REFERENCES TO ANIMALS IN THE DĪWĀN OF AL-HANSĀ' 

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In the Dīwān of al-Hansā' (ca. 575 A.D.-?), we find 57 elegies, the verses of which, taken together, come to a grand total of 627 lines\(^1\). Approximately 18 percent of these, or 109 verse lines, contain the names of 20 animal species, or various adjectives describing them; in addition to a number of lines of particular relevance which are concerned with the characterization and depicting of some animals' qualities and habits, out of which there are no less than 13 that make mention of more than one species each.

The purpose of the present paper is to present and analyse all the sentences containing references to animals that occur in the collected oeuvre of al-Hansā', and offer a translation of each, replete with brief notes that may serve to facilitate a better knowledge of either the word itself or the animal it signifies. Longish explanations I have consciously striven to avoid for obvious space limits, yet some important information on etiological and etymological aspects of the sentences might not infrequently be conveyed sufficiently clearly by the translation itself.

Animal species occurring only once or, at any rate, very rarely, in the dīwān are singled out first:

1. 228.49.10\(^4\) "The leopard (as-sabantsa) marched forth for a fierce battle, aided by two kinds of weapon – teeth and claws." Commentators are unanimous in that the word means 'leopard', although some insist it actually signifies a feature ascribed to the panther: 'brave of heart'. (b65, d44, eAtwī 1944:104). The poetess characterises her brother Ṣahr as a leopard, when he is leaving to meet a ferocious fighter, that is death, who, quite like the leopard itself, is armed with teeth and claws. Death, therefore, is also likened to a wild animal in the metaphor, which makes the line even more picturesque.

2. 245.53.4 "And when the white-complexioned [damsels] walk together like [white] water-fowl (hanat al-mā') in the turbid, shallow water." The aesthetic beauty of the six-line poem is enhanced by the continuous presence of the concept of whiteness as an undercurrent; thus, this line compares the fair-complexioned women to water-fowl (a) (presumably white too), while two lines further her

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\(^1\) Throughout my study, I have relied on the edition of Fāyiz Muḥammad that follows the version of Abū l-ʿAbbās Taʿlab, since this appeared to be the most complete of all the editions available to me. Hereunder, I shall refer to it as (a). Given the considerable divergences among the various editions, I have found it imperative to keep comparing all the data with those offered by the rest of the published versions. These will be marked here as (b-f). For details, cf. the References. For a general survey of the poetry of al-Hansā's, cf. the short article of Fariq (1957) or the elaborate essay of Rhodokanakis (1904).

\(^2\) The order is as follows: page number, verse number, line number.
brother is said to have dealt to the enemy a blow so heavy that even the white fruit of the *ruʿ* tree is unable to alleviate the damage.

(3) 140.27.8 “[And you]... you left there a long night and a camping-place, where the wolves (*awāṣil*) were howling to each other on the roadside.” This word is an adjectival form referring to their ‘trotting, ambling, or running’ (a), though some say it is the plural of ‘wolf’ (c165) or ‘female wolf’ (b124), or else it is a term for ‘trembling’ applicable only to wolves.

(4) 109.16.2 “On such camels [is he travelling], which are like the serpents of al-Abā‘ (hāyyāt), [and when he returns] their humps get fatter but ticks (*gīrdān*) do not settle on them.” His camels were so very lean, as a result of heavy marching and fighting, as to resemble serpents, for they, even if having swollen sometimes, are quick to become as thin again as an arrow. It is said that ticks settle on camels when the latter grow thin. According to another tentative, ticks are to be found exclusively in filthy places (a).

(5) 59.7.4 “I swear by God, I shall not forget the son of ‘Amr, the son of goodness, as long as the pigeon coos, or there is a frog (*sulqām*) to be found in the sea.” The meaning of the word remains a matter for speculation. It is likely to mean ‘male frog’ (a, d97), yet whenever used together with the noun ‘sea’ in the construct state, it will come to mean ‘the life, or bulk thereof’ (a). Its multiple meanings also include ‘darkness’, ‘duck’, as well as ‘wave of the sea’. The interpretation may be somewhat modified by the substitution of the word al-ʿamār, ‘copious waters’ (b128, c169) for ‘sea’ in some versions. The gist of the sentence, at any rate, is the notion of ‘never’.

(6) 114.17.8 “[Sahr, when mounted] on any female animal with a mute voice, is as though he and his camel-saddle had been [placed] on a wild she-ass (*umm tawlah*).” She likens Sahr’s camel – or, more appropriately, its carriage and/or energy – to that of a female wild ass, which, as expressed in the next line, roams the sparsely desert, ‘singing’ in a resonant voice, as though sounding a multi-holed wooden flute (a).

(7) 129.24.4 “The father of orphans, who grow up with him in opulence, like small chickens (*firāḥ*) on a grazing grassland.” Comprehending this sentence will pose no trouble.

(8) 34.4.10 “What a multitude of riders who came jostling as mountain goats (*wusūl*) do, and you massacred their prominent heroes with your sword.” The difficulty of this sentence lies to a great extent in interpreting the verb takaddasu, which has a pronouncedly varied meaning, including, e.g., ‘to be pressed together’, ‘to go hurriedly’, ‘the gait of a mounted battalion in iron armour’, ‘to jump’, ‘a group of riders and their combined force’, ‘to go in a single throng’ (a), or, elsewhere, ‘(horses) pressing together’, ‘to make haste while walking’, ‘to go with difficulty on account of the movements of shoulders or chests’, ‘to move one’s sides while walking’, ‘the horse’s pacing to war’, ‘an unhurried pace’, ‘the advance of mountain goats’, ‘to run wild’ (d93), and, finally, ‘the walk of horses when they appear to carry a burden’ (f237). This very verb occurs in another passage too

3 A tree common in the Hijāz, whose white, soft and pulpy fruit used to be utilized to dry up the bleeding by crushing it over the wound (a246).
REFERENCES TO ANIMALS IN THE DĪWĀN OF AL-ḤANSA’

(157.32.8), where it is explained as follows (a): ‘to go to war neither too fast nor too slowly; used primarily in reference to war’, ‘a mounted battalion and their concerted jump resembling that of a flock of mountain goats’. The first hemistich of the line corresponds to a verse of al-Muhallabī, to which the following explanation is proposed: the movements made by the two shoulders and two sides of the horse while walking, which are similar to those made by the mountain goats; and this is a sign of the horse’s leisurely pace in entering the war (Ibn Qutayba, Ma‘ānī 40).

97.4.32 “Which [i.e., a sharp sword,] will cut the summit of Mount Yadbul off, from which its mountain goats (aswāl) will not leave.” That is to say, the peak of Mount Yadbul is so high as to make the habitat of those goats all but inaccessible. The two sentences display two different plural forms, and that within one single verse too.

(10) 184.38.7 “And wail for your brother, on whose death the cavalry split up into bands like sandgrouses (qatā) do, and who was generous and magnanimous, slaughtering fat she-camels [for his guests].” (11) 75.10.3 “And wail for your brother of the cavalry groups, [so numerous] as sandgrouses (qatā), which have [forever] lost, with the death of Shāh[r], [the usual] gifts and booty.” In both verse lines, riders are likened to birds, on account of their dispersal and numbers, respectively.

(12) 43.4.24 “How many wailing women you have driven to crying, who [wail and gesticulate] like young wild cows (ırah), [their voices being like that of] cows (iın) looking at their calves [to summon them].” The singular of the word ırah is ırh, and it means ‘wild cows’ (b123, d95), or ‘wild cow calves’ (a, c163). The noun iın signifies either ‘cows’ (a, Ibn Qutayba, Ma‘ānī 696), or ‘having wide/black eyes’, the singular being ıyan. The interpretation of this line is that cows, when catching sight of their calves, moo to them to call them to be suckled, and the voices of mourning women are compared to this sound (a, c163). According to other sources, however, women leave their dwellings as wild cows do their corral, enjoying the rainfall; or else the gathering of women is likened to cows coming together, and their subsequent stampede out to the rain (b123, d95).

(13) 128.23.11 “Like a camel-saddle when fastened to a tattooed beast which competes with a herd of wild cows (aswār) [in its speed of running].” The following lines(a) proceed to describe the behaviour of ‘a herd of cows’ (Arwī 1994:113, Ibn Qutayba, Ma‘ānī 709) or ‘a herd of oxen’, which has sought refuge under an arțā tree⁴, only to be disturbed by her brother’s camel and becoming agitated. The camel, feeling the approach of a hunter towards the herd, lost no time to flee, making the herd flee too, while some of its animals take to fighting the hunter’s dogs.

(14) 141.27.9 “And many a humiliated and plundered captive whom you have gathered like white antelopes (arām) of a sandy land, leaving them [in safety] among your people.” The collecting and freeing of captive women are compared to a hunter’s capture of white antelopes or gazelles (a, b125, c165, Ibn Qutayba, Ma‘ānī 696). There is a difference of opinion as to what is meant by the

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⁴ A mountain situated in the farthest reaches of the land of the B. Kilāb (a48).

⁵ Arțā, arțā’ (a) or artāt (b55, c77, ‘Arwī 1994:113); a tree the fruit of which resembles that of the jojoba.
possessor in the construct state, as it may be explained as either ‘sandy land’ (c165, f226) or ‘a place which is full of gazelles’ (b125).

(15) 82.11.3 “Then he raised his whip [to urge] a huge, short-haired horse, which is like a dust-coloured gazelle (ṣadd).” It may be a young ewe among the grey, dust-coloured he-goats, or a gazelle of middling stature (a), or else a he-goat of middling stature (b53, c74, d48, ‘Arwi 1994:110).

(16) 132.25.6 “With a precious, firm lance, sharp-pointed and straight as the wing of an eagle (nasw).”
(17) 132.25.8 “He was saved from the points of the lances by a lean horse, which is [as swift] as an eagle (ṣuqāb) setting out from its nest to take prey.” (18) 253.51.20 “[The horses], when driven to the well, swoop down [on the water], as does the eagle (ṣuqāb) of darkness.” In the first verse line the lance, sharp and straight as it is, is likened to an eagle’s wing; in the second, a lean horse’s light-footed rapidity is to a flying eagle’s body; in the third, the swift running of horses with their riders is to an eagle’s flight.

(19) “65.8.12 “Many a bloody battle that you stopped, [in which the riders] were like locusts (garād), and an army of men ran [to flee from] being taken captive.” The truly problematic point is not the word ‘locusts’ but the noun sawm, juxtaposed to it in the genitive structure, which may signify ‘as numerous as locusts’, ‘going like locusts’ (a), or ‘the herd is heading for the pasture’. This very noun occurs again in another passage too (sawm al-araḏili; 181.37.1), where it is rendered as ‘men walking’, or ‘those differing from him’ or ‘the rich’. In other dirāns (b51, c72, d48) this word is replaced by mitla, and the rest of the sentence is likewise heavily different.

(20) 68.8.13 “[You attacked] them in the morning with horses whose hoofs clattered on the earth, as though they had been [as quick as] locusts (garād) driven by the wind of Naḏġ towards the sea [of Iraq].” These locusts are moving along from the Tihama to Naḏġ, being driven as they are towards the sea of Iraq by the wind of Naḏġ, that is a southerly one (a). As can be seen here, the metaphor of locusts appears no less than twice within one poem, and in two consecutive lines too, probably in an effort on the poetess’ part to make palpable the multitude and rapidity of the horses spoken of.

(21) 164.33.19 “[Fighting], you hold up the hanging extremities of [your] loose, long armour, [mounted] on your thin [horse like a] locust (beyṣāna).” The phrase means ‘a horse that is as thin as a locust’, ‘a locust that his horse resembles in its thinness and quickness’; ‘a locust that has turned red from its original colour of blackish-yellow’, ‘a horse with a long body and scanty flesh’ (a), ‘locusts with multi-coloured stripe patterns on their wings’.

(22) 197.42.17 “With dishevelled hair and pale colour, they do not cease crying [even] if the barking dogs (nawābiḥ) have ceased [their concert] at night.” Some dirāns (b23, c34, d29) substitute the word nawā’ib for nawābiḥ, but that is also likely to refer to dogs (c43, e260).

(23) 18.1.2 “A disaster, when the dogs (ḥilāb) voices are made tremble by hunger, and the secrets of whisperers is made public.” The most enigmatic word in this line is yudāgi, which is interpreted
varied as 'tremble with hunger', 'hush someone', 'shout' (a, e4), although in some versions (b145, c191, d108) prefer the reading yasqā, which probably means 'be silent, listen'.

(24) 101.14.2 "When he is reprimanded for its wearing a leather horse-shoe, it starts trotting quickly, in the manner of dogs (kilāb), in the thorny bush, listening intently." Again, it is the verb that we must pay special attention to: tābqa. The troth of the horse is likened to that of dogs when the latter are running with a hopping gait. According to the commentaries, the precise meaning is 'when the horse keeps putting its hind feet in the footsteps of the front ones' (a, Ibn Qutayba, Maʾānī 46). (This word occurs again in 126.23.5).

The following species appear in more than one line in al-Hansâ’s oeuvre:

(25) 59.7.4 "I swear by God, I shall not forget the son of ‘Amr, the son of goodness, as long as the pigeon (hamāma) coos, or there is a frog in the sea." (26) 184.39.1 "I recalled ‘Amr when [hearing] a high-pitched pigeon (hamāma) sing and coo on a branch of the ‘um tree." The pigeon plays a prominent role in laments, for wherever it appears in a poem it will remind the poetess of her brother with its unceasing cooing, or it is evoked to make us understand that she will continue remembering and lamenting her beloved until it ceases singing, that is forever. An interesting element is the tree mentioned in the second line, the singular form of which is ‘uma.

(27) 235.50.1 "I wait for ‘Amr whenever I [hear] a grey ring dove (muṭāsrwaqa hamāma) shout away its anguish in the wadi." (28) 176.35.6 "I shall lament you as long as there is a ring dove (muṭāsrwaqa) to wait on a tree’s branch and there is a night-time traveller for me to travel with." (29) 168.34.9 "I shall lament you as long as there is a ring dove (muṭāsrwaqa) to wait and there are stars to illuminate the night for those travelling." (30) 202.43.2 "I am reminded of ‘Amr whenever a ringed [dove] (dāt atwāqā) coos with its high-pitched voice among the branches."

In all of these lines, we can observe virtually identical images of the dove. (31) 243.52.2 "And be like a turtle-dove (marqā) among the twigs of its bush, or a crying, cooing [creature] (huttāf) on the branches of the palms."

(32) 130.24.5 "A superb protector, whom you would imagine is a lion in Bīša (asd bi-Bīša) that is revealing its teeth." (33) 236.50.5 "He is one of the maned lions of Bīša (asd Bīša) which will protect its friends [and] relations, be they sedentary or Bedouin." Besides the camel and the horse, the lion is the third most important animal motif in this poetry. The location mentioned here is, according to the sources, a place famous for its predatory fauna (a, f208), or a territory of the Arabs infested with lions (b11), or a wadi in the Yemen, populated primarily by the Ḥaḍām and the Kaʿb tribes, which lots of lions roamed (a).
In yet another line, the poetess again refers to her brother as a lion from a Yemeni town (f208) or an Arab settlement (b17, c26): (34) 105.14.11 “And Saḥr was like a brave lion of Ṭabaša (ṣīd Tabāša) to the cavalry when they were returning and attacking.” In all the above three lines, her brother is visualized as a lion (ṣiṣaṣ) bravely protecting its habitat and family.

(35) 174.34.26 “With a great army on horses hopping in their bridles like lions (ṣiṣaṣ) appearing in a teeming crowd.” Which is to say the bravado of these riders makes them resemble ferocious lions.

(36) 130.24.6 “A lion (ṣiṣaṣ) of whom companions are wary, [being as he is] of a hard disposition, strong of claws and slender of hips.” There are a number of verses which do not simply describe him/them as a lion, merely mentioning some of the latter’s stereotyped inner attributes, but also give a description of the appearance of the animal, which is, naturally, suggestive of some inner qualities too. Here, the ṣiṣaṣ is characterized by one of its typical attributes (b11, c12, f227), ḏubārīm, which might be rendered as ‘of a hard disposition’, ‘with a broad neck and waist’ (a), ‘of a strong integrity’ (f227, Ṣatwī 1994:101). This word also occurs in the following lines, which are the poetess’ longest and most detailed, hence probably most beautiful, similes describing the lion.

(37) 188.40.9 “[And you are of such a] people to whose tent visitors are always coming, and who, when wronged, become like a lurking (ḥādir), severe-looking (mutabassil),” (38) 188.40.10 “Whose finger tips are broad, whose neck is broad (ṣābir) [of a hard disposition], and whose den in the bushes hides a lioness and cubs.” (39) 189.40.11 “A lion with broad jaws (ḥizabā’), a ferocious lion (rībā’), which one fears meeting, the eyes of which are wide open.” Ḥizabā’ means a stout and strong lion (a), while rībā’ does a brave (b108, Ṣatwī 1994:126) and strong (a, d84) one, of a proud gait (a). The first hemistich of this line also appears in a poem of al-Fararadaq (Ibn Qutayba, Maḥānī 252).

(40) 97.13.11 “And [at] a broad-jawed lion (rībā’), which, when running [to catch its prey], cannot be stopped.” Here, as in the previous line, the adjective preceding rībā’ is ‘broad-jawed’.

(41) 97.13.10 “And he is more demure than a shy virgin, while being braver than the father of lion cubs (ābi sībl, a male lion (hizabā’).” A prominent feature of the lion in similes is its having cubs and females around it, which is it is intent on protecting.

(42) 98.13.12 “And [he is] obeyed by the lions (ḥādirāt) of the bush [which will not leave their hiding-places for the fear that they feel] when they hear his roar in every dawn.” Vide supra; al-ḥādirāt means such lions as use small thickets as hiding-places and will not leave them (a, Ṣatwī 1994:101); that is lions hidden in their dens, looking surreptitiously at their surroundings.

The following three lines feature the bold and energetic ṭayy. (43) 182.37.4 “You are like a lion (ṭayy) protecting its den and cubs, of a solid heart when the spears tremble.” (44) 204.44.3 “Oh you brave man, you are braver than a maned lion (ṭayy) in its den protecting its cubs.” (45) 256.50.4 “[Ṣaḥr] is of a pliant nature, neither a weakling nor an ignoramus, but bold like the predatory lion (ṭayy) of the forest.”
There remain two verses, one of them containing an *isti'ara makaniyah,* the other describing a maned sort of animal, which is quite likely to be a reference to a lion. (46) 234.49.38 “With a thick [strong] arm, he is much feared for his unexpected [attacks], [and he resembles a lion by virtue of] having two weapons, teeth and claws.” (47) 171.34.15 “As though they, on the day of their turning against him to a man, had encountered [the living embodiment of] fury and force, [bursting forth from] a maned predator.”

The most important animal species to appear in poems are the two essential domestic animals of the Arabs, the horse and the camel. To comment on horses first. There is a fair selection of terms for them in modern standard Arabic; out of these, however, only *hayl* occurs in pre-Islamic poetry. On the other hand, it will not always signify ‘horse’, but often ‘rider(s),’ the exact meaning being determined only by the context, and even then left uncertain occasionally. Thus, in 157.32.9 *Sahr* shaves off the forelock of enemy riders after being victorious over them. In contrast, 234.49.37 describes *Sahr* as ‘shaver of forelocks,’ which probably refers to his shaving off the forelocks of looted horses, a customary thing in those days, although this is not an unequivocal point. All the following five lines mention *hayl;* and it is to be noted that this word is used by the poetess in speaking of horses in a general sense, as opposed to one particular horse, named for some important feature of it. Which, of course, does not imply that *hayl* could not be combined with adjectives.

(48) 242.51.16 “Oh you who catches sight of a rider among the cavalry (*hayl),* [his] long-tailed steed carrying him running.” Dāfiya means ‘long-tailed’ (a, b148, c195, d110). (49) 133.25.10 “And should we have been alert to Hālid’s doings, he should never more be able to lead a stud of horses/horsemen (*hayl).” (50) 101.14.1 “Oh my eyes, do wail over *Sahr,* pouring forth copious [tears, like] horses (*hayl*) when sweltering with the long forced march.” The meaning of the verb is ‘to grow weak and thin with a long foray’ (a, b16, c24, d25), ‘for one’s condition to worsen’ (a), ‘to tremble, wither’ (f236). (51) 67.8.13 “[You attacked] them in the morning with horses (*hayl*) whose hoofs cluttered on the earth, as though they had been [as quick as] locusts driven by the wind of Nağd towards the sea [of Iraq].” Vide *supra* (locusts). Horses that hit the ground hard and scatter pebbles with their hoofs when running (b52, ‘Aṭwā 1994:109). (52) 173.34.22 “No sleep until the horses (*hayl*) return with stern glances [because exhausted], casting away [the care of] fillies (mubrās) and foals (ambār).”

(53) 126.23.4 “And you made the people swallow him during the fight, then sent your foal (mubr) to the cavalry, and it duly went there.”

(54) 164.33.20 “You have been lost by [your horse] *Tālqa,* who gained some rest [after ever so many forays]; oh, if only their owner could see the group of horses (*hayl*) [now that they have put on weight and had a long rest].” *Tālqa* is the name of a horse of *Sahr*’s (a, al-Ǧundūšānī, Asmā 158). Another verse line also mentions the name of a horse, Ḥāsnā’, which probably belonged to *Sahr* (a); this, however, may well mean ‘a horse of noble breed’ (a). Al-‘Arabī does not mention this
latter name, but this matters relatively little as he likewise fails to mention aš-Šamā‘, the favourite horse of Mu‘āwiya. (55) 145.31.2 “Many a horse of noble pedigree (hasna‘), the eyebrows of which flashed out from under the locks [in running], [were owned] by the tribe.” “Of an evening, he fastened the saddle onto the horse’s back and made it run, [the horse] enjoying marching in a circle if mounted by him.” “Slicing the earth with its hoofs around him, thrusting itself [with vivacity] beyond the hillocks, [surveying the surroundings], lest he should fail to notice something.” “And he made [the horse] run in various manners, and it was not found lacking in any kind of run.” “After he had made it prance, the horse proceeded [to carry him running, as quick] as water [runs when] the owners of water-carrying camels empty the huge buckets.”

Sābih is a horse that is running with unstretched front legs as though swimming (a, b7, d19, ‘Atwī 1994:80), that is to say very swiftly (b7, c15/40, d19, f221, ‘Atwī 1994:80). This noun appears in as many as three lines: (56) 76.10.5 “It runs with [the rider, who urges it by kicking] its waist; a superb, brawny horse (sābih), when the night has put its garment of darkness on.” Here, the horse is further characterized as ‘enormous’ (c15), ‘strong’ (a, f243), ‘having a nice physique’ (b7). (57) 201.42.24 “The giver of camels of a noble breed and exceedingly swift horses (sawābih).” In this line, yet another interesting word, meaning ‘long, tall’ (a, ‘Atwī 1994:94), ‘having firm flesh’ (c32), is added to ‘running as though swimming’.

(58) 69.8.15 “How often you have treated the visitor to a nice garment, a noble horse (sābih) and a plump virgin.” Sābih tīfūs is a horse that runs as though swimming and has a thoroughly noble pedigree on both sides (a, f228). The second word introduces the following line, and is then accompanied by several adjectives describing the horse: (59) 116.17.12 “And a horse of noble pedigree on both sides (tīf tājīb), of noble Arabic blood (mrīb), a swift runner (mutatallīq) with a tame nature (wādūd), which, if asked by its rider, sets off [with no delay].” Mrīb means ‘a thoroughbred Arabic horse, which is made evident even by its neighing’ (a), whereas mutatallīq is one that is ‘happy to be trained to race’ (a), and wādūd is ‘of a cheerful disposition’ (a).

(60) 211.46.24 “You were sitting on a powerful, young thoroughbred (mrīb qārib), which seems to be insane when galloping.” The term for a thoroughbred horse that we encountered in the previous line is here combined with qārib, that is ‘a horse over five years of age (a) with a fully grown set of teeth’ (l235).

(61) 82.11.3 “Then he raised the whip to a huge, short-haired horse (lusūb aqyūd), which was like a dust-coloured gazelle.” Ḥawwāb means ‘huge, having a huge belly, with puffed-up sides’ (a, b53, c74, d48, ‘Atwī 1994:110), while aqyūd is a horse ‘with short hairs’ (f210).

(62) 28.3.7 “[And attack them] on every lean mare with clipped hairs (gārdā‘ an-nusāla dāmir) at the end of the night, brandishing your swords.” The adjective ‘short-haired’, which we have seen used in its masculine form in the above line, re-appears here as a feminine adjective, suggestive of ‘mares’, which, neighing as they do in a far less audible and shrill voice, help avoiding to arouse the attention of the enemy during raids. Nusāla means ‘hairs plucked or fallen out (a, b32, c46), hairs lost’; while dāmir is a horse grown lean not because debilitated but as a result of heavy
training that has led to a loss of all fat on its body and the thinness and hardness of its musculature.

(63) 132.25.8 "He was rescued from the points of the lances by a lean horse (dāmir), [as rapid] as an eagle setting out from its nest to hunt." Vide supra (eagle), and the previous line.

I have already touched upon the meaning of the verb tābaqa; see above, at the similes about dogs.

(64) 126.23.5 "[The horses] are ambling along cautiously [for the pain they feel in their hoofs], yet you would say [Saḥr's young horse is] [still] rigid (qāfīl), even when it had walked for long and they had entered al-Hārār." Qāfīl refers to a horse that is 'rigid with leanness' (a), 'a lean horse'. (65) 101.14.2 "When he is reprimanded for its wearing a leather horse-shoe, it starts trotting quickly, in the manner of dogs, in the thorny bush, listening intently." In this line, not only the exact purport but also the very use of the word sarth are questionable; it may mean 'leather horse-shoe' (a), 'a swift horse with no saddle on', but is replaced by different words in the rest of the diwāns (b16, c24, d25). The last verb in this verse signifies 'let out an excited sound' (a), or 'prick up one's ears' (a).

In the following lines a wide array of terms is to be found for various species and qualities of horses. (66) 242.51.17 "Under you is a huge-flanked (kabda), reddish-brown (kumayt) mare, which resembles someone arranging his garb on his right arm, coiling it up." Kabda' means a horse 'having huge flanks' (b148, c195, d110), that is to say offering an extensive surface for the rider to urge it on by kicking it; whereas kumayt describes 'a dark chestnut horse, with a certain reddish-black hue' (b148, f238).

(67) 91.12.9 "And the camel set out on a race against a prime [horse] with a curved back (awaqī), a broad chest (musaddar), long cheekbones, and a huge chest." Awaqī designates a putative descendant of a celebrated stallion of the Kinda confederation (a) which was then taken from that tribe by the Banū Sulaym, al-Hansi’s kin during the yarm ‘llaf. Musaddar means 'broad-chested' (a), whilst musaddar does 'a horse one chest's length ahead of the rest in a race' (b10).

(68) 143.30.3 "Many a frightful scene that you have entered deep with noble youths on their tres- sured horses (mugrabāt)." The word means 'horses tied up quite near their owners', either because of their being cherished by the latter, or with an eye to the possible necessity of mounting them quickly for a raid (a). Other sources prefer the interpretation 'highly esteemed horses' (c55) or 'saddled thoroughbreds'.

(69) 136.26.16 "[He stabs at their horses, which are] advancing (mugbilāt) toward him, then turning away (mudbivāt) and retreating, reluctant to fight [any more]." (70) 48.4.36 "Of a day, you see him seated on an enormous horse (haykal) like a combatant igniting the fire of war." Haykal is something 'of enormous proportions' (a).

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6 A tribal alliance formed in the late 5th century by the Himyarites of Southern Arabia (Yemen) in order to protect their trade routes.
And what a multitude of real men on their svelte horses (suzzab), [who], directing [their horses] in the direction [of war], [went] galloping. Suzzab are ‘well-trained, perfectly fit horses (a), svelte and delicate animals’. For other renderings, vide supra (eagle, locust, mountain goat).

The lines in al-Ḥansā’s diwān with references to camels can be analysed by grouping them into three categories. The first category comprises verses in which the emphasis is on noble deeds, namely on lavish presents of precious, fat camels, or massive slaughters thereof for the purpose of feeding guests.

_Rafīq al-mubātān, hāruf al-‘izzām_ [has the camel that you have slaughtered for your guests]; there is a man who lets his guests, rather than himself, eat, and does entertain both his kin and strangers.” Other diwāns substitute ‘fatty bones’ (a, c158) with ‘scented robe’ (b11, c12, d21).

Many a reliable (amūn), strong she-camel (ans) that you have slaughtered, distributing its flesh to feed the starving people. ‘Ans is a ‘strong she-camel’ (a), whereas amūn signifies a camel ‘that you can rely on in a combat’ (a, f206). The following verses also clarify the method of slaughtering the camels, namely ‘with a shiny white sword resembling lightning; being grabbed by an eminent leader’. (74) 206.45.9 “It was crawling along on three legs after losing a fourth.” “By a sword, when you aimed at it, it became as though its bones were [as soft as] a castor plant.” Tabarzadama is ‘tearing apart and distributing’ (a). These lines are of particular interest, displaying as they do marked similarities to the description in another poem of a slaughter of camels. The adjective amūn occurs there too, as does the verb takūsū, which means a camel’s ‘staggering or crawling on three legs and chest’ (a), ‘going’ (c124), ‘walking paralysed’ (b93). (75) 150.31.12 “Many a she-camel killed fully healthy (hamrā maẓliima) in the company, as though there had been a sand-dune on its two sides [with its back fat and hump grown].” “You aimed at him without having asked for permission, then let [his blood] flow and dressed [your] sword with it.” (76) 152.31.14 “It was crawling along on three legs, after you had left there another [the fourth one] dyed [with blood].” (77) 154.31.16 “And [the camel that had been killed] was ransomed by a strong camel (gbaṣrā) dependable in combat, and the camel-saddle [the former] had left behind was put on [the latter].” Hamrā maẓliima is a ‘red camel unjustly accused’, or one ‘killed when totally healthy’ (a). Ġbaṣrā is a ‘powerful (a) and splendid (f210), tall camel’.

And wail for your brother, on whose death the cavalry split up into bands like sandgrouses do, and who was generous and magnanimous, slaughtering fat she-camels (niḥ) [for his guests]. Nīḥ are ‘old and fat she-camels’ (a). Agr means ‘the act of slaughtering a camel’ (a, b48), ‘killing a sheep’ (f231). The same verb is applied in the next line; οqaqr being ‘a person who slaughters great numbers of camels’ (a, b48, c67). (79) 230.49.15 “Sahr would be bold when setting out for a fight, and Sahr would magnanimously slaughter his camel for the starving.”

Nasṣṣu bi al-kūrum lānīr qudr um al-muṣāṣṣa’at waṣibṣib ḥaṣibṣib (80) 181.36.21 “He, when his pot is boiling, is a distress for the camel herds (kiṣām), as well as for the old, fat, powerful [hence not easily driven] she-camels, and the fast-trotting she-camels of middling [size].”
The word *mu'āba* designates 'obese camels, having more fat than flesh on their frames' (a), noble mares' (f226), 'she-camels not easy to lead' (b115, c153). *Hansalī* means 'camels of middling size (a), extremely swift (b115, c153), light-footed or powerful (d89)'. This word re-appears in the 14th line of the same poem (or another poem, as some *divāns* present it), where it is explained as meaning an 'adroit, skilful swordsman' (a, b114, c151, d88).

(81) 203.43.6 "And he presents old, strong and fat camels (samad), while a miser will refuse to do so, as well as such rarities as will win in [various] competitions." *Samad* are 'fat (a, b105, c140, f232) and old camels'.

(82) 201.42.24 "And the giver of noble camels (is) of fine breed, and of swift horses." The meaning of *is* is 'noble camels (a), of a reddish-white hue; a white camel the whiteness of which is mixed somewhat with a fair or darker hue' (f232).

(83) 57.6.7 "They slaughter the she-camels ten months pregnant (tisār) for those who come to visit them, even when not one in a hundred suckling camels (mi'a) can provide milk for an infant." It is regarded as an exceptionally noble deed, since slaughtering a pregnant camel was seen as a sin. *Kaba*, *yakubbin* means 'killing a camel for the guests (a), lay them out on the ground, turn them on their heads' (f237); whereas *tisār* designates a 'she-camel that has been pregnant for six months or more, or else for ten months (a, c45, d34), regarded as exceedingly valuable' (Atwi 1994:129). The word 'hundred' occurring in the second hemistic one encounters again in the next line. (84) 208. 46.7 "He has uncommon gifts and luck on a day of boasting, protecting honour and giving off lots of camels (mi'um)." Her brother, therefore, was a noble man who loved to act as a generous host.

"A man of noble deeds such as will slaughter his own camel for the guests; should you be a guest at his tent, you would see him entertain his guests, giving the fat of the camels' hump to them." (247.54.7 and 161.33.9).

The lines constituting the second category are those which probably come closest to a lament, that is to the emotions of a woman having just lost a darling relative. These verses describe she-camel whose offspring have died, evoking strong feelings of sympathy.

(85) 134.26.5 "[As though] there were four [camels] (arba) in my heart, which keep mentioning longingly [their lost young] till the time of rest arrives." *Arba* are 'four she-camels affectionate for their offspring' (a, e166); whilst in other *divāns* the second hemistic is entirely different, turning thereby the meaning of the phrase into 'the four uppermost ribs of the chest' (b26).

(86) 197.42.18 "They long with nostalgia even after the people's eyes have closed, crying like she-camels unwilling to drink, having lost their young (wiliha qawāmi)." *Waliha* are 'she-camels longing after their lost offspring' (a, b22, c34); while *qawāmi* means 'camels that, dissatisfied with the pasture and water to be found on their own territory, choose to feed elsewhere' (a), or 'camels that raise their heads from the water short of having drunk because of the cold' (a, b22, d29, *Atwi* 1994:95), or else 'those which keep raising their heads, then drinking again' (c34).

(87) 228.49.11 "And not an animal having lost its offspring (fagul) [like me], before which the skin of its beloved, stuffed with straw (baww) has been put, and it is circling around it, calling it now loudly, now all but inaudibly." The poetess then goes on to describe the situation of the poor
wretched animal, hence of herself. "It continues to feed until it [suddenly] recalls its lost offspring, whereupon it starts to wander up and down unquiet with pain; it will get none the fatter even if the springtime rains have poured upon the earth and caused everything to turn green; it will keep longing and growl loud and long." Asšūl is 'one whose infant baby has died (a), a woman bereft of her child (a, c66, d44, ‘Atwī 1994:104), or a camel bereft of its offspring'. Beawār: 'when a baby camel dies, it is common practice to skin it and stuff its skin with grass or other vegetable material, then give it to its mother for the latter to continue fondling it and caring for it' (a, c66, d44, ‘Atwī 1994:104); a young camel or a stuffed camel skin to trick the mother into continuing to yield milk.

(88) 102.14.3 "You have participated in the fight [just as you desired to], which is [like] a [she-camel] refusing [to suckle], yet surrendering [eventually, like a] suckling she-camel (marīyy) [having lost its offspring] which yields abundant milk." Marīyy is a 'milch camel' (‘Atwī 1994:90), 'one whose offspring has died yet it still gives milk when milked' (a). This line, together with the following one, describe war as an obstinate she-camel refusing to yield milk. The first hemistich may well be a reference to the fact that a camel will not give milk unless its nose or thigh is fastened (a); that is to say, metaphorically, that her brother has put a halter on the unbounded ferocity of war, while the second hemistich's reference is likely to be that an animal being milked will stand with its legs apart, avoiding all rudeness (a), which is to say war has totally surrendered to her brother. This same image is continued in the following line. (89) 103.14.4 "And previously, whenever a milker would take to [milking] it, it wounded him [to protect itself], besmeared him with blood, and pressed its legs together with its tail held high." That is to say, war had previously wounded and killed anyone bold enough to defy it.

(90) 107.15.4 "When the milk of the powerful she-camel with a thick hump (bāzīl kaswāmā) dried up, and it fled the milkers to seek refuge at the acacia tree." Bāzīl signifies a 'camel whose teeth grew out (b130, c171) when eight or nine years old' (a, l207); or 'whose first teeth had just appeared; the small of a riding beast' (c171). Kaswāmā is a 'camel with a thick hump' (a). Whereas rifād means 'milk' (a) in this line, it does 'donation' (a) in the next one.

(91) 158.33.2 "On account of Sāḥr, and which man can be like Sāḥr? when even the old she-camel (nāh) ceases to fondle its offspring [on a freezingly cold night]?" Vide supra (nāb).

Finally, let us turn to the third category of verses containing references to camels in the diwān of al-Hansā; one that encompasses verse lines about camels used for raiding as well as lines that cannot be grouped into either of the previous two categories.

(92) 40.4.20 "Many a herd of camels (muq̢māt) that you have led seated [on your horse], and you have put a brand on them (asfâl) with your spear." Asfâl are 'camels having no mark on them (a, b123, c162, d94), that is animals the buttoks of which have never been stabbed' (a).

(93) 41.4.21 "Many a camel of extraordinary speed (nāg̢y̢y̢a) whose hooves are worn off [with frequent running], which [you have slaughtered, then] left their joints in the sand of the road." Nāg̢y̢y̢a designates a 'swift she-camel' (a, b123, c163, d94).
(94) 211.46.26 “Defeated, they withdrew, and [on returning], you found your companions laden with booty, with black/white camels (/gin/).” Meaning either ‘black’ or ‘white’ (a), /gin/ is an example of the addād, and it most likely refers here to camels of either colour.

(95) 217.47.3 “Nor Ṣahr; and who can be like Ṣahr setting out of a morning, driving before him a camel (qubb) with a piercing glance.” (96) 109.16.2 “On such camels (qubb) [ie he travelling], which are like the serpents of al-Abā’, [and when he returns] their humps get fatter but ticks do not settle on them.” The noun qubb, occurring in both lines, properly means ‘she-camels with narrow hips’ (a, f235). For the second verse, vide supra (ticks, serpent).

(97) 169.34.12 “And war [after breaking out and intensifying] mounted a scabby, wretched camel (garbā’ bātíra), settling on a bare spot on its back.” A line containing an extremely beautiful simile to characterize war.

(98) 88.12.2 “I crossed [that desert] with a quick-paced she-camel (miṣğām ar-rāwāb), which, when rid of its saddle, is like a camel (jamal) hard [to lead].” Miṣğām ar-rāwāb is ‘a camel that moves quickly’ (a, b9, c17, d20, ‘Atwi 1994:82), being as swift as evening is followed by morning. Kūr is a ‘camel-saddle’ (a, ‘Atwi 1994:82); cf. 128.23.11, where gūtūd carries the same meaning. The subsequent lines of this poem of al-Hansā, in which she probably addresses a son or daughter of hers, say that her child reproaches the camel for the mistakes it made during the journey, occasionally beating it even if it has done nothing bad; and [the camel] is frightened of him, beaten by him or not; and [during the journey] the camel set out on a race against a prime [horse taken as booty] with a curved back, a broad chest, long cheekbones and a huge chest.”

(99) 24.2.9 “And when Mu‘āwiya b. ‘Amr was among us on his white she-camel (adamā), which was quite like a noble camel (jamal fanīq).” Adamā is a ‘perfectly white’ (a) or brown she-camel’, while fanīq is a ‘noble he-camel’ (a, b104, c137), ‘a prime breeding camel’.

(100) 231.49.19 “He is a pleasant person; his words are unequivocal; his camels (gumālā) [graze] scattered [on the pasture]; and he keeps mending the [broken] bones.” The noun signifies ‘she-camels, a camel herd’.

(101) 86.11.7 “For [you have to wail Ṣahr, being reminded of him by] a wooded part of Yalban, where there is [his] camel (ubir as-surā) among the lean she-camels (qulas).” Camels would be used for travelling, especially at night, only if extremely powerful, ‘ubir as-surā. Quulas are ‘she-camels’ (f236), or ‘young she-camels’.

(102) 159.33.3 “I have sworn by the Lord of reddish camels (subb) that are headed for [His] Sanctuary.” Subb are ‘camels with a variegated colour, white mingled with a reddish hue (a), reddish-chestnut, reddish.’

(103) 160.33.8 “The frost [of those nights] forced the pregnant camels (aswāl) into the pens, with curved bodies and kidneys visible [for skinniness].” The word aswāl designates ‘camels whose milk has become abundant (a, c186), she-camels in the seventh month of pregnancy’ (b140, f225). As we
could observe before, the poetess depicts the severe cold of winter by describing the wretched condition it brings for the (pregnant) camels, and sometimes in a quite detailed manner too.

(104) 192.42.2 “A torrent of water, as [the water] bursting forth from the full containers on the camels’ (nawādib) backs.” Nawādib means either ‘camels used for carrying water from the well’ (a, c31) or ‘containers for carrying water’ (b21, c31, f242).

(105) 196.42.14 “The winds blow [dust] onto our beasts let loose to pasture (sawām), and the paths of our grazing-grounds have become barren.” (106) 242.51.18 “When overtaken from behind [being otherwise as quick as always to be followed by all the riders], it claimed to be like animals, let loose to pasture (sawām), of a man setting out in the morning.” The meaning of the word sawām is ‘animals grazing freely, or all one’s property, especially land’ (a), or else ‘beasts’ (Aṭwī 1994:90), ‘camels headed for the pasture or already there’ (b148, c196, d110, f223).

Finally, there are still other lines that seek to characterize camels from some aspect or other, of which noteworthy examples include: (107) 114.17.8 “[Saḥr, when mounted] on any female animal with a mute voice (aḡmā’ al-buḡāy), is as though he and his camel-saddle had been [placed] on a wild she-ass’s, so energetic is he.” The mute animal is in all probability a reference to a camel. (108) 40.4.19 “[These armies] had long and broad lips [like those of a camel], [and they swallow anyone who approaches them, despite] having no eyes or mouths.” The avant-garde of the army, when lining up for attack, is likened here to a camel’s mouth. (109) 53.6.3 “They kept dying in about a week’s time, becoming like the peoples that had perished before, and following [the fate of] the Ta-mūdītes.” The interesting element of this line is the phrase zīm ḥāmīsah, which means ‘about a week’s time’, and is derived from the vocabulary of camel rearing: ‘a five days’ period without watering the herds’ (a, b31, c44, f228); ‘when someone was preparing for a long journey, he would water his camel only once in every five days to train it to bear thirst’ (b31), or else ‘the most burning thirst felt by the camel during the scorching summer days’, ‘grazing between two waterings’ (a). “Like a camel-saddle when fastened to a tattooed beast which competes with a herd of wild cows [in its speed of running].” 128.23.11, vide supra (camel-saddle, wild cow); the ‘tattooed beast’ is likely to be a camel (a) or a wild ass with a striped skin (Aṭwī 1994:113).

In summary, we must observe that animals play a very prominent role in the poems of al-Ḥansā’. Like the poetry of the Ġabiliyya in general, hers also offers a detailed description of various facets of Bedouin life, with many ever-recurrent images and themes, which is of course due to the ever-unchanging kind of environment. Animals she presents in such vivid images as to make us all feel, see and hear what she is describing. Her sentences are sometimes simple as befits a depiction of the extreme simplicity of the desert, but one occasionally encounters quite complex phrases and examples of garīb too in this poetry. In al-Ḥansā’s poems, animals often appear in similes, which represent the most frequently applied poetic device of the Ġabiliyya era, conveying as they do the gist of the verse, the image formed in the poet’s mind in a condensed and powerful way, in order to make tangible the inner and outer
qualities of her beloved brothers, to express the pain felt by her – since she presents highly emotional and lyric pictures when describing animals –, and, eventually, to lend strength to her statements and describe everyday life. Although hyperbole is a common phenomenon in al-Hansâ’s poetry, it is not applied in reference to animals. The description of animals always serves to characterize certain individuals (her beloved brothers, captive women, etc.) or other species of animals (a horse being as swift as an eagle, etc.), or else it is a mere depiction of the environment.

It is to be noted that some animal species that, appearing frequently in al-Hansâ’s poems, are the focus of special attention are described in minute detail, in spite of the diwan’s being essentially a collection of laments. This may be explained by the fact that tâbîn, or praise of the deceased, is given a much more prominent place in her oeuvre than in comparable collections of elegies; moreover, perhaps to counterweigh the relative absence of the theme of hikma in her collection, al-Hansâ’ offers us plenty of wasf, or description. In alluding to ferocity and strength, the image of the leopard is evoked. Various feminine features are described by similes of white water-fowl, wild cows, or white antelopes. Perishing is shown through images of the wolf; leanness is characterized by describing serpents, ticks or locusts; perpetuity by pigeons and frogs; swiftness and multitudinous by mountain goats, sandgrouses, locusts, eagles, dogs and horses. It may therefore be stated as a general observation that horses, if in a group, tend to be likened to locusts, as well as to sandgrouses, as the latter fly in one single group but scatter when forced to do so, whereas the swiftness of horses is compared to the flight of eagles. The most important attribute of dogs is their barking, that of pigeons and doves, rueful cooing. It is to be observed that lions are referred to as asad, horses as hayl, when no particular feature of them is emphasized; while a lion may be called layl when bold, ri’bâl when proud and strong, hizabr when huge and powerful. Speaking of horses, the poetess puts an emphasis on their noble pedigree, broad chest, lean but muscular body, and swift pace. Her poems also testify that horses were held in very high esteem among these people, as every reference to horses bespeaks praise and affection towards them. Camel, the mainstay of desert life, is spoken of in quite varied phrases. This being the animal that lived closest to the ordinary Bedouin, even a woman was able to describe the various characteristics of the species, including the strikingly affectionate treatment displayed by she-camels towards their calves.
APPENDIX

1. leopard (1) 1
2. water-fowl (2) 1
3. wolves (3) 1
4. serpents (4) 1
5. tick (4) 1
6. frog (5) 1
7. wild she-ass (6) 1
8. chicks (7) 1

9. mountain goats (8-9) 2
10. sandgrouses (10-11) 2
11. young wild cows (12) 1, herd of wild cows (13) 1
12. cows (12) 1
13. white antelopes, gazelles (14-15) 2
14. eagles (16-18) 3
15. locusts (19-21) 3
16. dogs (22-24) 3
17. doves (25-31) 7
18. lions (32-47) 16
19. horses (48-71) 24
20. camels (72-109) 38

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7 Numbers in brackets refer to paragraph numbers in the article, whereas the numbers outside the brackets refer to the number of occurrence in the Diwan.