though sometimes we do not even get that. On the other hand, a ‘good story’ may be recorded. Stern gives us the following:<sup>117</sup>

Abū l-Ḥasan b. Nizār on the gradual collapse of the Almoravid Empire, carved out for himself the principality of Guadix. Owing to intrigues of the people of his town, he was captured and imprisoned by Ibn Mardanīš, the lord of the majority of the eastern districts. The unknown authority from whom al-Maqqarī (ii. 331–2) has the story continues:

He remained in prison for a long time. At last he found the means to communicate with a good singing-girl, having a beautiful voice. He then composed his *muwaššah* which begins:

<i>nāza ‘aki l-badru l-layāḥ</i>	<i>bintu d-danāni</i>
<i>fa-lam yada ‘laki qtirāḥ</i>	<i>‘alā z-zamāni</i>

and which contains, among other things, the following lines:

<i>yā hal aqūlu li-l-ḥasūd</i>	<i>wa-l-‘īsu taḥḍi</i>
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<sup>115</sup> al-A‘mā at-Tuḥlī, *Dīwān h–m*, Iḥsān ‘Abbās’s Introduction to his edition.

<sup>116</sup> I shall refer to these sources only where unavoidable. The references are conveniently gathered together by Sayyid Ġāzī 1979: II, 755–773.

<sup>117</sup> Stern 1974:106. [Transliterations have been standardized to the system used in *The Arabist*.]

*yā lā'im-ī 'alā s-sarāḥ*                      *kānat amānī*  
*aḥrağahā dāka s-samāḥ*                      *ilā l-'iyānī*

He then appointed someone to teach her the poem and its melody. The stratagem succeeded; the poem when recited before Ibn Mardanīš pleased the ruler, who, taking the hint contained in it, liberated his prisoner.

From other sources we learn that Ibn Mardanīš came to power in Valencia in 1147 and remained as ruler until his death in 1172.<sup>118</sup> This gives a time frame for the poem, and we can see roughly where Ibn Nizār fits in a list of poets; but it is hardly as important as the four stanzas of an 'echo' *muwaššah* preserved in the *Muğrib* [of Ibn Sa'īd] or the two complete poems preserved in the *'Uddat al-ğalīs* (144 and 274) [of Ibn Bišrī]. It is also the case that some of the incidental details in the 'good story' are rather more important than those concerning the poet: a singing girl is taught both poem and melody.

Another 'good story' shows us the fragility of attributions. Ibn Ḥaldūn<sup>119</sup> baldly quotes a piece from someone whom he calls Ibn Mu'ahhal:

*mā l-'īdu fī ḥullatin wa-tāqi*                      *wa-šammi fīb*  
*wa-innamā l-'īdu fī t-talāqī*                      *ma'a-l-ḥabīb*

The festival is not made by fine clothes and the smell of perfume.  
 The festival is made by meeting the beloved.

The piece is drawn into a more expanded story by the medical biographer Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a,<sup>120</sup> who on the authority of his informant the *qāḍī* Abū Marwān al-Bāğğī changed the name of the *waššah* to Ibn Zuhr.

We were in Tunis together with an-Nāṣir (Almohad Caliph 1199–1214). Prices in the army were very high and barley was very scarce. Abū l-Ḥağğāğ Ibn Mūrātīr composed a *muwaššah* for an-Nāṣir in which he included a parody (*tağyīr*) of a verse (*bayt*) written by al-Ḥafīd Abū Bakr b. Zuhr in one of his *muwaššahs*. The text of Ibn Zuhr read *mā l-'īdu...*, which Ibn Mūrātīr changed to:

*mā l-'īdu fī ḥullatin wa-tāqi*                      *min al-ḥarīr*  
*wa-innamā l-'īdu fī t-talāqī*                      *ma'a š-ša'īr*

The festival is not made by fine clothes made of silk  
 The festival is made by meeting *barley*.

<sup>118</sup> Kennedy 2014:194–195.

<sup>119</sup> [Ibn Ḥaldūn, *Muqaddima*, ed. II, 428, Eng. tr. III, 445. The reading of the name is uncertain: Mu'ahhil, Mu'ahhal, Mūhal etc.]

<sup>120</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a, *'Uyūn al-anbā'* 533–534. The Arabic text is given in Ġāzī 1979: II, 181.

an-Nāṣir ordered two *mudds* of barley to be given to him: this was, at that time, worth fifty *dīnārs*.

The piece is taken by Stern<sup>121</sup> to be a *maṭla* ‘, but the place for such a twist is the *ḥarġa*; and if we look at the *ḥarġa* of a poem by al-Ḥabbāz (Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb, *Ġayṣ at-tawšīḥ* 10:5),<sup>122</sup> there it is in what appears to be the original version. Stern was surely right to remove Ibn Zuhr from the story, and, in the absence of further evidence, I think that we might do the same with Ibn Mu’ahhal.

The list that follows sets out in a rough time frame *waššāḥs* of extant poems down to the death of the Almohads.

### *Umayyad period (–1031)*

0. Yūsuf b. Hārūn ar-Ramādī (d. 1012). The place and date of birth of ar-Ramādī remain uncertain. The first definite thing we know about him is that he studied al-Qālī’s *Kitāb an-Nawādīr* with the great master. He also wrote a *qaṣīda* in his praise some thirty lines of which have survived in the *Yatīmat ad-dahr*.<sup>123</sup> He clearly flourished (the fact that at-Ta’ālibī included some of his *ši’r* in his sadly scanty treatment of Andalusian writers is external proof of that) and he was court poet to al-Ḥakam when the latter was caliph (961–976). He was on the wrong side in the court intrigues that followed al-Ḥakam’s death. Ibn Abī ‘Āmir al-Manšūr had him imprisoned and then exiled to Saragossa. Eventually he was allowed back to Cordoba but was never rehabilitated and spent the last forty odd years of his life in the shadows until his death in 1012. No *muwaššah* of his has survived, but he was responsible for extending the use of *taḍmīn*.
1. ‘Ubāda b. Mā’ as-Samā’ (died 1028 or 1030) is the first poet from whom we have extant *muwaššahs*. It would appear that al-Ḥiġārī confused him with ‘Ubāda b. al-Qazzāz.<sup>124</sup> His two surviving *muwaššahs* are fully developed but contain no Romance elements.

The place<sup>125</sup> and date of birth of ‘Ubāda Ibn Mā’ as-Samā’ are also uncertain. Ibn Bassām (*Daḥīra* I/1, 468) tells us that he moved to Cordoba and was a leading panegyrist there during the ‘Āmirid and Ḥammūdīd regimes: *wa-laḥīqa bi-Qurṭuba ad-dawlata l-‘āmiriyya wa-l-ḥammūdiyya wa-madaḥa riġālahā*. His most important teacher was az-Zubaydī. Given that az-Zubaydī left Cordoba for Seville some time before his death in 989, it seems reasonable to suggest that ‘Ubāda was born no later than 960. Ibn Bassām (*Daḥīra* I/1, 475) quotes a couple

<sup>121</sup> Stern 1974:113.

<sup>122</sup> [References are to the added chapter numbers, each corresponding to the oeuvre of a single poet, followed by the number of the *muwaššaha* cited from that poet.]

<sup>123</sup> [at-Ta’ālibī, *Yatīmat ad-dahr* II, 114–117, no. 103.]

<sup>124</sup> Stern 1974:64–65.

<sup>125</sup> Malaga and Cordoba are mentioned in the sources.

of lines from a *qaṣīda* to Ibn Abī ‘Āmir, which must have been written before the latter’s death in 1002. He also notes (*Daḥīra* I/1, 478) ‘Ubāda’s Šī‘ī leanings in his poetry (*wa-kāna ‘Ubāda yuḏhiru t-tašayyu‘a fī šī‘rihi*) and quotes several pieces addressed to various members of the Ḥammūdids, especially ‘Alī ibn Ḥammūd, ‘caliph’ 1016–1018.

*Tā’ifa period (1031–1086/91)*

1. Ibn al-Mu‘allim ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, a minister of al-Mu‘taḍid, the ‘Abbādid ruler of Seville from 1042 to 1069 AD. The use of al-Mu‘taḍid’s *kunya* Abū ‘Amr in line 10 of his sole surviving *muwaššah* makes it likely that it was dedicated to him, as the *kunya* is also found at the beginning of a part of a *marīya* on al-Mu‘taḍid by Ibn al-Mu‘allim.<sup>126</sup>

Ibn al-Mu‘allim, like many Arab ministers, was something of a literary figure, enough to persuade Ibn Bassām to include a section on him in the *Daḥīra*. Despite this, the *muwaššah* is one of the weakest in the series. The handling of themes is trite, and the phraseology is flaccid. However, it is the earliest by a known poet to contain some Romance elements.

2. Ibn ar-Rāfi‘ Ra’suh<sup>127</sup> is said by Ibn Ḥaldūn<sup>128</sup> to have been a poet at the court of the Banū Dī n-Nūn of Toledo. The poem from which Ibn Ḥaldūn’s comments stem is ‘*Uddat al-ḡalīs* 241; it is addressed to Yaḥyā b. Dī n-Nūn, ruler from 429<sup>129</sup>–467 AH (1037–1075 AD). However, Ibn Bišrī, ‘*Uddat al-ḡalīs* 49 and Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb, *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* 5:4 mention Yūsuf b. Hūd, ruler of Saragossa from 473–477 AH (1081–1085 AD).

The ‘*Uddat al-ḡalīs* has two poems (241 and 268) clearly ascribed to Ibn ar-Rāfi‘ Ra’suh. Two more (76 and 305) are given anonymously but are found in the poet’s section in the *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* (5:7 and 5:1). ‘*Uddat al-ḡalīs* ascribes two others (9 and 49) to al-Ḥuṣrī, but they appear as *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* 5:6 and 5:4. The latter has a seventh stanza, not found in the ‘*Uddat al-ḡalīs* 49, which contains Romance material. Finally, ‘*Uddat al-ḡalīs* 92 appears anonymously, but is ascribed to Ibn ar-Rāfi‘ Ra’suh in *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* 5:2 and to al-Ḥuṣrī in [aṣ-

<sup>126</sup> Ibn Bassām, *Daḥīra* II/1, 123.

<sup>127</sup> This seems to be the most likely spelling of his name. [His name has lately been standardised as Ibn Arfa‘ Ra’s, his full name being Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Mūsā al-Anṣārī. See Regula Forster and Juliane Müller, “The Identity, Life and Works of the Alchemist Ibn Arfa‘ Ra’s”. *Al-Qanṭara* 41 (2020) 373–408, doi:10.3989/alqantara.2020.010, where his date of death is given as 1197.]

<sup>128</sup> [Ibn Ḥaldūn, *Muqaddima*, ed. II, 425, Eng. tr. III, 442, in Rosenthal’s transliteration the name is Ibn Arfa‘-ra’sah.

<sup>129</sup> Or possibly 435/1043.

- Ṣafadī's] *Tawšī' at-tawšīh* 48.<sup>130</sup> Two other surviving poems (Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb, *Ġayš at-tawšīh* 5:3 and 5:10) have Romance elements.
3. Ibn Labbūn is the composer of the poems in section twelve of the *Ġayš at-tawšīh*. He is referred once in Ibn Bassām, who typically tells us that the minister and poet Ibn 'Ammār (murdered by al-Mu'tamid in 1086) sent Ibn Labbūn a present of apples and pears, and that there was an exchange of poetic pleasantries.<sup>131</sup> Two of his surviving poems have Romance elements.
  4. Yaḥyā al-Ġazzār lived in Saragossa under the Banū Hūd [r. 1039–1110]. He was a butcher who became a poet and then reverted to being a butcher, as we learn from Ibn Bassām.<sup>132</sup> Two of his surviving poems (section eleven of the *Ġayš at-tawšīh*) have Romance elements.
  5. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Baṭalyawsī, known as al-Kumayt al-Ġarbī, is the subject of section six in the *Ġayš at-tawšīh*. He is linked in the *Muġrib* (1, 370–371) with Abū Ġa'far Aḥmad al-Muqtadir who ruled Saragossa from 1058 to 1084; *Ġayš at-tawšīh* 6:4 refers to Abū Ġa'far. Two of his surviving poems have Romance elements. The title al-Kumayt al-Ġarbī<sup>133</sup> shows that he was highly esteemed as a classical poet.
  6. Yūnus b. 'Īsā al-Mursī al-Ḥabbāz is the subject of section ten in the *Ġayš at-tawšīh*, with 10:2 also found as *'Uddat al-ġalīs* 101. Otherwise, we have no information about him. Two of his surviving poems have Romance elements.
  7. Muḥammad Ibn al-Qazzāz is the most commonly used way of referring to a poet (some say two poets) whose name appears in various guises. Ibn Bassām<sup>134</sup> gives his name as Muḥammad ibn 'Ubāda, known as Ibn al-Qazzāz. Among the other forms 'Ubāda b. Muḥammad b. 'Ubāda has caused much head-scratching. I believe that the various names refer to one poet. Stern's article on the subject<sup>135</sup> now needs some modification, as some details crop up in poems in the *'Uddat al-ġalīs*, which was unknown when the article was written. He was a court poet of al-Mu'tasim of Almería but also wrote for others such as the Banū Ṭābit of Tavira. He may reasonably lay claim to be the greatest virtuoso among the *waššāḥs* who flourished in the period of the *mulūk at-ṭawā'if*. Seventeen complete *muwaššāḥs* of his have survived,<sup>136</sup> with three having Romance elements. They include the remarkable *min mawridi t-tasnīm* (Ibn Bišrī, *'Uddat al-ġalīs* 22).

<sup>130</sup> [References are to section numbers.]

<sup>131</sup> Ibn Bassām, *Daḥīra* II/1, 434.

<sup>132</sup> Ibn Bassām, *Daḥīra* III/2, 905–908. See also Ibn Sa'īd, *Muġrib* II, 444.

<sup>133</sup> [A reference to the renowned Arabian poet al-Kumayt ibn Zayd al-Asadī (d. 743).]

<sup>134</sup> Ibn Bassām, *Daḥīra* I/2, 801–805.

<sup>135</sup> Stern 1950.

<sup>136</sup> Thirteen in the *'Uddat al-ġalīs*, two in the *Dār at-tirāz*, and two in both. Two of those in the *'Uddat al-ġalīs* are also to be found in the *Ġayš at-tawšīh*, but wrongly ascribed. The absence of a section devoted to him in the *Ġayš at-tawšīh* is surprising.

8. Muḥammad b. ‘Abbād al-Mu‘tamid ruled Seville from 1069 until he was toppled by the Almoravids in 1091 and exiled to Aġmāt in Morocco. An outstanding classical poet, he continued to compose until his death in 1095. His sole surviving *muwaššah*, with its small Romance element, must come from the period before his fall.
9. ‘Alī b. Ġanī al-Ḥuṣrī moved from the Maġrib to al-Andalus in 1058 and stayed at various courts until his death in 1093. Two poems are ascribed to al-Ḥuṣrī in the ‘*Uddat al-ġalīs* (9 and 49), but they appear in the *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* in the section devoted to Ibn ar-Rāfi‘ Ra’suh (5:6 and 5:4). The latter has a seventh stanza, not found in ‘*Uddat al-ġalīs* 49, which contains Romance material. Finally, ‘*Uddat al-ġalīs* 92 is anonymous, but the poem is ascribed to Ibn ar-Rāfi‘ Ra’suh in *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* 5:2 and to al-Ḥuṣrī in *Tawšī‘ at-tawšīḥ* 48.
10. Ibn al-Labbāna, a court poet of al-Mu‘tamid, survived and mourned the fall of the ‘Abbādid. He then became a peripatetic poet, going wherever his poetry might earn him some sustenance, as was the case with other major poets of his period. He spent time in the Maġrib, and one of his most famous poems, *binarġisi l-aḥdāq*, is addressed to the Ḥammādid Bādīs ibn al-Manṣūr, a monster who ruled his small Algerian *tā’ifa* for less than a year (1104/5). Ibn al-Labbāna survived till 1113. He thus straddles the *Tā’ifa* and Almoravid period. One of his surviving poems has Romance elements.

*Almoravid period (1086–1147)*<sup>137</sup>

The earlier poets in this group were born in the *Tā’ifa* period.

1. al-A‘mā at-Tuṭīlī died in 1126. Five of his surviving poems have Romance elements. [There is some confusion about al-A‘mā and Ibn Baqī, as four poems listed among al-A‘mā’s works in the *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* are attributed to Ibn Baqī in other sources.]
2. Ibn Ruhaym, d. 1126. Two of his surviving poems have Romance elements. [His *muwaššahāt* are preserved in both the *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* (13:1–10) and the ‘*Uddat al-ġalīs* (345).]
3. Ibn Baqī, d. 1145. [Several of his *muwaššahāt* are preserved in both the *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* (1:1–9) and the ‘*Uddat al-ġalīs* (thirty-two); one (50) among these is attributed to Ibn Zuhr in *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* (15:2) and that attribution seems to be correct. Four of his surviving poems have Romance elements.]
4. Ibn az-Zaqqāq, d. 1133.
5. Muḥammad al-Abyaḍ, d. c. 1133 [*Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* (3:1–9), and five poems in the ‘*Uddat al-ġalīs*.]

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<sup>137</sup> [The biographical notices concerning authors from the Almoravid period onward remain incomplete or preliminary in many places.]

6. The polymath Ibn Bāḡḡa is linked with the famous *ḡarriri d-dayla ayyamā ḡarri*, but the *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* attributes it to Ibn aṣ-Ṣayrafī.<sup>138</sup> Ibn Bāḡḡa was poisoned in Fes in 1138.
7. [Abū ‘ Abdallāh] Muḥammad b. Šaraf<sup>139</sup> is placed in the Almoravid period by Ibn Ḥaldūn.<sup>140</sup> It is probable that eleven of his *muwaššahs* survive. Section seven of the *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* has nine poems plus the first section of a *maṭla* ‘ beginning *qaḍat bi-qṭināši l-usdi*, the whole poem being found as ‘*Uddat al-ḡalīs* 28. *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* 7:2 is mainly the same poem as ‘*Uddat al-ḡalīs* 229, but the final stanzas are different. Finally, there is the well-known poem beginning *šamsun qāranat badrā*, found in *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* 17:1 and *Dār aṭ-ṭirāz* 3 but ascribed to Ibn Zuhr by Ibn Abī Uṣaybī ‘a.<sup>141</sup> However, Ibn Sa‘īd ascribes it to Ibn Šaraf in *al-Muqṭataf*, and this is also the reading in the corrected text in Ibn Ḥaldūn.<sup>142</sup>
8. Abū ‘ Āmir Ibn Yannaq (Íñigo) aš-Šāṭibī (1089–1152).
9. al-Manīšī (mid-12th century). One of his surviving poems has Romance elements.
10. Ibn Sa‘īd (d. 1155).
11. Ibn Quzmān (1078/80–1160). A *muwaššah* written by the famous *zaḡḡāl* has Romance elements in its *ḥarḡa*.

*Almohad period (1147/1172–1212/1223)*

1. Aḥmad b. [Muḥammad b.] Mālik [al-Balansī] as-Saraqustī, known in the ‘*Uddat al-ḡalīs* as al-Lāridī,<sup>143</sup> is said to have died in 571/1175.<sup>144</sup> Two of his surviving poems have Romance elements.
2. Ibn Hardūs (d. 573/1177) [one poem in the ‘*Uddat al-ḡalīs*].
3. [Abū l-Ḥasan] Ibn Nizār [two poems in the ‘*Uddat al-ḡalīs*].
4. [Abū Bakr] Ibn aṣ-Ṣayrafī, died 577/1181, appears to be the latest poet with Romance elements in a surviving poem [one poem in the ‘*Uddat al-ḡalīs*].
5. Ibn Maslama (d. 585/1189).
6. Ibn Zuhr al-Ḥafīd (1110–1198) [*Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* 15:1–10 and twenty poems in the ‘*Uddat al-ḡalīs*].
7. as-Sulamī (d. 603/1206).
8. Ibn Ḥazmūn (d. 614/1217) [five poems in the ‘*Uddat al-ḡalīs*].

<sup>138</sup> Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb, *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* 9:3.

<sup>139</sup> [His grandfather was the famous scholar of Ifrīqiyya, who went to al-Andalus as a refugee, see Stern 1974:104.]

<sup>140</sup> [Ibn Ḥaldūn, *Muqaddima*, ed. II, 427, Eng. tr. III, 445. He became famous at the beginning of the Almohad dynasty.]

<sup>141</sup> [Ibn Abī Uṣaybī ‘a, ‘*Uyūn al-anbā*’ 526, Chapter “al-Ḥafīd Abū Bakr ibn Zuhr”.]

<sup>142</sup> For correction see Stern 1974:105.

<sup>143</sup> For the link, see Jones 1988:125.

<sup>144</sup> Ibn al-Abbār, *Takmila* I, 70, *tarḡama* 206.

9. Ibn Ḥarīq (d. 622/1225).  
 10. Ibn al-Faḍl (d. 627/1229).

### Later

Ibn aṣ-Ṣābūnī (d. 1238) [three poems in the *‘Uddat al-ḡalīs*].  
 Ibn ‘Utba (d. 637/1239).  
 Ibn Sahl, drowned in the Guadalquivir in 1251 [three poems in the *‘Uddat al-ḡalīs*].  
 Ibn Ḥātima (d. 1369). Important because of the autograph manuscript [see Section 3 above; one poem in the *‘Uddat al-ḡalīs*].

## 5 Constituent features

### 5a Stanzaic structure

#### 5a1 The basic form of the muwaššah

The standard *muwaššah* has five stanzas (*dawr/bayt*). Of the 354 poems in the *‘Uddat al-ḡalīs*, no less than 332 (nearly 94%) have five stanzas. There are another seventeen with six stanzas, bringing their combined total to 98%. Four and possibly all five of the poems with fewer than five stanzas are incomplete. The anthology also contains one (late) poem by Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb that breaks the mould by having eight stanzas.<sup>145</sup>

Using A etc. and Q to show the rhyme at the end of a segment, the simplest form is:

AAA Q-Q \*\* BBB Q-Q \*\* CCC Q-Q \*\* DDD Q-Q \*\* EEE Q-Q

Each section labelled A/B/C/D/E is called a *guṣn* and a whole line labelled Q-Q is called a *simt* or a *qufl*, whilst the final *simt/qufl*, labelled Q-Q, used to end the poem with a special twist,<sup>146</sup> is called the *ḥarġa* or *markaz*.

Only nine poems in the whole corpus<sup>147</sup> have this simplest of forms, but there are also five<sup>148</sup> which have Q-R instead of Q-Q.<sup>149</sup>

Logic or common sense (or even both) indicates that these two forms, with their one minor variation, were the basic form from which many others were to develop – though again it must be stressed that with the *muwaššah* no evidence survives for the

<sup>145</sup> The whole corpus gives proportions that are only marginally different.

<sup>146</sup> On the role of the *ḥarġa* see section 5e below.

<sup>147</sup> Ibn Bišrī, *‘Uddat al-ḡalīs* 31 (‘Romance’), 131 (Ibn Zuhr), 132, 218, 222, 224 (‘Romance’), 321, 326; Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb, *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* 8:9.

<sup>148</sup> Ibn Bišrī, *‘Uddat al-ḡalīs* 51 (Ibn Zuhr), 52, 290 (Ibn Zuhr), 291 (Ibn Bišrī), 300.

<sup>149</sup> These fifteen poems are roughly 2.5% of the whole corpus.

first century and a quarter of its existence. However, Arabic poetry in general shows a marked tendency to evolve by elaboration rather than simplification.

One addition brings us to a more popular form, accounting for just over 14% of the total corpus. This is through putting another *simṭ/quṣl* R R or R S at the beginning of a *muwaššah*. Such a *simṭ/quṣl* is known as the *maṭla*<sup>150</sup> (prelude), the term being that used for the first line of a classical *qaṣīda*. Poems with a *maṭla* ' are called *tāmm* (complete), whilst those without a *maṭla* ' are called *aqra* ' (bald).

It may well be that the presence or absence of a *maṭla* ' is determined by musical factors, but again it must be stressed that the music and all evidence about it has [almost completely] disappeared.<sup>151</sup> This is true even when fragments of poems survive in the repertoire of modern Mağribī musicians. Back projection is not possible. I am convinced that along with the stanza limit, music was crucial in differentiating the *muwaššah* from earlier forms. In particular, I suspect that it led to features like *taḍmīn* and *taḍfīr*, and to the dominance of rhyme in general.<sup>152</sup>

The length of the segments depends jointly on the number of rhymes and on the metre used (see the sections on Rhyme and Metre).

### *5a2 How the structure of the muwaššah might have developed from that of the musammaṭ*

Given the absence of relevant evidence for the period of the origin and development of the *muwaššah* and the dearth of information about the early *musammaṭ*, anything we glean from Arabic literary sources can provide only circumstantial pointers. However, there is enough to persuade leading western scholars working on 'Abbasid literature, such as [Ewald] Wagner and van Gelder,<sup>153</sup> that the two are linked. Indeed, there are some examples of pieces from pre-Islamic poetry with a *musammaṭ*-like structure, but they appear to be fortuitous creations; whereas in 'Abbasid times such

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<sup>150</sup> The *maṭla* ' is not mentioned by Ibn Bassām [*Daḥīra*], but it is found in about five-sixths of the surviving corpus and is thus a dominant feature.

<sup>151</sup> There are musical marginalia in the '*Uddat al-ğalis*. In the manuscript, they appear on the first forty pages, covering poems 1–60, though not every poem has a note. Although the ink is faded and the notes are positioned rather awkwardly, it is clear that the poems were accompanied by music. If a *muwaššah* (such as no. 10) begins continuously without a title, there is no note on the music, since such notes are otherwise placed in the margin next to the title of the *muwaššah*.

<sup>152</sup> [Dwight F. Reynolds's book *The Musical Heritage of Al-Andalus* (2021) led Alan Jones to reconsider several key problems, but time did not allow him to elaborate on them.]

<sup>153</sup> Stanzaic poetry is on their periphery. It would be reasonable to include [Gregor] Schoeler, who also has firm views, and is a specialist in the field. [See, e.g. Schoeler 1978 and 1993.] In the sixties and seventies, two major Arab scholars, Ğawdat ar-Rikābī and Iḥsān 'Abbās, doubted the link between *musammaṭ* and *muwaššah*, but more recent Arab scholars have not followed them.

pieces appear to result from the experiments that poets and even composers of *maqāmāt* tried out.

The only poem that can be said to provide an actual link between the *musammaṭ* and the *muwaššah* is poem 164 of the *‘Uddat al-ğalīs*, a six-stanza piece with a typical *musammaṭ* pattern:<sup>154</sup>

*him bi-ṣ-ṣibā wa-da ‘i*  
*maqāla dī wara ‘i*  
*fa-innamā l-alma ‘i*  
*man bāta lam yasma ‘i*  
*fī l-ḥubbi min ‘adali*

*fa-in ‘aḍūlun abā*  
*wa-lağğā aw annabā*  
*fa-ğannihi muṭribā*  
*man lī bi-raddi ṣ-ṣibā*  
*wa-lahwi wa-l-ğazali*

*wa-bi-ab-ī ğu ‘daru*  
*muhafhifun aḥwaru*  
*ruḍābuhu sukkaru*  
*wa-wağhuhu nayyiru*  
*ka-š-šamsi fī l-ḥamali*

*wāfā ka-faṣli r-rabī ‘*  
*rīmun tawā fī d-ḍulū ‘*  
*wa-šabba nāra l-wulū ‘*  
*bayna l-ḥašā fa-l-ḥuğū ‘*  
*qad bāna ‘an muqali*

*aḥbib bihi min rašā*  
*aḥwā haḍīmi l-ḥašā*  
*taḥālulu in mašā*  
*ka-l-badri yabdū ‘išā*  
*fī sundusi l-ḥulali*

*kam dā uqāsī l-ğarām*  
*fī ḥubbi badri t-tamām*  
*wa-qad aliftu s-saqām*

<sup>154</sup> No reason is given for the inclusion of what is ostensibly a *musammaṭ* poem in a collection of *muwaššahāt*. Nor does the piece have any title, though it is not the only poem without one. The only reason that comes to mind is the music, but of course there is no indication of that. The metre is classical: *mağzū’ al-basīṭ*.

*wa-rāḥat-ī fī btisām*  
*Muḥammadi bni 'Alī*

Thus, the rhyme pattern is

AAAA Q \*\* BBBB Q \*\* CCCC Q \*\* DDDD Q \*\* EEEE Q \*\* FFFF Q

An alteration of the rhyme pattern from AAAA Q to AAA QQ etc. is relatively simple, giving:

AAA QQ \*\* BBB QQ \*\* CCC QQ \*\* DDD QQ \*\* EEE QQ \*\* FFF QQ

Nevertheless, it brings a change of structure, as can be seen in poem 321 of the *'Uddat al-ḡalīs*:

<i>la 'alla zamāna ṣ-ṣibā</i>	<i>ḡuṣn</i>	
<i>yu 'āwidu ṣabban ṣabā</i>	<i>ḡuṣn</i>	
<i>tanaššaqa 'arfu ṣ-ṣabā</i>	<i>ḡuṣn</i>	
<i>fattaqa li-miskin fatīq ** wa-rāqa li-dam 'in arīq</i>		<i>simṭ / qufl</i>
<i>a-mā wa-bayāḍu ṭ-ṭalā</i>	<i>ḡuṣn</i>	
<i>wa-murtašifun ka-ṭ-ṭilā</i>	<i>ḡuṣn</i>	
<i>wa-mā šaffa-nī min ṭilā</i>	<i>ḡuṣn</i>	
<i>lammā kuntu fī-man yufīq ** wa-mā zāla waḡd-ī yafūq</i>		<i>simṭ / qufl</i>
<i>'araftu rašan kullamā</i>	<i>ḡuṣn</i>	
<i>ranā ṭarfuhu kallamā</i>	<i>ḡuṣn</i>	
<i>wa-law šā 'a kāna l-lamā</i>	<i>ḡuṣn</i>	
<i>šifā 'uhu li-ṣabbin yaḍīq ** bi-aysari šay 'in yaḍūq</i>		<i>simṭ/qufl</i>
<i>ašāra bi- 'unnābi-hi</i>	<i>ḡuṣn</i>	
<i>wa-a 'raḍa 'an-nā bi-hi</i>	<i>ḡuṣn</i>	
<i>fa-kam ḍā u 'annā bi-hi</i>	<i>ḡuṣn</i>	
<i>wa-abkī li- 'ahdi l- 'aqīq ** bi-dam 'in ka-lawni l- 'aqīq</i>		<i>simṭ/qufl</i>
<i>sa-ad 'ū wa-in lam yajib</i>	<i>ḡuṣn</i>	
<i>ḥabīban wa-in lam yujib</i>	<i>ḡuṣn</i>	
<i>wa-ašdū bi-ṣawtin yajib</i>	<i>ḡuṣn</i>	
<i>laka l- 'ahdu min-nī waṭīq ** wa-ṭīq yā Bna 'Abdi l-Waṭīq</i>		<i>ḥarḡa/markaz</i>

Similarly, poem 224, which contains Romance *ḥarḡa* 16, runs:

*law anṣafa maḥbūb-ī*  
*wa-ḡāda bi-marḡūb-ī*  
*wa-lam yarḍa ta 'ḍīb-ī*

*la-aršafa-nī ḡalma-h \*\* fa-lam aštaki ḡalma-h*

*bi-dīni l-hawā dintu  
wa-muḡ kuntu mā ḡuntu  
wa- 'izz-iya lā huntu*

*fa-man kāna dā himmah \*\* yarā faraḡan hammah*

*raḡītu bi-idlāl-ī  
wa-suḡm-ī wa-awjāl-ī  
fa-da ' 'anka ta 'dāl-ī*

*fa-inniya min ummah \*\* ra 'at suḡmahā immah*

*ḡimāmu l-hawā lāzim  
li-kulli fatan hā 'im  
fa-in lāmahu lā 'im*

*fa-da ' 'anka man ḡamma-h \*\* wa-lā tada 'i ḡ-ḡimamah*

*wa-ḡawdin janat suḡm-ī  
bi-ḡawtin barā jism-ī  
tugannī-hi li-l-ummi*

*ktāl mī mā almah \*\* kkry mā almah*

The change from AAAA Q to AAA QQ etc. is the simplest possible, whereas a direct change from AAAA Q to AAA QR etc. is slightly more complicated. On the other hand, a change from AAA QQ to AAA QR is again simple. For an example see poem 16 of the 'Uddat al-ḡalīs (which has a *maḡla*):<sup>155</sup>

*nasīmu r-rawḡi fāḡ \*\* fa-ḡūmū našrabu*

*a-lā qum yā ḡulām  
adir ka 'sa l-mudām  
maḡā ḡarfu ḡ-ḡalām*

*wa-kāfūru ḡ-ḡabāḡ \*\* ilay-nā yuḡlabu*

*ḡilū mizḡa l-ḡumūr  
bi-salsāli t-tuḡūr  
fa-mā sirru s-surūr*

*siwā ka 'sāti rāḡ \*\* wa-rīḡin ya 'ḡabu*

<sup>155</sup> I am not suggesting that this poem is early. We know from the language of the *maḡla* ' that it was originally the *ḡarḡa* of another poem. It is also found as the *ḡarḡa* of a Hebrew poem of Yehuda Halevi (*Muwaššahāt*, ed. Rosen-Moked, no. 10) and also in a *mukaḡfira* [see Dozy 1881: II, 485] by Ibn aḡ-ḡabbāḡ [*Dīwān* 61, no. 58: *nasīmun rawḡi s-samā 'i fāḡā ...*].

‘alā dahrin maḍā  
 taḥiyyātu r-riḍā  
 zamānun yuqtaḍā

dinānun tustabāḥ \*\* wa-‘ūdun yuḍrabu

ilā l-‘išqi sbiqū  
 wa-ra’y-ī sābiqū  
 fa-in lam ta‘šaḡū

fa-sīrū fī l-biḥāḥ \*\* ṣafā lā ya‘šabu

da‘ū-nī sāhirā  
 wa-ḥibb-ī hāḡirā  
 sa-ad‘ū l-qādirā

yā rabb-ī ḍā l-milāḥ \*\* fu‘ād-ī ‘aḍḍabu

Such a development is logical, but the poems quoted, like the majority of poems in the *‘Uddat al-ḡalīs*, are anonymous. There is no way of dating them, and they thus fall short of being solid evidence. The *muwašṣaḥa* obviously stands apart from *ši‘r* in having a stanzaic structure, but in language, metre and themes it starts from the same base. There is careful use of the *madīd* metre in the form XLSL LSL SSL, with only half a dozen segments starting with a short syllable.

### 5a3 Further stages in the development of the *muwašṣaḥ*’s structure

This first involved the splitting up of the *asmāṭ* into smaller units (*taḍmīn*), and according to Ibn Bassām,<sup>156</sup> it was first used frequently by ar-Ramādī (d. 1012).<sup>157</sup> Note that Ibn Bassām does not tell us who was the first to use *taḍmīn*, nor does he tell us what form the division took. It seems natural to assume that the two sections of the *simṭ* would become four, but in the extant corpus poems with that pattern are rare. Poems in which the *aḡṣān* have a single section and the *asmāṭ* have three sections are not uncommon but are not markedly popular.<sup>158</sup>

<sup>156</sup> The normal *caveats* about Ibn Bassām’s comments apply, and the phraseology he uses is both brief and vague.

<sup>157</sup> The *Daḥīra* has a dozen or so references to, or quotations from ar-Ramādī, scattered through volumes I–III. Iḥsān ‘Abbās gathers references from other sources in a useful way [in note 1] on III/1, 346.

<sup>158</sup> There are only eight poems with four-section *asmāṭ* and single section *aḡṣān*, whilst there are twenty-nine poems with three-section *asmāṭ* and single section *aḡṣān*. Although these latter include four by the very late Ibn Bišrī, they count among their number al-A‘mā’s *dam‘un saḡūḥun wa-dulū‘un ḥirār \*\* mā‘un wa-nār \*\* mā ḡtama‘ā illā li-amrin kubār* – the first Arabic *muwašṣaḥ* with a Romance *ḥarḡa* to come to light; (Ibn Bišrī, *‘Uddat al-ḡalīs* 124; Ibn al-Ḥatīb, *Ḡayṣ at-tawṣīḥ* 2:6; aṣ-Ṣafadī, *Tawṣī‘ at-tawṣīḥ* 30).

The fourth stage<sup>159</sup> involved the splitting of all lines. Ibn Bassām<sup>160</sup> tells us that the poet responsible for this was ‘our ‘Ubāda, who invented *taḍfīr*’ (using *taḍmīn* in the *aḡṣān*). Stern<sup>161</sup> assumed that ‘our ‘Ubāda’ means the ‘‘Ubāda of this chapter (of the *Ḍaḥīra*)’, i.e. ‘Ubāda ibn Mā’ as-Samā’. It is hard to disagree with this; but it makes the introduction of *taḍfīr* a rather late development. This seems somewhat implausible.

This *taḍfīr* splitting occurs in the majority of the extant poems, with the most common pattern being:

[ABCB] QRQR ABCB \*\* STSTST ABCB \*\* UVUVUV ABCB \*\* WXWXWX ABCB \*\*  
YZYZYZ ABCB.<sup>162</sup>

An excellent example of a well-known poem of this format is poem 241 in the ‘*Uddat al-ḡalīs*’ composed by a leading *waššāḥ* of the *Ṭā’ifa* period, Ibn ar-Rāfi ‘Ra’suh.

*al-‘ūdu qad tarannam \*\* bi-abda ‘i tarnīn \*\* wa-šaqqati l-maḍānib \*\* riyāda  
l-basātīn*

*wa-ḡannati ṭ-ṭuyūru \*\* ‘alā quḍubi l-bān  
wa-aḍḥaka s-surūru \*\* usūdan li-maydān  
fa-kullu-nā amīru \*\* bi-r-rāḥi wa-sultān*

*min watarin takallam \*\* bi-s-sihri l-mubīn \*\* wa-ṭā’irin tuḡāwib \*\* min  
quḍbi r-rayāḥīn*

*hāti sqi-nī l-humayyā \*\* fa-r-rawḍu yaḡfūḥu  
qad mālati ṭ-ṭurayyā \*\* wa-ṭāba ṣ-ṣabūḥu  
yaḡuttuhā ‘alayyā \*\* ḡazālun malīḥu*

*ka-l-ḡuṣuni l-muna ‘am \*\* fī ḥullati nistrīn \*\* muṭarrizu l-ḡawānib \*\*  
yanqaddu mina l-līn*

*aqim ‘alā widādi \*\* ḡī l-maḡdayni wa-šrab  
mumahhidi l-bilādi \*\* min šarqin wa-maḡrib  
wa-nāširi l-‘ibādi \*\* sulālati ya ‘rub*

*al-maliki l-mu ‘azzam \*\* muḡilli s-salāṭīn \*\* murattibi l-mawākib \*\* hizabri  
l-mayādīn*

*malkun lahu ḡanānu \*\* mina l-layṭi aqdam*

<sup>159</sup> The chapters “Second stage” and “Third stage” are missing.

<sup>160</sup> Ibn Bassām, *Ḍaḥīra* [I/1, 469.]

<sup>161</sup> Stern 1974:26.

<sup>162</sup> Allowing for some variations in the rhymes in the *asmāṭ* (e.g. AABB, ABAB etc), this pattern occurs in over 37% of the poems in the ‘*Uddat al-ḡalīs*’, a huge proportion for any one type.

*kamā lahu banānu \*\* mina l-ġayti akram*  
*in 'abasa z-zamānu \*\* yawman wa-taġahham*

*talqāhu yatabassam \*\* ka-nawri l-basātīn \*\* af'āluhu kawākib \*\* li-d-dunyā*  
*wa-li-d-dīn*

*taraġġa 'a l-ḥabību \*\* 'an raddi s-salāmi*  
*wa-fī l-ḥašā lahību \*\* min farṭi l-ġarāmi*  
*ḥattā šadā l-ka'ību \*\* šadwa l-mustahāmi*

*taḥṭur wa-lis tusallim \*\* ka-'annaka ma'mūn \*\* murawwi 'al-katā'ib \*\**  
*Yahyā bnu Dī n-Nūn*

There is universal agreement that the final *simṭ/qufl* of the *muwaššah*, the *ḥarġa*, is used to end the poem with a special twist. However, any such twists are not structural: metre and rhyme do not change. The only structural feature of the *ḥarġa* is that it is the final piece of the *muwaššah*. It is of course the case that in many poems the poet works out what his *ḥarġa* is going to be and then goes on to compose the rest of the *muwaššah*. That is not the point. By the time one reads (or, better still, hears) a *ḥarġa*, one knows the content of at least fifteen *aġṣān* and at least four or five *asmāṭ* (*qufls*). One will know from those *asmāṭ* the pattern of the metre and of the rhymes, and the final *aġṣān* might give some indication of what the content might be.

It borders on the perverse in those circumstances for modern western scholars to use the *ḥarġa* as a way into looking at the preceding part of the poem – for the audience it is the end, the way out.

Let us look at two extremes. The first is an exercise in brevity by Ibn Zuhr that has fortunately survived in a minor source. Even so there are twenty lines before one gets to the *ḥarġa*. Moreover, the fourth stanza has all the appearance of being a final stanza, whose *simṭ* is the subject of a well-known story.<sup>163</sup>

*hāti bnata l-'inabi \*\* wa-šrabi*

*yā šāḥib-ī mā taqūl*  
*mā 'un wa-zillun zaṭīl*  
*wa-qahwatu salsabīl*

*zafirta bi-t-ṭarabi \*\* fa-ṭrabi*

*zami 'tu wayḥ-ī wa-mā*  
*kuntu aḥāfu z-zamā*  
*mā duqtu<sup>164</sup> mā 'al-lamā*

<sup>163</sup> The text was first published by 'Inānī 1982:55–56.

<sup>164</sup> The ms. has *dāqa*, but this cannot be right.

*wa-qahwata š-šanabi \*\* mašrab-i*

*zabyun hađīmu l-wiṣāh  
yur 'ā bi-mawlā l-milāh  
ađalla usda l-kifāh*

*fī mawđi 'i l- 'ağabi \*\* fa- 'ğabi*

*yā zā 'ir-ī fī l-manām  
bi-ħaqqi badri t-tamām  
balliğhu 'annī s-salām*

*wa-fādi-hi bi-ab-ī \*\* tumma bī*

*wa-salhu an yuṣhibā  
taḥiyyatan li-ṣ-ṣabā  
wa-ğanni-hi in abā*

*rudd is-salām yā ṣabī \*\* bi-n-nabī*

In contrast, poem 138 in the *'Uddat al-ğalīs* (by 'Ubāda) has five enormous stanzas, and in the *Dār aṭ-ṭirāz* [15] recension it has six:

*kam fī qudūdi l-bān \*\* tahta l-limam \*\* min aqmuri \*\* 'awāṭi  
đī anmulin wa-banān \*\* miṭli l- 'anam \*\* lam tanbari \*\* li-l- 'āṭi*

*hunna z-zibā 'u š-šumūs \*\* qanīshunna đ-đaygamu  
mā in lahā min kunūs \*\* illā l-qulūbu l-huyyamu  
al-qurbu minhā 'urūs \*\* wa-l-bu 'du 'anhā ma 'tamu  
tilka š-šifāhu l-lu 'ūs \*\* yuṣfā bi-hinna l-muğramu  
lahā liḥāzun nu 'ūs \*\* tarnū bihā fa-tuṣqimu*

*bi-a 'yuni l-ğizlān \*\* wa-tabtasim \*\* 'an ġawhari \*\* asmāṭ  
qađā lahā l-ğayrān \*\* an tuktatam \*\* fī muđmari \*\* anyāṭ*

*ahwā rašan sāhirā \*\* huwa l-hawā mā aqtala-h  
qađ masaḥat ṭā 'irā \*\* alḥāzuhu qalb-ī walah  
fa-lam yazal ṣābirā \*\* qalb-ī 'alā mā 'allala-h  
lammā ġadā qādirā \*\* ađhā qalīla l-ma 'dalah  
yā zālīman ġā 'irā \*\* qatalta man lā đanba lah*

*saṭawta bi-l-haymān \*\* zulman wa-lam \*\* tastabşiri \*\* yā sāṭi  
ħaf saṭwata r-raḥmān \*\* idā ħakam \*\* bayna l-bari \*\* wa-l-ħāṭi*

*yā wayḥa man šuwwiqā \*\* ilā ḥabībin qađ salā  
qađā bi-an yuğriqā \*\* fī d-dam 'i man qađ anḥalā  
zulman wa-an yaḥfiqā \*\* minhu l-fu 'ādu l-mubtalā  
ka 'anna-mā 'allaqā \*\* minhu 'alā tilka ṭ-ṭulā*

*fa-qāla mustanfiqā \*\* man dā llaḍī ahdā ilā*  
*fu 'ād-iya l-ḥafiqān \*\* fa-qāla qum \*\* fa-l-tanzuri \*\* fī š-šāḥī*  
*ilā bunūdi š-šawān \*\* 'ādūka tam \*\* istahbiri \*\* aqrāt-i*  
*a-mā tarāhā muṭūl \*\* 'alā qināhā ḥāfiqa*  
*ka-l-ḡālibāti taḡūl \*\* ḥawla l-ḡiyādi s-sābiqa*  
*anša 'ahunna n-nuḥūl \*\* miṭla s-saḥābi l-wādiqa*  
*lahā 'alā n-naḡmi ṭūl \*\* minhā furū 'un bāsiqa*  
*inna t-turayyā taqūl \*\* wa-innahā la-ṣādiqa*  
*mā ba 'da hāḍā makān \*\* min al-himam \*\* minhu turī \*\* manāṭī*  
*bāna lahā kaywān \*\* minhu l-qidam \*\* wa-l-muštārī \*\* muwāṭī*  
*aflāku mulkin tunīr \*\* sa 'ādatan li-l-muslimīn*  
*tasrī d-duḡā wa-tasīr \*\* bi-l-faṭḥi wa-n-naṣri l-mubīn*  
*yasū 'u ba 'da n-naḍīr \*\* minhā ṣabāḥu l-munḍarīn*  
*tuḥdā bi-madḥi l-amīr \*\* ilā bilādi l-mušrikīn*  
*annā nahā fa-taṭīr \*\* bi-miṭli ašfāri l-ḡufūn*  
*wa-mabsimu l-ḥirṣān \*\* qad intazam \*\* ka-ašturi \*\* al-amšāṭī*  
*wa-l-baḥru ka-l-burkān \*\* qad iḍṭaram \*\* bi-mus 'ari \*\* l-anfāṭī<sup>165</sup>*  
*wa-mihraḡānin lahu \*\* yawmun anīqun manẓaru-h*  
*baḥrun ḥakā ramlahu \*\* min kulli ḡibin 'anbaru-h*  
*wa-š-šāṭi qad ḥallahu \*\* Muḥammadun wa-'askaru-h*  
*wa-rākibun raḥlahu \*\* rakbun ḥakathu ḍummaru-h*  
*fa-qāla 'abdun lahu \*\* mustaḥsinan mā yubširu-h*  
*yā ḥabbaḡā l-mihraḡān \*\* ramlun yanam \*\* ka-l-'anbar \*\* li-l-wāṭī*  
*wa-l-fulku ka-l-'iqbān \*\* wa-l-Mu'taṣam \*\* bi-l-'askari \*\* fī š-šāṭī*

One can suggest that this poem, clearly composed to celebrate the festival mentioned in the *ḥarḡa*, is one in which the poet composed his *ḥarḡa* first. But surely the patron and the circumstances of the festival, together with the conventions and themes of the genre and the poet's own inspiration, drive the first forty-two lines of the poem. The *ḥarḡa*'s role is none of these; rather, it provides a twist and an anchor to round the poem off.<sup>166</sup> Yet the central fact is that either thirty-five or forty-two meaty lines, according to the recension, have occupied the hearer's/reader's attention before the

<sup>165</sup> Extra stanza, found only in the *Dār aṭ-ṭirāz*.

<sup>166</sup> The sharp-eyed will have noticed that four of the poems that I chose to illustrate structural points have a proper name in the *ḥarḡa*. This is a relatively common feature. Of the 350 *ḥarḡas* in the *'Uddat al-ḡalīs* there are fifty-four poems with a *ḥarḡa* including the name of at least one person (and occasionally more) and another twelve containing a placename.

*ḥarġa* is reached. It is absurd that most western scholars think that they can get all that they need from the *ḥarġa* or, if they read that much, the final stanza of such an imposing poem. The *aġsān* of the final stanza contain several vignettes that are cleverly reprised in the *ḥarġa*; but the requirement for the *waššāḥ* was to compose a poem of at least five stanzas, and the earlier ones cover a range of themes with some virtuosity. It is only by studying whole poems that we can get an idea of what he used to entertain the audience.

### 5b Rhyme

Ideally Arabic metre and rhyme should be dealt with together, but each has its own innumerable intricacies that tend to swamp the salient points. My aim here is to deal with the changes that were brought about in their relative balance.

The splitting of hemistichs or lines into rhyming sections,<sup>167</sup> *tasmīṭ*, offered poets a range of opportunities to develop the rhyme patterns in their *muwaššahāt*. In other respects, *tasmīṭ* is disruptive of both meaning and metre.

This shows up clearly when the *aġsān* of a poem have a number of short sections. A good example occurs in a famous and much lauded (*aqra*) poem by ‘Ubāda al-Qazzāz, which is found in three major sources.<sup>168</sup> The *aġsān* are the first quotation to be given by Ibn Ḥaldūn.<sup>169</sup> They come from the third stanza [in the version included in ‘*Uddat al-ġalīs*]:

*badru tam \*\* šamsu duḥā \*\* ġuṣnu naqā \*\* miskū šam  
mā atam \*\* mā awḍaḥā \*\* mā awraqā \*\* mā anam  
lā ġaram \*\* man lamaḥā \*\* qad ‘ašiqā \*\* qad ḥurim*

The basic rhyming pattern for the *aġsān* is QRST QRST QRST, but in this stanza the first and fourth sections have the same rhyme QRSQ QRSQ QRSQ.

The verses have also been examined with insight and learning by Jareer Abu-Haidar, whose comments merit close attention.<sup>170</sup> He translates the *aġsān* as follows:

A full moon	a forenoon sun	a branch on a sand dune	musk for smelling
How full!	how clear!	how leafy!	how fragrant!
Certainly	whoever has had a glance	has fallen in love	has been deprived.

<sup>167</sup> Sections that do not rhyme are very rare (Ibn Bišrī, ‘*Uddat al-ġalīs* 276); and those that allow change of rhyme within one set of *aġsān* are almost as uncommon (Ibn Bišrī, ‘*Uddat al-ġalīs* 246 and 247 which share the same pattern, metre and *ḥarġa*).

<sup>168</sup> Ibn Bišrī, ‘*Uddat al-ġalīs* [23] (‘Ubāda); *Ġayš at-tawšīḥ* 1:3 (Ibn Baqī); *Dār at-ṭirāz* 18.

<sup>169</sup> Rosenthal’s translation, III, 441:

Full moon – late morning sun – bough on a sand hill – sweet smelling musk:

How perfect – how resplendent – how exuberant – how fragrant!

No doubt – he who sees her – falls in love with her – has lost out.

<sup>170</sup> Abu-Haidar 2001:127ff.

The difficulties of making such short *ağşān* (Q [three syllables]; R [four syllables]; S [four syllables]; T (here Q<sub>2</sub>) [three syllables]) cohere are all too obvious; in addition, the poet has linked 1Q with 2Q; 1R with 2R; 1S with 2S; and 1T (Q<sub>2</sub>) with 2T (Q<sub>2</sub>). It is interesting that the *asmāṭ* have a less complicated rhyme pattern, with the last two sections of the *ağşān* fused to give a seven-syllable section [ABC ABC]. The *ḥarġa* runs:

*al-ġamāl \*\* waqfun ‘alā \*\* zabyi Banī Tābiti*  
*lā zawāl \*\* fī l-ḥubbi lā \*\* ‘an ‘ahdi-hi t-tābiti*

Beauty \*\* has been bestowed on \*\* the fawn of the Banū Tābit  
 There is no end \*\* in love, no, \*\* through his firm covenant.

Clearly ‘Ubāda’s focus is on the Banū Tābit, but the rhymes dominate. In another poem, ‘*Uddat al-ġalīs* 214, beginning *mā ḥālu man lahu nafasun ḥāfīt*, the sections are longer and the rhyme scheme of the *asmāṭ* is the simpler ABCB. The *ḥarġa* runs:

*in zurta fī Ṭabīra Banī Tābit \*\* fa-qrahumu s-salām*  
*wa-qul lahum ‘Ubāda llaḏī tadru \*\* bāqī ‘alā d-ḏimām*

If you visit the Banū Tābit in Ṭabīra \*\* convey to them my greetings,  
 and say to them, “‘Ubāda whom you know \*\* remains loyal.”

Here, with only four sections in total, the flow is smoother, and there is more focus on the proper names, including, very unusually, that of the poet himself.

*man ḥāl \*\* fī-mā qāl \*\* fa-lā muḥāl \*\* wa-lā ntiqāl \*\* wa-bī maṭāl*  
*mawlā l-mawāl \*\* ‘uḏran aḥāl \*\* ‘alā ttiṣāl \*\* awġāl \*\* bi-awġāl*

*‘uḏḏāl \*\* yā ‘uḏḏāl \*\* qultum muḥāl \*\* lumtum ḏalāl \*\* lastu bi-sāl*  
*‘an ḏā l-ġazāl \*\* man ṣā’a qāl \*\* fa-l-bāl \*\* ḏū balbāl*

*šawqun bi-qalb-ī ‘āt \*\* fa-nawmu ġafn-ī ḥatāt \*\* fa-l-ġiyāt \*\* min maṭāt \*\**  
*ḥarrun naḏḏāt*

*fī muḡatin atlāt \*\* ka-ḏ-ḏayġami d-dilhāt \*\* lā ktirāt \*\* li-ntitāt \*\* ḥāḏī l-*  
*aḥḏāt*

A few poems are found with up to ten sections in the *asmāṭ*.<sup>171</sup>

<sup>171</sup> [The text of this chapter breaks off here.]

*5c Metre*

All known composers of *muwaššahāt*, whether illiterate like Ibn Ġāḥ,<sup>172</sup> proletarian like al-Ġazzār,<sup>173</sup> or from a ruling family like al-Mu‘tamid,<sup>174</sup> also composed *ši‘r* (classical Arabic poetry). Moreover, roughly 98% of the *muwaššahs* themselves use the language of *ši‘r*. Thus, it is reasonable to expect that the metres they use will be close to those of *ši‘r*. The metres of *ši‘r* first came into existence in pre-Islamic times, when up to a dozen metres came into general use, though some of them remained rare. Indications of experimentation with new metres are quite rare before 700 AD. The first person to schematize this prosody was al-Ḥalīl b. Aḥmad (d. 791). The aim of al-Ḥalīl was to describe the metrical system, but as with so much of his work, his findings became normative for later writers on the subject and for the poets themselves. The first summary of his work to survive was by none other than Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih (see above) in his magnum opus *al-‘Iqd al-farīd*.<sup>175</sup>

However, just as the breaking up of hemistichs has allowed the additional formats to be added to the bases of *ši‘r*, so too the metres show additions to and variations from the *‘arūḍ*, the system used for classifying Arabic metres. This was not an Andalusian innovation. Such changes are referred to succinctly in the brief quotation from the Valencian Ibn Sa‘d al-Ḥayr found in the *Tawšī‘ at-tawšīḥ* of aṣ-Ṣafadī.<sup>176</sup> He is clearly sympathetic to the *waššāḥs*, drawing a parallel between the metrical experiments of Miḥyār ad-Daylamī and al-Ḥarīrī and those of the people of al-Andalus with the *muwaššah*. Ibn Bassām, though disdainful and hostile to the genre, confirms this *‘arūḍ* background, as does the enthusiastic but sometimes baffled Ibn Sanā’ al-Mulk.<sup>177</sup>

This is still the approach of most modern Arab scholars.<sup>178</sup> It was also the way that western scholars scanned the rather small collection of *muwaššahāt* available until the late 1940s. For Stern there was no question of the metres not having an Arabic basis. In six pages<sup>179</sup> he gives a brief analysis of three classes of poem: (a) forms identical with one of the classical metres; (b) those where a hemistich of a classical metre is broken up by internal rhymes; and (c) classical metres with modifications. This simple division, which is used by Ibn Sanā’ al-Mulk (though

<sup>172</sup> [Ibn Ġāḥ was a poet who lived in the Ṭā’ifa period in the court of al-Mu‘tamid (r. 1042–1069), a member of the ‘Abbādid dynasty of Seville, see e.g. al-Maqqarī, *Nafh at-ṭīb* IV, 243–244.]

<sup>173</sup> [A poet of the Ṭā’ifa period, see above.]

<sup>174</sup> [Ruler of Seville in the Ṭā’ifa period, see above.]

<sup>175</sup> Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih, *Iqd*, chapter *Fī a‘arīd aš-ši‘r wa-‘ilal al-qawāfi* [V, 424 ff.].

<sup>176</sup> aṣ-Ṣafadī, *Tawšī‘* 20–21. [See 1.3 above.]

<sup>177</sup> See, for example, his comments on pp. 35–36 of the *Dār at-tirāz*.

<sup>178</sup> See, for example the work of Ġāzī and ‘Inānī.

<sup>179</sup> Printed in Stern 1974:27–32.

without much rigour) is still useful, but it uses the low-level classifications of Arabic metre that do not address some of the more complex points that inevitably surface with the *muwaššahāt*. Apart from one or two printing errors, it contains nothing that might mislead us, and it has the great merit of looking at the initial lines of the poem concerned.

This form of analysis posits that Arabic metre is entirely quantitative. However, there is more to it than that. At the centre of the original explanation of the 'arūḍ system put forward by al-Ḥalīl<sup>180</sup> is the fact that the feet comprising the constituent parts of a hemistich all contain an unchangeable nucleus (Arabic *watid* plural *awtād*), and that there are two basic nuclei: the *watid maǧmū'* (˘ –) [iamb in western terms] and the much less common *watid mafrūq* (– ˘) [trochee]. These nuclei provide a metre with its particular rhythm (and with it some stress)<sup>181</sup> and cannot be changed. Other syllables in a metre can be either long or short or modified by use of resolution (– becoming ˘ ˘); or they may be dropped (e.g. ˘ – ≠ becoming ˘ –). Some of the variations remain constant throughout the poem; others change from line to line.

Poems that are anisosyllabic, with hemistichs varying in the number of syllables they contain, are common, as is usually the case in languages with a syllabic metrical system.<sup>182</sup> Resolution features in two prominent metres (*kāmil* and *wāfir*). Thus, the *Muʿallaqa* of Labīd,<sup>183</sup> composed in the *kāmil* metre, has in its eighty-nine lines one line containing twenty-five syllables, seven containing twenty-six, twenty-seven lines containing twenty-seven, thirty-three containing twenty-eight, eighteen containing twenty-nine and three containing the maximum of thirty. An even earlier example of variation is a sixth-century CE lament by Ğanūb, a woman of the Huḍayl tribe. The poem is in the *mutaqārib* metre, in which the twelfth (final) syllable can be kept or dropped at will. Her poem of twenty-five lines has twelve first hemistichs that have twelve syllables whilst the other thirteen have eleven syllables; all the second hemistichs have twelve syllables.<sup>184</sup> This is a fairly common feature that is normally a matter of only minor interest to Arabic literary scholars.

When the poems containing 'Romance *ḥarǧas*' returned to the light of day, the first western scholar to work on them was García Gómez [1905–1995], who had

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<sup>180</sup> It should be remembered that a couple of centuries separate al-Ḥalīl's work from the earliest surviving poetry, and that his norms do not cover some very well known pre-Islamic poems.

<sup>181</sup> The Arab grammarians and philologists do not discuss stress as a phenomenon, but remarks about the rhythm of some Qur'ānic texts would appear to indicate that some stress was involved. More to the point, some stress is discernible when one listens to a recitation.

<sup>182</sup> See, for example, Greek or Latin verse.

<sup>183</sup> [For the poem, with translation and commentary, see Jones 1996:164–202].

<sup>184</sup> For the poem, with translation and commentary, see my *Early Arabic Poetry* I. [1992]: 37–50. The second hemistichs all have twelve syllables. Lines 22–24 provide a fortuitous forerunner to the *musammaʿ*.

been a student of [Julián] Ribera [1858–1934]. He lost little time in suggesting a Romance basis for the metres of the *muwaššah* (and for the *ḥarġa*, as we shall see later). One of García Gómez’s key points, that a stress-syllabic system can be perceived in the *muwaššahāt*, is not implausible, but his suggestion that this was a Romance system is much more difficult; and his suggestion that the system was isosyllabic is an egregious error that flies in the face of the evidence. García Gómez’s solution to this problem was silently to rewrite the offending material, cutting a syllable here and adding one there, as his theories required.

### 5d Themes

[This section is missing.]

### 5e Ḥarġa

One possible factor in the development of the *ḥarġa* is the likely wish of the *waššāḥs* to signal the end of a poem with a twist or punchline. Endings of this kind are to be found from the time of ‘Umar ibn Abī Rabī‘a (c. 644–711), the originator of Arabic amatory poetry. Two pieces from his *Dīwān* show the sort of endings he could produce. They are not direct forerunners of the *muwaššah*, but the work of popular and famous eastern poets was always influential in al-Andalus.

The first is the final line of an eleven-line piece:

*taqūlu id ayqanat anni mufāriqihā \*\* yā layta-nī mittu qabla l-yawmi yā ‘Umaru*<sup>185</sup>

She said when she was sure that I was leaving her \*\*

‘Would that I had died before to-day, O ‘Umar!’

The second consists of the final two lines of a six-line piece:

*wa-laqaḍ qultu yawma Makkata lammā \*\* arsalat taqra ’u s-salāma ‘alay-nā  
ni ‘amu llāhi bi-r-rasūli llaḍī ursila wa-l-mursili r-risālata ‘aynā*<sup>186</sup>

I said on the day we spent at Mecca, when she sent someone (f.) to greet me,  
‘God has blessed the Messenger who was sent and who conveys the message as  
an overseer’.

Moving forward to Abū Nuwās (c. 762–814), who has already been mentioned in connection with the *musammaʿ*, the penchant is much stronger. In an article<sup>187</sup> I wrote thirty years ago I gathered together thirty-six pieces from his drinking songs

<sup>185</sup> ‘Umar ibn Abī Rabī‘a, *Dīwān* 142, no. 135.

<sup>186</sup> ‘Umar ibn Abī Rabī‘a, *Dīwān* 394, no. 424.

<sup>187</sup> Jones 1991.

(*ḥamriyyāt*) that could be looked on as precursors of the *ḥarġas*. In these pieces Abū Nuwās shows a liking for quotations from famous poets. A good example is a piece that ends by quoting the first hemistich of the famous *Waddi* ‘*Hurayra* by al-A ‘šā.<sup>188</sup>

The final two lines run:

*akrim bi-him wa-bi-naġmin min muġanniyatin \*\* fa-fī l-ġinā’i bi-naġmin  
yuḍrabu l-maṭalu  
hayfā’u tusmi ‘u-nā wa-l-ūdu yuṭribu-nā \*\* Waddi ‘ Hurayrata inna r-rakba  
murtaḥilu<sup>189</sup>*

How noble they are, how excellent a melody from a songstress  
In singing with melody words of wisdom are propounded.  
A slender girl who can make us hear, with the lute thrilling us,  
‘Say farewell to Hurayra – the caravan is on its way.’

Other famous poets quoted by Abū Nuwās include al-Ḥuṭay’a, Nuṣayb, and Baššār, the latter two of whom he mentions by name, but the person he quotes most is himself. Thus, we have a *ḥamriyya* that ends by quoting one of his most famous poems:

*mā zāla tāġiruhā yasqī wa-ašrabuhā \*\* wa-‘inda-nā kā ‘ibun bayḏā’u ḥasnā’u  
kam qad taġannat wa-lā lawmun yulimmu-nā \*\* da ‘ ‘anka lawm-ī fa-inna l-  
lawma iġrā’u<sup>190</sup>*

The wine-seller kept on plying me and I kept on drinking,  
And we had with us a fine, busty girl;  
How often she sang, and no blame attached to us,  
‘Don’t blame me, for censure only spurs me on!’

There is a third example that ought to be mentioned, which, with hindsight, has special interest. Here Abū Nuwās gives us a punchline that is of Persian origin, and not from Arabic at all:

*fa-btasamat tumma arsalat maṭalan \*\* ya ‘rifuhu l- ‘uġmu laysa bi-l-kadabi  
lā tu ‘tiyanna ṣ-ṣabiyya wāḥidatan \*\* yaṭlubu uḥrā bi-a ‘nafi ṭ-ṭalabi<sup>191</sup>*

She smiled and uttered a well-known saying  
which the Persians know to be no lie:  
‘Don’t give the young man one [kiss];  
[if you do] he will press you very hard for another’.

<sup>188</sup> al-A ‘šā, *Dīwān* 55, no. 6.

<sup>189</sup> Abū Nuwās, *Dīwān* 84.

<sup>190</sup> Abū Nuwās, *Dīwān* 700.

<sup>191</sup> Abū Nuwās, *Dīwān* 274.

Though we cannot say what the influence of such examples was, they were clearly part of the *waššāhs*' literary heritage;<sup>192</sup> but once again the loss of datable early material precludes further conclusions, though the corpus itself shows that verbs of transition were a well-recognised and dominant feature. Indeed, by the time Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk wrote the *Dār at-tirāz*, the presence of a transitional verb in the final stanza was for him a *sine qua non*: "The *ağsān* immediately preceding the *ḥarġa* must contain an expression like 'he said' or 'I said' or 'she said' or 'he sang' or 'I sang' or 'she sang'."<sup>193</sup> This turns out to be incorrect, as he would have discovered if he had looked more carefully at the small corpus of Andalusian *muwaššahāt* that feature in the *Dār at-tirāz*. No less than four of his thirty-four poems have no verb of transition: 7, 25, 32, 33.

They are, in fact, the tip of the iceberg. The corpus reveals that there are almost a hundred poems, covering all periods, that lack a verb of transition. In all there are slightly more poems without verbs of transition than there are poems without a *maṭla'*.

He further tells us that "if it employs the classical form of the language, in the same way as the rest of the stanzas and *qufls* that precede it, the *muwaššah* is not a *muwaššah* any more in the true sense of the word"<sup>194</sup>

Clearly, he was not acquainted with 'Uddat al-ġalīs poem 283, which was quoted at the end of section 2.3. This deceptively simple poem eschews both a verb of transition and a distinctive *ḥarġa*, with the final *simṭ* containing no non-classical material.

The claim that the *ḥarġa* is the base of a *muwaššah* is a generalisation not always substantiated by the corpus.<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Both 'Umar Ibn Abī Rabī'a and Abū Nuwās make it to the Indices to Ibn Bassām's *Daḥīra*, to go no further.

<sup>193</sup> Stern 1974:33, [Arabic text 159; Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk, *Dār at-tirāz*, 31.]

<sup>194</sup> Stern 1974:33, [Arabic text 158; Ibn Sanā' al-Mulk, *Dār at-tirāz*, 30–31.]

<sup>195</sup> [The text breaks off here. Since the remaining materials consist only of sporadic and unfinished files, no attempt has been made to reconstruct the continuation.]

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