A Sociolinguistic View of "hazl" in the Andalusian Arabic "muwashshah"

Author(s): David Hanlon


Published by: Cambridge University Press on behalf of School of Oriental and African Studies

Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/620768

Accessed: 31-08-2015 13:05 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.
A sociolinguistic view of *hazl* in the Andalusian Arabic *muwashshah*  

**DAVID HANLON**  
Birkbeck College, London

The documented history of the theory of the *muwashshah* and one of its constituent parts, the *kharja*, spans almost 800 years: from Ibn Sanā’ al-Mulk (d. 608/1211) to the present day. Apologists for the various theories broadly belong to one of two schools, which for the sake of convenience I shall label ‘integralist’ and ‘partialist’. The integralist view holds that the *muwashshah* is an indivisible poetic unit with a coherent internal structure; partialists, on the other hand, divide the *muwashshah* into two separate units where certain linguistic criteria are applicable: the main body of the *muwashshah* in Classical Arabic and the *kharja* if it employs a Romance and/or Arabic vernacular.

Despite the fact that his views are quoted by some partialist critics in support of their claims for the genesis of the *muwashshah*, I regard Ibn Sanā’ al-Mulk as the founder of the integralist school, following Van Gelder. The latter has examined the extent of critics’ study of the coherence and structure of Arabic verse in an important survey of medieval Arabic literary theory.  

In a poetry in which more than one subject is treated in the same composition, critics naturally devoted attention to the means of transition from one theme or motif to another. The transitional devices fall into two categories.  

The poet has to make subtle connections between the various subjects (*funūn*) of his discourse. Thus he makes a transition (*fa-yatakhallas*) from love poetry to panegyric, from panegyric to complaint, from complaint to request; ...by the subtest of transitions and best of representations (*bi-altaf takhallus wa-ahsan ḥikāya*), without any motif being broken off from the one preceding it, but connected with it and mixed with it.

and Ibn Khaldūn:

Then he [the poet] starts a new speech in another line, in the same manner; and he passes on (*yastafrīd lil-kharūj*) from one subject (*fann*) to another, from one aim (*maqṣūd*) to another, by preparing the first aim and ideas in

---

2 Van Gelder, *Beyond the line*, 33–6, 51.
3 Van Gelder, *Beyond the line*, transl., 55.

© School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London 1997
it so that it agrees with the second and discord (*tanāţfur*) is kept far from the speech.4

Van Gelder relates the term *khurāj* to the term *kharja* as used by Ibn Sanā‘ al-Mulk;5 from this point of view his comments may be interpreted as an adaptation of a theoretical tradition, developed for the study of classical verse, in order to describe the internal coherence of the *muwashshah*:

It is the rule, or rather law, that in the *kharja* the transition to it (*al-khurāj ilay-hā*) be made with a jump and by passing from one subject to another (*istiţrādan*).6

We see the confusion between *khurāj* and *istiţrād* alluded to earlier; here the latter is a means of achieving the former. Clearly for Ibn Sanā‘ al-Mulk the transition from the final *aghşān* of the *muwashshah* to the *kharja* was one that did not compromise the structural integrity of the poem despite changes of theme or linguistic variety.

Although the integralist approach has not won many adherents in modern scholarship, a number of recent studies have made significant contributions to it: Kennedy has scrutinized thematic aspects of the *muwashshah* within the tradition of Classical Arabic literary theory and from a more Andalusian perspective;7 Rosen-Moked has studied in depth what Ibn Sanā‘ al-Mulk terms *khurāj* and *istiţrād*, or the mechanisms in the final *aghşān* by which the transition to the *kharja* is made;8 and Menocal, whilst recognizing the legitimacy of the partialist practice of isolating the *kharja* from the *muwashshah* in diachronic studies, makes an eloquent plea for more synchronic analysis within an Andalusian framework, rather than the classical framework favoured by Ibn Sanā‘ al-Mulk.9

The defining characteristic of any partialist approach to the *muwashshah* is the belief that its *kharja* has its origin in a popular tradition of Romance lyric poetry if it employs elements of a Romance vernacular. It is perhaps unfair to characterize it as an approach to the textual analysis of the *muwashshah*, since it is often motivated by the study of peninsular and European literary history, as typified by the studies of Alonso and Menéndez Pidal.10 However, synchronic textual analysis of the *kharja* is frequent among students of medieval European literature such as Dronke.11 It is a common, but not universal, belief among partialists that the connection between the main body of the *muwashshah* and the *kharja* is loose and artificial.

In a field of inquiry in which disagreements traditionally inspire a good deal of acrimony, differing synchronic analyses have respected the fact that

---

4 Van Gelder, *Beyond the line*, transl., 191.
the ‘truth’ they reveal is relative to the framework of working hypotheses in which they are carried out; it is on the question of the origins of the muwashshah that scholars have disagreed so forcefully. I suspect that it is for the claims it makes in this regard, that an integralist theory of the muwashshah propounded by Abu-Haidar has yet to receive the credit it deserves.\(^{12}\)

The distinction that Ibn Quzmán draws between hazl and classical verse (ash’ār) in zajar 65,\(^{13}\) and a passage by Ibn al-Khaṭīb in which he gives notice of Abū ‘Abd Allâh b. Bāq’s mastery of hazl and ‘the hazl-like literature used in al-Andalus’ (al-adab al-hazlī l-musta’mal bi-l-Andalus),\(^{14}\) are perhaps evidence that hazl was recognized in al-Andalus as a distinct literary genre. It was characterized by an obscene and frivulous thematic content, the optional use of a vernacular and a freedom from the constraints of classical literary tradition; in contrast, the tradition of formal mu’rab demanded a respect for literary convention and the use of the standard written language. Abu-Haidar makes a cogent case for regarding some kharjas (typically those which are panegyrics), as elements of hazl introduced as light relief after the ponderous mu’rab of the main body of the muwashshah. The aim of this paper is to provide a sociolinguistic context for the assessment, within an integralist tradition, of the kharja as an element of hazl within the muwashshah, by examining the degree to which al-Andalus was a bilingual and diglossic speech community, and the degree to which such bilingualism and diglossia influenced attitudes towards the linguistic varieties used in the muwashshah. I wish to stress that the term hazl in the foregoing discussion is to be understood as a descriptive label; its relation to the ihmād of Classical Arabic literature with reference to a theory of the origin of the muwashshah is neither affirmed nor denied.\(^{15}\)

Throughout much of its history, al-Andalus was characterized by varying degrees of bilingualism and diglossia. There are two broad categories of the former: societal and individual. Societal bilingualism involves the use of two languages in one unit of political organization which is typified either by a territorial division between two speech communities (for example Belgium), or by a speech community’s use of a language that is different to that of the larger political unit of which it is a part (for example, Catalonia). Linguists have coined a long list of terms to refer to degrees of individual bilingualism: additive, subtractive, compound, coordinate, dominant, incipient, productive, symmetrical, asymmetrical, etc. The paucity of extant data relevant to the study of Romance/Arabic bilingualism in al-Andalus does not justify such detailed qualification; I shall limit myself to the use of two terms, functional and receptive bilingualism, that are appropriately broad in their reference.\(^{16}\) Functional bilingualism is circumscribed at one extreme by a limited knowledge of grammar and vocabulary to perform a finite number of tasks in a second language, and at the other by a native-like control of a second language with limited phonological, syntactic and lexical interference from the first language which, although detectable by monolingual speakers of the target language, does not seriously hinder the communication of ideas. Receptive bilingualism is said of an individual who is capable of understanding the written and/or


\(^{13}\) Ibn Quzmán, Gramática, métrca y texto del cancionero hispanórabre de Aban Quzmán, ed. F. Corriente (Madrid: Instituto-Hispano-Arabe de Cultura, 1980), 423.


spoken forms of a second language, yet cannot write and/or speak it beyond common formulae such as greetings.

It is difficult to provide a complete account of Andalusian bilingualism based solely on the small number of cases of individual bilingualism cited by contemporary authors writing in Latin and Arabic, and although modern scholarship has plausibly suggested that there was a concentration of monolingual speakers of Romance in rural areas,\(^ {17} \) there is no direct commentary on the distribution of linguistic competence according to sex, social class, ethnic origin or religious affiliation. However, the linguistic consequences of conquest and the social and economic hegemony of the invaders parallel those of the military and economic subjugation of Wales by England. Both situations lend themselves to analysis within a view of societal bilingualism formalized by Fishman, in which L\((\text{language})_1\), of the intruding power class, is the language of the means of production (capital, plant and organization), and L\((\text{language})_2\), of the subjugated population, is the language of manpower.\(^ {18} \) In order to win social, economic and political mobility, speakers of L\(_2\) (Welsh or Romance) are required to adopt L\(_1\) (English or Arabic) with no reciprocal pressure on speakers of L\(_1\) to adopt L\(_2\); the reservoir of monolingual speakers of L\(_2\) is thereby greatly reduced and its existence threatened.\(^ {19} \) The situation is exacerbated if L\(_1\) enjoys currency beyond any immediate political boundaries, as is the case in Belgium where there is a higher incidence of French/Flemish bilingualism among those who regard Flemish as their first language since French is a gateway to the outside world in a way in which Flemish is not.

The circumstances conducive to the trend from Welsh monolingualism to Welsh/English bilingualism were created when the Statute of Wales of 1536 and 1542 disallowed Welsh status in administrative and legal structures.\(^ {20} \) During the Industrial Revolution, Wales became an important centre of coal-mining and iron-smelting: workers were overwhelmingly speakers of Welsh; the majority of owners and managers were overwhelmingly speakers of English. By this time English had also dislodged French as the principle international lingua franca; consequently, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the number of Welsh/English bilinguals rose dramatically and the number of Welsh monolinguals fell commensurately.\(^ {21} \)

Parallels are not evident in al-Andalus during the conquest and the first decades of settlement for two reasons: speakers of Arabic and Berber were outnumbered by speakers of Hispano-Romance and were forced to marry within the latter speech community; and an Arabo-Islamic social and cultural infrastructure had yet to establish itself. The knowledge of Romance displayed by Sulaymān b. Aswad al-Gāfīqi, judge of the great mosque of Córdoba during the reign of the emir Muhammad (238–83 A.H./A.D. 852–96), is perhaps evidence of more widespread functional, or at least receptive, bilingualism among the invaders and their descendants at an earlier date.\(^ {22} \) It was from the ninth

\(^ {17} \) Federico Corriente, Arabe andalusi y lenguas romances (Madrid: Editorial Mapfre, 1992), 34.


\(^ {19} \) cf. Uriel Weinreich, Languages in contact (The Hague: Mouton, 1968), 84–5 on the concept of the 'unilingual hinterland' of Rhaeto-Romance in Switzerland.

\(^ {20} \) Bellin, 'Welsh and English', 450.

\(^ {21} \) Williams, 'Language contact', 215.

\(^ {22} \) Muhammad b. al-Ḥārith al-Khushani, Qudāt Qurtuba, ed. Ibrāhīm al-Aḥyārī (Cairo: Dār al-kitāb al-misrī, 1982), 167.
century onwards that Eastern influence was to impress itself on al-Andalus and bring it into the cultural orbit of the wider Islamic world, within which Arabic was the unchallenged language of commercial, artistic and intellectual life, a role that could never be played by Latin and/or Romance. Consequently, those individuals who wished to better themselves socially and economically, and who might have regarded Romance as their first language in an earlier age, became functional Arabic/Romance bilinguals. The oft-quoted Indiculus luminosus of Alvarus is testimony to the enthusiasm for Islamic fashions, and the language for which they were a vehicle, among the youth of the capital. It was only natural for the young and upwardly-mobile of Córdoba to imitate the fashions and linguistic habits of the ruling classes, and regard their native Romance traditions with scorn. We have biographical sketches of a number of these individuals, especially those who embarked on careers as physicians in the ninth and tenth centuries, for example, Jawād the Christian Physician (al-tabib al-nasrānī) and Khālid b. Yazīd b. Rumān the Christian (al-nasrānī).

The reputation of the latter extended beyond the borders of al-Andalus (he corresponded with the Egyptian physician Nastās b. Jurayh), and enabled him to acquire great wealth and estates through the practice of medicine. Ibn Malīka the Christian (al-nasrānī) also enjoyed a prosperous practice; he required 30 chairs to seat waiting patients during surgery hours. Little is known of Ishāq the Physician, except that he was a Christian (masiḥī l-nihla), and the father of the most successful of this group, Yahyā b. Ishāq. The latter converted to Islam, became vizier to the caliph 'Abd al-Rahmān III and was appointed governor of Badajoz. The adoption of Islam as a way of life and Arabic as a means of communication similarly enabled one al-Habīb, of Romance-speaking parents (kāna ābā uhu 'ajaman), to pursue a legal career and rise to the top of the Andalusian judiciary in the early tenth century.

As in Wales, the economic and social supremacy of an invading force initiated a trend among the indigenous population from monolingualism to bilingualism which gained momentum because of the inability of Romance to compete with Arabic as an international language of culture and commerce, and culminated in Arabic monolingualism in areas such as eleventh-century Toledo. A contemporary observer, Ibn Ḥazm, presaged some of the conclusions of modern sociolinguistic inquiry concerning the relationship between language and political power:

[In the case of] a people that suffers the loss of its political dominion and is ruled by its enemies and filled with worries, one can be sure that its ideas will die and it is even possible that its own language will disappear.

Diglossia is defined by Ferguson in a seminal paper:

DIGLOSSIA is a relatively stable situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically

---


26 al-Khushāni, Qudat Qurtuba, 217.

more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned by formal education and is used for written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation.28

In al-Andalus there was probably little diglossia among the Arabic-speaking population at the time of the invasion and the period of settlement that immediately followed it; there was no Arabo-Islamic infrastructure through which tuition in Classical Arabic was possible, and a knowledge of Classical Arabic was probably rare among the rank and file of the invading forces. However, subsequent to the process of imitation of Eastern cultural models in the ninth and tenth centuries, all members of the Arabic-speaking population with a modicum of education were diglossic in varying degrees. The cultivation of a genre which censured the numerous phonological, syntactic and lexico-semantic features of spoken usage not codified by classical grammarians, the lahn al-‘amma literature, is concrete evidence of diglossia in this period. Its first Andalusian exponent, al-Zubaydi (316–79 A.H./A.D. 928–89), undertook to contribute to this body of writing when he noticed that his predecessors in the Eastern Islamic world had failed to comment on features peculiar to al-Andalus:

…then I scrutinized the spoken usage of our time and country and found sentences that Abū Ḥātim [al-Sijisti] and other linguists had failed to mention among the [examples] they cite, of language which our populace had corrupted, changed its form (ahālū lafẓahā) or altered its meaning (wada‘ūhu ghayra mawdi‘īhi).29

Outside the muwashshah, Romance was committed to writing either in contexts which are consciously colloquial (the zajal), or as glosses for technical terms (botanical dictionaries). Otherwise it must be assumed that it was used only for informal spoken purposes, and was therefore a L(ow) variety in common with spoken Arabic, and in contrast to the H(igh) variety, Classical Arabic.

All speech communities have strong attitudes towards varieties of their own language and the languages of other speech communities. Many varieties are stigmatized and intimately related to regional stereotypes. The Upper Egyptian (sa‘idi) is typically regarded as stupid and backward; /g/ and /g/ as opposed to /ʃ/ and the plosive jīm of Cairo, are an integral element of the stereotype. New York City English is stigmatized in a similar way as ‘Brooklynese’, and is imitated by many Americans for comic effect.30

Diglossia and bilingualism encourage such attitudes. In diglossic societies, L is regarded as decidedly inferior to H. In Morocco, H is associated with beauty, richness and is considered to be the language that Moroccans should use most;31 presumably, L is neither beautiful nor rich and should be spoken least by Moroccans. Societal bilingualism often fosters negative attitudes towards one of the two languages because its speakers are more numerous in the lower socio-economic strata; British government commissioners reporting on the use of Welsh in 1847 make no attempt to disguise such attitudes:

...a peculiar language isolating the mass from the upper portions of society...the Welsh element is never found at the top of the social scale...his language keeps him under the hatches.

...the Welsh language is a vast drawback to Wales and a manifold barrier to the moral progress and commercial prosperity of the people...it bars the access of improving knowledge to their minds.32

It is well known that the term that most commonly denoted Romance in al-Andalus, 'ajamiyya, carried negative connotations in a linguistic tradition initiated by the pre-Islamic peoples of northern Arabia, who called themselves 'clear speakers' ('arab) in contrast to foreigners, or 'confused speakers' ('ajam), whose language they could not understand.33 The tradition was perpetuated by the Quran, in which 'ajami and its morphological cognates are invariably contrasted with 'clear Arabic speech' (Q. 16:103, 26:192–8). Since it is more than likely that the monolingual speaker of Romance in al-Andalus was condemned to a menial profession and life in the lower socioeconomic strata, the negative connotations of 'ajamiyya probably widened to accommodate associations with poverty, a backward outlook on life and rural simplicity.

The literary consequences of these attitudes for a contemporary audience depend on whether the muwashshah belonged to the domain of H or L. Internally H was its principle medium: of the five constituent stanzas of those compositions that contain snatches of vernacular speech, at least four are couched in the literary standard. Although there is no compelling reason to argue that externally the muwashshah belonged to the domain of H to the exclusion of L, the medieval critic Ibn Khaldun does document instances of recitation in the formal literary salon (majlis) during the tenth and eleventh centuries: dāhikun 'an jumān by al-A’mā; jarriri l-dhayla ayyamā jarri by Ibn Bājja in the majlis of Ibn Tīfalīt of Saragossa; and the recital by Ibn Zuhur of mā ladhīna lī sharbu rāhī of al-Abyad in order to defend the latter’s reputation as a washshāh.34 It must be assumed, therefore, that at least on some occasions in such contexts the use of vernacular Romance and/or Arabic was an intrusion that had a comic effect, an observation first made, to my knowledge, by Forster:

This literary use of what was otherwise a non-literary language doubtless imparted a certain piquancy to the poem, parallel perhaps to that produced in a diglossic, not bilingual, situation in Pygmalion.35

Perhaps an analogue closer than Pygmalion can be found in the dramatic literature of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain, which reflected contemporary sensitivity towards speech and dress as indicators of the difference between urban and rural life-styles. The rustic stage jargon, sayagués, contrasted sharply with the prestige variety of Castillian spoken at Toledo that was the primary vehicle of dramatic expression. Its use carried strong associations of a rustic type who was crude in manners and dress, stupid and the speaker of a language described as ‘bumpkin’ (pastoril, rústico), ‘coarse’ (grosero) and ‘comic’ (gracioso).36

The sociolinguistic framework I employ necessarily attaches greater importance to the fact that a change in linguistic variety in the muwashshah represents a shift from H to L, rather than a switch from Arabic, in a generic sense, to an unrelated language such as Romance. The 135 poems in the Arabic corpus that employ vernacular Arabic exclusively are, from this point of view, typologically equivalent to the 42 that use Romance (or an adixture of Romance and Arabic). I shall therefore examine three poems by way of example: the first employs vernacular Arabic in its kharja; the second and third employ predominantly Romance on the basis of all textual reconstructions attempted thus far.

Thematically and stylistically, 'Bi-abi 'ilqu bi-l-nafsi 'alīq' by 'Ubāda is a rather conventional piece characteristic of the amatory muwashshah which makes it useful for the purposes of illustration. With the framework adopted here, the first four stanzas constitute the mu'rab, the kharja constitutes the hazl, and the point at which the transition from mu'rab to hazl is made occurs in the final aghšān of the fifth stanza. The mu'rab is devoted almost entirely to a description of the love object which relies heavily on the ghazal cliché to the extent that it may be considered a catalogue of its stock elements. The beloved has a round and shining face like a moon:

I have fallen in love with a crescent moon …
A full moon that shines with well-proportioned beauty.
A full moon that triumphs with shining magic.
When he appeared [like a full moon], dragging the trains of beauty behind him …

His cheeks glow with red and white floral hues:
  Lily-of-the-valley besieges a well-protected rose,
  A curl of hair like a scorpion’s tail upon jasmin.

His glances are like arrows that pierce the lover’s heart:
  Armies of beauty [dwell] on his eyes,
  And the glance plumed with licit magic.

His saliva, like wine, intoxicates the lover:
  His mouth is a wine jar made to be kissed.

His teeth are white and symmetrical like a string of pearls:
  His teeth mock the pearl necklace [surpassing it in beauty].

References to the physical attributes of the love object are invariably cloaked in metaphor, mentioned in succession, and little regard is shown for establishing a syntactic relationship between them. The description is not mimetic, and relies for its internal coherence not on any logical structure expressed through conjunction and coordination, but on the juxtaposition of elements and the understood background of a literary cliché. The beloved is an archetype, of which a small number of elements are selected for representation in a collage, whose abstraction is best articulated by the poet himself in the second stanza: ‘there appeared to me a being created for love’ (‘anna li khalq bi-l-‘ishqi khalīq). The aghšān of the final stanza mark a change in tone and style:

38 cf. Rosen-Moked, ‘Towards the kharja’, a study to which I am greatly indebted in the analysis that follows.
After he had clothed himself in the garb of beauty,
I desired to kiss his delicious, dark red lips,
But he refused, quoting a verse,
And leant over coquettishly
With the sweetest of diction:

In this post-coital scene, while the reference to the garb of beauty maintains a level of abstraction that is not incongruous with the preceding mu’rub, a narrative, more concrete style predominates which is expressed most readily by the opening reference to a concrete time frame (lammā) and the succession of past simple verb forms: ‘he clothed’ (tasarbal); ‘I wanted’ (aradtu); ‘then he said’ (fa-qāla); ‘and then he leant over’ (wa-māla). The animation and direct speech render the love object more tangible and human.

The kharja follows:

Anā qūl qūqū līs bi-llāh tadhīQui.
‘I say, [here’s] a titbit, by God you will not taste it.’

This literal translation belies a dramatic change in register which is marked by common features of Andalusian spoken Arabic: anā qūl, an approximation of the Western Neo-Arabic first person singular of the incomplete tense, vs. Classical aqūl; the negative līs vs. Classical lā; the object pronoun -ū vs. Classical -hū; and finally qūqū (‘titbit’), a word of unknown origin but whose duplicated CV syllable identifies it as a creation of child language.⁴⁰ The thematic shift that accompanies the fall in register (from H to L) is appropriately downward (from amatory to bawdy). The beloved teases in childish language (‘look what I’ve got—but you can’t have any’): ‘titbit’ can be understood as an anatomical reference which perhaps requires no gloss, and which an idiomatic translation of the kharja might profitably exploit. In sum, the mu’reb is a lofty and highly-stylized example of amatory poetry; the hazl is an informal and bawdy piece of verse. The transition from the latter to the former, istitrād or khurūj in the parlance of Ibn Sanā al-Mulk, is effected in the final aqGShān through the introduction of a narrative style and the maintenance of thematic continuity.

‘Min mawridi l-tasnīm’, of the same poet, employs mainly Romance in the kharja, which has become a famous anthology piece in its own right.⁴¹ In common with ‘Bi-abī ilGh bi-l-nafsi ʿalīq’ it is a traditional amatory poem and shares its thematic and stylistic structure. The central thematic thread that joins the mu’reb and hazl is the separation of the lover and his beloved introduced in stanza one. The stereotype of the guardian (raqib) prohibits emotional and physical approaches to the beloved, a situation that obliges the lover to call on the South Wind as a messenger:

I love a beloved whose guardian has approached
Forbidding that the fruits of his flowers be picked.
Oh garden of desires surrounded by hateful things,

Oh South Wind, I burn with his fire,
Welcome, carry my greeting in a blaze
And gladden a desolate one who finds his beloved silent through fear of
the guardian.

The mu‘rabr employs further amatory clichés, but interweaves them in a
way that, although not without precedent, lends them freshness. The first
example is an adaptation of the convention that establishes an opposition
between fire (of the lover’s passion) and water (of the lover’s tears): in the
matla‘, the fire of passion is extinguished not by tears but the beloved’s saliva,
which in turn does not take the form of wine but of waters from the fountain
of the river Tasnīm in Paradise. The theme of fire and thirst is reprised in the
second stanza to extend the ocular element of the gazelle motif: the murderous
glance of the beloved in the direction of the lover is expressed as the gaze of
a gazelle urging on its young as it seeks fertile pasture in a waterless desert.
Lastly, ‘Ubāda reinterprets the cliché of the lover’s heart palpitating like a
bird in the breast within the context of the branch as a metaphor for the
beloved’s slender waist: in the third stanza the lover becomes a bird, perched
on a supple branch, whose heart races at the sight of the branch’s fruit, and
despite warnings, falls to its death.

The aghyān of the final stanza follow:

And a maiden who continues to complain to someone who is unjust
Woe to one who is in thrall to one who will not come to help.
When, consumed by passion, she saw him delay
She sang, when her only hope was to go to him:

A change in tone occurs that is similar to, though less pronounced than,
the shift that is effected in the transitional verses of ‘Bi-abī ‘ilq bi-l-nafṣī
‘alīq’: from an idealized realm populated by archetypes who are rarely
described in anthropomorphic terms, to the more mundane context of ‘a
certain maiden’ (wa-gḥādatīn), whose movements and utterances are described
with a higher degree of realism. This paves the way for the hazīl section, or
kharja, which takes the form of a quotation by the young woman:

\[
\text{m.w sīdī Ibrāhīm yā nwāmmī dalajī fānta mīh dīh nukhti}
\text{in nūn sh.nūn kār.sh f-ūr.ym. tīb g.r mī ūb l.g.r-tī}
\]

‘My lord Ibrāhīm, oh sweet name, come to me tonight
Otherwise, if you do not wish, I will go to you. Tell me where I may couple
with you.’

This colourless translation, in keeping with the tradition of modern kharja
scholarship, fails to convey the violent change in register caused by the switch
from Classical Arabic to a Romance patois, a highly appropriate vehicle for
the section’s comic informality and obscenity. A truly idiomatic translation
which attached greater importance to connotation might establish l.g.r-tī as
its focus. In this instance it is interpreted as a reflex of LIGARE rather than
PLICARE, since all the empirical evidence available indicates that Latin /pl-/ suffered no palatalization in the Mozarabic dialects, and as a calque of the
Arabic root \(j-m-s\)’, particularly form III of the verb āma‘a, verbal noun mujā-
ma‘a (‘to have coitus with’). In this way the imperative phrase is a calque of

---

42 For the text of the kharja and its variants, see Alan Jones, Romance kharjas in Andalusian
Arabic muwaṣṣaḥ poetry (London: Ithaca Press, 1988), 25–33. The use of a point is a typographical
convenience which serves to indicate a vowel whose approximate quality cannot be determined from
the textual evidence, and is equivalent to the schwa used by Jones.

the Arabic qul lī ayna muṣṣama′ati iyyāka (‘tell me where I may couple with you’). Further semantic interference of Arabic possibly occurs in the cases of in nūn < iillā (‘otherwise’),44 and nwāmmī daljī, a calque of the Andalusian Arabic diminutive usayyam as used by Ibn Quzman.45 In sum, when scrutinized within its textual and contemporary sociolinguistic contexts, the kharjja is not so much an expression of passion of lyrical intensity but a vulgar invitation of the ‘your place or mine’ variety that contrasts sharply with the sombre tones of the muʿrab, but shares its central thematic concern with the separation of lover and beloved by the raqīb who motivates the request for a secret nocturnal rendezvous.

The last example is ‘Damʿun safūhun’ by al-Aʿmā al-Tuṭlī (d. 1130/31), in my view the most able of the Andalusian muwashshah poets.46 The muʿrab, hazl and final aghsān are thematically linked by the lovesickness of the lover whose physical symptoms are catalogued in the muʿrab section: burning thirst, tears, sleeplessness, and sword wounds. The prohibitions of the guardian (stanza 1), the glances of the beloved (stanza 3) and the tyranny of the beloved (stanza 4) are identified as the causes of a physical and emotional disequilibrium conveyed by the establishment of several antithetical conceits. The poem begins with a conventional contrast between fire and water:

Flowing tears and a burning breast—fire and water have not met except for a matter of great moment.

Further examples abound: the guardian seeks for the lover a short life (ʾamr qaṣīr) and long torment (ʾaṣā tawīl); the beloved displays a harshness (qaṣwa) that blind passion believes to be tenderness (īm); and the lover receives tyranny (zulm) in return for his righteous service (insāf). The religious devotion of the lover, in contrast to the faithless aloofness of the beloved, is articulated most forcefully in the second stanza in which the lover yearns to make a pilgrimage to the lover, whom he addresses as Kaʿba, the centre-piece of the Ḥajj ritual:

Oh Kaʿba to whom hearts perform the Ḥajj
Half with love which makes the prayer and half with desire which makes the response,
As every moan turns to him repentantly:
I am at your behest (labbayka), tell the guardian:
Take me on the Ḥajj and the ‘Umra there without denial of desire;
my heart is a sacrificial offering (ḥadīy) and my tears votive stones (jimār).47

The final aghsān follow:

I have no escape from him in any event.
A ruler who lied and treated me with harshness and aloofness
Left me in thrall to sorrow and madness
And then sang, half-drunken and half-teasing:

The transitional verses respect the thematic integrity of the muwashshaḥ through allusion to the cruel disdain of the beloved, but their articulation of

44 Jones, Romance kharjas, 30.
47 Labbixka (‘at your service’) is a formula addressed to God during the pilgrimage until thestoning at the valley of Minā; ‘Umra is the lesser pilgrimage which may be performed in association with the Ḥajj; hadiy is a sacrificial animal slaughtered on tīd al-adhā; jimār are three heaps of stones in the valley of Minā formed by the stones thrown by pilgrims returning from ‘Arafāt, thought to symbolize the stoning of Satan.
this cause of lovesickness through a succession of past simple tense forms that punctuate a narrated fragment of a drinking scene, mark a stylistic departure from the more descriptive and abstract muʿrab. The kharja takes the form of a drunken utterance by the beloved:

\[ \text{m.w al-habīb .nf.rm. dhī m.w .mār kān .dh sh.nār bi-nafṣī .m.nt. k.shād m.w l.gār.} \]

‘My darling [is] ill from loving me. Who will cure [him]? I would ransom my soul for [another] lover who seeks to couple with me.’

A dry academic register prohibits the use of an idiomatic translation that would do justice to both the intrusion of a Romance vernacular apposite to the thinly-veiled eroticism of the kharja, and al-Aʿmā’s skilled exploitation of the Romance lexis for thematic ends: the ‘illness’ of the lover (.nf.rm.) is not a reference to the stylized lovesickness of the muʿrab but a euphemism for sexual exhaustion which prompts the beloved to seek another partner for carnal gratification. Mention has already been made of l.gār <LIGARE as a word pregnant with innuendo; k.shād <*CAPTIARE (‘hunts’) is perhaps similarly influenced on a semantic level by the language of Arabic love poetry in which hunting and capture often connote sexual pursuit and conquest, as, for example, in zajal 20 of Ibn Quzmān:

If that prey (dhā ’l-sayd) falls into my hands, oh friends, I will renounce my celibacy and see my hopes realized.

al-Aʿmā surpasses the achievement of other Andalusian poets such as ‘Ubāda or Ibn Baqī through a successful integration of the hazl element into the poem on several levels that inspires in its audience a frisson that follows the initial comic reaction. Despite its vernacular garb, the vernacular kharja’s antithetical compound, .nf.rm./sh.nār, echoes the muʿrab’s amatory themes and exploits the rhetorical device (tībāq in the jargon of the codifiers of classical bāḍī‘), most commonly employed to convey the tension that necessarily follows from the emotional distance between the lover’s passionate devotion and the beloved’s spiteful detachment; at the same time it is a vehicle for the poem’s bawdy element of hazl. Thus it expresses in small compass all the oppositions that the muwashshahah embraces: of theme (amatory vs. bawdy); of style (descriptive vs. narrative); of tone (abstract vs. concrete); and of linguistic variety (high vs. low).

To conclude, subsequent to the establishment of an Arabo-Islamic cultural and political infrastructure in al-Andalus from the ninth century onwards, Classical Arabic established itself as the language of high culture and administration, in which formal tuition was necessary in order to attain social and political mobility. Varieties of spoken Arabic and Hispano-Romance were used only for spoken informal communication and became the object of negative evaluation. Romance was further stigmatized because its monolingual speakers were confined to a narrow material, and possibly rural, existence. Romance and vernacular Arabic were thus appropriate vehicles for the facetious and frequently obscene element of hazl in the muwashshahah, in contrast to the formal and sombre element of muʿrab, which found its natural expression in Classical Arabic.

48 This is a speculative text eclectically drawn from strands of the complicated manuscript tradition. See the invaluable palaeographical analysis of Jones, Romance kharjas, 76–95.
49 Ibn Quzmān, Cancionero hispanoarabe, 144.
50 Whilst I retain full responsibility for the views expressed in this paper, I wish to record my gratitude to Dr Richard Hitchcock of the University of Exeter, Professor Pat Harvey of King’s College, London, and Dr Jareer Abu-Haidar of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, who generously gave their time to comment on the paper at various stages in its development.